

YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE FROM GHANA

We wanted to share some exciting progress made possible in Ghana thanks to support from you!

Most families in Ghana earn a living through farming, raising livestock and fishing. Accessing clean drinking water can be difficult here and water-borne diseases become a major cause of death in young children. In addition, early marriages and pregnancies are common. Girls and women in Ghana experience gender-based violence so they cannot reaching their full potential and playing an active role in their community. Girls cannot make informed choices about their bodies because lacking of sexual and reproductive health education.

Throughout fiscal year 2020, with the help of your sponsorship, we were able to promote gender equality by increasing the skills and confidence of girls and improving knowledge on sexual and reproductive health and rights. We also increased access to savings and loans groups, supporting local child protection committees and raising awareness of children's rights.

We are grateful to you for making these changes possible. We know you will enjoy reading on to see how your generosity is changing the lives of children, like your sponsored child, across this region.



OUR IMPACT

153 STUDENTS JOINED CHILDREN CLUBS AND LEARNED ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS IN CENTRAL REGION

18,705 UPPER WEST GHANA WOMEN HAVE ACCESS TO SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION

17,753 PEOPLE HAVE ACCESSED TO CLEAN WATER IN EASTERN REGION

IN VOLTA, 306 CELEBRATED 'GIRLS GET EQUAL' AND CALLED FOR GENDER EQUALITY

PLAN INTERNATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE



COVID-19 is having devastating impacts all over the world. It is not only a health emergency, it is an education and protection emergency. Since girls are often worse affected during a crisis, Plan International is putting them at the heart of our response and long-term outlook. We have scaled up healthcare systems, food security, access to clean water, handwashing and awareness campaigns, and keep education in children's lives via radio broadcasts.

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS FOR YOUTH

Young people in Upper West Ghana lack opportunities to gain the skills they need to get a good job or start their own business. Unemployment and underemployment

of youth prevent the economic growth of the region and continue to keep young people in poverty.



VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS ASSOCIATIONS PROVIDE IMPORTANT FINANCIAL SERVICES TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES

To help give young men and women the skills they need to open the door to a brighter future, we have started village savings and loans associations.

Through these associations, 6,000 young people can now save their money. We provided training on financial literacy, record keeping, and how to start a business. With access to loans from the associations, youth can now invest in their futures and start their own businesses.

These 6,000 young people have also received technical training in green skills and how to protect the environment. They have learned how to ensure that their businesses are green and sustainable.

IMPROVING MENSTRUAL HYGIENE

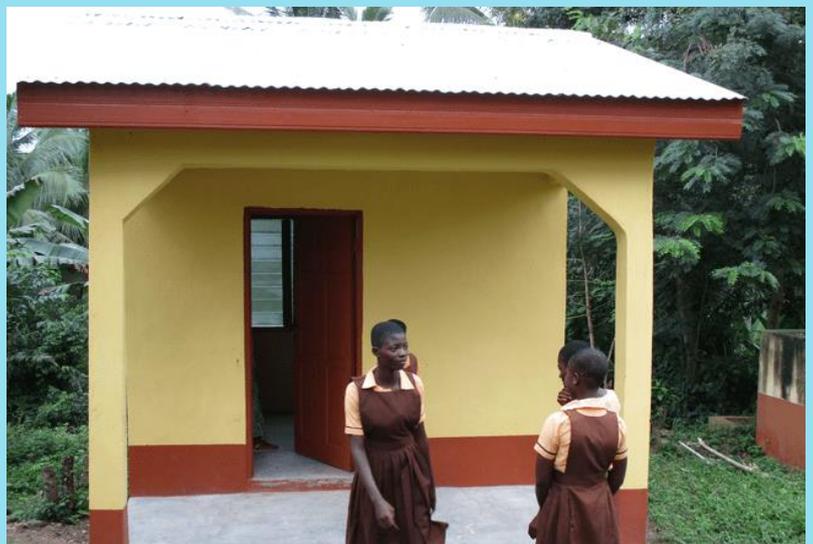
Cultural stigmas around menstruation mean that many girls lack knowledge and support to safely and hygienically manage their periods. Schools often do not have private and clean toilets or changing rooms for girls. Hence, girls frequently skip school while on their periods, leading them to fall behind on their lessons, sometimes dropping out of their education entirely.

