

Maharajganj India

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

Plan International has been a proud partner of communities in Maharajganj, India since 1999. This rural region – which stands at the foothills of the Himalayas – is surrounded by forest, and lies near the border of Nepal.

Though close to 100% of children in Maharajganj are enrolled in primary school, just 69% make it to secondary school. While there are a number of contributing factors to this social issue, one major component is girls dropping out of school early due to early marriages: 25% of young women in Maharajganj are married before their 18th birthday.

This year, with your help, 10,500 young people took part in comprehensive and judgement-free sexual health courses, including critical units on girls' rights and gender-based violence.

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



Participants in a gender equality workshop.

Impact in Numbers

2,550

struggling students caught up through tutoring

10,780

children improved their handwashing skills

2,450

young people learned more about menstruation

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 1,541 Sponsored Children In Maharajganj

Projects That Support Lasting Change

My Future Is Bright

Malnutrition is more than just a food issue.

Today, limited access to sanitary toilets, clean water or regular handwashing has led to continued preventable issues in Maharajganj, like diarrhoea, which can cause severe dehydration. As part of our efforts to reduce the rate of illness in our Sponsored communities in Maharajganj, we've partnered with 27 local schools to celebrate World Handwashing Day, reaching a total of 5,940 children.

Today, these schools have official 'Hand Hygiene Corners,' where students can find everything they need to keep their hands clean and stay healthy. Since July 2023, 9 schools now have safe drinking water, meaning that 2,700 children are now at less risk of contracting water-borne illnesses.

For children who do get sick, we supplied 5,000 rehydration solutions to community health facilities, and trained healthcare workers and community members on the early identification and treatment of diarrhoea.



5,940 children celebrated World Handwashing Day.

2,700

children now have clean drinking water at school



More than 1,000 students in Maharajganj caught up in school through remedial tutoring.



Ksushi is one of 1,540 young people in Maharajganj using their brand-new library.

Budding Bookworms

43% of girls and women in Maharajganj cannot read.

In 2022, Plan International conducted a survey of student reading and maths levels in Maharajganj. We found that 9% of Grade 3 students could not recognise numbers 1-9, and 19% of students could not read lowercase letters.

The Inclusive and Quality Education programme offers easily accessible remedial classes in foundational literacy and maths skills. 41 volunteers have been trained as tutors, reaching 1,025 local children.

We also conducted 'Back to School' enrolment drives in 49 communities, in which 3,479 families had an easy way to make sure that their children would be returning to school after the summer holidays. In total, 784 children enrolled in school as a result of these drives. Finally, Maharajganj now has 44 new libraries, in which 1,540 children can easily check out books that they need for school.

"The new library in our village has been a game-changer for girls like me."

– Ksushi (13) from Maharajganj

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



This year, 300 young women celebrated International Girls' Day.

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

We will work with children, parents, educators and healthcare workers to share information about handwashing, accessing clean water and early treatment for sanitation-related illnesses.

Girls in Maharajganj are continuing to drop out of school at alarming rates. We will strengthen our remedial tutoring programmes to address learning gaps and support the continued education of all students.

Using a combination of vocational training and alternative education facilities, we will help provide students with options for accessible, realistic ways to stay in school.

Message from Plan Staff

"Your support has enabled us to improve services, facilitate access to education and healthcare and empower communities. Your contribution has been instrumental in helping us drive positive change and leave a lasting impact on our community."



Shyam Singh,
Programme Area
Manager,
Maharajganj

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

196

youth activists
became peer
educators

6,800

teens discussed
sexual health

1,360

young women
received medical
care

366,350

young people
know more about
their rights