



# The effectiveness of Plan's child-centred community development

Plan program review (2003 to 2006)



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# About Plan

Founded 70 years ago, Plan is one of the largest child-centred community development organisations in the world. We work in 66 countries on projects and initiatives that address the causes of poverty and its consequences for children's lives.

This means working in partnership with children, their families and communities, and at national and international levels, to bring about sustainable change.

At a local level, we work directly with all groups in a community to identify the priority issues affecting children. We actively encourage children to analyse their own situations and raise their awareness of the fundamental rights to which they are entitled. We then support the community to build the skills and access the resources it needs to implement projects that will lead to positive change in children's lives.

We campaign for children to achieve their rights and work at national and international levels to influence policy decisions that will lead to improved resources for children and their communities. In this way, we create and maximise all opportunities for children to speak out on their own behalf and participate in decision-making that affects their own development.

This program review has been produced by Dr Julia Betts, an independent consultant. It aims to provide a comprehensive overview of Plan's work and to locate that work within the current framework of international development. In addition it identifies areas of good practice and reports on Plan's effectiveness and the challenges ahead.

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# List of acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals (UN)
ARO	Asia Regional Office	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
AusAid	Australian Agency for International Development	NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
CCCD	Child-centred community development	RESA	Region of East and South Africa
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	ROA	Region of Americas
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)	SIP	School improvement program
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness ECHO	UBR	Universal birth registration
ECCD	Early childhood care and development	UN	United Nations
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Aid department	UNDP	United Nations Development Program
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
FINNIDA	Department for International Development Co-operation (Finland)	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
ILO	International Labour Organization	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
IMCI	Integrated management of childhood illnesses	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
		WARO	West Africa Regional Office
		WHO	World Health Organization

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# Foreword

## Plan: linking the local and the global

This global effectiveness review is a first for Plan and I am proud to present it. Plan is a constantly evolving organisation, so given the size and scale of our activities, it is vital that we periodically take time to pause and look closely at our programs and review all areas of our ethos, strategy, and programs – both in the way we perform internally as an organisation and in the way we function externally in the changing climate of the international development arena.

The review marks a watershed, as never before have we taken stock of our work in such a comprehensive way – looking in detail at our methodology and programs worldwide, and asking whether we deliver maximum impact and effectiveness for all our stakeholders.

Using expert analysis and country examples, within the framework of international tools and conventions, it objectively highlights our organisational strengths and weaknesses, identifies lessons learned and good practices to date, pinpoints challenges for the future, highlights areas where work could be improved or scaled up, and shows us where greater shared learning of good practice would benefit our global activities.

First, it shows that Plan is a key player in pushing for the realisation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – Plan’s work is underpinned by the Convention which plays a vital role in encouraging and shaping a change in attitude towards children and their parents, as both claimants and bearers of rights.

The review also shows that Plan makes a significant contribution to fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) – all Plan’s country programs are directed towards enabling children, their families, and their communities to meet their basic needs in education, health, water and sanitation, livelihood, and protection.

Finally, it shows how Plan is capitalising on its global network, which links communities at district, national, and global level. It demonstrates the value of Plan’s evolving child-centred community development (CCCD) approach – our vehicle for maximising the outcomes and impacts of our work for the children, families, and communities that we serve.

However, we must continue to push to be better and more effective. A number of recent evaluations and studies have shown that not all our programs meet the high standards to which we aspire. And despite confirming that overall, Plan is heading in the right direction and continues to provide a great deal of effective work, this global effectiveness review also points to some areas for improvement. In particular, the need for increased attention to measuring our effectiveness, seeking the highest quality technical advice, ensuring value for money and a more focused approach to some areas and activities.

Plan has a number of initiatives currently underway to address some of these weaknesses but we recognise that there is still more to do. We need to ensure that we are as accountable to the children and families we work with as we are to our donors, and if we are to attain the standards we set for our work, some changes are needed in the way we plan, monitor, evaluate, and implement our programs.

As a participatory and consultative organisation, Plan’s management has expressed its determination and commitment to tackle the findings of this review, and to reflect on ways to put the recommendations into practice to further our aims of combating child poverty, exclusion and marginalisation.

The global effectiveness program review offers us sound and solid guidance for future program development, and Plan will not shy away from the organisational and institutional changes needed to support this development. A process that will enable us to work towards realising our vision, mission and strategic goals of championing, defending and promoting children’s needs and rights, and enabling all children to fulfil their potential.



Tom Miller  
Chief Executive Officer



# Executive summary

## New era of global development: shifts and challenges

Plan is an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) focused on addressing the causes and mitigating the consequences of child poverty. Its vision is of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignities.

Plan's work, across 46 country programs, is directed towards the realisation of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and the eight Millennium Development Goals, as well as national poverty reduction strategies. In particular, Plan programs operate under the four rights pillars of the CRC: survival, protection, development and participation.

Plan commissioned a review to assess its work from 2000 to 2006, with the remit to:

- locate Plan's work within the current framework of development co-operation
- provide a comprehensive overview of Plan's work in 46 program countries
- assess Plan's performance and responsiveness in combating issues relating to child poverty, exclusion and marginalisation in these different contexts from 2003 to 2006
- provide a useful source of reference for program countries and regulatory organisations
- identify lessons learned and good practice to date
- specify the challenges ahead and report on Plan's intended response to these

The review finds that, overall, Plan has responded well to the shifts and challenges of the new era of global development. In-country operations appear to be synergising activity effectively with the broader international strategic context of the Millennium Development Goals, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and poverty reduction strategies. The following key strengths were identified in 2006.

The size and scale of Plan's resources – a turnover of US\$540 million in 2006 – render it a **global player** in the development community, enabling the organisation to act as a powerful agent of change. Its growing capabilities in **global advocacy** have been demonstrated by the impacts and successes of the recent universal birth registration (UBR) campaign.

Respect and trust built up through **working in partnership** over seven decades, at levels from the village to the global, has created a powerful series of networks and alliances and has demonstrably resulted in conditions of influence on a wide range of partners.

Plan's **multi-level capability** is a key comparative advantage, facilitating change in spheres from the community to the national, regional and international. Long experience at the grassroots has created an extensive body of knowledge which, supported by an increasing capability to scale up, is leading to a strong international portfolio of programs and activity.

Plan's **child-centred community development** approach has demonstrated its worth, generating more sustainable, pro-poor policy responses from partners and better outcomes and impacts for programs. It has provided a common framework for global activity, and enabled work to be directed in a more focused way at the four pillars of the CRC. An emphasis on empowerment and governance is now emerging.

**Flexibility of response:** Plan's decentralised structure, combined with its strong partnership ethos, enable it to tailor its programs effectively to country need, and to respond swiftly when changing conditions require it. This flexibility is also enhancing growing work in disaster response and rehabilitation.

In terms of the **four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, this review finds that work in all four areas is progressing relatively well, with survival and development being the most conceptually and operationally advanced. Participation remains an emerging agenda in some countries.



**Pillar 1: Survival** covers work in health, nutrition, water and sanitation. Plan programs are operating effectively, based on sound knowledge of local conditions, likely shocks and trends, and an integrated approach to program design. Health, in particular, is an area of strength. Future needs include greater technical capacity within our country programs; greater capability for scaling up; increased shared learning of good practice; stronger intersections with the disaster preparedness, response and recovery agendas; greater representation in some countries at national level; and enhanced linkages with national poverty reduction instruments.



**Pillar 2: Development** covers early childhood care and development (ECCD), and formal and non-formal education. Programs are progressing well, having originated from a more traditional model of service delivery. There is increased focus on institutional strengthening of both governmental and civil society systems, and on working alongside government and international agencies, particularly in contexts where strong national-level partnerships already exist. Key challenges for the future include scaling up examples of good practice, generating a coordinated response among donors, NGOs and government; creating greater technical capacity, building advocacy capacity; and building on examples of good practice in areas such as ECCD.



**Pillar 3: Protection** is a rapidly growing area for Plan, with child protection at the strategic level increasingly being framed as a rights issue and being mainstreamed throughout the organisation. More countries are adopting a child-centred community development approach to child protection, but there remains scope to link activities more explicitly with national poverty reduction strategies, for increased scaling up, and for greater sharing of learning and experience.



**Pillar 4: Participation** is reflected in cross-cutting program areas such as social inclusion, gender, strengthening civil society, empowerment and governance. This is in general an emerging area, having been facilitated by the advent of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and CCCD, though clear pockets of good practice exist. Capacity-building for civil society is a strength, as is Plan's work in child media, and experience and practice are moving along the continuum from participation towards concepts of empowerment and governance. There is at times room for a more progressive approach; gender thinking, for example, needs to shift to a more rights-based model.

In terms of work reaching across these four pillars, Plan's work in AIDS is progressing well, with a framework for innovation now developed. This will form a springboard for scaling up activity in the future, based on lessons learned to date. Plan does, however, need to liaise more closely with bilateral donors in country, to develop technical expertise and stronger links at national level and to develop a funding strategy to maximise impact. Work on household economic security is emerging as a potential strength, building on experience and lessons learned in micro-finance. This area of work is likely to gather momentum in the near future.

Two thematic areas that have emerged as potential constraints or weaknesses are environmental sustainability and adult literacy issues. These are not traditional areas of technical expertise within Plan, yet both, if not addressed at an early stage of program design, can undermine long-term sustainability. Other emerging themes and challenges include disaster response, preparedness and risk reduction, urbanisation and decentralisation, and children in extremely difficult circumstances. Work is developing in all of these areas, and strategies and policies are emerging.

The following are areas for improvement, as identified by this review.

**Technical capacity:** the review identified several areas in which the process of rapid transformation has left Plan with gaps in our capacity. Greater research expertise would enable a more explicitly evidence-based approach to development and stronger

advocacy capacity within country programs would assist engagement in national and international policy dialogue. Some sector-specific capacity gaps have also emerged; survival issues, for example, and some cross-cutting areas of expertise, such as gender, need greater technical support.

**Greater shared learning:** this would facilitate the development of technical capacity and enable transformation and change to take place on a sound basis of experience and evidence. It would also enhance progress in emerging areas such as children in especially difficult circumstances and disaster risk reduction.

**Scaling up:** while strong capability and momentum clearly exist among country programs, taking programs to scale is still, in some locations, presenting challenges. Capacity gaps exist and increased sharing of experience and best practice is essential, as is engagement with national-level partnerships, policies and aid instruments.

**Becoming a rights-based organisation:** child-centred community development has done much to increase the momentum of mainstreaming rights-based approaches across Plan. However, there is still progress to be made, in particular in relation to operationalising CCCD models across sector program work.

**Partnerships:** these are both a core strength and an opportunity for development for Plan. While many partnerships appear to be both strong and effective, care is needed in some contexts to prevent Plan replacing the state. Partners must be viewed not as welfare organisations or subcontractors but as rights-based structures, sharing Plan's concerns and values, and entitled to long-term strategic partnering.

In terms of institutional change, a strengthened monitoring, evaluation and lesson-learning function will undoubtedly enhance Plan's development effectiveness in the years to come, including the development of a global effectiveness framework. An updated global program framework will capture more effectively the evolution to CCCD, and reflect more accurately new activities such as advocacy, child protection and governance work.

In conclusion, Plan as an organisation has made, and is making, strong progress towards becoming organisationally and programmatically 'fit for purpose' in the new era of global development. Challenges, gaps and opportunities remain but, overall, its status in 2006 means that Plan can move forward with confidence in its abilities, pride in its human resources and a clear sense of achievements in its programs so far.



# Introduction

## Setting the scene

### Addressing child poverty now, averting the problems of tomorrow

More than two billion inhabitants – one in every three on the planet – are under 18 years of age. Almost 90 per cent of them live in the developing world. The majority are poor.

As globalisation takes hold, growing economic prosperity in much of the world can be seen. Yet hundreds of millions of children are still growing up in absolute poverty, deprived of their basic rights to survive, develop, be protected and participate in the world around them. Child poverty, even today, remains largely silent and hidden from policy-makers.

Plan's experience from across the world over seven decades shows clearly that children and communities can be key agents of change. It is only by addressing the issues facing their generation now that offers a chance to anticipate – and try to avert – the problems of tomorrow.

This program review reports on Plan's experiences between the years 2003 and 2006, with a particular focus on 2005/06 country programs.<sup>1</sup> It asks whether Plan's activities so far are delivering maximum impact and effectiveness for the countries, communities, children and families with whom it works. It explores how far the organisation has travelled, where it stands now, and whether changes in direction are needed for the future.

### What Plan stands for: locally, nationally and internationally

Plan is a global organisation focused on addressing the causes, and mitigating the consequences of, child poverty. Working through a network of 16 national organisations and four regional offices, it directed its resources at 46 countries in 2006.<sup>2</sup> Some of these are middle-income countries; most are low income. Plan had a global turnover of \$540 million in 2006, and this is continuing to rise.



Young children at a Plan early childhood care for development (ECCD) project in Timor-Leste

Child sponsorship is the basic foundation of Plan, with almost 1.39 million children enrolled. Plan believes that sponsorship is a potential vehicle to both promote and practise children's rights. Historically, Plan's sponsorship approach concentrated on the individual child; however, more recently, the focus has shifted and moved towards building a global community aware of, involved in and united about the needs and rights of children. Sponsorship offers people around the world a very real connection to the human face of global poverty and the challenges of development.

Seventy-two per cent of expenditure in 2006 was funded through sponsorship; but an increasing amount of Plan's development funds is raised through framework agreements and grants from major bilateral donors. Private sector partnerships also form part of Plan's funding strategy.<sup>3</sup> In addition, local fundraising in middle-income countries is being piloted, mainly in the Americas: as well as raising funds, this approach also helps to increase civil society capacity and networks.

1 Some data in this review also refer to earlier periods, such as evaluations of country programs from 2000 to 2005. However, the main focus of this review is on the period 2003 onwards.

2 In addition to the 46 program countries, Plan opened new offices in Laos, Liberia and Rwanda in the second half of 2006 and a new national office in Switzerland. See Appendix 4.

3 In 2006, Plan had private sector partnerships with Accor, NetHope, Nokia, Microsoft and Renault amongst others.

**Plan's vision** is of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignities.

**Plan's mission** is to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives by:

- enabling deprived children, their families and their communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefit from their societies
- building relationships to increase understanding and unity among people of different countries and cultures
- promoting the rights and interests of the world's children

This vision and mission set out Plan's strategic goals to champion children's needs and rights.

One of Plan's major comparative advantages is its multi-level approach. At the local level, Plan has spent more than 70 years building up experience and partnerships around the world. At national level, Plan has become a valued partner in supporting governments to develop and implement poverty reduction strategies. At the international level, Plan's work is designed to support global development mechanisms such as the Millennium Development Goals and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its size and scale allow it to take a powerful role in global advocacy.

As an organisation, Plan's decentralised structure enables approaches which are responsive and dynamic, reflective and receptive to change. Plan does not advocate a 'one size fits all' approach; its approach is about flexible solutions, firmly based on informed response to local needs and opportunities.

In summary, Plan's decades of experience, combined with its vast global reach, make it a key player in the development arena. It is currently well positioned to mobilise international civil society and the global community to defend and promote the rights of children.

## Accountability to all stakeholders

Children are now more vulnerable in more ways than ever before, and new needs are rapidly emerging. These needs, combined with increasing knowledge of the underlying causes and effects of poverty, require fresh strategic thinking and novel solutions.

From 2003 to 2006, Plan contributed over \$1.3 billion to improving the situation of millions of children, families and communities across the globe.

### Investment in programs and partnerships

Plan has embarked on a 10-year fight against child poverty across 12 Asian countries. It has pledged to invest \$1 billion on children in Asia, \$250 million of which will be used to support children's education. Overall, nearly \$130 million was invested in the region in 2006.

In Africa, Plan invested nearly \$200 million in 2006 in programs and partnerships to improve the lives of children in 20 countries, and is currently opening new programs in Mozambique, Rwanda and Liberia.

In the Americas, Plan invested over \$110 million in 2005/06. It also developed local fundraising initiatives in Brazil and Colombia.

Given the size and scale of these resources, it is crucial – for Plan itself, for its partners, for the international development community and, most importantly, for the children, families and communities with whom Plan works – that they are used as effectively and efficiently as possible, to generate maximum sustainable development.

Plan takes accountability at every level, seriously. As part of both upward accountability, to donors and sponsors, and downward accountability, to the children and communities supported, it emphasises the need to learn from experience. This program review forms an important part of that process.

## Purpose and methodology of this global program effectiveness review

The program review aims to:

- **locate Plan's work within the current framework of international development**
- **provide a comprehensive overview of Plan's work in 46 program countries**
- **assess Plan's performance and responsiveness in combating issues of child poverty, exclusion and marginalisation in these different contexts from 2003 to 2006**
- **identify lessons learned and good practice to date**
- **specify the challenges ahead and report on Plan's intended response to these**

It is directed at Plan staff and partners, nationally, internationally and locally, whether governmental or non-governmental, and the wider development community in every country of the world where Plan plays a role. It will also be a useful source of reference for program countries and regulatory organisations.

This program review is based on an extensive review of internal and external documentation across all the countries in which Plan works, including international

strategy and research documents, country strategy plans, country program outlines, country program progress reports, regional strategies, thematic reports, as well as program and project evaluations. It forms part of Plan's global evaluation process during 2006, focusing on outputs, outcomes, impacts and lessons learned. It has been written independently of Plan, but in close collaboration with Plan staff. Its recommendations are fully accepted by Plan management and will form the basis for planning future work.

The program review has the following structure; Part 1 (pages 9–16) locates Plan's work in the current policy climate of development, and identifies Plan's role and comparative advantage in the changing context of international development. Part 2 (pages 17–53) analyses experience of practice up to 2006, including achievements, progress and lessons learned. Part 3 (pages 55–60) focuses on emerging themes and challenges which have been identified in this global review of Plan's progress so far. Part 4 (pages 61–70) summarises the learning generated through this review, assessing Plan's strengths and weaknesses, and areas for development in the changing era of global development.



Young people participating in a Plan project to eradicate Chagas disease in Bolivia





Pre-school classroom construction by local communities supported by Plan Kenya to create a healthy and friendly learning environment

# Part 1

## Locating Plan in a global context

This section of the program review locates Plan's work in the changing climate of international development. It describes why Plan's focus on child poverty is central to the international development agenda, and explains Plan's core methodology and approach for its work through its child-centred community development approach. It then outlines how Plan's work links to international tools and instruments such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Millennium Development Goals and country-specific poverty reduction strategies.

## Children: bearing the brunt of poverty

Children form a disproportionate part of the population in developing countries, over 50 per cent in some national contexts. In any given population, children are disproportionately poor. Women and girls bear much of the brunt of the poverty, facing heavy farm labour in rural areas and the need to collect fuel and water. In urban areas, children are often employed in harsh working conditions, unprotected despite child labour laws or social welfare systems. In the context of both rural and urban poverty, children are perceived as economic assets; many of them, especially girls, do not attend school because their contribution to household income forms a critical part of the survival of their family.<sup>4</sup>

Poverty alleviation strategies and policies generally focus on household income. But child poverty is often hidden within the household, since children traditionally have the least influence on how household income is spent or distributed, and available resources are often not directed at the needs of children.

Policy-makers and planners tend to view children as dependants, and parents often see them as a form of social security for old age in countries where no alternative exists. But children are active social, political and economic actors in their own right, contributing to the household economy from a young age and playing a key role in shaping tomorrow's society.

To make significant inroads into international development targets, therefore, poverty alleviation strategies need a strong child focus. If Plan invests holistically in the human capital of children, it is investing in cost-effective, efficient and sustainable ways to combat poverty. The 2006 World Development Report, 'Equity and Development', opens with a focus on children, pointing out that children's differences in life chances vary widely according to where they are born, their location of birth, their race, gender and social groups. The 'lottery of birth' leads to "wasted human potential and thus to missed development opportunities".<sup>5</sup>

## The changing context of international development

**"Equity is complementary to the pursuit of long-term prosperity. Greater equity is doubly good for poverty reduction. It tends to favour sustained overall development, and it delivers increased opportunities to the poorest groups in a society."**

François Bourguignon,  
Senior Vice President and Chief Economist,  
The World Bank<sup>6</sup>

In recent years, the climate of international development has changed. International agencies and bodies are placing an increased emphasis on collaborative efforts to meet international targets, on accountability for pro-poor service delivery, on effectiveness and transparency, and on greater use of participatory development processes. The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness has committed countries and donor agencies to the five principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results, and mutual accountability.

Key drivers of change include:

- **the emergence of a common international framework for action/development through the Millennium Development Goals and the Paris Declaration**
- **the rise of the human rights agenda**
- **a strong focus on good governance and accountability**
- **the trend towards decentralisation**

As part of this process of global harmonisation, large international non-governmental organisations such as Plan are finding that their work is becoming increasingly aligned to donor and government development policies through instruments such as framework agreements and national poverty reduction strategies. Plan as an organisation has responded proactively to the challenges of the new era, scaling up its operations from the micro to the meso and macro levels, and by adjusting its approach to address the opportunities and challenges that these changes and drivers represent.

Increased engagement with international agencies presents both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities include greater scope to engage with national governments, to participate at the table of international dialogue, and to scale up and strengthen operations. Challenges include addressing the global while staying focused on the local; the need to

4 Sachs, J. 2005. *Investing in development: a practical plan to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Overview.* UN Millennium Development Project

5 World Bank. 2005. *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development.* New York: World Bank pp2

6 *ibid.* and *The World Bank.* 2005. [Online]. [Accessed 8 May 2007]. Available from World Wide Web: <http://go.worldbank.org/UWYLB43C0>

develop new and different capabilities and expertise; and the need to develop ever more effective ways to retain our own values and integrity while carrying out grant-funded activities.

International development strategies, methodologies and tools have had to evolve and change to respond to these global shifts. Plan is no exception to this evolution and, since 2003, has based all its programs on its child-centred community development approach, explained opposite.

### **Bilateral and multilateral partners**

Some of Plan's major bilateral and multilateral partners include United Nations agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, ILO and UNOCHA, the World Bank, the European Union, bilateral development agencies such as CIDA, DFID, the Dutch Ministry for Development Cooperation, USAID, FINNIDA, SIDA, AusAid and NORAD, as well as international and national non-governmental organisations.

On major advocacy campaigns, Plan spearheads its own issues such as universal birth registration. Plan also works collaboratively with agencies at national, regional and international levels.

