

Country strategic plan summary for 2002 - 2012

This document describes how Plan Ghana and its partners will mobilize the different resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued action from 2002 – 2012.

About Ghana

Ghana has three vegetation zones – coastal savanna, forest belt and dry savanna north - and has a population of 20 million people. Children and youth form the largest percentage of Ghanaians. Ghana is agrarian with over 65% of the population living in rural areas. The major source of livelihood is agriculture.

Plan Ghana's Program

Plan has been working in Ghana since 1992. It opened its first program area in Bawjiase, central region in 1992. Plan scaled up into Mankessim also in the central region in 1993 and expanded into Aseewa in the Eastern region. In 2002, Plan further expanded its operation to the Upper West region namely, Tumu and Wa. Plan Ghana currently works with families in more than 250 communities throughout Ghana. Over the next years Plan will continue to focus on improving the quality of basic education, livelihood, water and sanitation, agriculture, environmental conservation and raising awareness on child rights and responsibility.

Some issues affecting children in Ghana

1. Poor quality of education, especially in pre-schools and basic schools as a result of:

- a. Apathy on the part of parents and other stakeholders towards children's education – Many parents do not see the education of their children, especially female children as a priority because of poverty.
- b. Low motivation for teachers in the rural areas- Conditions in the rural areas are not attractive so teachers refuse posting to such deprived areas. There is lack of accommodation, teaching aids, no incentives for rural teachers, poor supervision and monitoring, resulting in absenteeism. All these lead to ineffective teaching and learning.
- c. The absence of a conducive and child friendly school environment for effective teaching and learning – Structures are dilapidated, with no protection from the weather, old and broken down furniture and no learning aids.



Children walk over 4km in search of water

2. Another important constraint to children's education are related costs (school supplies, school and examination fees and school uniforms) and most parents cannot afford these costs due to parent's low levels of income. Low-income levels are explained by the rudimentary methods of farming, high post-harvest losses, the limited availability of arable land, the large number of unskilled labour and limited access to credit facilities especially for women and unemployment.

3. Health issues such as:

- a) Inadequate immunisation facilities leading to high mortality rates for children under 5 due to diseases such as tetanus, measles, etc.
- b) High HIV prevalence among children.
- c) Long distances to basic health facilities, access to basic sanitation and unsafe water sources.
- d) Low levels of safe drinking water leading to high incidence of guinea worm disease cases amongst others.
- e) High malnutrition prevalence manifesting in stuntedness, wasting and underweight.

4. Adolescents/children are vulnerable to teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections due to inadequate access to adolescent reproductive health services.

5. Very low and in some areas lack of awareness on child rights issues.

How will Plan Ghana address some of these issues?

To help ensure **quality education for all children**, Plan will focus on:

- Ensuring community participation and ownership of the teaching and learning process.
- Provision of child friendly entrant and infrastructure for effective teaching and learning.
- Improvement of teacher quality and retention in rural areas.
- Provision of scholarships to needy children to enable them achieve their potential.



Promoting immunization for all children

To ensure **food security for all children** through sustainable livelihood Plan will facilitate a program to offer credit to women while giving them training on health related issues. Other areas of focus are:

- Facilitate the provision of water for dry season farming and all year round farming.
- Provide access to high yielding seed varieties and simple improved technologies.
- Increase farmer knowledge of market information.
- Facilitate farmer access to extension services.



We are in school say the children

To help promote **better health for all children**, Plan will focus on:

- Encouraging child survival activities in terms of malaria control, immunization, acute respiratory infections management, diarrhoea, etc...
- Promoting reproductive health activities targeting adolescents and women in providing community based family planning services including programs involving men (Daddies' Clubs).
- Promoting access to health by encouraging the formation of community-managed mutual health systems.
- Facilitating awareness on HIV/AIDS and access to preventive and control services for children and parents.
- Facilitating the provision of water and sanitation facilities such as community-managed water points; household sanitation facilities; community health and hygiene programs.



Women's groups accessing credit

Awareness creation on the rights of the child will seek to:

- Promote child rights awareness programs through media, children's clubs and government where child to child and child to adult training sessions on common issues that affect children in their respective communities will take place.
- Promote a campaign on 'universal birth registration'.
- Support social services for street children, violence against children, child labour, children with disabilities, orphaned and vulnerable children.

Program Approach

Plan will facilitate to engage poor children and their families to join and lead the process of implementing the above mentioned programs to fulfil children's rights as defined in the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child, including rights to: survival, development, protection and participation. To ensure the likelihood of sustaining development efforts, long after Plan phases out of the communities, Plan will work to enhance the grassroots level work of mass organisations such as the community based groups, youth groups, children groups, women groups, etc. Plan is also committed advocating the national government to ensure that policy reforms address the issues currently affecting children in Ghana.