

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

Plan International has been working in rural Lilongwe, a province comprising 19 Malawian communities, since 1994. During that time, the reported number of cases of gender-based violence has decreased, most recently from 195 to 153.

This year, 2,080 adolescents participated in workshops about sexual health and reproductive rights as part of our “Girls Get Equal” programme. 995 students who had given up on their educations were provided a supportive path back to school.

**Your continued sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Lilongwe.**



14

Youth enrolled in Economic Empowerment programme



200

Families benefitting from donated goats



13,198

Young people informed about sexual health



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN MALAWI

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

“The pandemic made it difficult for my family to earn money. Thanks to Plan’s Sustainable Livelihoods programme, my parents harvested manure and saved the cost of artificial fertilizer bags. They can sell the manure to other community members and their income can now support my household and school-related demands.”

# CASE STORY: YOU CAN DEPEND ON ME



**NAME: SARA**

**AGE: 20 YEARS OLD**

**HOBBY: BEING WITH FRIENDS**

"I see myself becoming a more confident person, and I know where to seek support when I come across challenges. Through my business I can earn enough to support my two brothers, and they have both gone back to school."

## Meet Sara

**Like your sponsored child, Sara has been empowered by Plan International to change her life.** At age 13, Sara and her siblings were suddenly forced into extreme circumstances. Without parents to provide for them, the children had to support themselves.

## Finding My Way

Sara and her siblings had nothing, except for the land their parents left them. Sara's two older siblings were the first to enter the workforce, but their earnings simply weren't enough- school supplies and fees for the whole family were too expensive.

A dutiful sister, Sara dropped out of school to help shoulder the burden. She joined the ranks of many other Malawian students, particularly girls, who do not complete their education due to poverty.

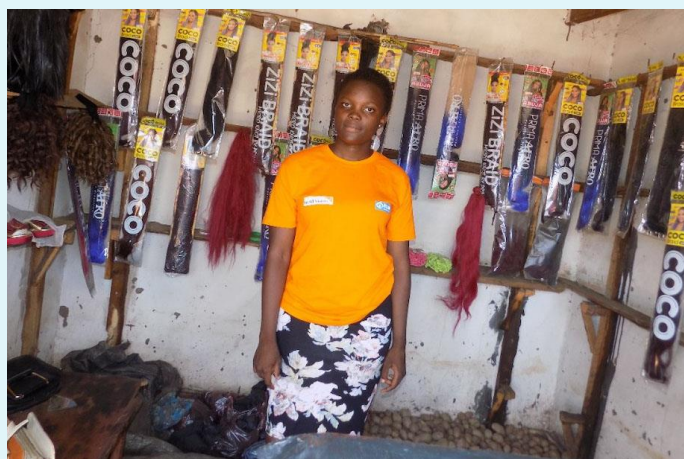
With limited resources, young people and girls especially can find themselves in dangerous employment situations. Plan International offers vocational training to adolescent girls and young women in Malawi just like Sara. These programs allow girls and women to build confidence, agency, and financial stability safely.

## Knowledge Is Power

This year, Sara took part in one of Plan's girls' clubs, where she learned practical skills for employment and health. There, she connected with a Village Savings and Loan group, which provided her capital to start small businesses.

Today, Sara provides for her siblings by selling a range of products. Now able to pay their school fees, her younger brothers have re-enrolled in school. Her income allows her family to buy food, utilities, and clothing.

Powered by a newfound confidence, Sara is ambitious. She tells Plan, "My dream is to see my business grow."



Sara in her shop.

**WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 6,355 CHILDREN IN LILONGWE**



# OUR PROJECTS IN LILONGWE ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



In a country where most girls do not complete secondary school, hundreds of girl students found their way back to a supportive education.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



**Many girls in Malawi do not have a choice about whom, or when, to marry.** A confluence of social norms and financial precarity force most adolescent girls out of secondary school before graduation, perpetuating a cycle of inequality.

This year, Plan International dramatically exceeded several of its goals in its “Girls Get Equal” project. Plan successfully brought 995 students who had dropped out back to school, including 661 girls – well beyond our goal of 925 students.

Similarly, 1,867 teachers – over 300 more than our target – received trainings in inclusive pedagogy.

Lilongwe teenagers reported a 15% increase in their knowledge of sexual health, thanks to our trainings.

## PROMOTING STRONG GIRLS



**82% of girls in Malawi are not able to complete their education.** One contributor to this statistic is child marriage: 42% of women in Malawi ages 18 to 24 were already married before their 18th birthday.

Dismantling institutional sexism is a community effort. This year, Plan International collaborated with young people in Lilongwe to emphasize gender equity, consent and confidence.

2,080 adolescents discovered new sexual health resources in their community. 1,826 children received sexual health education, as well as counselling sessions.

12 children and 12 teenagers received new leadership roles, wherein they will pass on these lessons to their peers.



“Nowadays, it doesn’t matter whether my parents have money or not: I know I will go to school even when I am menstruating. Before, I could have missed classes if my parents did not have money for pads.”

**- Tionge (Grade 8) from Lilongwe**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



**<5%**

Of schools in Malawi have facilities for handwashing with soap



**20%**

Of girl students in Lilongwe have dropped out by Grade 7



**19%**

Of schools in Malawi do not have safe drinking water



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

- Malawi has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world. We will continue to encourage girls to stay in school by bolstering their scholastic support.
- Young people in Malawi are vulnerable to repeated instances of sexual abuse. We will strengthen community reporting mechanisms and referral systems.
- Deforestation threatens livelihoods of many in Lilongwe. We will plant fruit trees to revive the region's tree population.
- Lilongwe is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. We will promote climate resilience through workshops about irrigation and drought-resistant crops, like cassava and sweet potato.

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



"It is a great honour to mention the high level and kind support that you were able to provide to the children of Lilongwe and their respective families. Through your support, we have been able to fulfil the promises we made to the children that we are working with."

**Daniel Kapatuka**  
Programme Area Manager, Lilongwe

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