Working with partners such as UNICEF and local community-based organisations in the very successful UBR campaign (see page 18) resulted in over five million children having a birth certificate – the proof of identity needed to access so many rights and services.

Plan has also worked with Save the Children and ECPAT to prevent commercial and sexual exploitation of children and is a key player in global coalitions such as the Global Movement for Children and the Global Campaign for Education. In these coalitions, Plan provides strategic advice and hands-on operational input, contributing to successful initiatives such as Lesson for Life, Send My Friend to School and My Friend Needs a Teacher which reached tens of millions of children in the North and South.

In addition there are many other partnerships at program country level. Some of these are highlighted in this program review.

## **Plan's development approach: child-centred community development**

While most countries are signatories to the main international conventions, ratification does not, in many countries, translate into meaningful action. This may be due to centralised structures that do not allow for participation, to top down, non-consultative policy-making, to civic inertia, to lack of voice or to mistrust in civic participation mechanisms. It may be due to national policy mechanisms failing to recognise the multi-dimensional nature of poverty, and its consequent impacts on child development. Whatever the cause, this results in right-holders being unable to claim their rights from relevant duty-bearers, or to challenge the duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations effectively.

It is here that Plan's child-centred community development (CCCD) approach enters the arena. Traditionally, Plan has worked in five key areas – growing up healthy, learning, habitat, livelihood and building relationships. However, as Plan's programs evolve, Plan is also increasingly getting involved in new areas such as participation, child protection and advocacy. To increase the impact of its programs and to facilitate the synergy among the different program areas in which Plan operates, and applying its core principles,<sup>7</sup> Plan has developed its CCCD approach, building on the experience of seven decades of learning. Plan considers child-centred community development an effective approach in facilitating the realisation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and therefore formally adopted it in 2003 as its overarching approach to development.

Key elements of the CCCD approach are participation, child-centred programming, supporting groups and organisations, and partnership, networking and relationship-building. Child-centred community development allows Plan to work in partnership at a range of levels, in an integrated manner, from the local community to national and international levels.

Child-centred community development combines the extensive knowledge and experience gained from long-standing work on poverty reduction on the ground with a recognition of the global shifts and changes discussed in the previous section. It was developed because of the growing recognition that resource transfer to alleviate child poverty is not empowering or sustainable if it only addresses the

7 Plan's principles – child-centeredness, institutional learning, integration, gender equity, environmental sustainability, empowerment, sustainability and co-operation – set out how activities are designed and implemented, the process and approach.

symptoms and not the causes of child poverty. CCCD has meant Plan gradually shifting away from traditional needs-based service delivery to a rights-based model in which participatory, child-centred community development is complemented with initiatives aimed at duty-bearers at district and national levels. It has meant recognising and identifying webs of exclusion and discrimination that violate human rights and perpetuate cycles of poverty. In order to address violations of rights Plan's approach demands that it works with those most marginalised and excluded, many of whom are children.

An important component of the CCCD approach, therefore, is its capability to influence policy and transform institutional structures to become pro-poor, more participatory and child-friendly. This requires a long-term commitment with well-articulated strategies for scaling up initiatives at community and district levels.

The success and sustainability of CCCD in practice depends on the effective allocation of scarce public resources, the ability of communities and public agencies to govern themselves well, to communicate easily and to access the information they need to make informed decisions. It is here that Plan's child-centred community development, as an approach, engages with the rights and good governance agenda.

Within Plan, it is clear that the application of child-centred community development as an overarching approach is at different stages in different contexts. In Bangladesh and India, for example, where rights-based approaches are well established and civil society relatively well developed, CCCD is embedded across all Plan programs. In countries where rights approaches are new or unfamiliar, and civil society is only at an emergent stage, country offices take a more incremental approach, focusing on building understanding and awareness before starting implementation.

Since adopting child-centred community development, however, Plan's understanding of the concept itself, alongside rights-based approaches and their implications for its different domains<sup>8</sup>, has further evolved. Some of its elements, therefore, such as claiming rights and the principles of 'non-discrimination' and 'in the best interest of the child', are gradually becoming more clearly articulated, as is evident in recent strategic documents such as country

strategic plans and Plan's AIDS framework, discussed in Section 2.3. This increased understanding goes hand in hand with, and will inform, a re-alignment of Plan's policy and program architecture to achieve a better 'fit' with CCCD.

## Linking Plan's work with international instruments and mechanisms

Child-centred community development provides the vehicle for maximising the effectiveness of Plan's development programs globally. Strategically, two key international instruments guide Plan's work, underpinned by the child-centred community development approach. These are the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the internationally-agreed Millennium Development Goals.

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

In recent years, the international development community has moved towards viewing development as a process of realising people's rights rather than the distribution of welfare. The need for equity and social justice as a necessary prerequisite to poverty reduction, security and stability is now being recognised more widely.<sup>9</sup> Many international covenants and legal instruments have emerged which commit their signatories to realising human rights. They include the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children, the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the Indigenous and Tribal People's Convention.

In particular, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has played a vital role in encouraging and shaping a change in attitude towards children and their parents, as both bearers and claimants of rights. The Convention unites the familiar view of the child as a vulnerable being, requiring protection and assistance, with the concept that she or he is a thinking, acting individual, with views and opinions, able to participate in decision-making processes and to act as a partner in the process of social change. All of the 46 countries to which Plan directs its resources are signatories to it and report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on their progress towards realising the Convention.

<sup>8</sup> Plan's five domains – its key work areas – are growing up healthy, learning, habitat, livelihood and building relationships.

<sup>9</sup> World Bank. 2005. *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development*. New York: World Bank.





Family sharing food in Guinea Bissau

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out 54 articles on child rights under four ‘pillars’ of rights.

- **Survival** – through the provision of adequate food, shelter, clean water and primary health care.
- **Development** – in a safe environment, through the provision of formal education, constructive play and advanced health care.
- **Protection** – from abuse, neglect and exploitation, including the right to special protection in times of war.
- **Participation** – the opportunity for the child to participate in social, economic, cultural, religious and political life, free from discrimination.

It will be apparent here how child-centred community development intersects conceptually and operationally with the CRC. As a child-focused, and an increasingly rights-focused organisation, Plan has aligned its work in recent years to address the Convention’s mandate. Its work now facilitates the realisation of the Convention, and related regional and national conventions, in several ways.

- **Strategic planning** – Plan increasingly maps its work around the four pillars of rights set out in the Convention.
- **Implementation** – the Convention sets standards in health care, education and legal, civil and social services. Plan works to support national governments to achieve these.

- **Monitoring and accountability** – as signatories to the Convention, governments have committed themselves to protecting and ensuring children’s rights. Plan forms part of this accountability process, helping to hold the duty-bearers to account under the Convention’s obligations and/or their relevant country laws.
- **Integration** – the CRC states that rights are inalienable, indivisible and require an integrated response. Based on its long experience of community needs, Plan devises programs which take holistic approaches to realising rights.

Regional instruments to support the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have been developed, such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child noted earlier. In addition, some countries have ratified the Convention and subsequently adopted it into their own legal codes and statutes – one example is the Brazilian Statute of Children and Adolescents. As well as engaging at program level with the individual pillars of rights, Plan also works at the legislative level nationally to support the efforts of countries to implement the Convention through its child-centred community development approach, and as part of the international coalition for compliance. It is playing a major role in assisting several countries to produce ‘alternative’ or ‘shadow’ reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on progress towards realising the Convention.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For example Ethiopia, Pakistan, Cameroon, Dominican Republic, the Philippines, Mali.



Ensuring access to health care – Plan Sudan works together with local health committees and the health services department

## The Millennium Development Goals

All Plan's country programs are directed towards enabling children, their families and their communities to meet their basic needs in education, health, water and sanitation, livelihood and protection. Programs are developed in alignment, where possible, with the efforts of national governments towards achieving the eight internationally-agreed Millennium Development Goals.<sup>11</sup> In recent years, efforts in areas such as HIV and AIDS, and the growing focus on, for example, embedding gender approaches into domains, means that Plan's work addresses, with a greater or lesser degree of emphasis, each one of the MDGs.

Child-centred community development underpins and facilitates this process through its components and

emphases described above. In particular, through its rights-based approach, it stresses greater engagement with national dialogue in the context of government strategies and policies on pro-poor service delivery.

Although Plan's work addresses all eight of the Millennium Development Goal targets, as described in Part 2, some particular areas of demonstrated strength from 2003 to 2006 are set out here.

**Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger** – the UN reported in 2006<sup>12</sup> that the proportion of people living in extreme poverty globally is falling, except in sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Asia where numbers are rising. Children represent a vast proportion of these people. Plan's work in food security, livelihood development and micro-finance directly contributes to achieving this goal.

**Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education** – the UN reported in 2006 that this target is attainable, but that almost 80 per cent of the world's out-of-school children live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. These are key target areas for Plan's education programs, which have supported the enrolment of hundreds of thousands of children.

**Goal 4: Reduce child mortality** – 10.5 million children died before their fifth birthday in 2004, mostly from preventable causes. Plan's work in health, nutrition, and early childhood care and development is aimed at reducing these numbers. The UN also reports that addressing disparities in maternal education and household poverty is the greatest challenge in achieving the child mortality target by 2015. Plan's education and poverty reduction programs are designed to take an integrated approach, which will generate sustainable change for the medium and long term.

**Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability** – while access to improved sources of drinking water is on the increase, there is a clear disparity among countries and between urban and rural populations. In the meantime, many people in the developing world still lack access to basic sanitation facilities. Plan continues to make significant investments in water and sanitation in order to improve this situation.

<sup>11</sup> The Millennium Development Goals are to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and empower women; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV and AIDS and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; develop a global partnership for development.

<sup>12</sup> United Nations. 2006. **The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006**. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

In recent years, however, Plan's activities and priorities have extended beyond the breadth of the Millennium Development Goals. For example, Goal 2 focuses solely on primary school enrolment. Yet Plan believes that enrolment should be accompanied by a quality education, with tangible improvements in achievement and completion rates, as its internationally-adopted school improvement program proposes.

The MDGs represent a normative framework for development, and provide a common language and unifying context within which global development activity can take place. They therefore act as a strategic driver for Plan's development activity. However, the Goals represent internationally agreed targets, rather than obligations; they do not commit states to fulfil obligations as duty-bearers.<sup>16</sup> It is Plan's focus on realising the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, through child-centred community development, that addresses this wider international development remit.

To support its work towards the Millennium Development Goals and the realisation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Plan has established regional strategic plans for Africa and Asia, which set out the parameters for action in the coming years. Plan's regional strategy for the Americas will be developed in 2007. Thematic documents help set strategic frameworks for planning – such as 'Creating a climate for innovation – a framework for Plan's response to HIV and AIDS' as well as reports on urbanisation and children in the poorest and most difficult situations.

**Table 1: Plan expenditures (in US\$000) by domain and region and their relationship to Millennium Development Goals (2003 to 2006)<sup>13</sup>**

Plan domain	Related MDG	The Americas	Asia	Eastern and Southern Africa	West Africa	Total <sup>14</sup>
Growing up healthy	1, 4, 5, 6	\$45,395	\$45,227	\$89,693	\$52,114	\$232,427
Learning	2, 3	\$80,732	\$81,398	\$55,662	\$74,687	\$292,479
Habitat	7	\$85,592	\$69,949	\$50,702	\$53,619	\$259,862
Livelihood	1, 8	\$14,016	\$32,686	\$23,167	\$12,867	\$82,736

**Table 2: Selected outputs<sup>15</sup> in 2006**

Growing up healthy		
Training of professional health workers	Subtotal: number of professional health workers trained	15,687
Training of community health workers and traditional birth attendants	Subtotal: number of community workers trained	82,321
Training of professional and community health workers and traditional birth attendants	Total number of health workers trained	<b>98,008</b>
Health management training	Total number of people trained	<b>9,325</b>
Health centre construction or rehabilitation	Total number of centres	<b>351</b>
Learning		
Training of professional teachers	Subtotal: number of teachers trained	68,533
Training of teaching volunteers	Subtotal: number of volunteers trained	10,311
Training of professional teachers and education volunteers	Total number of teachers and volunteers trained	<b>78,844</b>
School management training	Total number of people trained	<b>11,591</b>
School/centre construction or rehabilitation	Total number of schools/centres	<b>7,305</b>
Water and sanitation		
Water points constructed or upgraded	Total number of water points	<b>14,313</b>
Communities connected to water system	Total number of communities connected	<b>3,904</b>
Latrines constructed or upgraded	Total number of latrines	<b>59,241</b>
Livelihood		
Agricultural training of extension workers	Subtotal: number of extension workers trained	4,904
Agricultural training of farmers	Subtotal: number of farmers trained	176,050
Agricultural training of extension workers and farmers	Total number of extension workers and farmers trained	<b>180,954</b>
Vocational and business training	Total number of people trained	<b>90,229</b>

<sup>13</sup> This table does not cover all Plan domains and therefore does not capture all program expenditure. Figures taken from Plan's Worldwide Combined Financial Statements.

<sup>14</sup> The figures in the columns for the two Africa regions and the total include expenditure for the Hope for African Children Initiative of a total of \$12,123,000 on Growing up healthy, and \$2,725,000 on Learning.

<sup>15</sup> Outputs are defined as the immediate products generated by Plan's activities.

<sup>16</sup> **Linking MDGs and human rights: theoretical and practical implications.** UNDP, Oslo, 2006

## Linking Plan's work with poverty reduction strategies

At national level, Plan engages actively with governments on their poverty reduction strategy instruments. These are often represented by poverty reduction strategy papers, or equivalents.

Poverty reduction strategy papers outline a national programme for poverty reduction, which forms the foundation for lending programmes with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. Poverty reduction strategy papers were developed as a mechanism to ensure that debt relief and international loans are used for country-level poverty reduction. They are, in effect, the strategy document for meeting the MDGs at national level.

Given that children form a major or even dominant sector of the population in many countries in which Plan works, the potential impacts of poverty reduction strategy papers on children and poverty cannot be understated. Policy priorities and frameworks, together with delivery and accountability mechanisms will all impact directly or indirectly on the services children will receive from the state, the realisation of their rights as citizens under international commitments and, therefore, on their future development.

The role of international non-governmental organisations such as Plan within poverty reduction strategy papers can be complex.<sup>17</sup> While international NGOs are often crucial partners in enabling governments to deliver their commitments under the relevant poverty reduction strategy or poverty reduction strategy paper, they are also part of the accountability process, reporting on how effectively governments are reshaping their policies or service delivery in relation to pro-poor principles. The role of child-centred international NGOs is part of this tension, supporting state duty-bearers, whether locally or nationally, to realise their commitments to children through the relevant poverty reduction strategy or poverty reduction strategy paper and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as lobbying and advocating for child rights. The challenge is to reconcile the potentially conflicting aspects of this relationship.

Plan takes the view that it is comfortable to align its programs to these mechanisms where it can be confident that its programs both enhance the capacity of duty-bearers to realise their commitments under the CRC and, at the same time, support claimants (often children) to claim their rights. Examples of country programs where Plan interventions are targeted directly at sectors of the relevant poverty reduction strategy paper include Tanzania. Here, Plan is targeting its work with the government on education, to maximise the country's likelihood of attaining its poverty reduction strategy paper targets within a CRC framework.

Plan offices are increasingly seizing the opportunities offered by decentralisation to support governments to achieve their poverty reduction strategy paper targets, as set out in the UN paper 'Localizing the MDGs'.<sup>18</sup> Poverty reduction strategy papers often focus on national action plans but do not elaborate on how local governments should implement pro-poor service delivery to achieve their goals. By offering technical expertise and building partnerships at a local level, Plan programs in the Americas in particular are increasingly harnessing these opportunities for a localised child-rights approach to poverty reduction.

### Summary

Plan's work is increasingly being directed at and by international tools and mechanisms such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as national instruments such as poverty reduction strategy papers. Its child-centred community development approach is a core part of its approaches to development effectiveness, aiming to maximise the outcomes and impacts of its work for the children, families and communities that it serves.

The next section of this program review assesses the extent to which Plan programs have delivered towards its objectives and intentions, and what lessons can be learned from experience.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, *Ontrac newsletter, issue no. 34. Capacity Building and the State*. Published September 2006. Oxford: INTRAC.  
<sup>18</sup> United Nations. 2006. *Localizing the Millennium Development Goals, A guide for Municipalities and Local Partners*. Nairobi: United Nations Habitat.



Birth registration in Cambodia

## Part 2

### Learning from experience

This section of the program review evaluates Plan's recent impact, effectiveness and lessons learned in the period 2003 to 2006. It starts with the first, and most fundamental, right of the child – that of birth registration. The right to be registered as a citizen, and therefore to be able to claim rights and entitlements from the state, underscores all other rights of the child across the four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Plan undertook universal birth registration as its first global advocacy campaign, learning significantly from this experience.

After exploring the lessons learned from the universal birth registration campaign in Section 2.1, Section 2.2 (pages 23–46) of the review uses the lens of the four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to review Plan's work across its country programs, namely survival, development, protection and participation. This section describes programs in the different countries in which Plan operates, identifies the contribution of CCCD where relevant and sifts out lessons learned.

Section 2.3 (pages 47–51) addresses the theme of the indivisibility of rights, recognising that rights cannot be treated in isolation and asking to what extent Plan's programs demonstrate an integrated approach. Within this, it considers Plan's work on HIV and AIDS, and household economic security. And finally, and perhaps most importantly, Section 2.4 (pages 52–53) asks to what extent Plan's national and global programs are underpinned by the principle of sustainability for the medium and longer term.

## 2.1 Universal birth registration: Plan and global advocacy

Global advocacy is a relatively new area for Plan. Its campaign for universal birth registration was launched at the United Nations on 22 February 2005 and, after 18 months, was up and running in all countries in which Plan works.

A child-centred community development approach to advocacy examines why duty-bearers (including parents, families, local and national institutions) are failing to allow individuals and groups to exercise their rights, and to facilitate the changes necessary to allow rights and entitlements to be claimed. Plan's UBR campaign is based on this approach. It recognises that advocacy work, if taken up simply 'on behalf of' poor or excluded groups, rather than in partnership with them, becomes just another 'service delivery' activity, whereas governance changes are often needed.

Universal birth registration is a cross-cutting global theme that continues to be a focus of Plan's programs. It is critical in today's new era of global development, being core to realising both the CRC and the MDGs. It has both demonstrated Plan's capability in addressing global challenges, and increased the organisation's confidence in being able to rise to them. It has acted as a learning experience at country and international levels, showing Plan its strengths and capabilities as well as areas in need of capacity development.

### Why universal birth registration?

The global campaign takes as its starting point Article 7 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that "the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents".

Plan's rationale for a focus on universal birth registration is that a birth certificate provides a child with permanent proof of identity in an unstable and turbulent world. Without a birth certificate, required in most countries for an identity card or passport, children may have difficulty demonstrating their entitlement to basic human rights such as health care and education,



Baby in China receives birth registration certificate

and to assistance at times of crisis. Their risk of exclusion, exploitation and abuse is greatly increased, particularly if they are separated from their parents. Birth registration offers recognition as a person before the law, and helps safeguard rights such as inheritance, land title and voting. Without it, the wider enjoyment of a child's fundamental rights and freedoms as set out in the CRC may be severely compromised.

Universal birth registration offers, in effect, a platform for all Plan's development activity. It is a key part of child survival, protection, participation and development. It is an essential tool of government planning to provide the demographic base on which effective development strategies can be built.

UNICEF estimates that around 50 million newborn children a year are not registered at birth.<sup>19</sup> As a direct result of Plan's efforts since 2005, at least five million children have been registered, 10 countries have made changes to their birth registration policies or legislation and a further 21 are working towards change. In 11 countries, the fee for parents to register their child's birth has been eliminated or reduced.<sup>20</sup>

A number of UN mandates – including Article 44 (1) of the General Assembly Resolution: A World Fit for Children, plus articles of the relevant Optional Protocols<sup>21</sup> – emphasise that registration is a critical first step in ensuring a child's rights to survival, development and access to quality services. But for national governments, faced with severe resource constraints and difficulties of structure and outreach, enabling the implementation of universal birth registration can be a challenge. In Uganda, for example, birth registration is a legal requirement, enshrined in the constitution – but in 2000, only 4 per cent of births were actually registered.<sup>22</sup>

### **Plan's campaign: using a mixed advocacy strategy**

Plan's global advocacy campaign targets the governments of those countries where UBR has yet to be achieved. It calls on state parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to recognise their responsibilities under Article 7 of the Convention and to create the conditions that enable other duty-bearers such as civil registrars and parents to fulfil their responsibility of registering the child at birth. The campaign builds on Plan's strengths: a global network, spanning developed and developing countries; a multi-level approach, which offers the ability to scale

up and replicate successful initiatives; its reach from remote communities to global gatherings; and CCCD, which enables the organisation to develop its advocacy activity based on sound knowledge of grassroots realities. As such, the global campaign is combining upward pressure from within country programs for achieving universal birth registration, with downward pressure through donor governments and regional and international institutions including the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations.

Plan has adopted a 'mixed' advocacy strategy, which is tailored to the country context. In China, for example, birth registration at ground level is at a relatively early stage of understanding and implementation.

Plan is therefore adopting an incremental, step-by-step approach to awareness-raising and generating understanding. In Cambodia, however, Plan has been able to work closely with the government and the Asian Development Bank on a country-wide mobile campaign and is undertaking a wide range of high profile activities to achieve 100 per cent coverage. Nine million Cambodians, including adults who were unregistered at birth, have achieved registration.

### **Upward pressure**

Plan's country offices and program units are exerting upward pressure for increasing rates of birth registration on local and national government.

In Bolivia, Plan has worked closely with the National Electoral Court and UNICEF to successfully advocate for a gratuity clause to make birth registration free for children up to 12 years; a three-year amnesty period to register children aged 12 to 18; and a change in legislation to allow single mothers to register their children with the family name of a relative. In Peru, working in partnership with the Ministry for Women and Social Development, Plan has worked to secure the suspension of fees for birth certificates in more than 400 municipalities. In addition, the law has been modified so that either the father or mother – not necessarily both – can register a child.

