

Bougouni

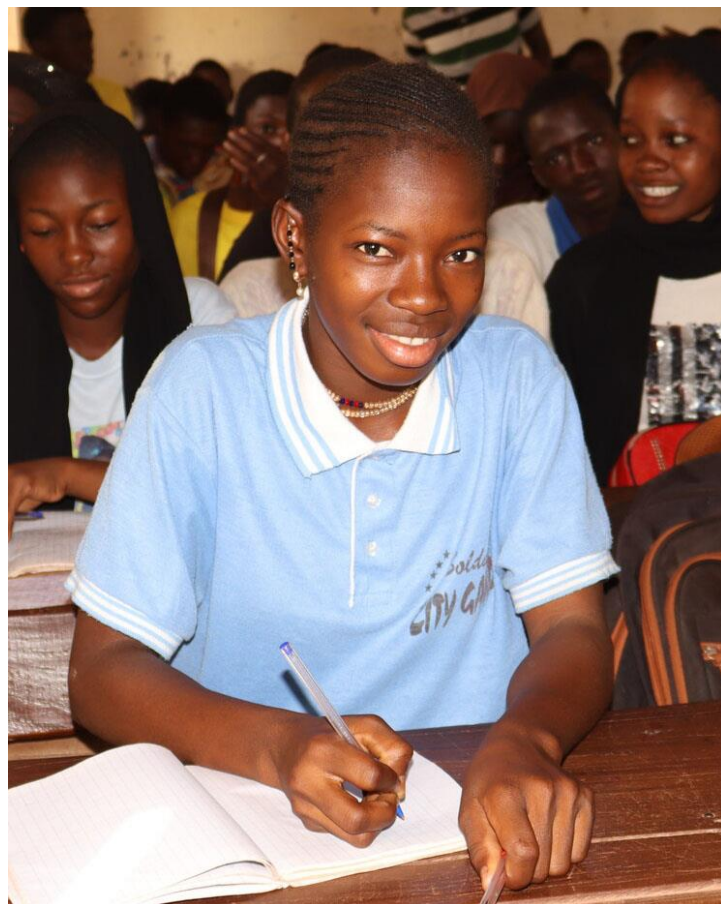
Mali

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

Through the Break Free programme, community leaders and youth are raising awareness of child protection issues. Their advocacy reached thousands of people this year, sharing information and resources on the consequences of child marriage, early pregnancy and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

In addition, Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) are empowering women with tools to invest in their economic futures through income-generating activities. Through these associations, women take leadership roles in their community.

With education, resources and leadership skills, people in Bougouni are making changes in their communities—and creating a brighter future.



VSLAs help many families afford school fees.

"We learned to talk to each other without taboos. Thus, many of us are well-oriented in matters of sexual and reproductive health."
—Assetou (17)



Impact in Numbers

1,155

members of VSLAs trained on management tools

1,050

market gardeners supported with seeds

10

communal councils committed to end child marriage

Investing in the Future



NAME:

Tata

AGE:

29 years old

DREAMS TO BE:

An entrepreneur



“From a former Sponsored Family, I benefited from training. As a result, I became conscious about social problems that threaten our societies.”

Meet Tata

Like many women in Mali, Tata is building a stronger future for herself and her family.

Tata is a former Sponsored Child who now lives with her husband. She enjoys walking and chatting with her friends in her spare time.

Creating Opportunity for Independence

In Tata's community, many girls do not work due to the lack of training and income-generating opportunities. Instead, they marry early and manage the household work. Raising awareness is key to creating community change and challenging restrictive gender norms. As campaigns promoted the importance of educating girls, young women like Tata saw their chance to become financially independent.

Tata enrolled at a vocational school where she studied tailoring for two years. Today these tailoring skills are the foundation of her small business, which helps support her family's needs. Along with other tailors, Tata participated in an awareness programme focused on youth entrepreneurship.

Empowering the Next Generation

And Tata is not the only young woman to invest in her future. Through campaigns carried out by youth, in partnership with Plan International, more girls and women are aware of their rights.

New classrooms are enabling more pupils—especially girls—to attend school, and vocational training at job centres provides the opportunity to learn marketable skills. With successful entrepreneurs like Tata leading by example, youth can plan for a future of economic independence.



Tata with her sewing machine.

We Work With 11,758 Sponsored Children in Bougouni

Projects That Support Lasting Change

Steps for Safer Lives

Community leaders and young people in Bougouni are addressing the dangers of child marriage, early pregnancy and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) through the Break Free programme.

Break Free is a global initiative to improve protection by reducing rates of early pregnancy, keeping girls in school and providing them with skills to succeed. This year, awareness sessions reached thousands of young people and adults in Bougouni.

As a result, more adolescent girls have access to quality technical and vocational education, empowering them to create a path of economic independence. This year, a vocational training centre taught 400 young women marketable skills in sewing, hairdressing, and goat and poultry breeding. Participants, equipped with entrepreneurial and professional abilities, accessed materials to start their income-generating activities.



100 young women were supported with start-up kits for income-generating activities.

7,832
people were reached with
awareness-raising sessions



VSLA members with the savings and credit funds.

Saving for the Future

Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) groups promote financial empowerment and social inclusion for women.

VSLAs are small, self-managed savings groups which meet regularly to save money safely and access loans. Through VSLAs, women are better able to control their resources and invest in income-generating activities. Participating engages women in their community and increases their decision-making power.

This year, the creation of 165 new VSLA groups has enabled 2,926 women in Bougouni to access local sources of financing to launch their project ideas and support themselves. In addition, 1,155 members of the management committees of the new VSLA groups gained more training on establishing VSLAs, their roles and responsibilities and management skills.



Paying for school supplies was a big concern each year for 16-year-old Sitan.

“My mother is a member of the VSLA. This allowed her to start goat breeding and buy my school supplies at the beginning of the school year.”
— Sitan (16)

You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Today's children are tomorrow's leaders.

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

In the coming year, young people will have better pathways to quality employment and entrepreneurship. We will promote youth organisations and train 80 young people on business creation opportunities.

General Assemblies will educate women's groups for the establishment of 165 new Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) groups.

By training 200 peer educators on sexual and reproductive rights, we will support young people to make informed decisions about their futures. Youth clubs will be centres for information on child marriage, early pregnancy and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Message from Plan Staff

"We have been able to establish a fruitful partnership with state structures and Non-Governmental Organisations to carry out projects and programmes in all the communities. These achievements have enabled us to ensure the protection of children, youth and girls, and community resilience."



Oumar Malle,
Programme Area
Manager,
Bougouni

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

40

teachers trained
on child
protection

500

youth learnt
composting
techniques

50

Farmer Field
Schools
established

78

preschools
supplied with
food