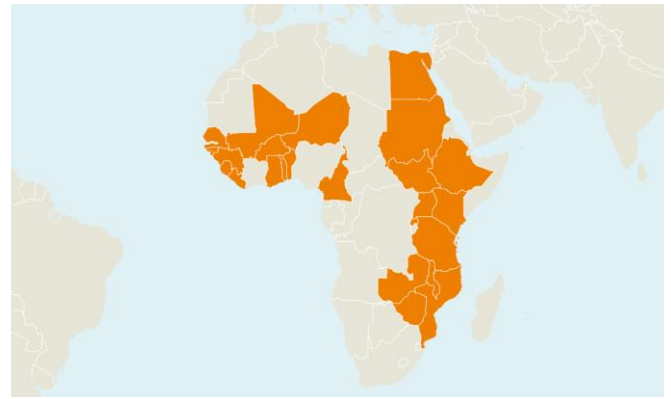


ANNUAL UPDATE

ZIMBABWE

CHIREDZI



Together with your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Chiredzi. Learn more about the valuable ways we work with children and communities.

Plan International has been working in Chiredzi, Zimbabwe since 1991. Today, we are involved with Sponsored Children and their families in 227 villages across the Chiredzi region, focusing on issues like girls' educations, child marriage, teen pregnancy, unemployment and gender inequality. This year, Chiredzi has been particularly hard-hit by a wave of cholera sweeping across Zimbabwe. Looking forward, we will focus on addressing this health crisis, connecting with parents about health and hygiene and encouraging youth leadership.



1,310

young people were supported with vocational skills



50

sponsored families received start-up kits to boost business ventures



2,062

community members learned about nutrition

“THE MONEY EARNED FROM PLANS’ FARMING PROJECT AT OUR SCHOOL PAYS FOR MANY CHILDRENS SCHOOL FEES.”

Thandekile, 16 years old, Sponsored Child





NAME: NEO

AGE: 17 YEARS OLD

DREAMS TO BE: A DOCTOR

“OUR BUSINESS IS GROWING. SOON, WE WILL BE OUR DISTRICT'S POWERHOUSE. I IMAGINE A FUTURE WHERE WE IMPROVE THE LIVES OF ALL OF OUR NEIGHBOURS.”

Meet Neo

Like the child you sponsor, Neo is taking steps toward achieving her goals and becoming a role model.

When Neo's 'school exam scores threatened the future of her education, a vocational training course in leather skills offered a safety net.

At Risk of Dropping Out

17-year-old Neo is the daughter of subsistence farmers and the older sister of a primary school student. She loves to play volleyball and dreams of being a doctor. When Neo took her school exams, she was disappointed to see that her scores were not as high as they needed to be for her to complete her education.

For girls in Zimbabwe, this poses a high risk: In Neo's community, unemployment and substance abuse are high among young people, which can be life-threatening. This is particularly worrisome for women and girls, who often struggle to become financially independent, getting married or pregnant at a young age and dropping out of school.

Developing A Safety Net

Neo is one of ten girls in her community to participate in Plan International's five week-long leather product-making workshop, which provided materials, business management lessons and seed funding to start their own small enterprises. Today, Neo describes being more self-assured than ever. Neo and a few of her friends, also young women, earn money for their families selling their leather goods to the community, and are even talking about expanding their business. Neo plans to return to school with wind in her sails: she has a newfound sense of confidence and a back-up plan for the future.



No matter what happens, Neo knows she'll be okay.

OUR PROJECTS IN CHIREDZI ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



This year, hundreds of young people in Chiredzi connected through learning and leadership.

I CAN DO ANYTHING



65% of women in Zimbabwe struggle to get jobs because of negative social norms.

Unemployment is a significant problem in Zimbabwe, and 85% of unemployed people in Zimbabwe have fallen into crime, illegal migration, substance abuse or other risky behaviours. This year, 1310 young people in Chiredzi participated in our vocational skills training workshops, which offered lessons in cosmetology, welding, hospitality, catering and others.

Today, 60% of these participants have found employment, while another 12% have started their own small businesses. 50 former Sponsored Children have joined Village Savings and Loans groups, where they discuss financial literacy, entrepreneurship and budgeting, and receive seed funding for starting up businesses.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



26% of students in Chiredzi drop out of school before graduation. Between faraway schools, child marriage and unplanned pregnancies, young people – especially girls – faced an uphill battle when it came to completing their educations.

This year, we offered safe boarding facilities for girls to stay if long commutes threatened their continued education, and dropout rates fell to 0%. 160 girls became significantly more involved in school activities and advocacy, and 12 girls took on leadership roles to investigate the causes of school dropouts. Working with these youth leaders, we'll assess these results to improve girls' enrollment in school and lower the dropout rates.

“Had it not been for Plan, I probably would have dropped out of school. But now, I'm a confident, assertive girl. I can make a difference.”

- Lorraine (18) from Chiredzi



YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



The best is yet to come – and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in Chiredzi.

- 54% of girls in Chiredzi complete secondary school. With your support, we will expand our Champions of Change programme, encouraging girls to become leaders and plan for their futures.
- Cholera is on the rise in this part of Zimbabwe. We will collaborate with local families to discuss sanitation and hygiene practices to reduce the spread of this disease.
- Zimbabwe has the highest rate of inflation for food of any country in the world. We will continue to offer vocational training and seed funding to aspiring entrepreneurs in Chiredzi.

Thank you for your continued support.



“We are so grateful to our donors, who have helped us reach the most vulnerable children and young people in Chiredzi.”

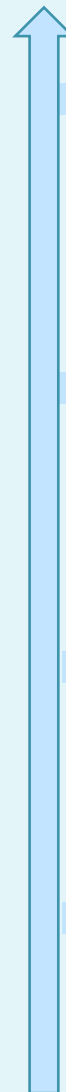
Track Murauzi
Programme Area Manager

THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment is turned into effective long-term change – providing help for self-help. We involve children at the centre of all projects, bringing effective and sustainable solutions to families and communities. With Plan’s Effect, your commitment helps empower communities to transform their lives and futures.

THE LAST 12 MONTHS



JULY

10,125

community members received food aid through cash transfer



AUGUST

12

girls researched drop-out rates among female students



SEPTEMBER

1,467

families learned about safety and gender-based violence



OCTOBER

58

sponsored families benefitted from solar-powered gardens

