

Eastern Samar Philippines

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

Plan International has been a proud partner of communities in Eastern Samar since 2001.

Due to its location, Eastern Samar is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, which have only grown in frequency as climate change continues to impact the region. In 2013, Eastern Samar was particularly hard-hit by Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), though typhoons are known to strike in the area four to five times per year.

As part of our work to support community resilience in the event of climate disasters, 27 health workers and 60 teachers have additional training in emergency response. After a training workshop about disaster risks, 50 residents identified local hazards, drafted proposals for solutions and received small grants to implement those changes.

"I've learnt so much about broadcasting, scriptwriting, public speaking and local issues." – Angel (17)



44% of the population here is under 18.

Impact in Numbers

252

students improving their reading skills

30

young people developed radio PSAs

1,422

girls downloaded new period tracker app

Finding My Voice



NAME:

Aisle

AGE:

16 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

A nurse

“The Youth Peer Educators programme helped me discover another side of myself. I never imagined I could do something like this.”



Meet Aisle

Like many girls in Eastern Samar, Aisle is optimistic about achieving her goals and building a strong future.

Aisle always thought of herself as shy and introverted. Though she struggled at times with feeling lonely, she assumed isolation was just her nature – until she joined Plan’s Youth Peer Educators programme.

Building Confidence

When Aisle’s parents left her community to work overseas, she moved in with her aunt. Though the two developed a powerful and close relationship, the home was intensely quiet, and Aisle often found herself feeling isolated. At times, unfamiliar faces or encounters with strangers would overwhelm Aisle, making her cry.

In 2023, Aisle became involved with Plan International’s Youth Peer Educator (YPE) programme, which helps young people – and particularly young women like Aisle – build confidence through practising leadership skills and public speaking. That year’s YPE focussed on an initiative called ‘Learn and Stay Protected.’

I Can Do Anything

Through YPE, Aisle and her fellow volunteers became peer educators about topics like gender-based violence, reproductive rights and child marriage. Becoming a peer educator was transformative for Aisle. ‘I’m good at things I never thought I could do, like public speaking,’ she tells us.

Realising this new skill set helped Aisle feel empowered to branch out. She imagines a future as a nurse, and currently works with young people who have dropped out of school.



Aisle (third from the right) leads a workshop.

We Work With 5,873 Sponsored Children In Eastern Samar

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Knowledge Is Power

1,171 girls and young women in Eastern Samar are already mothers.

373 of those girls and women have more than one child. A critical lack of adequate information about sexual health, reproduction, menstruation and contraception perpetuates early and unplanned pregnancies in this region.

The new Oky app is a period tracker and sexual health education resource developed with the help of 500 girls in the Philippines and now endorsed by the national government. Today, 4,247 community members have interacted with and installed Oky, including 2,663 girls and 161 women. 1,422 boys also downloaded the app, a powerful step toward breaking down taboos and misconceptions about menstruation, sexual health, reproduction and girls' rights.



The Oky period tracking app was developed with the help of 500 girls in the Philippines.

453

students took part in a sexual health symposium



Girls took over local leadership positions for a day, building confidence in speaking up.



Sheila tells us, 'I see myself as an agent of change now.'

Safer Together

We are working with Eastern Samar residents of all ages to uplift safer, stronger communities.

From cyber-safety to emergency response and local child protection committees, we are working hand in hand with students, parents, local leaders and educators to reduce instances of abuse.

One of our main approaches has been through empowering young people with the skills to become advocates, leaders and role models among their peers. To date, 22 girls and women, 6 boys and 1 man delivered a presentation to local policy-makers about children's rights in the region. 27 women participated in first aid trainings, with a special focus on providing psychological care in emergency situations. 35 young people took part in our Champions of Change youth leadership programme, in which participants identify local issues, advocate for solutions and influence other young people about making a change.

"I really enjoyed the community visit: we looked at local issues and identified key challenges."

— Sheila (18) from Eastern Samar

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



With your help, 10,683 sponsored children nationwide have new school supplies.

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

Employment options are limited for young people in Eastern Samar. We will build bridges between government organisations and private institutions to coordinate professional opportunities for young people.

We will also continue to support entrepreneurs as they operate small businesses, connecting them to relevant government support as necessary.

47% of children in this region are not immunised. We will conduct community-wide campaigns about infant health, nutrition and vaccinations.

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

592 people trained in disaster preparedness

12 children received critical care

200 people discussed HIV/AIDS prevention

24,846 people received aid after flood

Message from Plan Staff

"Organising Family Days in the Connect2Protect programme helped me discover my love for facilitating events with families from different communities. Working with Plan has made me see the different realities that children face in different places."



Doreen Faye,
Project Officer,
Eastern Samar