In Africa, achievements include Kenya, where Plan is one of the key organisations involved in reviewing the current Birth and Death Registration Act, while in Malawi Plan is part of the review team for the draft National Registration Bill. In West Africa, Plan has worked alongside UNICEF and UNFPA to organise a regional workshop on universal birth registration. In Mali, this led directly to a national action plan being

19 Unicef. [Online]. [Accessed 14 May 2007]. Available from World Wide Web: [http://www.unicef.org/protection/index\\_birthregistration.html](http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_birthregistration.html)

20 Plan. 2006. **Count me in: the global campaign for birth registration, Interim campaign report 2005-6**. Woking: Plan Ltd.

21 United Nations. 2002 **Article 8(2) of the UN Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography** and United Nations. 2002. **Article 3(d) of the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict**. Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights.

22 Plan (2004) **Uganda Country Strategy Paper 2004–2009**. (Unpublished).

drawn up, jointly designed by the Ministry of Interior, Child Welfare, Education and Health, UNICEF and Plan, which aims to reach 100 per cent registration within 10 years. Similarly, in Togo, a major success was the reduction of the cost for late registrations based on negotiations between Plan and the government.

In some countries, such as Ethiopia, where there is currently no official birth registration system, influencing legislation and policy is a real challenge. In collaboration with the Africa Child Policy Forum and UNICEF, Plan Ethiopia is expending considerable efforts to help push through a draft proclamation to establish a registrar office – an action that is currently pending with parliament.

Turning to Asia, the government in Vietnam is to issue a new decree on registration procedures, including birth registration, to simplify the process, while in Bangladesh a new birth registration law has been approved and is in the process of being implemented. In the Philippines, significant gains have included the passage of a law that allows children born out of wedlock to use their father's name; authorisation of the city/municipal registrar civil or the consul general to correct a clerical or typographical error in a civil register entry; and the suspension of birth registration fees and penalties for late registration.

### **Downward pressure**

At the same time, downward pressure to increase political will for birth registration is being exerted on national governments. Plan's international headquarters is working through UN mechanisms such as the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Human Rights Council and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure that birth registration is raised as an issue with reporting state parties. Meanwhile, Plan's European liaison office is working through institutions such as the European Parliament aiming for birth registration to be recognised in relevant policy papers and raised during political dialogues (for instance, with India).

Plan has sponsored eight regional conferences jointly with UNICEF since 1999 to share good practices and generate and enhance regional commitment to UBR: four in Asia, three in East and Southern Africa, and one in West and Central Africa. In Asia, the latest conference, in March 2006, generated a commitment to form a regional civil registrars' network, and 2007 will see the first conference in Latin America.

Plan's regional offices are also working to increase political will for birth registration among the governments of countries within their respective regions. Plan in the Americas was successful in lobbying the Regional Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to include birth registration in the sub-regional workshops on the follow-up to the recommendations of the Committee of the Rights of the Child. Among Plan's national organisations, Plan Belgium has successfully lobbied the Belgian Ministry of Development Cooperation to amend the law on international cooperation so that birth registration within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has been adopted as the fourth cross-cutting theme of Belgian development cooperation.

### **Resource commitments**

Political will for birth registration must also be matched with sufficient resources in human and financial terms. Plan Pakistan has successfully advocated for the allocation of an appropriate yearly budget on birth registration while the European liaison office was able to influence the European Commission to provide \$1 million to a joint Plan-UNICEF birth registration project in Bangladesh and to ensure that birth registration was identified as a key area for government policy planning. In addition, following the Plan/UNICEF regional conference on birth registration in Mombasa, Kenya in 2005, the Zimbabwean government allocated increased funds to birth registration.



## Innovation, scaling up and replication

Based on its child-centred community development approach, Plan country offices have adopted flexible and innovative approaches to universal birth registration. In Ghana, for example, community health volunteers have been trained to record the information required for birth registration, as have health workers and traditional birth attendants in Benin. Plan Programa Colombia has integrated birth registration work with vaccination campaigns. Plan Burkina Faso has facilitated the distribution of magazines in schools that deal with the subject of birth registration, while Plan Timor-Leste is in discussions

with the government to ensure that children are registered when they enrol in school. Plan Paraguay is talking to the national government about facilitating civil registrars to work in schools throughout the academic year.

The partnership between the Ministry of Interior, Plan and the Asia Development Bank in Cambodia is a potentially replicable intervention that other countries could adopt. Its focus on ensuring government ownership, plus its use of innovative approaches such as mobile registration units, have resulted in almost 80 per cent of the population now being registered.

## Lessons learned and issues for the future

The success of the UBR campaign has demonstrated, to Plan itself as well as others, its strengths and capabilities in global advocacy. Plan's multi-level capability, its strong partnerships around the world, its global reach and its child-centred community development approach, have shown its potential as a major advocacy player.

It has, however, also acted as a learning experience, demonstrating areas where the organisation needs to build capacity. Greater research expertise is needed to support an evidence-based approach to advocacy, and to develop policies and strategies based on cutting-edge knowledge. Stronger advocacy capacity is also required, so that Plan can engage in policy dialogue to maximum impact. The benefits of partnerships built up over years of effort need to be reaped, and new partnerships created to generate 'joined up' advocacy, especially at European level. The organisation needs to consider ways to support governments in making the transition from policy development to sustainable policy implementation; such as devising delivery mechanisms that fit with national budgets and resources, are decentralised to local level, enable outreach to marginalised communities, and are embedded into existing structures and mechanisms. There are also some

specific learning issues to address, such as incentives for registration and sensitivities about nationality issues, for example for migrants and refugees.

Objectives for 2007 include lobbying the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to evaluate every UN Convention on the Rights of the Child signatory's progress towards universal birth registration, and for the Committee to ask signatory governments to make improvements which will impact on all children. The World Bank, having acknowledged the impact of birth registration on poverty planning on many occasions, will be lobbied to proactively encourage birth registration in its negotiations with country governments. Plan intends to build stronger international alliances with UNICEF on universal birth registration, and to explore the possibility of an international universal birth registration conference with UNICEF.

With the knowledge and experience built up over the past few years, Plan can be confident that its work on UBR will continue to gain pace, and that its role in global advocacy will continue to develop. Plan's increasing capacity and confidence in this area will underpin its next global advocacy campaign on the theme of safer school





Children at a Plan-supported school for girls in Sudan

## 2.2 The four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Plan's country, regional and international programs address children's issues at all levels – from the village to the continent. Its work is directed at realising the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

A useful framework to analyse Plan's program impact and effectiveness is the CRC's four pillars of rights – survival, development, protection and participation – considered as different facets of a framework of indivisible rights. The sustainability of Plan's programs under these pillars of rights is underpinned by its growing work in household economic security, which is discussed in Section 2.3.

Plan's country program strategies are increasingly being expressed in terms of rights. India, Guatemala and Indonesia, for example, all express their country goals in terms of 'Rights to ...', using the four pillars of the Convention as their basis. At a regional level, country strategies and program plans in Asia clearly articulate a rights-based approach to their work, with those in the Americas voicing a strong focus on participation methodologies. The two Africa regions report the most challenges in approaching child-

centred community development strategically, particularly in the areas of advocacy, policy implementation and effective participation, but contain some powerful examples of good practice in rights-based approaches.

Underlying each pillar of rights, and cutting across them all, is the function and role of institutional strengthening, particularly of governmental mechanisms. This is a core concern, important in all the varied contexts in which Plan works; from rural, remote areas to urban slums. While the role of civil society, communities and parents is critical, a strengthened state, complying with its responsibility as the guarantor and duty-bearer of children's rights at local and national levels, is the key to realising the CRC. Plan's country programs, as will become clear, are making significant progress towards this aim.



# Pillar 1: Right to survival

Survival is a child's most basic right of all. It is core to all the main international conventions, declarations, charters and policies; the UN Declaration of Human Rights; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Millennium Development Goals. It is global and universal, and it is still, after decades of global development activity, a pressing, contentious and serious issue in areas across the world.

Survival as a theme contains many elements: health, nutrition and food security, water and sanitation, and shelter. Survival rights require integrated responses, and the flexibility for rapid changes in interventions at any given time. Plan's country programs accordingly take different approaches to survival, depending on the changing environment in which they work.

Across Plan's country programs, there are many descriptions and evaluations of successful interventions in child survival. Much of this appears due to Plan's long history of action and intervention at community level. Sound experience and knowledge of local conditions, mixed with the increasing technical expertise that Plan is developing, form a strong basis for action. Combined with the approach and principles of CCCD, plus an increased emphasis on scaling up, Plan programs are addressing survival rights comprehensively and well. The following sections provide some examples of results, lessons learned and good practice.

## Health

Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the right of the child to "the enjoyment of highest attainable standard for health". Plan has a strong track record of health intervention. Its USAID-supported child survival program, for example, which operates in 13 countries in all four Plan regions, has been awarded 21 grants from USAID in Washington since 1985.

Many Plan countries now support government attempts to implement the integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) approach, to improve child health from birth to five years of age. Integrated management of childhood illnesses targets the five principal killer diseases of the 0 to 5 age group, namely malaria, diarrhoea, acute respiratory diseases, malnutrition and measles. The gender dimension of IMCI programs is critical, given the key role of mothers in child health.



External evaluations have consistently shown that integrated management of childhood illnesses demonstrates an effective and sustainable approach to health program design, increasing community engagement and ownership. Independent evaluations of health sector interventions using IMCI models have noted reductions in diarrhoeal diseases; reduction in measles and pneumonia outbreaks; increased immunisation coverage;<sup>23</sup> increases in the coverage of maternal health services; increases in the use of clean home delivery kits; increases in childbirth attendance by skilled birth attendants; and increases in exclusive breastfeeding.<sup>24</sup> Integrated management of childhood illnesses offers a mechanism for Plan to scale up its interventions, given that such approaches have been successful in both prevention (improving awareness of child health issues) and response (by increasing children's access to and utilisation of medical services offered by community-based health clinics).<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> In Niger, for example, immunisation rates in Plan-attended communities have reached 100 per cent. Plan Niger Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

<sup>24</sup> Independent evaluations of C-IMCI programs across Asia, Africa and the Americas. See, for example, Kone, et al, Final evaluation of Plan Mali CPOs 2001/05, which cites reductions of 13 per cent in the percentage of children under three years old who have weight-for-age scores more than two standard deviations from the international norm; increases of 18 per cent in the percentage of children in Pak-targeted communities who are fully immunised; increases of seven per cent in mothers who have completed tetanus toxoid vaccination at their last pregnancy; increases of seven per cent in mothers who take children under three years suffering from ARI symptoms for appropriate treatment.

<sup>25</sup> See, for example, Plan Malawi: mid-term evaluation of mother and child health program, 2006; External evaluation of Plan Egypt country program, Environmental Quality International, 2006.

The impact and effectiveness of these programs depends in part on successfully engaging with and lobbying of national governments. This is an area in which Plan has growing expertise, helped by longstanding relationships and presence in-country. In Zimbabwe, for example, Plan has facilitated the formation of a working group on the household and community component of the integrated management of childhood illness approach, made up of non-governmental organisations, UNICEF and the World Health Organization, and which is chaired by the Zimbabwe Ministry of Health. In Cameroon, Plan has worked with the government, WHO and UNICEF to introduce a successful primary health care strategy in 12 health districts within three provinces. It aims to scale up these integrated management of childhood illnesses approaches to the national health service delivery system, in order to reduce infant and child mortality. Similarly, in Bolivia, Plan's interventions have integrated shelter and health issues, by working with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development on a program to prevent and reduce Chagas disease, a major health issue for Bolivia. The program has proved so successful that it has formed the basis of government policy on Chagas, and will be used to improve 36,000 homes in the worst affected rural areas over five years.

Plan's country programs demonstrate an increased emphasis on institutional strengthening, both with partner governments and with NGOs. In Nicaragua, Plan's work alongside the Ministry of Health is focusing on improving institutional capacities in order to improve service quality and coverage. Plan Benin has concentrated on transferring responsibilities for health provision to government bodies, and health projects are now given a community rather than an individual focus. For instance, where Plan used to pay the mobile vaccination team to visit 'Plan' communities, Plan's financial support for vaccination is now allocated at national level, to strengthen the Ministry of Health's vaccination program.

In many countries, health interventions are being linked with the growing decentralisation agenda. Plan Peru is working alongside the Ministry of Health, and local and international non-governmental organisations to develop a coordinated plan for localised health promotion. This has resulted in the formation of national networks and federations.

## Nutrition and food security

Plan programs have also worked extensively on nutrition and food security. Rather than focusing solely on delivering food supplies, an increasing number of programs are incorporating links to education and learning, in order to engage more effectively in the prevention agenda. Several country programs are also taking integrated approaches to addressing the underlying causes of child malnutrition.

Plan Indonesia, for example, is combining a child-rights approach with the principles of sustainable livelihoods.<sup>26</sup> Programs are focused on empowering communities and other stakeholders to cope with, and to recover from, the consequences of food and nutrition insecurity. Results include increased numbers of farmers who report improved farm productivity and integrated agricultural production; increased percentages of local communities that apply environmentally sustainable agricultural production techniques; and a decline in the number of villages that have been affected by food insecurity. An external evaluation found that 28 per cent of respondents stated that their incomes had improved directly as a result of Plan interventions.<sup>27</sup>

In Peru, an evaluation of a food security project in Cusco and Piura describes some useful lessons learned. The evaluation team observed that the project had



Child collecting food in Niger, following the locust plague and drought in 2005

<sup>26</sup> The core principles of the sustainable livelihoods approach are people-centred, holistic, dynamic, building on strengths, macro-micro links, and sustainability. The sustainable livelihood framework assumes five forms of 'capital' for analysis of the context: human, natural, physical, social and financial capital. See [www.livelihoods.org](http://www.livelihoods.org) for guidance sheets.

<sup>27</sup> Plan Indonesia Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished). See also Susur Alam Lewat Alur Masyarakat, External review of Plan livelihood program outlines, 2005.

demonstrated significant gains in terms of irrigation, attitudinal change and engagement with local government, and made some recommendations, which have relevance for other country programs. These included the recommendation that Plan programs should articulate food security, health and education as fundamental rights of all children; that nutritional monitoring systems by government partners often require strengthening, which presents an opportunity for Plan engagement; and that Plan programs are often strong at implementation level, but need stronger policy or conceptual frameworks.<sup>28</sup>

Plan programs are also engaging in emergency food aid, for example in Niger, where a drought and locust invasion in May 2005 left many children malnourished. Plan worked in partnership with the World Food Program, UNICEF and the government of Niger to distribute emergency rations and anthropometrical equipment. Similarly, Zimbabwe faced severe food shortages in 2006 due to successive droughts, as well as inflation rates of up to 600 per cent. An evaluation of Plan Zimbabwe's food security and poverty alleviation program found that while production of staple crops has not increased, due to factors in the external environment such as drought and greatly increased costs of inputs, communities had experienced increased food security through, for example, the development of community gardens growing vegetables, while the introduction of drip kits resulted in increased crop yields and reduced crop diseases.<sup>29</sup>

In these countries, as in all countries where it works, Plan places emphasis not only on emergency response but on risk reduction and minimising vulnerability. This is discussed in more detail in Part 3, but in both the countries mentioned above, Plan has combined its rapid aid response with a focus on medium-term development. In Niger, Plan works alongside the government on an institutional strengthening program, focused on health workers, local authorities and community management systems for cereal banks. In Zimbabwe, food aid has been accompanied by health and nutrition campaigns, which have resulted in reducing the number of cases of malnutrition (measured using growth monitoring indicators such as weight for age) in villages, and increased exclusive breastfeeding for the first four to six months followed by the use of proper weaning foods, contributing to reductions in infant malnutrition.<sup>30</sup>



Water borehole in Sudan, a partnership between Plan Sudan and the local community

## Water and sanitation

Plan works extensively to promote potable water and sanitation, particularly across Asia and Africa. As the 2006 Human Development Report makes clear, the world faces a global crisis in water that threatens to derail progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. "This is less about absolute shortages of physical supply and more about poverty, inequality and unequal power relationships, including gender, as well as flawed water management policies that exacerbate scarcity."<sup>31</sup> Key themes that UNDP has identified in water provision include a lack of political priority for water and sanitation; excessively high prices for the poorest; a failure on the part of the international community to prioritise safe water and sanitation; and a lack of political voice for the poorest in claiming their rights to water.

Plan's country programs are increasingly appreciating this view, and take a strategic role in water and sanitation provision. Plan sees enabling duty-bearers to realise their commitments under the framework of the CRC and MDGs as a crucial part of its role. In many countries, struggling with especially constrained resources, and major issues about water and sanitation provision, governments would struggle to meet targets without external assistance and support. In Sudan, for example, over 63,000 people living in 76 villages have been supported by Plan over three years to have

<sup>28</sup> Final evaluation of the food security project in Cusco and Piura. SID, Peru, 2005.

<sup>29</sup> Agrichem Services Ltd. Plan Zimbabwe food security and poverty alleviation program. End of CPO1 evaluation, 2006; Plan Zimbabwe Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2006. **Human Development Report 2006: Beyond scarcity: power, poverty and the global water crisis**. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

access to adequate hygienic supplies of water all the year round. In West African country programs, in particular, access levels to potable water supplies are often very low.<sup>32</sup> This affects women and children in particular, who generally assume responsibility for water collection. In Burkina Faso, only 61 per cent of the population have access to a potable water supply and 29 per cent to sanitation facilities.<sup>33</sup> Plan's efforts here in 2006 focused on creating access to potable water for communities in seven out of 45 provinces of the country. The Plan program targeted the provision of potable water to schools and communities, the creation and training of water management committees, and the construction of school and family latrines. Working alongside the Ministry of Water and Agriculture, over 140 boreholes with manual pumps were built in 2006, 26 out-of-use boreholes rehabilitated and 340 water management committees trained.<sup>34</sup>

An increasing number of Plan programs are placing an emphasis on scaling up, and on engaging with governments to influence national policy mechanisms from a child rights perspective, while mobilising the poor to claim their rights to water. Plan Indonesia, for example, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Planning Development Agency to formally provide strategic support to the government of Indonesia in the areas of water and environmental sanitation reform, program planning procedures and guidelines. This offers an entry point for advocacy and lobbying as well as technical support. Plan Cameroon earned a seat in the five-member permanent secretariat of the human values-based Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Education Committee created by the Ministry of Basic Education in 2005. The committee is building capacity for people-centred water, sanitation and hygiene education in the formal and non-formal education sectors in Cameroon, an initiative in which Plan will play a key role.

In Cambodia, Plan is working closely with the royal government of Cambodia, UNICEF, WHO, DFID and the World Bank Water and Sanitation Program to support adoption of improved practices and policies in the water and sanitation sector. Examples of this include supporting the dissemination of a new sanitation technical manual; promoting the development of a national school health policy; supporting an in-depth review of the rural water and sanitation sector to identify strengths, weaknesses and opportunities; and supporting the government to develop ways of mitigating serious drinking water quality problems such as arsenic.

The 2006, the Human Development Report also emphasised the need for using water in multiple ways to maximise household economic security, a concept explored in more detail in Section 2.3.

Plan Zimbabwe's work with drip irrigation and fishponds is a good example of this: a project in seven districts resulted in increased vegetable production and increased household incomes.<sup>35</sup> Building on this work, Plan is also conducting action research into scaling up rural community water and sanitation management initiatives, with a focus on sustainability.

Water and sanitation work also demonstrates Plan's growing advocacy capabilities at international and country levels. Plan's membership of global thematic groups such as Global Scaling Up and Productive Uses of Water enables it to contribute to global learning and knowledge management. At national level, in Thailand for example, Plan takes a proactive approach to legislation on access to services, combining a rights-based approach with its traditional grassroots presence to initiate local action for development. In Chiangrai, a local watershed development foundation and accompanying agricultural co-operative are now registered as legal entities, and supported to continue with their own lobbying and advocacy work.

32 Ali, et al. Final evaluation of potable water and sanitation project: Guli/Edduweim White Nile State Sudan. 2005.

33 MDG assessment (Burkina Faso). 2004. World Bank.

34 Plan Burkina Faso Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

35 Murimiradzomba, N. Case study on multiple use of water in Zimbabwe: household economic security: the case of drip kit irrigation project. Plan Zimbabwe, 2006.



## Lessons learned

Addressing survival issues of chronic food insecurity or severe health issues means long-term, integrated interventions which combine service delivery with elements of education, capacity-building for local and national partners, and/or institutional strengthening. It is apparent from country reports that by taking a holistic view based on local knowledge of vulnerabilities, trends and resilience to shocks, and building on traditional strengths in well-designed, responsive child-focused interventions, Plan increasingly engages more effectively in preventative measures on survival. Health is a key area for this, alongside a focus on building up people's livelihood strategies, and enhancing their coping mechanisms. The Zimbabwe experience in 2006 has demonstrated that this capability exists within the organisation and can be delivered even in an acutely challenging context.

Within the health sector, the integrated management of childhood illnesses approach used by an increasing number of Plan country programs is demonstrating positive results. Plan may wish to consider strengthening the linkages of these approaches to work in non-formal education for adults, for example, or links to early childhood care and development work, discussed under pillar 2.

In trying to design and implement such programs within contexts of great difficulty, Plan programs appear at times to try to exceed the physical capacity and resources available.<sup>36</sup> Increased technical capacity within Plan on specific areas such as developing programs on the sustainable livelihoods approach, linking water and sanitation issues with rights and entitlements, and greater awareness of gender methodologies and approaches, as well as focused and well-articulated strategies for scaling up, would resolve this issue. Greater shared learning of good practice should also facilitate the process.

Reflecting on gaps and opportunities, on governmental commitment and will, on capacity

available, and on existing networks, structures and mechanisms for delivery, Plan country programs will be able to take a clear view of where their comparative advantage lies, and where interventions are likely to gain most impact. Programs need to be designed carefully, so that especially vulnerable contexts have built-in capacity for flexible responses, using methodologies and tools such as the sustainable livelihoods approach to identify assets and vulnerabilities.

Contexts which regularly face serious issues of child survival are often some of the most challenging for program implementation. Macro-economic instability makes program planning very difficult; high inflation rates, for example, mean that material costs vary wildly, and are difficult to access and transport. Such problems require good country knowledge, and much ingenuity and experience. While these capabilities and skills clearly exist in abundance among Plan staff and partners, there is also a clear need for increased specialist technical capacity, particularly where survival issues start to intersect with the disaster response agenda, and the emerging theme of disaster response and risk reduction, discussed in Part 3.

