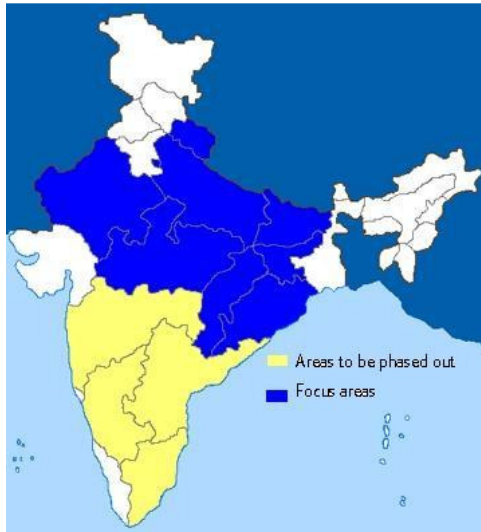


Plan India

Country strategic plan summary for 2005-2010



This document describes how Plan India and its partners will mobilise the different resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued action from 2005 to 2010.



Plan in India

Plan started its operations in India in 1979 and established partnerships with local and community based organisations to implement programmes across several states in India.

Marked by socio cultural and geographical diversities, India is home to 1 billion people of which more than 400 million are children. While much is being written about India's booming economy, it continues to belong to 41% of the poorest people in the world.

The previous country strategic plan period witnessed a major shift in Plan's programme approach which moved from direct benefit to sponsored children to the more comprehensive child centered community development approach. Sponsored children today are seen as representative of their communities.

Children are now active participants in the development processes and Plan's role has evolved to that of a 'facilitator' from being a mere 'provider'. Plan today works 'with' and 'for' children and communities rather than just working for them. Children and community organisations have become more empowered and community governance is strengthened. Partnerships and links with various government and non government organisations have been established in order to ensure achievement of the long term goals.

Significant improvements in the quality of education, especially for girls, have resulted in a decrease in early marriages. Advocacy initiatives have increased awareness on HIV and AIDS, female foeticide, immunisation, child survival and safe motherhood, birth registration,

sanitation, early childhood care and development and rights of children. Community managed micro health insurance has been initiated which is a system of pooling in of resources at the community level to meet their health needs. Vocational training and income generation programs have provided people with better livelihoods options and their economic conditions have improved.

Over the next five years Plan together with its partners, aims to reach out to some of the poorest areas of the country, in the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh (marked in blue on the map). Plan will gradually move out of the Southern states, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamilnadu, where it has been working for many years and which show improved health, education, and overall standard of living.



Our name is Today

"We do not receive education of good quality. The number of teachers is not in proportion to the number of students; the teachers are absent more often than not."

- Children from Uttarkashi

Plan continues to work with the most marginalized communities, which include farmers with small land holdings, landless and daily wage labourers, fishermen, weavers, socially backward ethnic groups and tribes, urban poor and communities in difficult circumstances - street children, children engaged in labour, children with disabilities, children orphaned by AIDS and people affected by natural disaster.

Issues affecting children

Unregistered children: Nearly one tenth of all children in Plan communities do not have birth certificates. Because of the widespread use of alternate traditional documents, the value of birth certificates is not realised.

Gender inequality: Strong preference for a male child often forces pregnant women to abort the female foetus. The girl child and the women are treated as a burden and are given less opportunities on health, education, economic and social security.

Poor health status of children: Women and children are undernourished. Maternal and child deaths remain high due to poor access to health care. Rate of complete immunisation is very low. Government health facilities in remote rural and tribal areas are not adequate.

Few opportunities to get quality education: Children drop out of school due to poor infrastructure, understaffing, poor quality of education and lack of opportunities for higher education. Dropout rate is higher for girls.

Local governance: The management of public facilities and use of government funds to ensure protection of children's rights and adequate social security, shelter, health, education and food needs to be more democratic and transparent.

Degrading environment: Water is a scarce resource in most communities Plan work with. A majority of the rural population does not have sanitation facilities and it is the cause of many child illnesses and deaths.

Disasters put children at high risk: A growing population and increased risk of natural disasters put already vulnerable children and their families at risk of displacement, injuries, disease and trauma.

Household economic and social security: The target group of Plan in India is the population which lives below a dollar per day. Families do not have economic and food security all the year round. Children are forced to work, at times in hazardous occupations.

motherhood through trained traditional birth attendants and health workers. Plan also supports government efforts to ensure complete immunisation, to train communities and care givers on early childcare and management of childhood and adult illnesses like diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria, tuberculosis and conditions of anemia and malnutrition.

All Children should have Quality Education: Plan works closely with communities, children, parents, teachers and local government to improve the quality of education, to make the schools child friendly and to ensure school attendance. Parents are motivated to continue education of their daughters.



Education – the road to empowerment

Plan's programme approach

Child centered programmes with participation of children: Plan believes in child centered community development. Through its programmes, Plan along with its partner organisations strives to empower children, families and communities so that children's rights are recognized and issues affecting them are amongst the wider agenda of adults, civil societies and the government.



Now, my son has an identity - A birth certificate

A glimpse of our programs

Giving Children an Identity: Plan works in partnership with the Indian government, UNICEF and local organisations to ensure all births are registered.

Campaign against Female Feticide: Plan is working with communities, government and other institutions to reduce the number of cases on female feticide and to generate awareness on the issue.

Child Survival and Safe Motherhood: Plan supports programmes to build capacities of communities on safe

"We are perceived as less important than boys, we must learn household chores, we are often expected to discontinue schooling, and we are not invested in because we will go to another family after marriage."

-Girls from Adithi-Plan Muzaffarpur

Strengthening Local governance: Plan works with communities and children groups to strengthen their own capacities to participate in local governance, to improve efficiency in the use of government funds and to improve the availability of and access to basic services in health, education, livelihood and infrastructure.

Water and Sanitation: Plan in collaboration with local organisations promotes environment and water conservation programmes as well as hygiene practices like water purification and hand washing. Government linkages are also encouraged to promote construction of family, community and school toilets.

Child Focused Disaster Response: Plan supports rehabilitation activities for communities affected by natural disasters like the Tsunami focusing at the same time on capacity building of children and families to be prepared to protect themselves from the effects of natural disasters.

Economic and Social Security of families is improved through promotion of savings, micro finance and micro-insurance groups, vocational training, sustainable agriculture and income generation programs.

Children are at the heart of everything we do.