

Country strategic plan summary for 2006-2010

This document describes how Plan Ethiopia 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 2006 -2010.

About Ethiopia

Ethiopia has an area of over 1 million square km. It has a total population of about 75 million and is thereby the second densely populated country in Africa. Agriculture, predominantly subsistence and rain-fed, is the economic base and means of livelihood for 84% of the population. About half of the population earn less than one dollar a day and live in poverty.

Plan Ethiopia's programs

Plan launched its first programs in Ethiopia in 1995. Currently it operates in Addis Ababa (Central), Lalibela (North), Shebedino (South) and Jimma (South-West). There is a plan to expand its programs into Tigray (North) in 2009. The programs are designed based on children's rights to survival, development, protection and participation.

The first round of evaluations of Plan's programs between 2000 and 2005 has indicated remarkable achievements in the intervention areas. For instance, health and sanitary conditions of Plan supported communities have improved. There is an increase of children's participation in development activities within their area. Access to primary education has also doubled in Plan's operational areas.

Studies indicate that academic performances and extra curricular activities of students in Plan Ethiopia supported schools are better than in non-Plan supported schools. In the rural areas, Plan Ethiopia is a pioneer in introducing the provision of pre-schooling to children up to age six. Lastly, the capacities of community members and local government in managing programs and projects have been enhanced.

Issues affecting children in Ethiopia

- There is a chronic food shortage and a high level of malnutrition, especially among children, due to recurrent drought, poor agricultural practices, poor natural resource management and the pressures of a high population.
- Unemployment is high both in urban and rural areas where household heads are not in the position to fulfil children's needs.
- Ethiopia has close to one million AIDS orphans. These children are deprived of guidance, care and support, recreation opportunities, access to nutritious food, education, health care, training on livelihood skills, and legal protection. The number of child-headed households due to HIV and AIDS is also rising.
- Children often get sick and one in every six children dies before its fifth birthday due to respiratory illnesses, diarrhoea, contaminated water, measles, malnutrition, malaria and AIDS. For every 300 pregnancies and deliveries, two mothers die due to complications.
- Children in Ethiopia are vulnerable to female genital mutilation, child marriage, abduction for marriage by a suitor (when the girl does not consent to the match), child trafficking, sexual and emotional abuse. Children are not registered from birth as Ethiopia does not have a national civil registration system and this complicates legal action against the abuses.
- About half of all children in Ethiopia are deprived of their right to education. Especially girls who are not often enrolled in school. Shortages of educational facilities and poorly trained and motivated teachers affect the quality of education.



Children while planting seedlings on the hillside during their vacation (rainy season)

How will Plan Ethiopia address these issues?

To ensure household **food and nutrition security**, Plan Ethiopia will focus on:

- Supporting the improvement and diversification of agricultural production for household food consumption and income among families.
- Raising awareness of the communities on nutritious values of local food stuffs.
- Facilitating food aid in response to emergencies.
- Promoting marketable skill trainings, saving and credit schemes to improve household incomes.

To protect and prevent women and children from the impact of **HIV and AIDS**, Plan Ethiopia will focus on:

- Increasing access to the prevention, care and support services for orphans and vulnerable children, people living with HIV and AIDS and their families.
- Increasing access for the prevention of parent-to-child-transmission of HIV and AIDS and voluntary counselling and testing services for young people.

To improve the **health** status of women and children, Plan Ethiopia focuses on:

- Improving health facilities within the communities.
- Improving safe motherhood services.
- Promoting youth/adolescent reproductive health services.
- Improving the access to and use of clean water and sanitation facilities.



A child fetching potable water from a protected source

To ensure the **right to protection and participation**, Plan Ethiopia will focus on:

- Awareness raising, lobbying and advocacy on child rights and specifically on birth registration, harmful traditional practices, child trafficking and children's participation.



A child rights workshop in a primary school

- Strengthening child rights institutions such as that of the child legal protection centre (to defend child right violations), children's clubs or children forums.
- Promote sponsorship communication and strengthening relationship between sponsors and children, families and the community.

To ensure the right to **quality universal learning**, Plan Ethiopia will focus on:

- Promoting home and community managed early childhood care and development services.
- Promoting community involvement in managing the on going educational programs.
- Providing technical and professional support for secondary education, including girls' education.
- Promoting literacy program for adults.

Program approach

Plan Ethiopia works with a child centred community development approach. This way of working aims to increase the capacity and opportunity of children to work together with others to address the structural causes and consequences of poverty in their community, their district, their region and ultimately in their country. A child centred community development approach involves listening to what children have to say about their needs and concerns and what is preventing them from achieving their rights. It also means encouraging and enabling children to take an active and – where possible – leading role in finding solutions to the problems they face. Plan Ethiopia therefore works with communities, local associations, governmental and non governmental organisations and national and international institutions to promote greater awareness and understanding of children's rights.