In order to engage more effectively in both the prevention and response aspects of child survival, Plan's communication methods and profile are key. Clearly, many Plan offices are working effectively with national and international mechanisms. But to play a key role in medium to long-term survival responses, Plan needs greater representation in some countries on national taskforces, and enhanced linkages with national poverty reduction instruments. Health is one area where this is starting to happen, but there is a need for a stronger engagement with government, increased advocacy capacity, and the capability to extract, learn from, scale up and disseminate much of the very good practice which exists on the ground.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, Wade, et al, Qualitative evaluation of the Nirop District child survival program, 2006; Synthesis report of Plan Egypt's Country Program Outline, Environmental Quality International, 2006.



## Pillar 2: Right to development

The right to development, as it is represented within the CRC, means the right to an education and to a future. In part, this implies a focus on the growth of human capital: “In a world with a fast growing global market and economy, it is important that new work forces are educated, trained, and have the capacity to be competitive if they are to enter the global arena. Countries’ assets are their people, especially their children” (Article 28, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). More broadly, however, development means a focus on increasing voice, participation and empowerment in fulfilling human potential, and in creating the capability, and realising the right, to play one’s part within a democratic society.

Plan has traditionally engaged with the child development agenda primarily through infrastructure investment, building schools and supplying materials, supporting teaching costs and delivering key services. As discussed earlier, in some contexts, particularly where the resources available to the national government are extremely constrained, enabling duty-bearers to realise their obligations to claimants through, for example, infrastructure support remains a core aspect of Plan’s work and one of its institutional strengths. Increasingly, however, country programs are engaging in complementary interventions, building in rights-based elements to broaden a program’s impacts and scope where possible.

### Early childhood care and development

The 2006 World Development Report argues that early childhood development initiatives are central to increased equal opportunities. Evidence supports the view that investing in early childhood has significant impacts on children’s health and readiness to learn and can bring important economic returns later in life – often greater than investments in formal education and training.<sup>37</sup> It is far more challenging to compensate for educational and social disadvantage among older children and adults than it is to provide support in early childhood. UNESCO’s 2007 Global Monitoring Report ‘Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education’ calls on countries to demonstrate increasing commitment to the first of the six Education for All goals: expanding and improving early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.<sup>38</sup>

As part of both survival and development, Plan countries are increasingly engaging with the early childhood care and development agenda, developing program interventions which address needs and rights in an integrated manner, reflecting the physical, mental



Temporary Plan primary school in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp, Indonesia

and psychosocial aspects of child development. The gender dimension of ECCD program design is crucial, given the different way girls and boys under the age of five grow up in many countries and the fact that women often assume responsibility for early childhood care and development activity. Recognising this, Plan is engaging with the relevant government ministry on gender in several countries, as the following examples show.

As with the school improvement program, the areas where early childhood care and development have been most successful are those where strong relationships have been formed at national level, and where there has been significant engagement in policy dialogue and/or representation on national groups. In Bangladesh, for example, the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs and the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education identify Plan as one of two key agencies to be consulted for any policy issues on early childhood care and development. The ECCD model implemented by Plan in Bangladesh, built on pilot studies which

<sup>37</sup> World Bank. 2005. *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development*. New York: World Bank.

<sup>38</sup> UNESCO. 2006. *EFA Global Monitoring Report. Strong foundations: early childhood care and education*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

have been extensively evaluated and refined, is now being implemented in 2,700 centres across the country reaching 36,000 children. The target is to reach one million children in the next five years.

In Tanzania, Plan recognises that the rights that early childhood care and development addresses translate in practice to multi-sectoral interventions, which in turn means engaging with multiple government ministries. Plan is therefore developing dialogues with the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Community Development, Women and Children's Affairs, and the Department of Social Welfare with the aim of joining up and coordinating activity across departments. Similarly, in Malawi, Plan is working alongside the Ministry of Gender and Community Services to develop community-based ECCD. In 2006, the construction of 10 pre-schools was underway, with the Ministry providing training and support on ECCD principles and approaches for community care-givers.

In Vietnam, Plan has set the ambitious target of increasing the percentage of pre-school children from 0 to 6 years old enrolled in early childhood care and development centres in Plan-targeted areas from 55 to 72 per cent by 2010. In partnership with the Ministry of Education and Training, activities in 2006 included upgrading and improving the infrastructure both of pre-schools and home-based centres; capacity-building for pre-school teachers and ECCD promoters; improving health care services at ECCD centres; and conducting parental education and advocacy activities to promote early childhood care and development. Based on progress so far, Plan Vietnam is well on track to meet its targets.

An example of the significance of early childhood care and development activity during trauma or disaster situations comes from Aceh in Indonesia, where Plan in 2006 supported ECCD centres in settlement camps set up after the tsunami. Ninety-six early childhood care and development teachers were trained, and 2,600 children benefited from activities within the camps. An evaluation of the program in 2006 recommended that education and health-related activities should be combined, and that eventually the program should shift towards more community-based management.<sup>39</sup> These experiences should assist Plan's future disaster response strategic planning, discussed in Part 3; there is growing international recognition that these services are critical to medium-term social and economic recovery from disaster.

## The school improvement program

Plan's School Improvement Program (SIP) has become a core mechanism for Plan's contribution to realise the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and provides a good example of where Plan's work encompasses greater breadth than the relevant Millennium Development Goal target, focusing not only on enrolment but also on quality and completion. It operates at both primary and secondary level, and is applied to both levels within country programs, although in line with the MDGs and country poverty reduction strategies, the emphasis tends to be on primary schooling.

The aims of the school improvement program are to:

- ensure support to every aspect of a school essential in creating the best learning environment for children
- promote the active participation of children and communities in school governance
- hold the individual school management accountable for children's enrolment, attendance, learning and successful completion

The SIP itself is an overall framework or policy for action and is a good example of a partnership approach to development – Plan may address some of the school improvement program's components,<sup>40</sup> while the community, local authority, the private sector, central government or another non-governmental organisation or donor addresses the others. Plan itself plays an active role in ensuring that all eight core components are covered through activities such as institutional strengthening where necessary.

School improvement program experience has shown that the approach presents a good opportunity to scale up, and to advocate at the national level for changes to basic education priorities. An external evaluation of the school improvement program in Albania, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sudan and Zambia in 2006<sup>41</sup> reported that schools operating under SIP guidelines demonstrate improvements in community involvement, school infrastructure and enrolment, especially for girls, when compared with schools without a school improvement program.<sup>42</sup> While the program is clearly no panacea – more child-friendly teaching methods, reduced teacher rotation and extra resources remain major challenges to providing quality education in these countries – it has demonstrated sufficient tangible benefits such that national governments are starting to use its approaches.

<sup>39</sup> Plan Aceh. **Country Program Progress Report 2006**. (Unpublished).

<sup>40</sup> The eight elements of the school improvement program are: ensuring teachers are competent and motivated; promoting active learning methods supported by appropriate teaching and learning aids; promoting the active participation of children and parents in school governance; ensuring a safe, sound and effective learning environment; establishing a relevant curriculum; ensuring that children are properly prepared for school; ensuring empowered and supportive school leaders; and advocating for supportive supervision.

<sup>41</sup> External evaluation of the school improvement program. Human Sciences Research Council, 2006.

<sup>42</sup> In Ethiopia, for example, the primary school enrolment rate, which was 43 per cent in 2000 in rural operational area of Plan Ethiopia, had almost doubled (82 per cent) in 2005. In the Sudan, an evaluation in February 2006 reported that enrolment rates were up by 51.3 per cent (girls by 27.3 per cent; boys by a massive 332.3 per cent). The number of 'repeaters' had fallen by seven per cent.

A country example of a school improvement program that is being scaled up comes from Tanzania. Here, Plan, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Administration, is working to roll out its Education for All program, which is based on SIP principles and approaches, as part of Tanzania's vast national-level Primary Education Development Program. Plan's education management information system forms the basis of the nationally-agreed information system instrument that will be used to collect data from all schools. An evaluation of this program reports that the Education for All program is appropriately aligned with national strategies and priorities, and is making significant gains in local ownership.<sup>43</sup> While concerns still exist about accountability and transparency issues, and about ensuring that communities, children and teachers are fully empowered to manage school improvement as underscored by the school improvement program framework and the child-centred community development approach, the Primary Education Development Program itself reported an increase in the primary net enrolment rate from 25 per cent in 2001 to 63 per cent in 2003.<sup>44</sup>

Education is the largest sector of Plan's investment globally since 2004, as expenditure figures in Part 1 showed, with over US\$292 million spent on education from 2003 to 2006. This is clearly reflected in many country program profiles. In Ghana, for example, the country program places a strong emphasis on quality basic education, working to integrate its school improvement program into the government's Free Compulsory Universal Education program. All other Plan country objectives operate in support of this. Evaluations demonstrate significant improvement in enrolment – particularly of girls – and attainment. For instance, in the Sissala West district, enrolment rates for 2005/06 rose by over 1,500 pupils against the previous year; over 900 of these were girls. Academic attainment has also improved, with results in English and mathematics in the standard performance monitoring test being 46 per cent and 41.8 per cent respectively as against 17.5 per cent and 16.8 per cent in the 2003/04 academic year.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to increased engagement with national-level service delivery, Plan countries are taking an increasingly greater role in lobbying and advocacy for access to quality education at country level,



Young person in Colombia, completing her homework

particularly in East and Southern Africa. Plan Sudan, for example, has participated in the national Education for All campaign, which has resulted in the government responding to coordinated pressure to increase both teachers' salaries and investments in primary education. Its recent position on expanding access to all children, regardless of ability to pay, is offering Plan an opportunity to participate in monitoring accountability at national level.

Recognising the need to reach beyond the Millennium Development Goal of 'primary enrolment', several country programs focus their efforts mainly on school quality at both primary and secondary level, offering Plan's technical knowledge and expertise to support partner governments. In Brazil, for instance, Plan is working closely with the municipal Secretaries of Education on educational quality at primary level, using methodologies such as student-centred approaches and child-to-child mechanisms for knowledge transfer. In China, the schools quality index is used in Shaanxi province in partnership with the local Department of Education, as part of the Shaanxi School Improvement Project at middle and elementary levels. This has been evaluated by officials from Beijing University and the China Ministry of Education, who found that after two years the project has significantly improved learning conditions in school; has had positive impacts on educational attainment, especially

<sup>43</sup> Final evaluation of Education for All program reported in Tanzania Country Program Outline 09. Education for All, 2006.

<sup>44</sup> Plan Tanzania Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

<sup>45</sup> Plan Ghana Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

in maths; has significantly improved school management, including female representation; and has secured significant support and engagement from local education officials. The evaluators felt that the school improvement program has the potential to “act as a pioneer” for national education policy implementation.<sup>46</sup>

As part of the drive towards quality improvement, some Plan countries are increasingly being invited to engage with national governments on the challenging issue of curriculum. In Cameroon, for example, Plan has facilitated the development of in-service training material for teachers, alongside the Ministry of Basic Education. In Bangladesh, Plan has been selected as the only international NGO to work with the government on curriculum and learning materials for primary education.

Many evaluations of Plan program interventions in education report outcomes which support the Millennium Development Goal of increased enrolment rates, particularly of girls, and which demonstrate reduced drop-out rates. In Guinea Bissau, for example, work in the 2000 to 2005 program cycle took the enrolment rate in the Bafata region from 20 per cent at baseline to 71.75 per cent at completion, while the primary school completion rate rose from 3 to 16 per cent.<sup>47</sup>

Plan’s school improvement program appears to have been particularly successful in achieving these impacts.<sup>48</sup> However, the more relevant question for Plan in today’s world is: to what extent does a child-centred community development approach enhance duty-bearers’ roles in educational provision, and what successful models of education, demonstrating what impacts, emerge as a result?

In Guinea in 2005/06, for example, Plan co-financed the construction of 94 primary and 16 secondary classrooms, and the renovation of 29 primary and one secondary classroom. This was a major contribution to enabling communities to access their rights to child development without which there is no doubt that the government of Guinea would manifestly struggle to

meet its MDG commitments. However, Plan is working simultaneously with the Guinean Ministry of Education to develop a decentralised school management system in Plan areas, which incorporates a rights-based focus.

Another example of a CCCD approach to education comes from Burkina Faso. Plan Burkina Faso takes the view that a successful child-centred community development education program requires much more emphasis on demand than has traditionally been the case. Working alongside the Ministry of Education and its district-level structures, Plan Burkina has developed a flexible model of education, with a focus on gender (‘girl-friendly’ schools), supplying school meals, a mentoring program, literacy for mothers and child care centres. The result has been significant improvements in enrolment rates across Plan areas, jumping in some locations from around 30 per cent in 2002 to nearly 60 per cent in 2005.<sup>49</sup> Partly as a result of this experience, Plan Burkina, in partnership with Plan USA, has been successful in winning a \$12.9 million grant from USAID for work on girls’ education.<sup>50</sup>

In addition, based in part on experience from Togo’s country program, where the work on violence against children in schools has proved to be a catalytic model for other country programs, Plan is developing its next global advocacy campaign on the theme of safer schools.

Finally, country programs increasingly focus on developing good quality education, particularly where the decentralisation agenda is creating new entry points. A good example comes from Bolivia, where one country program outline is dedicated to improving the technical capacity of the institutions responsible for teacher training, refresher training, monitoring and evaluation, as well as educational research processes. Plan’s target is to bring from 17 per cent to 30 per cent the number of schools rated as being of good quality (scoring above 75 on the school quality rating system) by the Bolivian government by 2009.

46 Zhang et al. Shaanxi school improvement project mid-term evaluation report. 2006.

47 Plan Guinea Bissau Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

48 See, for example, Espes. 2005. *Searching for elements of impact in the domain of primary education: a pilot study in Sierra Leone and Guatemala*. Ede: European Society for Programme Evaluation and Capacity Strengthening.

49 Burkina Faso Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

50 *Burkinabe Response to Improve Girls’ Chances to Succeed*. [Online]. [Accessed 15 May 2007]. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.brightnews.org/spip.php?article24>

## Facilitating the right to development in challenging conditions

An overview of country program documentation indicates the vast range of conditions and contexts in which Plan country programs operate. Many Plan offices face severe challenges in devising and implementing programs which facilitate the right to development in situations of volatility, instability or extreme need. However, the diversity of Plan's country programs is also in many ways its key strength: namely its flexibility to generate relevant and responsive, country-led interventions.

In Cambodia, for example, work on the right to development follows the period of the Khmer Rouge regime, when most of the educational infrastructure was destroyed, and teachers and other intellectuals killed. Primary school enrolment rates currently stand at around 70 per cent, but completion rates are only around two per cent in Plan areas, with ECCD services and enrolment simply non-existent. Based on participatory needs assessment, Plan's school improvement program approach in Cambodia includes training school management, school improvement planning, life skills training, identifying and training community teachers, setting up school libraries, child-friendly classroom management, cleaner schools training and development counsellors for girl children. Much progress has been made regarding implementation, and although it is too early to establish gains in completion rates, no drop-outs had been recorded in life skills programs at the time of writing.<sup>51</sup>

Timor-Leste in 2006 faced conditions of serious social unrest, resulting in considerable internal displacement

and most schools simply closing. While Plan continued to support the government in drafting a national early childhood care and development policy, Plan's work on the ground had to shift rapidly to emergency interventions for internally displaced children and their families in 2006. This included setting up safe learning environments in the 13 Plan-assisted internally displaced people's camps in Dili, and in working alongside UNICEF and the Ministry of Education to train teachers to provide education in an emergency setting. Despite the challenges faced, Plan continues to support the Ministry of Education to integrate human rights education, with an emphasis on child rights, into the curriculum of primary and secondary schools, developing and testing pilot materials during 2006.

In post-conflict contexts, Plan's experience and longstanding relationships, plus the flexibility of its multi-level and CCCD approaches, enable the design of tailored development programs. Plan has been working in Sierra Leone since the mid-1970s,<sup>52</sup> and has developed longstanding relationships of trust. Its long history of engagement in education in Sierra Leone means it is recognised by the government as a key player in the sector. Current post-war education renewal programs by the government are built on Plan's education renewal program strategy, which focuses on increased access to school as well as improvements in the teaching and learning environment. Impacts include attitudinal changes towards girls' education, increased enrolment of girls, improved teaching competency, more effective and participatory school management, and more accurate and readily-available data systems for educational planning.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> Plan Cambodia Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

<sup>52</sup> Some operations were scaled down or suspended in Sierra Leone between 1997 and 2000, due to the security situation, but Plan maintained its presence in the country throughout the period of unrest.

<sup>53</sup> Especcs. 2005. *Searching for elements of impact in the domain of primary education: a pilot study in Sierra Leone and Guatemala*. Ede: European Society for Programme Evaluation and Capacity Strengthening.

## Lessons learned

Facilitating the right to development is an area where Plan's programs are progressing well, having originated from a traditional model of service delivery. Programs aimed at institutional strengthening of both governmental and civil society systems to maximise service delivery to poor clients are on the increase and demonstrating good results, assisted by strong in-country relationships. Country programs are placing a greater emphasis on working with governmental and international agencies, particularly in contexts where strong national-level partnerships already exist. Global advocacy movements such as Education for All and the Global Campaign for Education have provided helpful entry points here.

However, at times, countries operating with extremely constrained resources are required to support duty-bearers to enable them to fulfil the rights of claimants, who are often children. While under the Fast Track Initiative and respective poverty reduction strategy papers, countries are offered support from donors to work towards achieving Education for All and the MDG targets,<sup>54</sup> how efficiently this support is utilised is open to question. In supplementing these wider support mechanisms, Plan enables duty-bearers to realise their obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and also opens up opportunities for policy dialogue with government duty-bearers.

Plan programs in early childhood care and development are at an earlier and smaller-scale stage of development when compared to its work in primary education. Examples are diverse and disparate rather than widespread and coherent. While pockets of good practice such as those mentioned earlier do clearly exist, experience could be more widely shared, and model projects scaled up. Lessons learned in ECCD do appear common across many country experiences: gains made in engagement and relationships with government can be capitalised on, even after project funding cycles have finished, as a springboard for policy development. A gradual handover of ECCD activities to local government mechanisms should be accompanied by a process of institutional strengthening. And monitoring of agencies tasked with delivering early childhood care and development must continue well after program cycles have ended. Given the new global policy drivers such

as the World Development Report's focus on equity of opportunity for children, ECCD in particular is an area that Plan will seek to develop further in the coming years in terms of policy development and assessment of effectiveness.

Program evaluations in primary education make several common points. Firstly, they point to the need to fully understand the reasons for lack of school attendance or drop-out. Without a comprehensive needs analysis, it is difficult to implement appropriate responses. Secondly, school management committees would benefit from training in planning methods, to enhance sustainability. Thirdly, education programs should be linked with violence against children issues, both at school and in the home, as Plan's experience in Togo demonstrates, described under pillar 3. Fourthly, as part of its role in accountability, Plan should lobby for involvement in the institutional strengthening of inspectorates. And finally, Plan should emphasise the development of flexible models of education that enable children to study other activities that are essential to family economic security.

Given the global support mechanisms under the right to development, for example the Fast Track Initiative, Plan needs to consider in its program planning how efficiently countries are utilising the new funds made available to them. School attainment and quality often remain low, despite resource injections of considerable scale. Important questions that Plan may consider include: To what extent are Plan resources supporting governments in their Education for All objectives? What is happening to costs replaced or saved by Plan inputs? How open are the duty-bearers with Plan in sharing information on their budget and expenditure on education?

Perhaps the key challenge facing Plan under the development pillar of rights, however, is that of scaling up examples of good practice. While the capability and momentum clearly exist among country programs, scaling up effectively requires not only demonstrated models of good practice, but a co-ordinated response among donors, NGOs and governments. Given its multi-level capability, Plan is well-positioned in many countries to facilitate this coordination. Increased confidence and greater capacity, particularly in advocacy, would enable country programs to take this next step forward.

<sup>54</sup> For example, 15 Plan program countries have benefited from the Fast Track Initiative in 2006. In 2007, this will increase to 19 Plan program countries. As a whole, 28 Plan countries are eligible for support under the Fast Track Initiative. The FTI is a global partnership between donor and developing countries to ensure progress towards the MDG goal of universal primary education for all.



## Pillar 3: The right to protection

Plan's country programs have worked on child protection<sup>55</sup> issues at various levels for many years, although it is only relatively recently that these have been recognised as fundamental to Plan's development activity overall and as requiring a much more strategic or thematic focus. Protecting children from violence and abuse is increasingly being viewed as critical to achieving Plan's mission to ensure children realise their full potential and as a critical element of the rights-based approach that Plan adopts in its work.

The UN Study on Violence against Children defines violence, in accordance with Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse”.<sup>56</sup> This is underpinned by the 1999 WHO report on child abuse which defines violence as “child abuse or maltreatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power”.<sup>57</sup>

Plan's global strategy for child protection contains a strategic objective which places “child protection at the heart of everything”. This promotes a mainstreaming approach to protection such that all programs contribute to protecting children from violence. Child protection is also part of the organisation's own accountability and good governance processes, as well as a broader policy issue for national and international action. Plan is therefore investing in staff development programs in the area.

A survey of child protection discussions in country program documents in 2006 revealed that, while a strategic commitment to engage in child protection is clearly present and mentioned in nearly half the reports, many countries are still at conceptual level in their discussions. Yet despite the agenda's relative newness within Plan, many country programs are increasingly focusing on child protection issues at both local and national levels, particularly where a changing policy context has opened up opportunities for action.

The government of Egypt, for example, has extended its Child Protection Decade until 2010. Plan's response has been to develop a full country program outline focusing on child protection, through capacity-building and institutional strengthening of civil society organisations as a way to tackle protection issues.



Volunteers training to work on child protection helpline, Plan Guatemala

For countries at an earlier stage of addressing child protection issues, initial analysis is essential and provides the basis for advocacy and awareness-raising. In Peru, Plan conducted a major research study alongside the Peruvian Ministry of Women and Social Development, UNICEF and a coalition of non-governmental organisations. This was the first national-level study to address the strengths, weaknesses and gaps of Peru's political and justice system, and will act as a key advocacy tool in lobbying the new government for improved child protection measures. Colombia also recently carried out award-winning research into the experiences of children facing violence.

