

Muzaffarpur India

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

Plan has been a proud partner of communities in Muzaffarpur, India since 2000. This historically significant city has been referred to as 'the lychee kingdom,' and produces more of these sweet, tart fruits than almost any other region in India.

In this part of the country, almost 41% of girls and women are married before their 18th birthday. Adolescent girls who are married early are at higher risks of dropping out of school, contracting health issues due to early pregnancy and experiencing domestic violence.

This year, 8,830 community members met to break taboos around topics like menstruation and reproductive health. An additional 3,467 teens and their parents met to talk about sexual health.



A group of young girls in Muzaffarpur.

**"Thanks to Plan's continuing education programme, I am currently attending university."
— Mumak (17)**



Impact in Numbers

1,497

new mums learned more about nutrition

94

children returned to school

2,056

students practised emergency preparedness

Knowledge Is Power



NAME:

Nakshatra

AGE:

12 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

An engineer

“School is very important to me. I see how it helps children, especially girls, become independent and reach their goals.”



Meet Nakshatra

Like many girls in Gairsain, Nakshatra is optimistic about achieving her goals and building a strong future.

Since Nakshatra's father died, the student has been living with her mother, aunt and sister. Their economic challenges and some powerful lessons in leadership are pushing Nakshatra to build a brighter future.

Determination for Education

Nakshatra and her sister are breaking a cycle in their family: unlike their aunt and mother, both girls are getting an education. Today, Nakshatra is in Grade 7, and her sister has completed Grade 10.

Most women in Nakshatra's community earn money as maids or as daily wage workers. Today, Nakshatra's family is in debt. Knowing the heavy weight of poverty, Nakshatra dreams of becoming an engineer so that she can support her family and buy them a new house or things like chairs and a bed for her mother. Nakshatra knows that education is a fundamental tool – not only to achieve her own goals, but also for all children, particularly girls.

Learning and Leading

Since 2023, Nakshatra and her sister have been members of Plan International's Children's Forum, a Youth Leadership Programme with a special focus on empowering young women.

As a member of the Children's Forum, Nakshatra is committed to getting children back to school. Until today, with Plan International's support, she helped four girls get back to school, including her older sister.



Nakshatra, her sister and their friends play carrom, an Indian board game.

We Work With 39,025 Sponsored Children In Muzaffarpur

Projects That Support Lasting Change

My Future is Bright

41% of children in Muzaffarpur suffer from malnutrition.

Malnutrition is much more than a food issue. The question of appropriate nutrition connects to poverty, gender inequality, healthcare, access to water and sanitation infrastructure. Today, many children and mothers are undernourished, which can mean stunted growth or dangerous health complications during childbirth and infancy. Limited access to sanitary toilets, clean water and healthcare has led to continued preventable health issues, like diarrhoea, which can also cause severe dehydration.

Last year, we conducted a month-long awareness raising session about nutrition with community members. During World Breastfeeding Week, we provided lactation coaching for pregnant women and new mums. Cooking classes were held for parents, in which caregivers learned how to prepare nutrient-rich meals for their families. Families received donations of seeds to build their own nutritious – and delicious – home gardens.



Girls demonstrating handmade nutritional diets shaped like flowers.

10,572

**community members
practised handwashing**



Girls participating in a "Good touch, bad touch" session.

Safer Together

Around one million children in India are already in the workforce.

Within these contexts, vulnerable young people are at risk of dangerous exploitation, including child marriage and trafficking. It takes a village to break cycles of violence and abuse. The Safety for Girls and Child Protection programme focuses on educating young people about their rights, which often begins with identifying forms of abuse. "Learning about the concepts of good and bad touch, I felt comfortable sharing my experiences of bad touch in a peer group," participant, and Sponsored Child, Sonalika Kumari tells us.

To date, 2,056 community members have taken part in peer groups like the one Sonalika Kumari describes. Here, they engage in safe, supportive spaces to build confidence, learn about their rights as protected by local laws and where to report abuse when it happens.



Sonalika Kumari, 13-year-old, Sponsored Child.

**"After going to a Plan meeting about girls' rights, I now confidently say no loudly, and share what I've learned with my friends."
– Sonalika Kumari (13) from Muzaffarpur**

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Young adolescent girls practicing rope skipping.

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

In this part of the world, nearly three million girls under the age of 18 are married. We will empower local child protection committees to create more robust reporting and protection systems for at-risk youth.

Just 59% of young women in Muzaffarpur use hygienic supplies during their periods, making them vulnerable to potentially dangerous infections. We will facilitate community-level activities about menstrual hygiene, reproductive health and pregnancy.

Nearly 41% of married women in Muzaffarpur have experienced abuse. We will work to break the cycle of abuse through inspiring workshops for girls and young women about life skills, resilience and safety.

Message from Plan Staff

"With your support, we will continue to empower more children by providing education, healthcare and access to clean water. Your contribution has been invaluable in our efforts to protect children's rights in Muzaffarpur."



Sanjiv Kumar,
Programme Area
Manager,
Muzaffarpur

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

families are
growing nutritious
home gardens

60

families received
supplies during
extreme weather

574

students are
practising
leadership skills

339

boys and girls are
now enrolled in
school