To help girls safely attend school while on their periods, we have built changing rooms and hand-washing stations at five schools in Central Region.

28 communities attended workshops which helped to break the stigmas around menstruation. They also learned about the dangers of early marriage and pregnancies, and the importance of girls' education and gender equality.

"I am happy we now have a girls-friendly washroom in the school. I can now feel comfortable in school when I am on my menstrual period. Thank you Plan International."

Maccrina, 17, sponsored child



PROTECTING CHILDREN AGAINST ABUSE

In the Eastern Region, cultural norms and a lack of knowledge of children's rights have led to high rates of early marriage, child labour and physical abuse. More than



CHILDREN ARE KEPT SAFE THROUGH CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES IN THE COMMUNITIES

20% of women aged 20 to 24 were first married before 18, and 30% of girls and boys aged 15 to 17 are engaged in child labour. These cases prevent children from reaching their full potential.

To help protect children against abuse, we have formed 10 community-based child protection committees. These teams are made up of 70 members, who are trained to recognise cases of child abuse and refer severe cases to the relevant authorities. They are also trained on youth sexual and reproductive health and rights, so they can help prevent cases of teenage pregnancy and child marriage.

Through community meetings, these child protection members are also able to raise awareness of children's rights among parents, who are then equipped to provide their children with safe, loving and supportive environments.

EMPOWERING GIRLS THROUGH FOOTBALL

Early marriages and teenage pregnancies are serious issues for girls in Volta. 29% of girls are married before the age of 18, and 13% of women between 15 and 19 years of age have given birth. These life events prevent girls from reaching their full potential, limiting their opportunities to finish their education and gain the skills they need for employment.

To help equip girls the skills and confidence they need to make informed choices about their lives and bodies, we held a football tournament in the Volta region. More than 660 girls took part, learning not only football skills, but also about their sexual and reproductive health. Through participation in the tournament, girls have improved their self-esteem and knowledge about their bodies.

"I am happy to be part of the Girls Football Club because I have learned how to play soccer to remain fit and how to protect myself against teenage pregnancy, which could ruin my future. Thanks Plan International!"

Edinam, 17, club participant



YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will continue to protect children's rights so they are able to thrive.

In the coming year, we will continue to work with the children, families and partners across Ghana:



- Improving support for girls to succeed at school, for example providing academic excellence workshops to girls in so they can increase their confidence. Meanwhile, we ensure children have inspiring learning environments by improving training for teachers and promoting inclusive and accessible education.
- Continuing to empower young people to make informed choices about their bodies and lives by teaching them about sexual and reproductive health and rights and promoting menstrual hygiene education for girls in school.
- Increasing opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to get a good job or start their own business by providing vocational skills training and entrepreneurship support.
- Increasing awareness of children's rights through community events and children's clubs and empower children to stand up for their rights. Furthermore, we will continue to strengthen local child protection committees.
- Increasing access to health services and raise awareness on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through social distancing and good hygiene practices, such as hand-washing with soap.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will continue to touch the life of your sponsored child and other children. We would not be able to do this without supporters like you!

MESSAGE FROM ERIC AYABA

Programme Area Manager, Upper West Ghana



"We have made significant achievements across hard to reach communities and touched the lives of deprived children, especially girls and young women. We have been able to achieve our core objectives of getting out-of-school children back to formal school. We also saw significant improvements in the livelihoods of women."

MESSAGE FROM ROSE BEYUO SILO

Programme Area Manager, Volta



"With your kind support, we implemented programmes and responded to COVID-19 demands which have significantly impacted the lives of children, families and communities in the deprived Volta area. Thank you for supporting Plan International!"

MESSAGE FROM RICHARD BOADU

Programme Area Manager, Central Region



"My heartfelt gratitude from Central Region where your sponsored child resides. The entire area, especially children, are very appreciative of your contributions which elevated the status of children, especially girls. Your support in the past year helped in implementing girls' rights projects in 89 communities!"

MESSAGE FROM KOFI ADADE DEBRAH

Programme Area Manager, Eastern Region



"This year has been exciting with projects implemented to benefit children and youth, especially in the areas of protection as well as water and sanitation. The children, youth and entire families of the beneficiary communities are very grateful to you for your contributions that have helped to significantly improve their livelihoods."

