

Karnali

Nepal

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

In November 2023, a 6.4 magnitude earthquake struck Karnali, worsening with an extreme winter and affecting 4,000 families with cold-related illnesses and damaged infrastructure.

Women and girls suffer from inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene, compounded by harmful practices like child marriage and Chhaupadi. In Jumla, 33% of children face early pregnancy and school dropout due to these issues.

To address this, Plan collaborated with families and communities to raise awareness and support gender equality, adding science labs to four schools and declaring three communities as child marriage-free zones.



Young participant in Karnali.

"I raised awareness about harmful practices affecting children and women. I'm proud to tackle these issues in my community." - Sabitiri, 14, Sponsored Child.



Impact in Figures

1,360

parents trained in positive child care

250

young girls trained in self-protection

25

families supported with health insurance

Advocating for Social Change



NAME:

Abisha

AGE:

16 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

**Government Social
Change Leader**

“My art shows that girls should not be confined to cow sheds or child marriage. Our advocacy must persist until no menstruation taboo remains.”



Meet Abisha

Abisha, a 16-year-old from Jumla, Karnali, is in class 10 preparing for her final exams. She enjoys studying, chatting with friends, helping her mother, and singing Deuda folk songs in her free time.

She comes from a small and happy family with four members: her father, mother, brother, and herself. She is glad her parents support her social activism and treat her and her brother equally.

Questioning Traditional Norms

As a curious young woman from a family that openly discusses menstrual health, Abisha questions the Chhaupadi practice, wondering why menstruating girls and women must be isolated, avoid drinking water, and sleep in dark, secluded spaces.

Her curious mind found like-minded friends and supportive facilitators in the Champion of Change class by Plan, providing her with the energy and inspiration to drive change.

Advocating for Gender Equality

Through Plan's Champion of Change initiative, Abisha learnt about child marriage, menstrual discrimination, and gender-based violence.

Inspired, she and her peers performed street dramas and organised rallies with the local government against menstrual discrimination, child marriage, gender-based violence, and child labour. In the Art is Power Programme, she painted a vision of change for Chhaupadi, hoping that joint efforts will transform it into dignified menstrual practices.



Abisha, 16, participating in Art is Power Programme.

There are currently 8,073 Sponsored Children in Karnali

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Nourishing Futures

In Karnali, high poverty rates and insufficient health facilities impact early child development, with 33% of children in Jumla facing premature pregnancy due to child marriage.

To address these issues, Plan collaborates with families, communities, and local governments to promote positive parenting and raise awareness about the importance of child care and nutrition.

Our initiatives have led to 174 parents (148 female, 26 male) learning about effective and gender-sensitive parenting. We trained 205 members of local Child Rights Committees (78 female, 127 male) in child protection and sexual and reproductive health rights. Additionally, support for baby warmers in four health facilities saved six newborns from hypothermia, and food demonstration sessions helped 27 mothers prepare more nutritious meals for their children under five.



Families participating in child care sessions in Karnali.

1,511

parents trained in child nutrition and care



Young children participating in school activities in Karnali.



Debinda, 12-year-old sponsored child in Karnali.

Inclusive Education

Access to quality and inclusive education remains a major challenge, with 770,000 children mostly girls, still out of school. The lack of proper educational resources and student-centred teaching means many early-grade children are still unable to read and write properly.

In collaboration with schools and local government, Plan has made education more student-centred and child-friendly in Karnali. 150 students were provided with learning materials to boost their reading skills. Plan rebuilt 20 classrooms to create better learning environments, and helped 10 schools improve their sanitation facilities for better health and hygiene.

Additionally, 250 girls aged 10 to 18 have joined efforts to promote gender equality and take collective action against child marriage and barriers to girls' education in their communities.

"Since joining Plan's programme, I received important school supplies. I go to school regularly, my parents save money, and I even came second in my class!" - Debinda, 12, from Karnali.

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Young participant in Plan's programmes in Karnali.

We're working together to advocate for a just world.

Child marriage is a major issue in Karnali, with 45% of youth married before 20. Next year, Plan will raise awareness about child marriage through collaboration with religious and community leaders, government officials, and the media.

Karnali province has the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Nepal at 21%. We will support comprehensive sexual education programmes and train health services to provide youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health support. High child marriage rates and Chhaupadi restrict educational access for girls in Karnali. Next year, we will enhance the education system to boost enrolment and retention, focusing on girls.

Message from Plan Staff

"With your support, we and our partners can work with young people, families, communities and governments to advance the rights of girls, youth and women in Nepal. Communities can raise their voices against harmful practices to create a more gender-inclusive and safe society for children, girls and women."



Mina Parajuli,
Regional
Manager, Nepal

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

851

students
participated in
fast-track classes

41

girls and boys
trained as peer
educators

25

young women
trained in
vocational skills

11

schools provided
with sanitation
facilities