Similarly, Plan Guatemala's research-based model on violence against children may serve as an example for others. Its Child Protection Strategic Framework is a rights-based, multi-level integrated response which is based on strategies of protection and prevention. Within this, protection (focused mostly on victims of violence) has four pillars: strengthening the legal framework, applying the law, establishing a model for integrated support and raising awareness. The strategy of prevention aims to prevent or reduce the incidence

<sup>55</sup> Child protection is seen as measures specific to prevent the mistreatment of children, rather than solely as part of the broader concept of social protection.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations. 2006. **World report on violence against children**. Geneva: United Nations Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children.

<sup>57</sup> WHO. 1999. **Report of the consultation on child abuse prevention, 29–31 March 1999**. WHO/HSC/PVI/99.1. Geneva: World Health Organization.

of violence towards children and adolescents by promoting respect for and realisation of children's rights, from the family to the national levels.<sup>58</sup> Achievements in 2006 include a proposal for reform to the penal code about mistreatment and sexual abuse of children and adolescents (currently pending Congressional approval), over 30 institutions (governmental and non-governmental) participating in the Network for the Prevention of Mistreatment and Sexual Abuse of Children and Adolescents in Guatemala, and 30 organisations in the area of Jalapa participating in departmental commissions to prevent child mistreatment and abuse.<sup>59</sup>

In the Philippines, Plan's Protecting Children at Risk program represents what can be done to protect children using a CCCD approach. The program's overall aim is to build comprehensive mechanisms and systems for child protection among governmental and non-governmental partners, which include detection, reporting, referral, peer support, legal assistance and rehabilitation. In 2006, Plan Philippines helped to:

- intercept over 1,800 victims of child trafficking
- open two safe havens for abused children, and begin to set up six more
- promote universal birth registration in 17 regions
- successfully lobby with others for revised legislation on juvenile justice
- carry out research on child abuse and on children in conflict to increase the visibility of the problem<sup>60</sup>

In Vietnam, the government launched a Law for Child Protection, Care and Education in 2006, an initiative known as Communes Fit for Children. Plan Vietnam is seizing the opportunity presented to support information and education drives through the media and to lobby for policy reforms. After successful lobbying by Plan, a Ministerial decree requires all 64 provinces of Vietnam to provide emergency support to cases referred by the Plan supported nationwide child helpline.<sup>61</sup>

In some countries, awareness of the rights of the child may be relatively high following successful campaigns – but there may be few or no structures to support the reporting and follow up of child abuse cases. Across the regions, Plan programs have opted to support providers of legal support to children experiencing abuse. In Ethiopia, for example, the Child Legal Protection Centre has so far provided legal aid to over 800 children and provided judicial representation for nearly 600. Plan Ecuador has set up 50 local Councils for the Defence of Child Rights. And Plan China has partnered with the China Bar Association to build a China Legal Support and Child Protection Network across five provinces, as well as supporting the Shaanxi Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, the first professional local child protection organisation in China.

Plan has also demonstrated willingness to address politically and culturally sensitive issues, under the banner of realising rights to child protection. An example arising from some West Africa country reports is that of female genital cutting, or female circumcision. Plan Mali is taking a child-centred community development-based approach to female genital cutting, capitalising on its multi-level capability to develop a program which is having significant impacts in terms of awareness-raising and reducing circumcision levels. Direct action in the field with communities is being combined with a program of capacity-building for national NGOs, and harmonisation of local and national female genital cutting interventions and partnerships, supported by an advocacy stream to national government, both via national NGOs and direct from Plan Mali.<sup>62</sup>



Launch of child protection campaign, Plan Vietnam

58 Plan. (Unpublished, 2006) **No more excuses: ending violence against children: beyond the UN study**. Interim working paper dated October 2006.

59 Plan Guatemala Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

60 Plan Philippines Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

61 A number of other Plan country programs also operate or support child help lines (Kenya and Timor-Leste are the most recent additions) and Plan also supports Child Help Line International.

62 While other country programs do make reference to female genital cutting in their strategic plans, Plan Mali appears to be taking the lead in challenging female genital cutting as a breach of a child's basic human rights, under a child protection/violence against children banner. Other countries may find the Mali experience a useful source of learning and good practice.

## Advocating on violence against children

Violence against children is increasingly becoming a recognised issue on the international agenda, with the Global Movement for Children<sup>63</sup> having established “reducing violence and abuse of children” as one of the first priorities in making the world fit for children. The UN’s violence against children report<sup>64</sup> provides a global picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, and proposes recommendations for action to prevent and reduce violence. In response to this, Plan developed an interim working paper<sup>65</sup> that begins to articulate Plan’s approach to working on violence against children, proposes a focus for future programme activity in order to address this issue effectively via the CCCD methodology, and makes recommendations for action at various levels. Thousands of people have contributed to the study since 2003, including Plan country programs at national level.

There are many examples of Plan’s work at community level, with different country contexts revealing different approaches to violence against children within Plan. In the Americas, a common theme is campaign-based advocacy approaches, using the media to run national-level campaigns to educate and inform children and their parents of a child’s right to protection, and supporting this by developing structures and mechanisms to help realise this right. There have been some notable successes here. Plan Paraguay’s campaign has resulted in the establishment of the National System for Childhood and Adolescence Promotion and Protection, plus department-level Council Departments for Childhood and Adolescence in Paraguay. Both Nicaragua and Guatemala have national-level child protection policies in place, albeit still in draft form, and Plan’s role in both these countries has been to promote implementation and enforcement, as part of raising awareness and supporting these governments to realise their commitments under the CRC. In Togo, Plan is working alongside the government to integrate child rights into the school curriculum and to ensure that the government honours its obligations under the Convention in relation to violence in schools.

Some country programs, meanwhile, have been able to seize the opportunity of multi-lateral advocacy campaigns to address violence against children. In Indonesia, for example, Plan has been able to join the national initiative on the Elimination of Violence

Against Children, working with the government, UNICEF and other international agencies to develop the draft National Action Plan to Eliminate Violence Against Children. As with many countries, Indonesia has enacted a Child Protection Law, but the ongoing decentralisation process means that the main responsibilities for child protection now lie with district and local government – representing both challenges and opportunities for Plan’s engagement.

Violence against children also intersects with a developing area of Plan’s work, namely working in conflict situations, or situations of unrest or instability. The UN’s Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict provides the policy framework here. Nepal, for example, faced a situation in 2006 where hundreds of schools were closed, affecting more than seven million children. A growing number of internally displaced people, with women and children representing 80 per cent of these, placed new needs on the government, non-governmental organisations and donors. Political developments are now promising, and it is hoped that long-term stability will return, but situations like this need a flexible response which is able to cope with unpredictability and rapidly changing circumstances. Plan Nepal’s country program incorporates specific coping strategies, built on the principles of child-centred community development, focused both on mitigating the impacts of the conflict on children, and on ensuring the long-term sustainability of Plan’s development efforts. The 2006 evaluation of the children in conflict program showed positive results in psychosocial support measures in particular, although more work is needed on situational analysis.<sup>66</sup>

Plan benefits from some comparative advantage regarding violence against children, using a multi-level approach to child protection that builds on experience at community level. Yet while much good work is taking place around the world, Plan’s research report on children in especially difficult circumstances<sup>67</sup> found that this has until recently been fragmented and dispersed, with inadequate organisational support in terms of agreed strategy, program policies and approaches, tools, methods and systems. There has also been little organisational learning across countries. The development of a global child protection policy by international headquarters should remedy these issues, providing a synthesis as well as a clear policy framework and impetus for mainstreaming.

63 See **Global Movement for Children**. [Online]. [Accessed 15 May 2007]. Available from World Wide Web: <http://www.gmfc.org>

64 United Nations. 2006. **World report on violence against children**. Geneva: United Nations Secretary General’s Study on Violence Against Children.

65 Plan. (Unpublished, 2006) **No more excuses: ending violence against children: beyond the UN study**. Interim working paper dated October 2006.

66 Shrestha, Shrestha and Paneru. Final report on mid-term evaluation on children in conflict project. 2006.

67 Ray, P. and Carter, S. 2006. **Understanding and working with children in the poorest and most difficult situations**. Plan. (Unpublished).

## Child trafficking

Child trafficking is a specialist area of child protection. It requires a particular skill set and considerable time commitment to invest in rehabilitation and reintegration. Where child trafficking issues are addressed in country programs, Plan often works through specialist partners and agencies, although awareness-raising programs and the establishment of early warning systems, for example, are proving effective, as are community-based protection and prevention measures such as those established in Togo.

Increasingly, however, Plan is taking a lobbying and advocacy role at national level, although this is not systematic, and functions mostly as part of coalitions with NGO partners. Some successes at policy level are being achieved. In India, for example, the efforts of a non-governmental organisation partnership, including

Plan, have succeeded in re-shaping the Immoral Trafficking and Prevention Act amendments bill presented to the Indian parliament. In the Americas, as in other regions, addressing child trafficking means looking at trans-national responses; in Haiti, where problems of child trafficking between Haiti and the Dominican Republic are immense, Plan has worked with UNICEF, Save the Children, World Vision and other partners to present an action plan on anti-trafficking laws to the President and the Prime Minister of Haiti. In Togo, as a result of Plan and its partners' advocacy efforts, the Law Against Child Trafficking has been adopted by parliament, and the Children's Code enshrined in law. Plan Togo documented its experiences in some research which has proved to be of benefit to other country programs.<sup>68</sup>

## Lessons learned

Within country programs, child protection at the strategic level is an emerging agenda. It is increasingly framed as a rights, rather than welfare issue, with more countries appearing to adopt a CCCD approach to protection. There remains scope, however, for Plan programs to link their activities more explicitly under child protection with national poverty reduction strategies such as poverty reduction strategy papers. Increased corporate understanding and positions on the child protection agenda will support such processes, but may well require a greater level of technical capacity within country programs and at international headquarters.

One of Plan's major comparative advantages is its ability to support communities in knowing what their entitlements are and to access them. Where Plan programs directly support child protection interventions, there is scope for increased scaling up, and for contributing these experiences more generously to the wider debate. Within partner governments, there may be a lack of clear roles and responsibilities on child protection, leading to poor coordination and duplication (at best), or absence of efforts (at worst).

Plan, by building on their relationships of trust and respect, can support governments to focus and

streamline their systems and policies, and to strengthen their institutional capacity. The UN Study reinforces the role of states in ensuring children are protected from all forms of violence and places the responsibility on governments to develop national action plans and to meet clear targets for legal change, for example, that will provide opportunities for Plan's country programs to engage with and lobby governments on this agenda.

As part of its role of promoting social accountability, Plan can act towards the child protection agenda by helping to monitor and report on the impacts of national child protection schemes at the community level. This forms part of global accountability for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, an area in which some Plan offices are rightly deepening their role, participating for example in developing the 'shadow' reports on Convention implementation for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. In years to come, it will become increasingly important for Plan to fulfil its role in this area, and to ensure that a child-centred community development approach to child protection across its programs delivers the benefits for which the potential exists.

<sup>68</sup> Plan. 2005. *For the price of a bike: child trafficking in Togo*. Dakar: Plan West Africa.

## Pillar 4: Right to participation

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child specifically articulates a child's right to participation in society. Participation is not only an end in itself, but also a mechanism by which children's rights may be realised more generally ('being participatory' as well as 'doing participation'). Participation is vital for sustainability, ownership, understanding and long-term planning of projects and programs; it is the foundation of empowerment and good governance. It is a prerequisite for maximising social and economic development, improving civil society and governance, and contributing to the sustainable achievement of all the MDGs and the realisation of the CRC.

Yet participation is also a challenge; it can be sensitive and difficult to try to address power relationships within and between families, between women and men, and especially in contexts where children are expected to be silent.

Plan programs have a long tradition of participatory approaches in their work, but it is perhaps a mark of the organisation's progress in recent years that more country programs are shifting their focus towards empowerment and governance issues. In all regions, even country programs dealing with sudden-onset crises are adopting a CCCD approach to planning, as reflected in the country program strategies of both Niger and Sudan.

In countries where needs are less acute, Plan programs increasingly address participation much more widely, using a variety of methods and approaches. Participation work appears at this stage to fall into the following categories: social inclusion approaches, gender mainstreaming, building civil society and, to a lesser extent, empowerment and good governance.

### Social inclusion

Plan programs are generally approaching social inclusion work through the evolving CCCD remit described in Part 2, focusing on the poorest and most marginalised, and in a number of countries specifically through their work with indigenous people.

One example is offered here on how to include a marginalised ethnic group. The inclusion of groups such as disabled children and orphans and vulnerable children is addressed in the section on children in especially difficult circumstances, in Part 3.

In directing its programs at the poorest, to support progress towards the MDGs and the realisation of the CRC, Plan programs focus on a wide range of excluded groups. Work with particularly vulnerable groups of



Baka pygmies in Cameroon show their birth certificates

children – such as disabled children, street children, children who are trafficked, those affected by HIV and AIDS – is described, but there is one striking example which demonstrates well how combining the four cornerstones of child-centred community development – participation, child-centred programming, supporting groups and organisations, and partnership, networking and relationship-building – can serve to create significant social change.

The example comes from Cameroon, which has focused on supporting the integration and social inclusion of the Baka. The Baka are a pygmy group who have a long history of remaining outside mainstream Cameroonian society. Working with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralisation, Plan enabled civil status registration centres that had long stopped issuing birth certificates to resume activities. Newly equipped with 5,700 birth certificates and 4,200 national identity cards, many Baka pygmies subsequently registered and participated in national elections, a record-breaking milestone in integrating pygmies into mainstream society. Birth certificates have facilitated enrolment into primary schools and registration for end-of-course examinations. Program focus in 2006 has been on

livelihoods and enhanced agricultural production, with 1,865 farmers from 30 associations trained in 2006 on how to grow oil palm and plantains, with 2,300 improved oil palm seedlings and 11,000 plantain suckers distributed for planting. This has resulted in greatly increased levels of farm ownership – many for the first time in history – and significantly reduced dependence on daily labouring for the Baka’s economically superior neighbours.<sup>69</sup>

## Gender

Gender approaches are clearly becoming more progressive within Plan country programs.

There is a growing recognition that the quality of participation is directly connected to gender issues; only if girls and boys are able to participate as equals, and are offered the same opportunities, will patterns of discrimination and the root causes of inequality be addressed. Women’s rights and child rights are mutually reinforcing; to address the structural causes and consequences of child poverty, gender disparities must be tackled head-on.

Coverage and approaches are not uniform nor informed by a wider policy framework, although a protocol document has been developed and adopted.<sup>70</sup> Despite the MDG specifically addressing the empowerment of women, some countries approach the area from a traditional social inclusion perspective, considering that for example female membership or participation in groups ‘counts’ as a gender-focused approach. Other country programs, notably those where CCCD thinking is more embedded, take a more progressive view, perceiving gender as a rights or empowerment issue and applying a gender mainstreaming approach to all their programs.

An example of this more progressive approach comes from Egypt, where in 2006 Plan co-organised, along with various government ministries, the country’s first national conference on gender: Gender and the Millennium Development Goals – Challenges and Future Vision. The conference attracted wide media attention, and served to increase collaboration and networks of government offices and non-governmental organisations working in gender issues. Similarly, in the Dominican Republic, Plan worked alongside the national Teacher Training Institute in 2006 to develop the country’s first teacher training course on gender and education, which will ultimately improve gender equality within the education sector.

At times, programs without a specific gender focus, but designed to work holistically on community empowerment, have indirect impacts on gender relations, such as Plan Zimbabwe’s Training for Transformation.<sup>71</sup> To ensure that gender is approached in a comprehensive, mainstreamed way, rather than in a piecemeal fashion, however, country programs need firstly to recognise the gap, and secondly to ensure specialist technical support. Some countries are adopting this approach. Plan Kenya has appointed a gender adviser to facilitate mainstreaming and Plan Tanzania is placing specific emphasis within its country planning framework on gender mainstreaming both institutionally and within its programs.

‘Doing gender’, however, is not the same as ‘being gender-focused’, just as ‘doing participation’ is different from ‘being participatory’. The institutional aspect of gender, as it relates to Plan’s own structures, policies and actions, is central to Plan becoming a more rights-focused, gender-conscious organisation. Gender audits are useful tools for this, such as that undertaken by Plan Asia, which conducted a gender scan of education programmes in 10 countries (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam), building on a similar exercise which took place in 2003. While great efforts have clearly been made to address gender inequality in education, the scan also reveals a number of areas where more accelerated action is needed. These include intensified advocacy with governments at national level, more effective sensitisation of Plan staff, partners, community members, teachers and children, and more effective



Two children attending the Plan Kindergarten in Indonesia

<sup>69</sup> Plan Cameroon Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished). Mid-term review pygmy rights and identity.

<sup>70</sup> Plan. 2005. **Gender Equality Protocol**. Woking: Plan Ltd.

<sup>71</sup> Plan Zimbabwe. 2005. Food security and poverty alleviation: medium term review.

scaling up of successful interventions. As a result of these findings, country programs are revising their education country programme outlines to incorporate key recommendations. Plan Asia is to encourage similar audits for programs in other key work areas, such as health, and water and sanitation.

Although Plan offices are clearly making progress, more needs to be done on the 'gender agenda'. Increased use of gender-sensitive program planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation methodologies is necessary. Plan needs to mainstream gender in all its programs and achieve implementation in a systematic way, embedding both the promotion of women's and girls' rights and the sensitisation of boys and men on gender issues, an area which needs a more intensive approach than currently used. Ultimately, a more coherent policy framework, based on the principles of CCCD and child rights, combined with a more proactive approach to staff training, would support Plan in raising the profile of gender both within its programs and within its own institutional practice.

## Strengthening civil society

A rights-based approach to development argues that effective, responsive, sustainable development is partially dependent on the ability of civil society to catalyse the efforts of the government, to provide local leadership, and to promote direct links to communities. This is the complement to supporting duty-bearers to deliver on their commitments; claimants must also be strengthened to know what their rights are, to articulate them and to be familiar with the process for claiming them.

Depending on the level of establishment and maturity of civil society in-country, there is a wide range of examples of Plan country programs across all regions using their multi-level capability to generate increased awareness of rights and capacity to claim them through civil society. As part of Plan's increasing emphasis on working in partnerships and alliances, this often involves institutional strengthening, enhancing the technical capacity, governance and maturity of civil society in order to lobby and act more effectively for the benefit of communities. It may involve legalising or legitimising civil society organisations, promoting accountability mechanisms such as the community monitoring and evaluation

systems developed in Honduras. It may also involve building connections to government structures and policies, grasping for instance the opportunities offered by decentralisation.

In Kenya, for example, Plan is working with the Ministry of Culture and Social Services to build the capacity of community-based organisations. This has resulted in drawing up 28 community development plans, all using participatory methodologies. In Bolivia, Annual Municipal Operative Plans form the budget planning framework at municipal level, which legally requires community participation. Plan is using participatory methodologies to strengthen informed participation of children, their families and communities, for example training communities in managing local data to support their demands, and to hold the municipality accountable for the resource allocation commitments made.

In some countries, Plan is able to seize on opportunities offered through legislative changes to increase partnership working with civil society. This is particularly the case where civil society may be relatively recent, or emerging. In Vietnam, for instance, the new Law on Associations has offered Plan the opportunity to support emerging and newly legitimate autonomous community-based organisations and local non-governmental organisations, a chance which the country program has taken up enthusiastically to set a process of capacity-building in motion.

Part of enabling individuals and communities to participate effectively is to enhance relationships and partnerships between communities and government. Plan has a particular strength in this area, its longstanding relationships at different levels within countries having built up trust and respect over time. In several countries, it is apparent that Plan has been able to act as a conduit, or catalyst, between communities and government, often via the opportunities offered by decentralisation. This has frequently delivered striking results. In El Salvador, for example, Plan has worked together with local schools and the Ministry of Education on a Co-existence and Participation Plan that will be applied in every school in the country, part of the post-conflict movement towards peace and violence reduction in which Plan is involved.

Where countries are emerging from a period of political instability or one-party rule, civil society is often emergent, and special emphasis is needed to build its capacity and networks. In these contexts, Plan countries are often channelling a significant proportion of funds to enhance institutional strengthening, by training in accountability, promoting child rights and building advocacy capacity, for example. Yet these contexts present special challenges; a limited supply of partners with the capacity and experience to work with Plan's rights-based approach means fewer opportunities for implementing large programs or scaling up. Plan Kenya's assessment system for evaluating the 'health status' of civil society partner organisations – based on capability, transparency, democratic status, values and principles, accompanied by a capacity-building program – is an example of good practice in this area, and has demonstrated strong results in terms of building the confidence of community-based organisations, in enhancing their capacity to lobby for community participation in local policy-making, and in progress towards more inclusive participation, especially of women.<sup>72</sup>

A key part of building a sustainable and capable civil society is generating networks and alliances. A broader network offers an opportunity to identify a common purpose, to share assets and capabilities, to increase recognition and legitimacy, and to add weight to lobbying and advocacy activities. This is one area which could add value to many country programs, although pockets of good practice clearly exist, such as in Pakistan, where civil society is growing in strength but lacks coordination. Plan here is focusing on clustering and networking, to build alliances and increase coherence within and among community-based organisations, national-level NGOs and local government structures. Several other countries mention federating groups as part of their strategy for sustainability. In Thailand, for example, in addition to strengthening groups and organisations, Plan is also promoting the scaling-up of community groups and organisations into networks at sub-district and district levels.

Plan's wide reach in many of the countries it works in, plus its multi-level capability and strong partnerships from community to national level, provide a strong platform for generating networks among and between civil society members. With the increased capacity and scale generated through these networks, lobbying duty-bearers to fulfil their commitments holds greater power and sway.

## Empowerment and governance

Examples of Plan's country strategic plans that are extending their work on child and community participation towards empowerment and governance are much fewer within country documentation.<sup>73</sup> Governance in particular tends to be encapsulated within the CCCD elements of participation and scaling up. These areas of focus are still in the relatively early stages of development; there are nonetheless some diverse examples of good practice within country programs.

Plan Uganda's Empowering Boys and Girls Living in Poverty program combines the promotion of child rights with the development of community management capacity and strengthening micro-finance institutions. This program has delivered significant improvements in claiming rights: birth registrations have increased significantly, parish development associations have been established, and have seen increasing claims for accountability on community-managed projects, and increased levels of confidence and capacity have been noted.<sup>74</sup>

Plan Philippines, one of the few countries that does explicitly mention governance, proposes a useful starting point for a rights-based approach, arguing that weak public demand for basic services for children stems from the lack of public understanding of children's rights and legal entitlements. To combat this, the Plan country office focused on child-friendly governance in 2006, establishing community-managed information systems to inform local decision-making and programming, which will hopefully be scaled up in years to come.

