

Gabu

Guinea-Bissau

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

This year, initiatives empowered young people—especially girls and young women—to learn and lead. Young people trained on sexual and reproductive health and rights, and how to advocate for change in their communities and national policies.

In addition, Girls Out Loud (GOL) is a project that engages young women and girls in a safe, inclusive online environment where they can access information and gain leadership skills. Together with local government and police we have also worked to strengthen skills and knowledge in dealing with cases of crime against children and women.

With education, resources and leadership skills, young people in Gabu are making changes in their communities and working to advocate for their rights.

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



GOL members are making their voices heard.

Impact in Numbers

1,584

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 Harmful 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 Cadidjatu's mother, she was always very energetic and intelligent. Today, reading is her favourite hobby and she wants to be a lawyer in the future.

Like many girls in her village, Cadidjatu was about six years old when she underwent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

A Frightening Experience

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, and after her mother contacted Plan, Cadidjatu was sent to the capital Bissau for medical treatment.

Cadidjatu underwent several medical interventions in the hospital. Plan staff supported her family with follow-up visits, and within a few years, Cadidjatu was able to take part in the events organised by Plan International.

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 7,559 Sponsored Children in Gabu

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Dignity Starts Here

Young women gain leadership skills to advocate for the issues that matter to them—economic, cultural, and civic.

This year, young people learned about their sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as harmful practices and gender discrimination. Young women trained on menstrual hygiene, as well as comprehensive sexual health decision-making. With knowledge and resources, these young people were empowered to make decisions regarding their bodies, relationships and futures.

As a result, youth organisations are better equipped to influence change in national policies, and hold the government accountable to the African Youth Charter and National Youth Policy. Community decision-makers and leaders at local and national levels are developing initiatives to address issues of child protection, including harmful practices like Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).



Participants at the People's National Assembly of Guinea-Bissau.

12,659

girls and women benefit from the initiative.



Round of talks held at one of the project retreats.



Girls from the GOL project.

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.

All children and young people have the right to freely speak out and influence the decisions that shape the world around them.

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



The International Day of the Girl, held at the National People's Assembly, was attended by 600 youth.

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

In the coming year, we will continue to advocate and 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, Gabu

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

300

women planted
seeds for
community

4,200

families created
community fields

4,032

pupils benefited
from a mini
school library

300

girls engaged on
the Girls Out Loud
platform