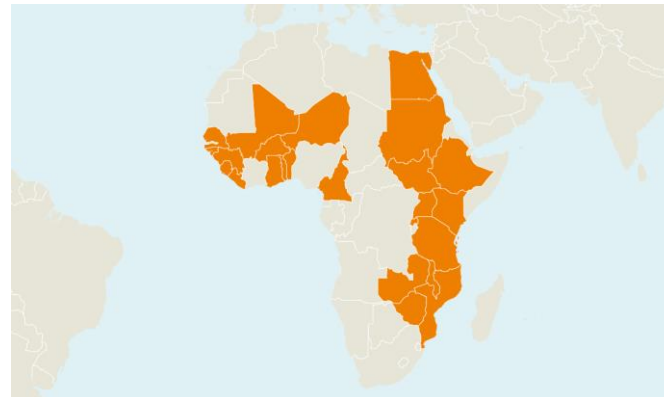


ANNUAL UPDATE

ZIMBABWE

BULAWAYO



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

This year, we've had honest conversations with community members about child marriage, HIV/AIDS and the prevention of illness, early pregnancy and the importance of girls' educations. Hyperinflation and unemployment are serious issues in Zimbabwe, and our projects also offered climate-resilient vocational training, materials and seed funding to young people so that they have the tools to start their own small businesses.



3,650

young people have improved access to health services



1,200

parents capacitated on disaster risk reduction



100

young adults enrolled in vocational skills courses

“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 BULAWAYO ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



Around 50% of children in Bulawayo are enrolled in primary or secondary school.

Between the cost of tuition fees, high rates of child marriage and negative social norms about girls' educations, girls and women are at a significant disadvantage when they are not in school. This year, we helped 2,300 girls who had left school return to their studies. 85% of these students went on to graduate with passing marks in maths and reading.

Many girls and women in Bulawayo do not complete their educations. This year, 2,300 girls returned to school.

As part of our work to change negative gender stereotypes about girls and women, as well as gender-based violence, 240 boys in Bulawayo became part of our Champions of Change programme, which focuses on self-esteem, empowerment, positive masculinity, non-violence and leadership.

MY BODY, MY FUTURE



15% of girls in Zimbabwe drop out of school because they are pregnant. One of the largest contributors to this statistic is a lack of open, supportive conversation with young people about their sexual health and reproductive rights. This means that young people are often at risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, and maternal mortality rates are high.

This year, 2,775 teenagers participated in our workshops about sexual health, consent, gender and communication. Another 3,650 young people have access to family planning services and STI testing through our mobile health outreach services. 100 teens and young adults are enrolled in vocational skills workshops, including climate-resilient agriculture.



“Plan’s sexual health lessons have changed my life in so many ways. I now have confidence about my body. It is my right to say no.”

- Nonceba (19) from Bulawayo

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 Bulawayo.

- Bulawayo has the highest percentage of children who are not in school of anywhere in Zimbabwe. With your support, we will continue to offer guidance and counseling to at-risk youths.
- 20% of girls in secondary school drop out because of child marriage. We will offer school clubs for at-risk girls as part of our effort to build self-esteem and educate the next generation about their rights.
- Many young students have to stop attending school because of fees that their parents can't afford. We will continue to offer scholarships to students in need to encourage the continuation of their educations.

Thank you for your continued support.



“In response to challenges from climate change and the economy, we focused on the health and rights of young people. Your support is changing the lives of many children.”

Noreen Makhurane
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



APRIL

328

Teachers trained in new methods



AUGUST

11,190

Youth learned about sexual health and rights



OCTOBER

3,484

Pupils supported with educational bursaries



DECEMBER

170

Out-of-school children received additional lessons