At a similar stage in its thinking, the Bangladesh Enabling Environment Program operates in collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and UNICEF, aiming to strengthen weak governance where possible and address serious issues of social exclusion. Plan's multi-level capability is offering entry points here, allowing for example the inclusion of children into advocacy on child protection issues, such as early marriage, dowry and child labour at a range of levels. The Children's Parliament, held in May 2006, raised issues such as these and was attended by the Ministers of Health and Education, receiving wide media coverage.

In Guatemala, Plan is focusing directly on strengthening community-level governance from a

<sup>72</sup> Mid-term evaluation of the community capacity-building program. Plan Kenya Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

<sup>73</sup> For example, internal child-centred community development scoping exercise. Plan Ltd, Woking, 2006.

<sup>74</sup> Plan Uganda Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).



CCCD perspective. In 2006, achievements included 14 municipal planning offices trained on accountable governance; nine municipal public policies on child and adolescent rights were initiated; nine databases of social and demographic data were installed in municipal planning offices; and seven socio-economic diagnostic studies were carried out. There has been a noted increase in interest by municipal governments in capacity-building for improved service delivery.

Plan country and regional programs are increasingly using the mechanisms and opportunities offered by the media for work on empowerment and also advocacy, in particular child media. Kids Waves, for instance, has enabled thousands of children in 11 countries to participate in making radio shows. Issues addressed in the broadcasts are AIDS, abuse and exploitation of children, genital cutting and child trafficking. An external evaluation in Senegal indicates that Radio Gune Yi has proved to be an effective instrument of advocacy and awareness-raising, although work is needed to help it keep pace with the rapidly-changing media landscape in Senegal. Child participation and empowerment have been another benefit of the project; an evaluation in 2005<sup>75</sup> indicated that participation in the broadcasting was often the inspiration for children's subsequent improvements in confidence, in technical and vocational skills, communication skills within their families, in belief in their rights and in hope for the future.

As Plan's advocacy capability grows, the lessons learned from implementing radio, television and newspaper campaigns have potential to lead its work on empowerment. Media, including child media, is a powerful tool, and Plan is an increasingly acknowledged leader in its use. Harnessing this regional and country-level experience to enhance its increasing advocacy work offers vast potential.

Guided by these and other examples, Plan programs could well start to address more strategically, and with a greater focus on rights and entitlements, the fields of empowerment and governance. This is a core part of Plan's role and remit locally, nationally and internationally as part of the global accountability mechanism for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child poverty, to some extent, begins and ends with governance; it is only when governments realise their commitments under the CRC that significant global impacts on child poverty and more responsive and accountable child-focused policies will start to be seen.



A Plan child media project in the Dominican Republic

<sup>75</sup> Ericsson, R. 2005. *I am a child but I have my rights too! Radio campaign in West Africa, final evaluation report.* Dakar: Plan West Africa.

## Lessons learned

Participation is clearly a growing area of Plan's work, having been facilitated by the advent of CRC and child-centred community development. Plan's multi-level approach offers a considerable comparative advantage, providing the mechanism to facilitate the links between micro, meso and macro levels.

The success of the radio work in West Africa indicates that participation and empowerment are a crucial part of realising the Convention, although more research on impact is needed, and issues about gender equality, inclusivity, sustainability and representation need to be addressed.

Plan's experience and thinking on participation is gradually moving along the continuum towards empowerment, gender equality and governance. There are many examples of effective work on this agenda across the world, but these are as yet discrete and dispersed. A more coherent, cross-cutting approach, which does not detract from Plan's decentralised, locally differentiated model but which does provide framework guidance for action based on minimum standards and principles, would help ensure that participation is effectively mainstreamed across all country program activity.

Participation as a means, rather than an end – 'being participatory' as well as 'doing participation' – is a critical part of supporting governments to implement their own poverty reduction strategies, to achieving the MDGs, and ultimately realising the CRC. There is scope for more country programs to take a mainstreaming approach to participation, envisaging it as a mechanism for achieving the rights of survival,

development and protection, and for generating sustainability. Similarly, there is scope for country programs to make more explicit linkages between the participation agenda and the relevant national poverty reduction strategy.

Building civil society's capabilities to represent and lobby on behalf of children and communities is a crucial part of the participation agenda. Plan can search for new ways of working with the whole gamut of civil society bodies, such as trade unions, faith groups and the private sector. There may be opportunities to build collaborations across these groups, as well as to legitimise the voice of civil society through, for example, issues such as 'codes of conduct' within national NGOs.

A great deal of child poverty is a direct result of poor or weak governance. Good governance is representative – it is carried out in a transparent, responsible and accountable manner. The role of civil society is critical here, and this is an area in which Plan is well placed to further its efforts in the future, to contribute to both global accountability and the democratisation of society.

Finally, the participation agenda also holds concerns for Plan as a corporate body. As an organisation, Plan itself needs to ensure that it is truly participatory and consultative in its operations, structures and hierarchy. The organisation is committed to reviewing its own processes, policies and procedures to ensure that this is the case; the ongoing institutional restructuring, discussed in Part 4, will open up more scope for the organisation to reflect.

## 2.3 Beyond the pillars: the indivisibility of rights

The above review of Plan's operations around the globe shows some of the organisation's operations under the four pillars of the CRC, while locating it on the continuum of development processes. It is apparent that much of Plan's work is moving beyond the normative framework of the Millennium Development Goals, towards a fully rights-based approach, more broadly enabling the realisation of commitments under the Convention.

This means recognising that rights are indivisible, as well as inalienable, and that their fulfilment often requires an integrated, holistic approach to development. Plan's decades of experience at local level have ensured that its programs have always practised this approach, as 2006 country progress program reports demonstrate. In the changing global context, however, Plan programs are recognising the need to scale up these integrated responses, and to bring them into the more rights-based framework of child-centred community development.

There are two key examples that clearly highlight the concept of the indivisibility of rights in Plan's programming. These are firstly HIV and AIDS and, secondly, household economic security.

### AIDS

The spread of HIV infection is one of the main development issues facing the world in the third millennium. It affects social, economic, political, cultural and human rights; it cuts across survival, protection, development and participation. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS, which was agreed by the Global Partners Forum in 2003, establishes international standards for realising the rights of children affected by HIV and AIDS.<sup>76</sup>

Plan's response to HIV offers a strong example of indivisibility. Plan works with affected children, families and communities to help ensure their survival and development; to help protect children from abuse and maltreatment; to reduce social exclusion as a result of stigma and discrimination and enable HIV and AIDS affected children and communities to actively participate in the response, inform others of its effects and lobby for more action to prevent its spread.

Plan's strategic approach for its work in HIV and AIDS is set out in 'Creating a climate for innovation'.<sup>77</sup>

The framework defines the scope of Plan's contributions to the global response to HIV and AIDS and articulates Plan's profile as a rights-based, child-centred community development organisation. The framework builds on good practice, in particular the Circle of Hope which was originally developed by Plan Uganda and subsequently adopted by the Hope for African Children Initiative. The Circle of Hope was also favourably received at the 2006 international AIDS conference in Toronto. All of Plan's programming and advocacy support the implementation of Article 24 of the Convention and, specifically, General Comment Number 3.

The framework defines Plan's relationship to duty-bearers: the role of a service provider of last resort; building the capacity of local organisations to demand resource allocations from duty-bearers; influencing and supporting governments to meet these demands; and advocacy and lobbying of international organisations to provide more equitable and more effective development assistance. As a result Plan's country office staff are increasingly involved in national policy and coordination bodies for AIDS programming, bringing a child-centred and child rights influence to national policies and action plans, national legislation and implementation frameworks.

Plan is a member of regional and international alliances and collaborations such as the Hope for African Children Initiative, the West African Working Group on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, the Canadian Coalition for HIV/AIDS and Youth in Africa, and the Global Partners Forum on Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS.

With the adoption of the Circle of Hope, the range of activities supported by Plan is widening and covers four main areas:

1. Reducing children's vulnerability – the right to be protected from HIV infection.
2. Extending the life of the parent-child relationship – the right to a family.
3. Living positively and preparing the family for transition – the right to support of families affected by HIV.
4. Ensuring the child's future – the right to special care and support for children in need.

<sup>76</sup> UNAIDS, UNICEF and USAID. 2004. *Children on the brink 2004. A joint report of new orphan estimates and framework for action*. Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

<sup>77</sup> Plan. 2006. *Creating a climate for innovation: a framework for Plan's response to HIV and AIDS*. Woking: Plan Ltd.

Plan's global annual expenditure on AIDS-related outcomes has increased from \$2.6 million in 2000 to \$15.7 million in 2006, and is projected to reach \$50 million per year.

Around half of Plan's AIDS programming budget is directed through the Hope for African Children Initiative, of which Plan was a founding partner. This pan-African partnership aims to scale up community-based support to children affected by AIDS and to harmonise approaches to mobilising resources and delivering them. While the scale of ambitions of the Hope for African Children Initiative at times outstrips its capacity, engagement with its mechanisms enables Plan to work in partnership with partners facing similar challenges.<sup>78</sup>

In addition to work at the regional level through the Hope for African Children Initiative, Plan also engages with international approaches such as the UN's 'Three Ones' model.<sup>79</sup> At national level, by forming strategic alliances, Plan is becoming increasingly able to influence national HIV agendas and maximise leverage of resources for child-centred programming.

Plan Mali provides an example of how many Plan country programs have transformed their role in recent years, switching from an organisation that previously mobilised funds, then used them to provide technical and financial support to community-based groups, to an organisation that is now contracted by government to provide technical support to governmental and non-governmental AIDS programs, with resources mobilised by the government of Mali from multi-lateral sources.

Within country programs, Plan is using different approaches to respond to varying contextual needs. Malawi provides a strong example of applying a multi-level CCCD approach to country programming. Here, Plan manages a sub-sector of the National AIDS Commission's HIV program using resources from the Global Fund. It is also part of a national policy committee developing policy on orphan care and, at community level, guided by the Circle of Hope framework, working to establish voluntary testing and counselling centres, to raise awareness, to implement community-based care initiatives and to develop effective referral systems. Plan

programs in Africa especially continue to emphasise real grassroots-level action, supporting children and adolescents to define their priorities and to formulate them into a cohesive advocacy agenda for sexual health, HIV prevention and care.

An explicitly rights-based approach comes from Uganda, where Plan has entered into a partnership with the Association of Uganda Women Lawyers to provide legal aid to people living with HIV. This project raises awareness among women and children about their rights of inheritance, follows up cases of violation of these rights, and reinforces universal birth registration as an essential first step towards protecting the property rights of orphaned children. A 2005 evaluation three years into the program in one district found a significant reduction of legal rights abuses, with women more aware of their rights and more confident about seeking redress. There were increased numbers of reported cases of property grabbing to local courts, and an increase in inheritance disputes being settled through out-of-court dispute resolution.<sup>80</sup>

Also in Uganda, experience of working with children affected by AIDS has highlighted for Plan the fact that even in very poor and difficult situations, child-centred and rights-based principles are relevant and crucial to the provision of effective support. However, the difficulties are very real and there is a need for Plan countries to understand more about successful good practices and for greater clarity on the application of CCCD approaches to this very special field.



Young people participating in a Plan community health project north of Lima, Peru

78 See the **Hope for African Children Initiative**. [online]. [Accessed 15 May 2007]. Available from World Wide Web: [www.hopeforafricanchildren.org](http://www.hopeforafricanchildren.org)

79 The 'Three Ones' approach consists of a one action framework providing the basis for co-ordinating the work of all partners, one national AIDS coordinating authority, and one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system.

80 Plan Uganda Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

## Lessons learned

Based on a review of Plan's work, the Circle of Hope framework, its conceptual approach to AIDS, was developed and rolled out across Plan countries. An evaluation framework is being developed as part of this process to allow Plan to further assess the effectiveness of the approach and to undertake a comprehensive review of activity in 2010.

In the meantime, Plan's AIDS framework policy sets out some priorities for the future:<sup>81</sup>

- although gains are being made at country level, increased technical and financial resources are needed for programs

- greater liaison with bilateral donors will ensure that Plan programming meshes with strategic priorities of donors in-country
- greater scaling up of successful interventions requires technical expertise and strong links at national level
- a funding strategy is needed to maximise impact: the Global Fund has approved \$2.8 billion of AIDS funding to 131 countries since April 2002

Greater clarity is also needed on how to highlight and promote best practices in the forms of, for example, the Circle of Hope framework among governments and communities and on how to translate the methodology into practical programming.

## Household economic security

Household economic security determined by the capacity of the household to provide for the basic rights and needs of children (survival and protection), and thereby to facilitate their development and participation in society, for example through education. Poorer households are vulnerable to economic shocks, and children are often first in line when shocks hit, facing reduced food intake, or being forced to leave school to earn income for the household.

Household economic security aims to:

- promote strategies and systems to promote pro-poor economic growth and create income generating opportunities
- build knowledge, skills and networks that enhance the ability of people to participate in these opportunities
- strengthen the economic security and resiliency of households to cope and recover from risks and shocks
- reduce barriers and promote opportunities for people who have been unable to be economically active or who are socially excluded

The agenda for household economic security is to improve the financial situation of households by building up equity for the future. To do this, people need to build assets for resilience to shocks. Assets are multi-dimensional and include skills, knowledge, relationships and other elements necessary for overall productivity and well-being. Using the sustainable livelihoods framework, assets can be understood in the following way.

- Financial capital – resources that can be used to make purchases, build wealth and address emergencies such as cash; savings; assets that can be liquidated; access to banking; and so on.
- Human capital – these are generally personal assets such as knowledge, skills, information, good health, empowerment, and the ability to influence relationships and pursue goals.
- Social capital – not socially excluded; ability to have access to information and support from groups such as extended family, community members or networks built around livelihood activities.
- Political capital – legal identity; knowledge about rights and responsibilities relating to earning livelihood; and so on.
- Natural capital – resources from the environment such as land, forests, water, clear air, etc.<sup>82</sup>

Plan's work on household economic security will support the achievement of the MDGs of reducing hunger and child mortality. It is also a powerful example of the indivisibility of rights, underpinning work across the four pillars of the CRC and helping individuals and families move up the ladder from the 'declining' to the 'coping' poor, and from the 'coping' to the 'improving' poor.

Even though some advances have been made in creating opportunities for diversified forms of income (for example through promoting sustainable livelihoods) this is not a current area of strength in Plan activity. To date, the greatest advances in household economic security have been in the area of micro-finance.

<sup>81</sup> Plan, 2006. *Creating a climate for innovation: a framework for Plan's response to HIV and AIDS*. Woking: Plan Ltd.

<sup>82</sup> For more guidance see *Institute of Development Studies, Livelihood Studies*. [online]. [Accessed 15 May 2007]  
Available from the World Wide Web: [www.livelihoods.org](http://www.livelihoods.org)



The Credit and Savings with Education program – a partnership between Plan Ghana, Akoti Rural Bank and Freedom from Hunger Ghana

Micro-finance underscores all the four pillars of rights, through its emphasis on reducing vulnerability to shocks and stresses (survival and protection) and through offering a springboard for development and participation to the declining and coping poor.

Plan has a traditional strength in micro-finance work. It is clear that, based on strong technical skills, country programs are now seeking to link micro-finance interventions with sustainable livelihoods programs, and scaling up where conditions permit. A final evaluation of Plan's work in sustainable micro-finance across the organisation found that work in this area has achieved its overall goal of creating commitment and capacity throughout Plan to practise sustainable micro-finance programming. Targets in all three key objective areas were realised during the five years (2001-06) of the strategy; these included increasing technical capacity in micro-finance planning within Plan; realising micro-finance institutional partnerships to deliver large-scale services with a focus on women; and building and sustaining the political will and resources to support micro-finance. The evaluation recommends that the corporate policy on micro-finance is updated based on the achievements and the lessons learned.<sup>83</sup>

In Africa, village savings and loan associations are recognised as particularly useful mechanisms for addressing survival, protection, development and participation because of their proven effectiveness in widespread outreach to the rural poor especially, their relatively easy path to sustainability, their simplicity, flexibility and low costs, and their ease of integration with other development objectives.<sup>84</sup> A number of programs have been successful in reaching rural women working with credit unions and rural banks to form credit and savings associations. Groups of women organise into

groups and guarantee each other's loans. In addition to promoting savings and loans, these programs offer education in topics such as women and child health, nutrition and business development. In Ghana, women who participated in a credit with education program reported improvements in their businesses and income. The women reported an accumulation of assets – both within the household and in the business – and used their profits for improving the household diet as well as investing in children's education.<sup>85</sup>

In Nepal, a study conducted by Plan found that even with outreach to more than 100,000 clients, 30 per cent of families did not have access to the credit and savings program that it supports. This rose to 35 to 50 per cent among discriminated castes and tribes who represent the poorest groups.<sup>86</sup> In response, the main focus of Plan's micro-finance program over the last two years has been to deepen its poverty outreach and develop models that can reach the extremely poor. These include adapting the Safe Save model which provides flexible arrangements to families to save and borrow small sums; the special inclusion strategy in which a detailed assessment is made of the assets of very poor families and projects built around these with an initial element of subsidy followed by the mainstream micro-finance program; and a leasehold vegetable scheme for poor landless families in which agro-inputs and support are scaled down over five years and the families are linked to micro-finance services.

Finally, Plan is conducting promising work in the field of vocational education and training for income generation. This work is relatively small scale so far, but early examples are showing promise. In Uganda, for example, Plan is working with the Ugandan government at national and district levels to build the capacity of vocational training institutes, primary teacher training institutions and local school management committees. This program has demonstrated significant progress, with quality inspections showing increases in enrolment rates in the vocational training institutes in particular.<sup>87</sup> In India, the Livelihoods Advancement Business School model developed by Dr Reddy's Foundation, a partner of Plan India, is a good example of vocational training courses that are based on market surveys, including training in life skills, and are followed by job placements. Plan Haiti's country program places strong emphasis on both micro-finance and vocational training, working through partnerships with local organisations. These programs need to be evaluated to determine if they have potential for replication or scaling up.

83 Boyle, P. Draft final evaluation of sustainable micro-finance in Plan. Plan USA, 2006.

84 Schiller, J. Presentation to the Regional RESA Network Meeting on HIV/AIDS, August 2006.

85 Alhaji Yahaya Abdul-Rahman. Mid-term and final evaluations for the Akoti credit and savings with education program. 2004, 2006.

86 Gurung, Y. and Subedi, G. Social exclusion, vulnerability and deprivation in Plan Nepal program areas. 2005.

87 Plan Uganda Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

## Lessons learned

Plan is clearly moving in the direction of increased understanding of the integrated and indivisible nature of rights, and is successfully developing its programs more strategically than could have been foreseen a decade ago. Programs and thematic interventions are based, as they have been at country level for many years, in terms of holistic responses to rights. Placing these needs within the conceptual framework of CCCD is evidently offering added value for interventions, making explicit the need for all four pillars of rights to be considered at any one time.

In the next year a framework for household economic security will further define and clarify how Plan can approach these issues more strategically. A review will be conducted to identify activities necessary to advance household economic security and to identify examples of both effective and promising practice.

Two areas not notable for their prominent appearance in country program planning and performance documentation are environmental sustainability and adult literacy issues. The links between adult literacy and child social and educational development are well established through research,<sup>88</sup> as is the need for increased attention to environmental issues particularly from a disaster risk reduction perspective. Both of these, if not addressed within program design, can constitute major constraints to successful implementation which can potentially undermine sustainability, discussed below. While there are clearly pockets of good practice, these may well be areas in which Plan wishes to develop its technical capacity and strategic planning in future.

<sup>88</sup> See, for example, Lauglo, J. 2001. Engaging with adults: the case for increased support to adult basic education in sub-Saharan Africa. *World Bank Africa Region Human Development Working Paper series*. Washington: World Bank or Psacharopoulos, G. and Woodhall, M. 1985. *Education for development; an analysis of investment choices*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## 2.4 Sustainability

A key issue for assessing impact and effectiveness, from the village to the global level, is sustainability. How can Plan ensure that the organisation's activities, interventions, influencing and policy dialogue will set strong foundations for the long term?

Sustainability is built on local ownership, as well as a wider environment that enables stability and forward planning. To achieve this, however, a change in power relations is often required. A useful framework to assess the sustainability of programs, therefore, is to consider how changes take place within wider transformations.<sup>89</sup>

### Transformations

- How have relationships of power changed? Are these for the better or worse?
- Are these changes sustainable? How 'institutionalised' are the changes?
- Are the changes durable – able to withstand shocks?
- Have cultural values changed?
- On what levels have changes taken place: micro, meso and macro levels?

### Dimensions

- Duty-bearers –  
Policy and practice? Service provision?
- Civil society –  
Networks, legitimacy and status?  
Organisational capacity?
- Collective/group level –  
Recognition and legitimacy? Group learning?
- Individual/personal level –  
Child survival and development?  
Participation and inclusion?

Analysis of country programs shows that most Plan programs enact change on at least two of these dimensions, and some on more, with the collective/group level being perhaps the weakest area. The challenge for Plan is to increase the number of programs that take a focused approach to enacting change on all of these dimensions simultaneously; and whose impacts consequently result in significant and long-lasting changes in power relations.

To generate sustainability, Plan programs tend to use the tools of partnerships, institutional strengthening of civil society and government, a multi-level approach and scaling up. Plan's role in strengthening civil society has been considered earlier, but it is noticeable that more and more country programs, especially in Asia and the Americas, are placing increased emphasis on institutional strengthening of governments.

This area intersects with the growing focus on scaling up and the emerging theme, discussed below, of decentralisation. Plan country offices on all three continents are demonstrating an increased tendency to engage with governmental structures in particular, and to supply technical expertise for support in realising the Millennium Development Goals and commitments under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Plan country programs are finding the capability, and building the experience, of working in partnership at national level. Country programs have worked hard to develop consultative status with government departments in many countries and the organisation is using these relationships effectively to influence government policy and programs. Some Plan programs are developing new and innovative ways of creating partnerships with government. In Vietnam, for example, Plan has volunteered to undertake research for the Vietnamese government's Social Economic Development Plan. These resources will hopefully act as a precursor to greater engagement on mainstream policy areas. In China, Plan invests efforts into piloting projects that can serve to build the capacity and expand the knowledge base of mainstream government agencies. Plan is also providing technical support for the Chinese government via an innovative program funded by the World Bank. Plan China is one of only three international non-governmental organisations (along with World Vision and Action Aid) that will provide technical assistance to train country and township government officials and village facilitators on participatory methodology, project planning and implementation.

