

# "See Our World"

"An essential part of Plan's work is to help create spaces for children and young people to discuss together the issues which affect their lives, then ensure adults respect their views so that children may be involved in community decision-making. This communication has been prepared with and by children directly and is intended to give a general sense of the kinds of issues children discuss and how they work together."

## The Girl Child Education For A Brighter Future

Dear Sponsors,

We are a group of about eight girls and seven boys and members of the Plan Kati Children's Club in a village called Sanambélé. We would like to share with you, our experience in promoting the enrolment of more girls in school.

### Why Most Of Us Are Not In School

"Illiteracy is like living in the dark", or "If you educate a boy you educate an individual, but if you educate a girl you educate a family or a nation". These proverbs have been with us for a long time. However, we do not take education seriously especially that of the girl child. This has been a source of worry to our Children's Club. Most of us especially the girls do not have the opportunity to go to school.

Listen to **Amiwatia a 16-year-old student....** "Sometimes our mothers are very busy. They are the first to get up in the morning and the last to go to bed at night. They work on the farms and do all the work at home. This is why they insist we help them so that they can have some rest. In a way, it helps us to be better prepared for our future as wives and mothers. That is why many of us do not go to school or can not concentrate with our studies".



We help our mothers.

**17-year-old Tenimba C. says,.....** "I did not go to school because there was none in our village. The nearest school was 6 km away and my parents felt that I could not walk to school and back every day with just a little food to eat".

We need to add that some teenage girls are forced to leave school to get married. Some of our teachers harass us sexually. Verbal, physical violence and humiliation force some of us to stop schooling.

## The Role Of Illiteracy

We have already stated that illiteracy is like living in the dark. As illiterates;



A Children's Club Meeting.

- \* We cannot read nor write our own letters.
- \* We cannot read simple instructions on how to take medicine.
- \* We cannot get a well-paid job. Most employers want educated employees.
- \* We are given names and laughed at.
- \* Some of us move to the towns to work as housemaids.

Due to ignorance as most of us have not had any sex education, we are exposed to sex and infected with sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

**Mai S. is 13 years and in the 7th Grade. She says.....**  
“I am an only daughter. Due to housework I am always late to school. I do not have time to study. At the end of our first term examinations I was the 42nd out of 48 children with an average of 8/20. Thanks to my school's Children's Club I have caught up with my poor performance last term”.

## The Future Is Bright

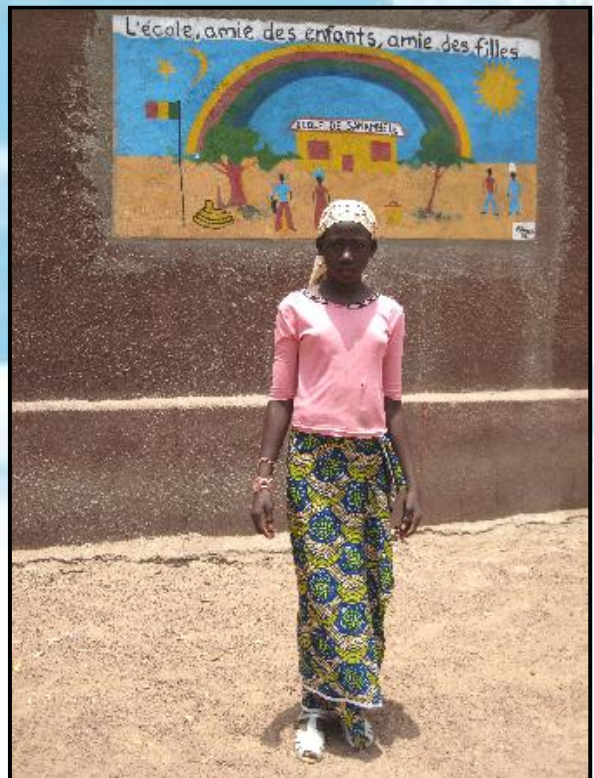
School management committees with representations from students, school authorities, parents, association of student mothers and our children clubs have been formed to promote children's education especially that of girls.

Plan has put up several well-equipped classroom blocks. Access to education is now closer to us. An Early Childhood Development Centre has been built to promote pre-school education.

In partnership with the Student Mother Association our children's club play an active role in sensitising our parents and peers. We regularly inform these 'mothers' about children who perform poorly in school and those that have dropped out. With the support of our teachers we organise remedial classes for girls whose performances are very poor and help those who for some reason cannot continue with their schooling.

We want to appeal to our parents, school authorities and partners to encourage girl child education. Our sisters should take their studies seriously because as the saying goes “knowledge is the only private property an individual can possess”.

“This document was reviewed and edited by Plan Staff.”



13-year-old Mai.