

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

**Thanks to your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Varanasi. Learn more about the valuable ways your support has benefitted them.**

This past year, thousands of families gained crucial knowledge to keep themselves safe from COVID-19. During vaccination campaigns at schools, 6,036 youth were immunized against the virus.

More girls can now take charge of their bodies thanks to training on menstrual hygiene management. Young people are also empowered to stand up for their rights and say no to early marriage. And parents are growing nutritious foods in kitchen gardens to help their children have a healthy start.

**We know the best is yet to come and your sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Varanasi.**



# 2,811

Girls received menstrual hygiene and dignity kits



# 555

Community events on the harms of child marriage



# 9,993

Children learnt about their rights



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN INDIA

**Hear from Meenaskhi about how COVID-19 has impacted her community.**

"I was afraid to take the COVID-19 vaccine because I thought I would get sick and die. Then Plan visited our community and shared information about the vaccine and the benefits. I decided to take the first dose and I was fine. I motivated my friends, and now I am fully vaccinated. Thank you Plan International."

# CASE STORY: REACHING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE



**NAME: TARANNUM**

**AGE: 12 YEARS OLD**

**HOBBY: READING**



"I always wanted to go to a big school and do well for myself and my family, but my parents could not afford the fees and I didn't have the necessary identity papers. Plan International helped us get documents for admission, and now I am confident I can fulfil my dreams."

## Meet Tarannum

**Like your sponsored child, Tarannum has been empowered by Plan International to change her life.** Tarannum has top marks in her grade, and she's excited about what the future holds for her. She and her three siblings are all enrolled at good schools and can access government programmes, thanks to their new identity cards.

## I Am Here

Tarannum's parents moved to Delhi in search of work. Her father was the only earner, and it was hard for him to make ends meet.

Government supports for income and food existed, but the family didn't have the proper identity cards. The documents were also needed for admission into secondary school.

After joining Plan International's child sponsorship program, Tarannum learned about the importance of having identity documents to claim her rights and access the supports she's entitled to.

Tarannum and her family now have their identity cards, and they can play an active role as full citizens in their community.

## Family Support

COVID-19 has been hard on Tarannum. Her father lost his job, and it became a struggle to provide food for the family, even with government programmes.

While distributing face masks and hygiene kits to help keep children and families safe from the virus, Plan International also provided financial support. Through this support, Tarannum's parents were able to purchase nutritious food for her and her siblings.

Tarannum is dreaming big for her future, and her parents are giving her all the support she needs to reach her goals.



*Tarannum on her way to school*

**WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 7,242 CHILDREN IN VARANASI**



# OUR PROJECTS IN VARANASI ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Girls and boys talk about periods to reduce the stigma during Menstrual Hygiene Day

## STAYING HEALTHY



**Around half of young women use unsanitary methods during their menstruation.** This leaves girls and women at risk of health issues. Tuberculosis is another serious health risk in Varanasi, which can cause lifelong damage or death if not treated properly.

To help girls learn more about their bodies and reduce the stigma of menstruation, communities celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Day. More than 8,000 people took part in community events, and 10,210 girls and boys learned more about their bodies and how to manage menstruation with dignity.

Through awareness events, 7,504 people improved their knowledge on how to prevent and treat tuberculosis. And 248 health volunteers are also able to share this information with families in their communities.

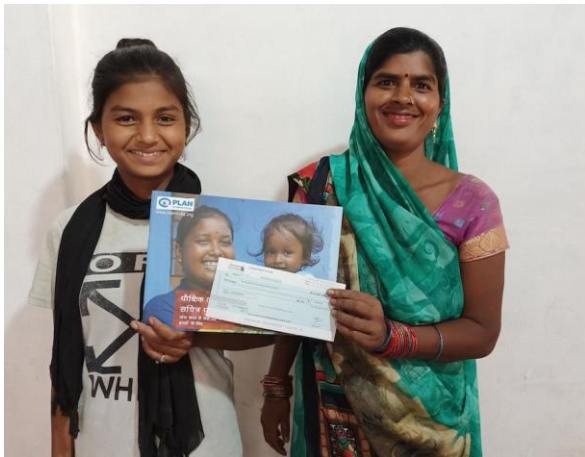
## NUTRITIOUS FOODS



**More than one in three children in Varanasi are underweight.** Many families struggle to afford and prepare nutritious foods, and lockdowns during the pandemic made this even more of a challenge.

To help children grow up healthy, 6,694 parents received cash assistance to purchase good food for their children. And 4,800 families received seeds to start kitchen gardens, along with recipe books for nutritious dishes. Parents and children also took part in cooking demonstrations, gaining practical skills in preparing healthy meals.

And more than 3,400 pregnant or breastfeeding women improved their knowledge on childhood nutrition, so they can give their babies the best possible start in life.



"I received a recipe book from Plan International on how to prepare nutritious foods. We also received seeds to start a kitchen garden. Now we are getting good vegetables and preparing delicious dishes at home. Our health is gradually improving."

**- Parul (13) from Varanasi**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



31%

Of people cannot read or write



32%

Of children under the age of 5 are underweight



53%

Of young women do not use hygienic methods during menstruation



**Your support helps girls and boys to stand up for their futures.**

- School drop-out rates remain high. We will support schools to create inclusive and inspiring spaces for all children to help them open the door to a brighter future.
- Around one in three young children are not a healthy weight for their age. We will support mothers with the knowledge they need to provide nutritious foods.
- Child marriage prevents girls from reaching their full potential. We will strengthen child protection committees and raise awareness of girls' rights.
- Without sexual and reproductive health knowledge, girls and boys cannot make informed decisions about their bodies. We will increase access to training to help reduce early pregnancies and improve menstrual hygiene.

**We know the best is yet to come, and together we will continue to work for a brighter, happier future for the children in Varanasi.**



“With your kind support, we are able to design programmes where children can actively participate and become agents of change in their communities. My sincere thanks for your continued support to children, youth, and families in Varanasi.”

**Shyam Singh**  
Programme Area Manager, Varanasi

## YOUR GENEROSITY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN STANDING UP FOR THEIR FUTURE AND RIGHTS