<sup>89</sup> Gallagher, H. Impact within a rights-based approach: different dimensions of change. Plan internal presentation, 2006.



Another example from Asia comes from Thailand, where direct economic assistance for schooling to individual children is being phased out, and the focus shifting to building the capacity of community-managed education funds, offering a form of insurance for educational opportunities for children in rural communities. In the Americas, Plan Guatemala has signed a macro-level agreement with the Ministry of Health to extend the coverage of basic health services in 15 municipalities. This will involve the progressive transfer of the funding responsibility to the Ministry, with technical support from Plan.

Plan is also, however, working increasingly in coalition with national-level civil society, partly to facilitate the federating and networking of civil society organisations, and partly to support changes in legislation. An example of the latter is the role played by several countries, such as Pakistan and Vietnam, in producing the 'shadow' reports on progress towards realising the CRC, which are created by partnerships of non-governmental organisations and presented to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child alongside state reports.

A focus on the MDGs and the realisation of the Convention means having the willingness and capability to scale up. There are many examples within this program review of how successful project interventions have, through Plan's multi-level capability, been scaled up to generate wider impacts. An interesting instance comes from Niger, where a female-focused micro-finance program, in which Plan invests only technical support and assistance, has operated so successfully that the number of savings and credit groups in the area has increased six-fold. Following its presentation at Plan's regional micro-

finance meeting, the Niger approach has become a model for several other African countries.

Within rights-based approaches, scaling up is seen as having greater impact on more people. But size does not necessarily equate to quality. A CCCD approach calls for strategic thinking and actions that optimise impact while retaining the principles of non-discrimination, participation and accountability.

## Lessons learned

In terms of sustainability, Plan's emphasis on partnerships, networking, institutional and civil society strengthening seems to be delivering strong outcomes. The multi-level approach offers strong potential for scaling up, but taking programs to scale is still, in some locations, an emerging area, where capacity gaps exist and where a carefully designed strategy, plus increased sharing of experience and best practice would be useful.

The sustainable livelihoods approach has proved to be a powerful tool in contexts such as Uganda for understanding and analysing the circumstances of vulnerable children and their families and for designing relevant interventions, leading to greater sustainability. It may well be that other programs could benefit from this approach, particularly as an analytical tool to explore alternative livelihood strategies. Plan's increasing focus on working in partnership will deliver greater sustainability impacts in the medium term; however, this will require greater clarity on the nature and operation of partnerships, as described in Part 4.

## 2.5 Summary

This part of the program review has considered experience in 46 Plan countries' programs across the world up to 2006. It has identified areas of strength and expertise, and sifted out some of the learning so far. It has also indicated some areas in which Plan can improve and develop its operations.

From this review of country experience, a number of emerging themes have arisen, with which Plan's country programs are beginning to engage and which are likely to become increasingly significant on the global development agenda. These are discussed in Part 3.





Togolese refugees in a camp in Benin after post-election violence in 2005

## Part 3

What next?

Emerging themes and challenges

While work under the four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, described in Part 2, focuses attention on the ongoing, pervasive rights that are still denied to millions of children living in poverty, new areas of concern constantly arise. Based on this review of Plan's programs in a changing external environment, a number of emerging themes have been identified:

- emergency response, preparedness and risk reduction
- urbanisation and decentralisation
- children in extremely difficult circumstances

This section assesses the rationale behind these emerging themes, and what they mean for Plan at an institutional level.

### 3.1 Emergencies: disaster response and risk reduction

As a global development organisation responding to disasters, Plan operates within an emergency context that has changed rapidly over the last decade. Among other developments, the frequency and scope of 'natural' and 'man-made' disasters have increased, and their impact on an escalating number of affected populations has grown as a result.<sup>90</sup> Progressively more accurate hazard monitoring systems and disaster risk indices mean that information on the nature and predictability of disasters is more accessible than ever. However, the long-term consequences of disasters are increasingly more detrimental to affected populations, and remain a key factor in chronic poverty and underdevelopment. There is general agreement in the development community that the number of disasters is likely to increase as climate change and global warming generate more severe weather-related events, with concomitant effects on economic development and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Humanitarian response is a key component of Plan's work. Plan's resources, contacts and facilities in more than 40 of the world's poorest countries are uniquely placed to provide emergency aid for disaster-affected communities, both in and beyond their established program areas. In 2005, for example, Plan's humanitarian response included emergencies such as the earthquake in Pakistan, Hurricane Stan in Central America and the food crisis in Malawi. In 2006, Plan continued to respond to acute emergencies as well as continuing its ongoing support to crises that had fallen from the world's attention.

Child participation is especially challenging in disaster and emergency situations, but Plan's work in early childhood care and development and primary education in Aceh following the tsunami provides a model for country programs. By the end of June 2006, Plan had spent US\$28.25 million on tsunami response programs in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Thailand in survival, protection, development and participation, working through health, psychosocial support, education, habitat, livelihood recovery and child rights programs. Plan is constantly revisiting and revising its approach to working with communities affected by disasters, and is currently developing revised guidelines for staff.

A major disaster response in 2005/06 occurred in Pakistan. An external evaluation<sup>91</sup> of Plan's earthquake response measures indicated that its education approaches appeared highly effective, referring to the construction of some 40 primary schools to replace those destroyed, assistance to the government to ensure that all schools were adequately staffed, and addressing psychosocial needs in the aftermath. A long-term strategy to support the rehabilitation of the education sector in affected areas has subsequently been developed.

There is an increasing recognition within Plan, however, that as well as responding to disasters, there is a need to develop an increased focus on disaster risk reduction. Disaster risk reduction is not a new concept, but the last decade has seen a fresh focus on the importance of addressing how vulnerable populations are exposed to risk. Several global movements, such as the UN International Strategy on Disaster Reduction and DIPECHO, the disaster preparedness program of ECHO, have advocated the importance of incorporating a culture of disaster risk reduction into the humanitarian sphere. Interventions to reduce vulnerability and empower communities to be resilient to the impact of natural hazards reinforce the humanitarian imperative, establishing disaster risk reduction as a cross-cutting issue in both emergency response and development processes.

The incorporation of disaster risk reduction into Plan's work represents an opportunity to consolidate and expand on Plan's disaster response capacity and program achievements. By incorporating disaster risk reduction into all elements of its work, Plan is able to have a greater impact on the communities it assists and protect more vulnerable people, especially children. By combining disaster risk reduction

<sup>90</sup> According to Munich Re (one of the world's largest re-insurers), economic losses from disasters in the 1990s totalled over \$608 billion, greater than losses over the four previous decades combined. This is supported by recent research by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters based in Belgium, which found that there were 360 natural disasters in 2005 compared with 305 in 2004. [www.difd.gov.uk/news/files/disaster-risk-reduction-faqs](http://www.difd.gov.uk/news/files/disaster-risk-reduction-faqs), 22 January 2007.

<sup>91</sup> Goyder, H. External evaluation of Plan support to earthquake zones in Pakistan. 2006.

initiatives with humanitarian responses, Plan can achieve wider international recognition as a responsive and proactive humanitarian organisation.

Country programs are increasingly integrating disaster risk reduction into broader development planning, as a 2006 survey of country offices has shown. Planning mechanisms vary greatly, however, with Asia country programs, perhaps based on their experience of responding to two very large disasters, taking the lead. West Africa appears at a relatively early stage of thinking, while the region of the Americas has some strong programs individually, yet there is perhaps scope for greater regional-level harmonisation. Within Eastern and Southern Africa, countries such as Malawi and Ethiopia could be used as a starting point for a regionally-focused disaster response network.

Plan's new disaster policy and strategy on disaster management start to address disaster risk reduction more comprehensively. Countries are encouraged to take a proactive approach to disaster preparedness, to assess risks and vulnerabilities, to identify response mechanisms, to increase coordination systems and formulate child protection policies. In El Salvador, for example, Plan has worked around hurricanes, volcanoes, tropical storms and floods. As part of its technical expertise in disaster risk reduction, the Ministry of Education has requested Plan's support to design an emergency plan manual for the national schools system, which includes a risk map and an emergency plan to be distributed nationally.

Plan's increasing involvement in all areas of disaster work means developing its capacity to produce risk assessments and contingency plans, as well as generating partnerships with national systems. It also means designing its longer-term programs based on knowledge and experience of disaster recovery, and adopting compliance to mechanisms such as the Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response. In 2006, for the first time, Plan began using the Development Assistance Committee criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of its work and to increase shared learning across the organisation.



Urban slum housing in Ecuador

### 3.2 Urbanisation and decentralisation

In 2007, for the first time in history, it is predicted that the majority of people will live in urban areas.<sup>92</sup> Throughout much of the developing world, this will result in larger slum populations, issues of overcrowding, inadequate housing, and a lack of water and sanitation, and a strain on essential services, including health and education. In urban slums and squatter settlements, mortality rates of children can be five times as high as in the more well-off districts.

Millennium Development Goal targets 10 and 11 – halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and improving the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020 – are excellent entry points for approaching urban interventions. But UN progress reports<sup>93</sup> show that these targets will not be met without public policy changes specifically geared towards addressing them. Given the integrated nature of urban poverty in particular, by improving the lives of slum dwellers contributions are being made to other MDGs such as combating HIV, improving environmental sustainability, addressing gender inequality and more.

This is a key challenge for Plan, given the rapidly urbanising contexts in which its programs operate. Recognising this, Plan has recently commissioned a report on urbanisation<sup>94</sup> which explores the rationale for engaging with the urban poverty agenda, and which also sets out some future strategic directions.

The urbanisation report draws on the experience of several Plan country programs, from the Americas through to West Africa. It points to a number of good

92 United Nations. 2006. **Localizing the Millennium Development Goals, A guide for Municipalities and Local Partners**. Nairobi: United Nations Habitat.

93 United Nations. 2006. **The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006**. New York: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

94 de la Barra. Urban strategy proposal for Plan. 2006.

practices and policy initiatives in urbanisation from which Plan can learn, such as UNICEF's Child Friendly City initiative and the WHO Healthy Cities initiative. The report points out that Plan's multi-level capability allows it to act effectively at local and municipality levels, while directing its work at global targets, and that its CCCD approach provides an enabling route to the very complex issues surrounding urbanisation.

Currently, Plan's coverage of programs for the urban poor is relatively limited, and fairly dispersed. It is therefore a challenge to locate and document a synthesis of successful examples of impact, then use these as examples to scale up and to influence public policy. A more practical route into the policy process, however, is through decentralisation, and this is an area where an increasing number of country programs are identifying entry points.

The UN report *Localizing the MDGs* points out that even though the Millennium Development Goals are global, they can be achieved most effectively through action at the local level.<sup>95</sup> Decentralisation offers opportunities to:

- support communities by working to develop the institutional strengthening of government systems at different levels
- initiate and develop civil society organisations to participate in the decentralisation process (where decentralisation is at an early stage)
- participate in decision-making for resource mobilisation, development planning, budgeting and monitoring their communities
- promote child rights using a CCCD approach
- lobby for increased accountability and more responsible, transparent governance
- support local authorities in their role as duty-bearers

Decentralisation also presents challenges, however; it can be difficult for municipal governments to commit to a sustainable political policy based on child and adolescent rights. Local governments are also vulnerable to private interests and pressure groups. There is a danger that decentralisation is taken as a way of reducing national governments' burdens, expenditures and accountability in social services. Communities can be seen as sources of information, rather than as true partners, leading to alienation and discontent, and central governments may also use decentralisation as a way of directing citizen protest away from themselves.

Plan programs are engaging with the decentralisation agenda in all the global regions, helped by its multi-level capacity, and by strong existing partnerships at micro and meso levels. At times this simply means harnessing newly-decentralised structures to roll out or scale up programs. More strategically, work currently appears to focus on three main areas: institutional strengthening, good governance and building links between civil society and local government.

In the Americas, decentralisation processes are reasonably well advanced, with Brazil being perhaps the furthest ahead. Capacity issues are a common constraint, often resulting in financial and administrative difficulties at local level. In Guatemala, Plan is working on both the supply and demand sides of decentralisation; building the capacity of national and local government structures, including training in accountability, transparency and participatory methodologies, for the effective local delivery of public services, and building knowledge of entitlements and how to claim these from local duty-bearers. In Bolivia, the Popular Participation Law has established municipalities as the key agents of development. Plan is focusing here on good governance, training in accountability and transparency for these new duty-bearers.

Timing is an important aspect of engaging with decentralisation; where the process is in its early stages, there are greater opportunities for engagement and support. Several African offices report that they have been able to align their programs with early stage decentralisation processes. In Mali, for example, Plan is working to embed a child rights perspective within community advisory councils, responsible for harmonising development interventions in communes and maximising the impact of resources. In Burkina Faso, Plan will be working alongside the new 'Communes Rurales' to help them define their role and focus on children's rights.

In the future, Plan should consider moving beyond participating in the decentralisation process to actively lobbying and advocating for it, using the leverage of the MDGs and poverty reduction strategy paper targets. An increased focus on decentralised governments requires adjustments to Plan's organisational structure to ensure that the allocation of human and financial resources is in line with the political-administrative divisions and structures in-country.

<sup>95</sup> United Nations. 2006. *Localizing the Millennium Development Goals, A guide for Municipalities and Local Partners*. Nairobi: United Nations Habitat.

### 3.3 Children in extremely difficult circumstances

Children in extremely difficult circumstances is a broad definition, which can encompass victims of apartheid and foreign occupation, street children, working children, and victims of natural and man-made disasters, children with disabilities, indigenous groups, victims of gender-based violence, such as trafficking and sexual exploitation of girls, and child soldiers.<sup>96</sup>

Working with children in extremely difficult circumstances requires an in-depth understanding of the dynamics that contribute to their exclusion before child protection mechanisms can be put in place. Using CCCD approaches can help change these dynamics in favour of children in extremely difficult circumstances, rather than recreating exclusion through traditional welfare approaches. Some areas of working with children in extremely difficult circumstances require specialist skills, such as rehabilitation and reintegration, child trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. In these areas Plan normally works through specialist partners; however, it has an important role to play in coordination and evaluation, and identifying and documenting good practice.



Child carpet weavers in Pakistan

### Disability

Article 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that “a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community”. While several country programs mention disability in the wider context of excluded groups, few as yet proactively implement rights-based programs. One of the exceptions is Plan Egypt, whose advocacy activities have resulted in the Ministry of Education committing to provide access facilities to all new schools for disabled children, and to developing an integrated country-level plan for disability in children.

The main lessons learned from Plan’s work with disabled children is that community-based rehabilitation approaches demonstrate significant positive impacts in terms of social inclusion and reducing marginalisation<sup>97</sup> and that the transition from a ‘medical’ to a ‘social’ model of rehabilitation fits well with a child-centred community development approach to change. It is expected that this area of work will increase in future, requiring increased capacity and expertise.

Few country programs outside Asia explicitly or proactively address child labour, yet the working children’s movement is a good example of how children in difficult situations can work together with organisations such as Plan to improve the quality of their lives. Article 32 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child obliges governments to protect those aged under 18 “from economic exploitation, and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Children should not work too long hours and not too hard work”. Children in the worst forms of child labour are often paid very little or no wages for very long hours and are denied their rights to education, health care, leisure and a reasonable standard of living. Change occurs by taking an integrated approach to these issues, through medium and long-term development projects, as well as engaging in lobbying and advocacy with employers and at national level to improve or implement legislation on child labourers.

<sup>96</sup> See Ray, P. and Carter, S. op. cit. for a fuller discussion.

<sup>97</sup> Plan Egypt Country Program Progress Report 2006. (Unpublished).

## Lessons learned

To date, Plan's approaches to child labour have mostly focused on the four pillars of rights explored earlier; the promotion of the right to development through access to education, for example, or to household economic security through facilitating micro-credit programmes. Child labour is, however, a controversial area; there is a wide range of opinion about its nature and the aims of programs to combat the exploitation of children in work. Plan Finland's position paper on the area<sup>98</sup> has identified some of the tensions and difficulties about the issues, and also indicated that there is a need for Plan globally to articulate its position on child labour, building on its work in child protection.

While there remain weaknesses in the processes of identifying and analysing the problems of children in extremely difficult circumstances, Plan's strengths lie in its child-centred approaches, its commitment to and practice of children's participation and its multi-level capability. Its long-term relationships in communities offer the opportunity to develop models for prevention, support and reintegration and to scale these up into mainstream programs. At the meso and macro levels, Plan's partnerships with local and national governments offer the chance to leverage the legal, policy and budgetary changes that are needed to realise the rights of children in the poorest and most difficult situations. Ultimately, however, it is Plan's emerging policy and program on child protection that will provide the mandate and the opportunity for action.

<sup>98</sup> Plan Finland. 2004. **Child labour**. Plan working paper. (Unpublished).





Plan supports community group participation around health issues in Sudan

## Part 4

### Conclusions: Plan's development effectiveness

The previous chapters of this program review assessed Plan's program experience across 46 countries, contextualising this work within the current framework of international development and identifying areas for future action. It is clear that Plan's work within the four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child facilitates change on a range of levels, from the individual through to the collective, from local to global, from civil society through to statutory duty-bearers. From a grassroots beginning seven decades ago, Plan has grown in size, scale and stature to become a leading international non-governmental organisation – an important player in global advocacy processes, and a major development partner locally and nationally.

At the same time, Plan recognises that in order to arrive and remain at the cutting edge of development, a process of continuous improvement is necessary. In reflecting on the experiences described in the previous chapters of this review, what institutional strengths can be identified that facilitate these transformations? What organisational gaps and weaknesses are currently hampering them? And what are the current priorities of the external environment that require Plan to adapt and change in response?

#### 4.1 Multi-level transformations

This assessment of Plan country programs across the world shows how Plan is working effectively to build the capacity and capability of civil society. The examples described in Part 2 show how networks are being facilitated, organisational capacity developed, and legitimisation of local organisations taking place, particularly in contexts where civil society is at a new or emergent stage. Civil society organisations with which Plan works are being brought increasingly into the policy-making process, often as part of the decentralisation agenda.

Concurrently, it is clear that Plan is working increasingly with the duty-bearers of the state to both enhance service delivery for poor client groups, and to generate pro-poor policy reform with a focus on children. In relation to service provision, many country

programs, as described earlier, are enabling duty-bearers to fulfil the rights of claimants, and therefore to realise their obligations under the CRC through providing additional physical, financial and technical resources. Institutional strengthening is a major part of Plan's work here, as Part 2 describes. On the creation of pro-poor policy reforms, Plan's growing advocacy and lobbying capabilities are playing an increasing role in facilitating these changes, both at national and international levels, as the examples from four global regions have shown.

These two areas are not of course mutually exclusive: transparent, effective and responsive governance depends to a great extent on the existence of a strong, legitimised and coherent voice from civil society. As shown, Plan programs appear in the main to understand the need to work with both government and civil society concurrently, to build relationships, to share understandings, and to generate a climate of trust and mutual accountability.

This review of country program activities also shows how changes are taking place on the collective and individual levels. Case study examples at the end of country progress reports for 2006 offer insights into the levels of personal change that have been experienced by participants in Plan programs, whether this is through participation in a child media project or through the installation of a water source, eliminating the need for a daily three-hour round trip. Work is also taking place on the collective level, albeit to a rather lesser degree, where Plan programs are placing an emphasis on, for example, the federation of community-serving organisations and community-based organisations as part of the sustainability process, or through the development of national plans for services such as health, which result in the development of national networks or federations.

Building on this experience, and using it to analyse Plan's institutional status at the end of 2006, what strengths can be seen that are enabling these transformations? And what organisational weaknesses or gaps can be seen that may constrain future change?

## 4.2 The strengths that facilitate change

### A global player

The size and scale of Plan's resources make it, as this review of country programs has made clear, a key player in the global development community. At local, national and international levels, Plan occupies a position of influence, which in turn enables it to act as a powerful agent of change. This position also enables Plan to act as part of accountability processes, whether as part of the global realisation of the CRC or when addressing service delivery issues at a local level. This strength, it is evident, is enabling transformation on all dimensions: government, civil society, the collective and the individual.

### Partnerships

Facilitating change at all levels requires the development and successful operation of strong partnerships, which are in themselves multi-level, and through which service delivery, lobbying and advocacy, and policy reforms can take place. Respect and trust built up through working in partnership at levels from the local to the national, regional and global has created a powerful series of networks and alliances for Plan. Plan's track record of success and expertise at country level has demonstrably resulted in conditions of influence on partners, including bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors and governments, and local and national NGOs. This results in transformations and changes for both civil society and governmental duty-bearers, at the collective and at the individual levels, whether through enhanced service delivery, an altered policy context or for example an increasingly legitimised civil society, with greater space for voice.

### Multi-level capability

One of Plan's key comparative advantages in the current climate of international development is its ability to act on levels from the village to the global. Its seven decades of experience at the grassroots has created an extensive body of knowledge, supported by the increasing capability to scale up. This, in turn, creates opportunities for transformation at a range of levels and with a range of partners, resulting in greater effectiveness of programs and resources. A good example of this is Plan's universal birth registration campaign, which is based on grassroots knowledge and experience, and has been scaled up and transformed into a global-level advocacy campaign.

### Child-centred community development

Plan's CCCD approach has demonstrated its worth, generating more sustainable, pro-poor policy responses from district and national governments, and better outcomes and impacts for programs. It provides a common framework for program activity, and enables work to be directed in a more focused way at the four pillars of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its explicit emphasis on changes in power relationships enables Plan programs to take up the mantles of empowerment and governance at all levels and, although these areas are at a relatively early stage of development, there are clear signs that rights-based approaches are moving towards becoming mainstreamed effectively.

### Flexibility of response

It is apparent from this survey of country programs that Plan's decentralised structure, combined with its strong partnerships described earlier, enable it to tailor its programs effectively to country need. It can also respond swiftly when changing conditions require it, such as where child protection policies are being developed, or where funds are released for HIV and AIDS interventions. This flexibility also enables it to respond effectively in times of crisis or disaster.



