

# ANNUAL UPDATE

# INDIA

## ODISHA



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

This year, advocating for inclusive education and quality health resources were top priorities. Together, parents, teachers and youth worked to improve educational access and gender equality in school, and students developed leadership skills through Child Cabinet student government. Young people also learned about their sexual and reproductive health and rights, reducing rates of early marriage and pregnancy. As a result, young people – and their families – have a brighter future ahead.



**1,085**

People celebrated International Day of the Girl



**2,717**

Parents learned about adolescent health issues



**4,662**

People attended sessions on the importance of education

**“PLAN IDENTIFIED ME AS VULNERABLE TO CHILD MARRIAGE. (THEN) I WAS ENROLLED IN CLASS. I AM HAPPY AND THANKFUL.”**

Aarati, 14-year-old Sponsored Child





**NAME: KANCHAN**

**AGE: 19 YEARS OLD**

**DREAMS TO BE: A  
POLICE OFFICER**

**“MY PARENTS SACRIFICED A LOT. IT IS TIME I START WITH SOMETHING THAT SUPPORTS MY JOURNEY.”**

## Meet Kanchan

**Like the child you sponsor, Kanchan is making steps towards achieving her goals and building a stronger future for herself.**

Kanchan is an outstanding student who loves to read. Her favourite subject is history, and she's passionate about Indian culture. And while cultural norms may disregard girls' education, Kanchan is on the path to a bright future.

## Facing Obstacles – With Support

Kanchan's large family didn't believe girls need to attend higher education, and discouraged her from taking Service Commission exams to get a government job.

Yet Kanchan is active in her Plan India community. She participated in the International Day of the Girl Takeover Event, and has a leadership position. She also has access to Plan India's Paramarsh resources.

Paramarsh is a unique service for career guidance and counselling services, enabling at-risk young women like Kanchan to make informed life choices. Through the programme, Kanchan and her parents participated in a series of dialogues to help facilitate a supportive environment for Kanchan to pursue her dreams.

## Leading by Example

Yet even with her parents' eventual approval and Kanchan's acceptance into college, the financial obstacles were still high. Through Paramarsh resources, Kanchan was able to start her academic journey towards higher education: She received a scholarship from the International School of Canada for a 6-month-long course. Now Kanchan is enrolled as an undergraduate in Political Science with Honours from the School of Open Learning University.

In leading by example, Kanchan will help create change in her community so that other girls can pursue their dreams.



*Kanchan is a role model*



# OUR PROJECTS IN ODISHA ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Adolescent Health Day enhanced awareness of menstrual hygiene management, gender-based violence, and other important themes.

## OUR RIGHTS, OUR FUTURE



There are 253 million adolescents in India – many of whom lack information and resources on sexual and reproductive health and rights. Without this knowledge, young people are susceptible to health issues like early and unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

Education and resources are key. The UMANG Project empowers youth with comprehensive education on sexual and reproductive health and rights. It creates awareness, strengthens systems and builds the agency of young people to help reduce early marriage and pregnancy.

This year, health volunteers helped more than 6,000 people access services, while peer educators shared information, and parents committed to providing safe and stable home environments. “Our Rights, Our Future” was the theme of the International Day of Girls in Odisha – a perfect fit for youth advocating for a healthier, more equitable life.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION



Many children are unable to access their right to an education due to socio-economic and gender barriers. Girls also face barriers to school leadership roles.

The Sopaan Project improves educational access and gender equality in school. This year, 4,662 teachers and students participated in 30 school-level awareness campaigns on the value and importance of education. In addition, 470 parents formed groups to support school activities. The project also includes Child Cabinet student government programmes. In Odisha, 570 children formed 38 Child Cabinets – 32 of which are led by girls.

As a result, children developed leadership skills, parents are engaged, and student enrolment increased.

“I participate in Child Cabinet meetings in school. Since I am a Peer Educator, I also orient adolescent girls on issues in our school and community. I am happy and thankful to Plan for involving me in all these activities.” - **Nibedita (13) from Odisha**



# 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 Odisha.

- Lack of information on reproductive health, menstrual hygiene and family planning continue to pose challenges for women and girls. We will work to end social taboos around menstruation, increase communication and empower peer groups to provide accurate information.
- 29-31% of women aged 20-24 got married before age 18. We will increase awareness of the consequences of early marriage and the impact on girls and young women.
- School drop-out rates remain high. To help pupils stay in school, we will facilitate awareness sessions and meetings between parents and teachers.

Thank you for your continued support.



“In the coming year, we will be able to reach more children for their education, health and capacity building. We are grateful for your continued support to the children in Odisha!”

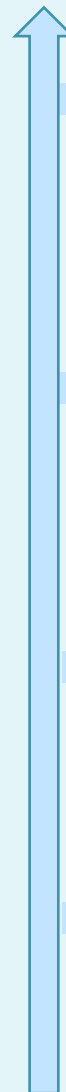
**Sukanta Kumar Sahoo**  
Programme Area Manager

## THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment becomes 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



### FEBRUARY

184

Patients with tuberculosis supported with food kits



### APRIL

150

Medical kits distributed to 148 health centres



### JULY

2,181

People accessed free health check-up services



### OCTOBER

570

Students formed Child Cabinets in 38 schools

