

Bafata

Guinea Bissau

Positive changes are happening in Bafatá. Learn more about how we're supporting children and girls' rights through our collaborative, equality-driven work.

This year, the Girls Get Equal and Girls Out Loud (GOL) campaigns empowered girls and young women to learn and lead—both in their lives and in their communities.

Through Girls Get Equal, young women practice leadership skills as they take on the roles of leaders in their community for one day—and learn how to use their position to advocate for progress.

Girls Out Loud engages youth in a safe, inclusive online environment. Eighteen-year-old Aissatu says: “In the words of the girls themselves, the platform has created a family, not just a group.”

With education, resources and leadership skills, young people in Bafatá are making changes in their communities—and working to improve their futures.

“With necessary learning material, I feel motivated and will continue my studies.” - Braima (10)



GOL members are making their voices heard.

Impact in Numbers

3,456

students benefited from new school furniture

400

girls participated in a menstrual hygiene campaign

100

teachers trained in language and maths

A Voice Against a Dangerous Practice



NAME:

Cadidjatu

AGE:

18 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

A lawyer

“I attend journalism classes and I present on the radio, with the aim of defending the rights of girls—considering the most vulnerable, whose voices are not heard.”



Meet Cadidjatu

Cadidjatu is advocating for a healthier future for girls in Guinea-Bissau.

According to her mother, Cadidjatu was always very energetic and intelligent—today, reading is her favourite hobby, and she wants to be a lawyer in the future. Today, Cadidjatu advocates for children who are unable to advocate for themselves.

A Dangerous Tradition

As is customary for many girls in her village, Cadidjatu was about five years old when she underwent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Cadidjatu became very ill after the procedure. For more than two weeks, severe pain meant she was unable to sit or walk. Her parents took her to a healer but the treatment failed. After her mother contacted Plan, Cadidjatu was sent to the capital Bissau for medical treatment.

Cadidjatu underwent several medical interventions in the hospital over the course of a month. Plan staff supported her family with follow-up visits, and within a few years, Cadidjatu was old enough to be able to participate in the events organised by Plan.

Protecting the Next Generation

Now, in addition to attending school, Cadidjatu is a member of Bafata's Regional Children's Parliament, which defends children's rights. She promotes awareness about Harmful Traditional Practices, with an emphasis on eliminating FGM. Cadidjatu is also an intern and presenter of a youth programme on one of the area's radio stations.

With her experience, knowledge and leadership, Cadidjatu is a voice speaking for the powerless.



Eighteen-year-old Cadidjatu is a leader in her community.

We Work With 12,444 Sponsored Children in Bafatá

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Learning to Lead

The Girls Get Equal initiative supports girls and young women to claim power over their own lives and to shape the world around them.

This year, the 3rd Edition of the Girls' Forum was held in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Day of the Girl. Participants reflected on the leadership status of girls in Guinea-Bissau 10 years later, and their challenges.

In addition, the First Solidarity March advocated for equal power for girls. And, girls in Bafatá participated in the Girls' Takeovers, where young female leaders take on the roles of community leaders for the day.

Together, these young leaders in Bafatá are demanding equal power, freedom and representation for girls and young women.



Girls took on roles of Chief of Staff and Minister of Education.

10
years of celebrating the
International Day of the Girl



GOL members call the group 'Nha Fala', a Creole saying to express that they have opinions.



GOL participants were empowered through information, resources and community.

Raising Our Voices

The Girls Out Loud (GOL) programme empowers girls and young women with information, resources and a platform to express themselves.

In Guinea-Bissau, gender discrimination impacts the ability of girls and women to make decisions regarding their lives. The GOL programme promotes female leadership through the use of online tools. It helps raise girls' awareness about the effective use of social media, and strengthens their leadership skills.

Through GOL, girls and young women learn about health issues such as menstrual hygiene, and how to advocate for better policies on menstrual health management at the global, national and local levels. They also learn how to plan for their economic independence, with financial education and entrepreneurship, and how to empower other girls to learn and lead.

"GOL brought an incredible change in the lives of the girls. It has been the best space that girls feel safe to share their problems and also seek help from peers."
- Fatumata (19)

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Today's youth are becoming tomorrow's leaders.

Together, we're working to create a more just world.

In the coming year, we will continue to raise awareness of the consequences of early marriage and gender-based violence.

We will promote inclusive education through a community-based model, to help support local leaders, school governance and community members.

We will strengthen existing children's and youth organisations, empowering young people to advocate for change at community and national levels. This will help address issues such as child labour, child marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Message from Plan Staff

"It is important that the impact of our programmes has a positive effect. We are mobilising efforts so that all children can access safe learning, and make choices about their lives. They can lead and participate in the development process of their respective communities, and ultimately have a prosperous life and future."



Carlos de Barros,
Programme Area
Manager, Bafatá

The Plan Effect

Sponsored children are at the centre of everything we do, and they help plan our programmes based on what's important to them. Sponsors' donations are a gateway into a community. This helps build trust and credibility to attract even more funds from new sources. This makes more sustainable programmes possible in sponsorship communities. This powerful synergy is something we call The Plan Effect.

Progress in Numbers

500

women accessed
supplies for
community

4,200

families created
community fields

22,384

youth learned
about their rights

300

girls engaged on
the Girls Out Loud
platform