

## Country strategic plan summary for 2005 - 2015

This document describes how Plan Paraguay and its partners will mobilise resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued action from July 2005 to June 2015.

This strategic planning document included a long process of consultation and participation with communities, children, Plan staff, government officials and other non-government organisations to identify the problems and develop a program to guide Plan's work to improve the lives and potential of children.

### About Paraguay.

Paraguay is a landlocked country situated in the South-Eastern part of South America. It is divided into two regions. The eastern region, characterised by its natural resources suitable for agriculture, livestock and forestry activity, has one of the richest water systems in the region (rivers, streams, lakes and lagoons). The western region or Paraguayan Chaco, is characterised by its aridity and very limited water resources, which makes the region an area very unattractive for people to live.

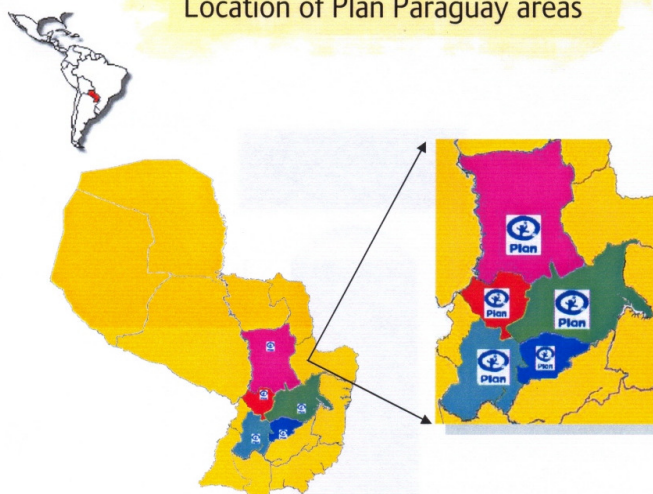
#### About Paraguay:

<b>Surface area:</b>	406,752 square kilometers.
<b>Age distribution:</b>	48% are between 0 and 19 years old.
<b>Languages:</b>	Spanish and Guaraní are both the official languages (the great majority of Paraguayan population is bilingual).
<b>Poverty:</b>	41.3% of Paraguayan population lives under conditions of poverty according to data of the national strategy against poverty 2003.
<b>Education:</b>	Around 7% of the Paraguayan population is illiterate.
<b>Economy:</b>	Agriculture, livestock, industry, construction and trade.
<b>Major exports:</b>	Electricity, soy, meat, maize, cotton, leather, timber, oilseeds, fruit, organic sugar and dairy products.

### Plan in Paraguay

Plan has been working in Paraguay since 1994 and is currently in five departments (Cordillera, Paraguari,

Location of Plan Paraguay areas



Guairá, San Pedro and Caaguazú). Plan has considered maintaining its work in these areas for the next period, with the exception of Cordillera that has showed important progress in the last years. This situation requires mobilising Plan efforts towards areas with higher rates of poverty in other regions of the country.

### Current issues affecting children

The programs, projects and activities during this strategic plan will address these problems:

- ◆ Violence against children within the family, school, and community context, especially for girls, as well as violence against women.
- ◆ Low-income of rural households and their lack of access to quantity and quality foods.
- ◆ Unhealthy household conditions and environment due to low access to basic sanitary services and environmental deterioration.
- ◆ Lack of suitable conditions to promote the organisation of children, adolescents, families and communities to support their development.
- ◆ Lack of opportunities to access basic education and secondary school.
- ◆ Low quality in basic education and low school retention rate.
- ◆ Low access to primary health care and health prevention.
- ◆ Institutional and civil society incapacity to guarantee children's welfare.

## How Plan will address these issues

### Integral Development for Boys, Girls and Youth

This program will centre its efforts on providing better quality services of health and education for boys, girls and youth in the areas where Plan is working through a process of negotiating with local, regional and national authorities with the purpose to improve health and education conditions.



Photo by Adam Hinton

*“Our parents now know more about how to take care of our health because they meet with the people in charge of the health posts”, said Mirian, 12 years old.*

### Participation and organisation

This program focuses in supporting children and youth to get involved at community and social organisations level, with the aim to look for solutions to the problems affecting their own lives and to actively participate in the decision-making processes; to guarantee the exercise of child rights and to achieve goals through collective actions.

### Healthy Environment

This program will generate conditions so that communities and institutions support the development of healthy and safe environments for children. There are four key areas: water and sanitation, hygiene habits, household conditions and environmental protection. Children have the right to a clean environment.



*“The most important learning is the proper use of water, not wasting it, closing the faucet well or fixing it when it is broken; also keeping our houses clean. Clean water is very useful because it keeps us healthy” said Edith, 11 years old.*

### Financial Services and Saving

This program seeks to offer the opportunity to have access to credits and donations to target groups, families, women and young people who, in an emergency situation, need financial support. This emergency situation could be related with housing, feeding, education, clothing, health etc.

### Food Security and Improvement of Productivity

The program will offer the technical assistance and training that will allow families and groups to improve quality and quantity in food production, with the intention to assure alimentary security at family level; as well as to count with economic resources to cover children’s education, health services and medicines, clothing, agriculture tools and production inputs.



Photo by Luis Vera

*“Thanks to our garden, we have also learned to cook and eat better”, Sonia, 14 years old.*

### Institutional Strengthening

This program intends to strengthen the role of Plan locally, as a facilitator and a driving force of social processes that will accompany the development of children and adolescents. Another objective is to strengthen Plan’s image as a civil society organisation that, along with governmental and non governmental organisations, contributes to the well-being of children and adolescents.

### Program approach

This strategic plan and participatory approach is based on child-centred community development, especially for the most vulnerable children. Plan Paraguay understands child-centred community development as a process in which children can exercise their rights, extend their opportunities and develop their capacities by participating in their communities’ development, with their families and in partnership with other social actors. This aims to creating appropriate opportunities for children to reach their full potential.