Local communities participating in a Plan Cambodia micro-finance study, 2006

### 4.3 Key areas for improvement

Plan as an organisation is currently in a state of transformation. Its organisational strengths, some of which are described earlier, provide it with a strong platform for progression. Rapid change, however, inevitably means that gaps and weaknesses appear as the institution evolves. This review highlights some core areas where Plan could improve its capacity and expertise to maximise its development effectiveness.

#### Technical capacity

Several areas in which the process of rapid transformation has left Plan with capacity gaps have been identified through this report. Greater research expertise, for example, would enable a more explicitly evidence-based approach to development, as the UBR campaign has shown, or the West Africa radio experience has indicated. Stronger advocacy capacity within country programs will enable Plan to engage in national and international policy dialogue more effectively. Some sector-specific capacity gaps have also emerged; on survival issues, for example, country programs are often confronting a multitude of serious issues at a time of extreme crisis. Greater technical expertise on the interlinkages between disaster preparedness and response, and aspects of the survival pillar of rights, would facilitate transformation and maximise program effectiveness.

#### Greater shared learning

Greater shared learning would facilitate the development of technical capacity, as discussed above, and enable transformation and change to take place again on the basis of experience, evidence and lessons learned. While there are pockets of excellent work being undertaken in areas such as early childhood care and development and vocational education and training, these need to be collated and disseminated and, in some cases, translated into coherent policy frameworks. At a program level, many issues, such as migration, child trafficking and HIV and AIDS cut across borders, require a transnational approach. Enabling greater regional coordination and harmonisation in some areas, such as child protection, children in especially difficult circumstances and disaster response, will both increase technical capacity and ensure Plan's place at the cutting edge of development.

#### Scaling up

This review identifies some very powerful examples of change and transformation within Plan country programs. While strong capability and momentum clearly exist among country programs, taking programs to scale is still, in some locations, an emerging area, where capacity gaps exist and where increased sharing of experience and best practice is essential. This requires not only demonstrated models of good practice, but a co-ordinated response among donors, non-governmental organisations and governments, which Plan is well-positioned to facilitate, given its strong partnerships and multi-level capability.

#### Becoming a rights-based organisation

The shift towards becoming a rights-based organisation is now taking hold in Plan, as this review of the evidence demonstrates. Child-centred community development, for example, is now mainstreamed as a concept across the organisation. However, there is still scope for progress to be made. CCCD implementation still varies across Plan programs worldwide; greater clarity around the concept's translation into practice will enable it to become the basis for program planning and design. Similarly, while Plan's experience and thinking on participation is clearly moving along the continuum towards empowerment and governance, there is scope for country programs to address these issues more explicitly in their work, as part of supporting countries in realising the CRC. A prerequisite is that the principles of participation are fully mainstreamed throughout Plan's operations, structures and hierarchy.

#### Partnerships

Partnerships are both a core strength and an opportunity for development for Plan. Working alongside duty-bearers to support them in realising their commitments under the CRC creates both opportunities and challenges. There is a danger, for example, of government departments or ministries in severely resource-constrained contexts becoming dependent on Plan as a resource provider. Vigilance is needed here in order to prevent Plan, in effect, from replacing the state. Similarly, working with civil society organisations to harmonise efforts towards development means recognising them not only as service deliverers, but also as actors in their own right. This means a paradigm shift in how partners are perceived; not as welfare

organisations or sub-contractors but as rights-based structures, sharing Plan's concerns and values, and entitled to long-term strategic partnering. One way of increasing Plan's activity at the collective level of transformation might be to increase the focus on building new partnerships with, for example, trade unions, faith groups and the private sector, and on building collaborations within and across these groups.

#### **4.4 Changes in the external environment**

The key external drivers of change listed in Part 1 included the emergence of a common international framework through the CRC, the MDGs and the Paris Declaration, the rise of the human rights agenda, a strong focus on good governance and accountability, and the trend towards decentralisation. As will by now be clear, the shifts and transformations in Plan's own activity, programs, structures and policies in recent years are both responding to these drivers and setting the organisation's agenda within them.

However, in years to come, Plan may also need to clarify, resolve and articulate its role as an international NGO within this changing global environment. Against the backdrop of harmonisation and alignment of the Paris Declaration, for example, sits the potentially conflicting role of accountability. This is perhaps exemplified most clearly within poverty reduction strategy paper processes, where there is an inherent tension between both supporting governments to achieve their relevant poverty reduction strategy paper and MDG targets, and retaining sufficient independence to critique and influence government policy. Plan programs on the whole appear to strike this balance well, but may need to give more explicit consideration to these dual roles within country programs, so they can articulate a clear position to in-country partners.

Plan will also need to capitalise on its core strength of flexibility to react to opportunities and new initiatives which arise from national or international policy shifts and changes. Debt relief, through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative for instance, means increased national spending on social development programs. Processes of privatisation often influence the way Plan works in terms of livelihood and food security. Decentralisation is another example, as is the \$365 million fund for the education Fast Track Initiative to meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

#### **4.5 Building on strengths: looking to the future**

Looking at its strengths, Plan is well situated in 2006 to address the challenges of the changing environment and to move its programs forward on sound and solid foundations. However, to ensure that it is truly fit for purpose to address the demands of the new era of development cooperation, it needs to adapt and reform accordingly. As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, what are Plan's responses to capitalise on its strengths, improve on its weaknesses and respond to the changing environment?

##### **Increased emphasis on development effectiveness**

As is now clear, Plan is directing its work synergistically towards the broader international strategic context of the MDGs, CRC and relevant poverty reduction strategies. Plan has consultative status in many countries with partner governments, and its work is recognised globally as making a significant contribution to achieving these national and international instruments. There is scope to increase the linkages with national-level poverty reduction strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, and country programs will work towards this in years to come. To achieve this, Plan will build on its existing strong partnerships, seeking to further develop networks and alliances at national level in particular.

As part of this process, and to maximise accountability, Plan is currently working to strengthen its planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning functions. The development of a global effectiveness framework, with greater focus on outcome and impact measures, will help track progress against the key international instruments nationally, regionally and globally.

## Updated program framework

The principles and domains that constitute Plan's global program framework, and around which many country programs are designed, were first developed in 1996. The way that Plan works has changed dramatically since then, and the five domains in particular do not reflect, for example, current work on children's participation and protection. Plan is currently working to align its program strategy and policy architecture under a single global program strategy framework guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This will reflect the evolution to CCCD, removing inconsistencies between strategy and policy documentation, and allowing for new activities to be captured which do not fit comfortably into the former model of domains, such as advocacy, child protection and governance activities. CCCD will itself be re-aligned, to reflect more clearly the key elements of child rights.

## Mainstreaming child protection

As will be clear from this program review, Plan at both country and international levels is placing an increasing emphasis on the child protection agenda. More activity is being conducted at legislative and national levels, through participation in advocacy activities, engagement with national bodies and structures, and by scaling up successful pilots.

Plan's international headquarters is setting Plan's policy agenda on child protection – 2006 saw the development of the global strategy for child protection, which will focus on creating 'child safe' environments, where children are safe, respected and active in their own protection. The global strategy will recognise the often complex and integrated issues about child protection such as gender differences, and the role of children's own resilience and coping strategies. The strategy will present a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the issue, encouraging all areas of Plan to place child protection as their first priority, and all program activities to contribute to the agenda.

## Institutional/organisational changes

During 2006, Plan concentrated on reorganising and streamlining operations, in order to meet the challenges of increasing levels of growth and international engagement. As well as providing an opportunity to consolidate, update and integrate Plan's various policy documents, this also offers the

scope to address emerging themes and issues. Finance, human resources, audit systems, and information and communications technology have been restructured, a team has been set up to assess program effectiveness and another to lead on global advocacy. This will ensure that core business processes are being carried out in a globally consistent manner, that Plan is meeting legal and financial requirements in the countries of operation, that roles and responsibilities are not being duplicated, ultimately reducing costs, and enhancing Plan's ability to share knowledge and best practice more effectively.

## Consolidating Plan's work in disasters

Through disaster preparedness, response and reconstruction, Plan is establishing its institutional logic chain from prevention to relief to rehabilitation to development. Country programs are increasingly integrating disaster preparedness into broader development planning along this continuum, and have started to identify their comparative strengths and advantages in addressing disaster issues. Plan offices are recognising that maximum returns are generated in prevention and development investments rather than in emergency responses. Reducing vulnerability and risk is a critical early part of this logic chain, and Plan globally is developing its capabilities in this area, becoming a significant player in the disaster preparedness, response and reconstruction global community.

## Capitalising on Plan's human resources

Perhaps Plan's greatest asset is its diverse human resources; these demonstrate a great capability to address complex needs in challenging situations, and to respond with flexibility and empathy where situations require it. Yet identifying and developing skilled and experienced personnel can be a challenge, particularly where the human capital base is gradually being eroded due to illness, emigration and/or competition from UN or multi-lateral missions. In response, many countries are responding by expanding training and development programs, and an HIV and AIDS in the workplace strategy was adopted by the international management team in 2003.<sup>99</sup> In the future, Plan will continue this focus on continuous improvement for staff, in order that its technical knowledge, capacity and expertise continue to locate its work at the leading edge of development.

99 Plan, 2003. HIV/AIDS in the workplace. Plan internal strategy. (Unpublished).

## 4.6 Conclusions and ways forward

This assessment of Plan's activity under the four pillars of rights of the CRC has located Plan's role within the current environment of global development, indicated the organisation's areas of success, highlighted its existing capabilities and expertise, and outlined some areas for future development. Plan has made, and is making, courageous and innovative decisions about its organisational development so that it can become truly fit for purpose in the new global context, and so that it achieves its vision of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignities.

Plan's role as a global player in the development arena of 2007 onwards offers it significant opportunities to contribute towards both the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the realisation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It also,

however, presents challenges, both institutionally and programmatically. Plan's core strengths, the respect and trust embedded in its partnerships across the world, and its corporate culture as a flexible and responsive organisation, should enable it to rise effectively to these challenges.

Clearly, there is much more work to do. But its status in 2006 gives Plan both the mandate and the opportunity to move forward with confidence in its abilities, continuing to learn from experience, so that the children and young people who are the ultimate partners in investments have more chances and opportunities to be protected, to claim their rights and, ultimately, to fulfil their potential.







Members of the Plan Memory Book project in Malawi, which works together with families living with HIV/AIDS to secure a safe future for their children

# Appendices

## Appendix 1

Country indicators

## Appendix 2

Plan program activity

## Appendix 3

Summary of expenditure per domain,  
2003 to 2006

## Appendix 4

Where Plan works

## Appendix 1 - Country indicators<sup>100</sup>

		Demographics								Growing Up Healthy			
Region	Country	Area (000 sq. Km)	Total population (millions)	% Urban	% Rural	% of the Population under the age of 15	UN Human Development Index (HDI) value (0.000 to 1.000)	Fertility Rate (births per woman)	Annual population growth rate %	Life expectancy at birth (in years)	Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	Under five mortality rate (per 1,000 births)	Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 births)
ARO	Bangladesh	144	139.2	25	75	35.9	0.53	3.2	1.7	63.3	56	77	380
ARO	Cambodia	181	13.8	19	81	37.7	0.583	4.1	1.9	56.6	97	141	440
ARO	China	9,598	1307.9	40	60	22	0.768	1.7	0.6	71.9	26	31	51
ARO	India	3,287	1087	29	71	32.5	0.611	3.1	1.3	63.6	62	85	540
ARO	Indonesia	1,905	220	47	53	28.6	0.711	2.4	1	67.2	30	38	310
ARO	Nepal	147	26.5	15	85	39.5	0.527	3.7	1.9	62.1	59	76	540
ARO	Pakistan	796	154.8	35	65	38.9	0.539	4.3	2	63.4	80	101	530
ARO	Philippines	300	81.6	62	38	35.7	0.763	3.2	1.6	70.7	26	34	170
ARO	Sri Lanka	66	20.5	15	85	24.5	0.755	2	0.7	74.3	12	14	92
ARO	Thailand	513	63.7	32	68	24.1	0.784	1.9	0.7	70.3	18	21	24
ARO	Timor Leste	15	887	26	74	41.6	0.512	7.8	4.7	56	64	80	800
ARO	Vietnam	329	83.1	26	74	30.3	0.709	2.3	1.2	70.8	17	23	170
RESA	Albania	29	3.1	45	55	27.6	0.78	2.3	0.6	73.9	17	19	23
RESA	Egypt	1,002	72.6	43	57	33.9	0.702	3.3	1.8	70.2	26	36	84
RESA	Ethiopia	1,104	75.6	16	84	44.8	0.371	5.9	2.3	47.8	110	166	870
RESA	Kenya	580	33.4	21	79	42.9	0.491	5	2.5	47.5	79	120	410
RESA	Malawi	119	12.6	17	83	47.3	0.4	6.1	2.2	39.8	110	175	1,100
RESA	Sudan	2,506	35.5	40	60	39.5	0.516	4.4	2	56.5	63	91	550
RESA	Tanzania	945	37.6	24	76	42.9	0.43	5	1.7	45.9	78	126	580
RESA	Uganda	241	27.8	13	87	50.4	0.502	7.1	3.7	48.4	80	138	510
RESA	Zambia	753	11.5	35	65	46	0.407	5.7	1.7	37.7	102	182	730
RESA	Zimbabwe	391	12.9	41	59	40.5	0.491	3.6	0.6	36.6	79	129	700
ROA	Bolivia	1,099	9	64	36	38.5	0.692	4	1.7	64.4	54	69	230
ROA	Brazil	8,515	184	84	16	28.1	0.792	2.3	1.2	70.8	32	34	64
ROA	Colombia	1,142	44.9	72	28	31.4	0.79	2.6	1.3	72.6	18	21	78
ROA	Dominican Rep.	49	8.7	66	34	33.1	0.751	2.7	1.3	67.5	27	32	180
ROA	Ecuador	284	13	62	38	32.8	0.765	2.8	1.4	74.5	23	26	80
ROA	El Salvador	21	6.7	56	44	34.3	0.729	2.9	1.5	71.1	24	28	170
ROA	Guatemala	109	12.3	47	53	43.5	0.673	4.6	2.3	67.6	33	45	150
ROA	Haiti	28	8.4	38	62	38	0.482	4	1.3	52	74	117	520
ROA	Honduras	112	7	46	54	39.7	0.683	3.7	2	68.1	31	41	110
ROA	Nicaragua	130	5.4	59	41	39.5	0.698	3.3	1.9	70	31	38	83
ROA	Paraguay	407	6	58	42	38	0.757	3.9	2.1	71.2	21	24	180
ROA	Peru	1,285	27.6	72	28	32.7	0.767	2.9	1.4	70.2	24	29	190
WARO	Benin	113	8.2	40	60	44.5	0.428	5.9	2.9	54.3	90	152	500
WARO	Burkina Faso	274	12.8	18	82	47.7	0.342	6.7	2.9	47.9	97	192	480
WARO	Cameroon	475	13.1	54	46	41.6	0.506	4.6	1.6	45.7	87	149	430
WARO	Ghana	239	21.6	47	53	39.5	0.532	4.4	1.9	57	68	112	210
WARO	Guinea	246	9.2	33	67	43.8	0.445	5.9	2.3	53.9	101	155	530
WARO	Guinea Bissau	36	1.5	30	70	47.4	0.349	7.1	3	44.8	126	203	910
WARO	Mali	1,240	13.1	30	70	48.3	0.338	6.9	2.9	48.1	121	219	580
WARO	Niger	1,267	13.5	17	83	49	0.311	7.9	3.2	44.6	152	259	590
WARO	Senegal	197	11.3	41	59	43	0.46	5	2.2	56	78	137	60
WARO	Sierra Leone	72	5.3	40	60	42.8	0.335	6.5	2.3	40.6	165	283	1,800
WARO	Togo	57	6	39	61	43.7	0.495	5.4	2.5	54.5	78	140	480

## Appendix 1 - Country indicators continued

Habitat		Education							Livelihood		Birth Registration
Population with sustainable access to an improved water source (%)	Population with sustainable access to improved sanitation (%)	Children reaching grade 5 (% of applicable population)	Net primary enrolment rate (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Adult literacy rate (% ages 15 and above)	Male (%)	Female (%)	Population living on less than US\$1 per day (%)	GDP per Capita (US\$)	Under fives registered (%) <sup>101</sup>
74	39	65	94	94	95	33.1	...	...	36	406	7
41	17	60	98	100	96	73.6	84.7	64.1	34.1	354	22
77	44	86	97	...	...	90.9	95.1	86.5	16.6	1,490	...
86	33	79	90	93	87	61	73.4	47.8	34.7	640	35
77	55	92	94	95	93	90.4	94	86.8	7.5	1,184	55
90	35	67	78	83	73	48.6	62.7	34.9	24.1	252	34
91	59	70	66	76	56	49.9	63	36	17	632	30
85	72	75	94	93	95	92.6	92.5	92.7	15.5	1,036	83
79	91	98	97	96	98	90.7	92.3	89.1	5.6	1,033	94
99	99	94	85	...	...	92.6	94.9	90.5	2	2,539	95
58	36	...	75	76	74	50.1	...	...	...	367	9
85	61	87	93	94	92	90.3	93.9	86.9	...	550	72
96	91	94	96	97	95	98.7	99.2	98.3	2	2,439	99
98	70	99	95	96	94	71.4	83	59.4	3.1	1,085	90
22	13	62	46	48	44	28.9	...	...	23	114	...
61	43	75	76	75	77	76.3	77.7	70.2	22.8	481	48
73	61	44	95	92	98	64.1	74.9	54	41.7	149	...
70	34	92	43	47	39	60.9	71.1	51.8	60-65	594	...
62	47	88	86	87	85	69.4	77.5	62.2	57.8	288	7.1
60	43	64	...	...	...	66.8	76.8	57.7	...	245	4
58	55	98	80	80	80	68	76.3	59.8	75.8	471	10
81	53	70	82	82	82	89	93.8	86.3	56.1	363	42
85	46	86	95	94	96	86.7	93.1	80.7	23.2	974	82
90	75	80	93	...	...	88.6	88.4	88.8	7.5	3,284	24
93	86	77	93	102	84	92.8	92.9	92.7	7	2,176	91
95	78	59	86	85	87	87	86.8	87.2	2.5	2,130	75
94	89	76	98	98	98	91	92.3	89.7	15.8	2,322	58.5
84	62	73	92	91	93	84.5	...	...	19	2,340	90.2
95	86	78	93	95	91	69.1	75.4	63.3	13.5	2,233	...
54	30	88	55	...	...	51.9	...	...	53.9	420	70
87	69	79	91	90	92	80	79.8	80.2	20.7	1,046	80
79	47	59	88	89	87	76.7	76.8	76.6	45.1	847	81
86	80	82	94	...	...	91.6	...	...	16.4	1,220	66
83	63	90	97	97	97	87.7	93.5	82.1	12.5	2,490	93
67	33	69	83	94	72	34.7	47.9	23.3	30.9	498	70
61	13	76	40	45	35	21.8	29.4	15.2	27.2	376	33
66	51	64	74	...	...	67.9	77	59.8	17.1	897	79
75	18	63	58	58	58	57.9	66.4	49.8	44.8	409	21
50	18	82	64	70	58	29.5	42.6	18.1	...	421	67
59	35	38	45	52	38	39.6	...	...	88	182	42
50	46	79	46	49	43	19	26.7	11.9	72.3	371	48
46	13	74	39	46	32	28.7	42.9	15.1	60.6	228	46
76	57	78	66	67	65	39.3	51.1	29.2	22.3	683	62
57	39	94	46	...	...	35.1	46.9	24.4	57	202	46
52	35	76	79	86	72	53.2	68.7	38.5	72.2	344	33

## Appendix 2 - Plan program activity

Region	Country	Year Plan started	Number of current PUs (or Program Areas if 'single PU' country)
ARO	Bangladesh	1994	7
ARO	Cambodia	2002	2
ARO	China	1995	5
ARO	India	1979	20
ARO	Indonesia	1969	13
ARO	Nepal	1977	4
ARO	Pakistan	1997	5
ARO	Philippines	1961	10
ARO	Sri Lanka	1981	4
ARO	Thailand	1981	5
ARO	Timor Leste	2001	4
ARO	Vietnam	1993	8
RESA	Albania	1995	1
RESA	Egypt	1981	6
RESA	Ethiopia	1994	4
RESA	Kenya	1982	9
RESA	Malawi	1994	4
RESA	Sudan	1977	6
RESA	Tanzania	1991	6
RESA	Uganda	1992	8
RESA	Zambia	1996	4
RESA	Zimbabwe	1986	7
ROA	Bolivia	1969	7
ROA	Brazil	1997	4
ROA	Colombia	1960	6
ROA	Dominican Republic	1987	3
ROA	Ecuador	1964	14
ROA	El Salvador	1976	3
ROA	Guatemala	1978	7
ROA	Haiti	1973	10
ROA	Honduras	1977	6
ROA	Nicaragua	1994	6
ROA	Paraguay	1994	4
ROA	Peru	1994	4
WARO	Benin	1995	2
WARO	Burkina Faso	1976	5
WARO	Cameroon	1996	3
WARO	Ghana	1992	2
WARO	Guinea	1989	4
WARO	Guinea Bissau	1996	1
WARO	Mali	1976	5
WARO	Niger	1999	1
WARO	Senegal	1982	5
WARO	Sierra Leone	1976	4
WARO	Togo	1988	3

## Appendix 2 - Plan program activity continued

Number of PUs phased out of since operations started	Number of Plan partner communities	Number of sponsored children (enrolled)	Average number of staff
0	187	28,200	207
0	38	7,400	104
1	407	25,362	126
10	2,906	74,197	983
10	301	55,901	289
4	146	40,078	328
0	140	20,208	108
8	446	44,185	250
4	233	25,737	157
0	642	21,822	99
0	12	0	17
0	190	38,967	149
0	154	4,215	39
2	22	38,831	152
0	65	23,595	122
6	995	67,453	270
0	92	22,505	102
2	174	31,734	129
0	27	29,900	147
0	1,007	36,638	199
0	38	23,000	124
0	937	44,927	209
1	1,060	45,828	258
0	88	17,792	99
4	307	41,660	196
5	136	29,850	153
1	1,030	58,953	235
1	385	37,288	181
4	598	46,393	169
1	92	47,001	188
3	561	36,243	141
0	325	26,111	151
0	442	23,964	88
1	233	28,118	115
0	53	20,953	92
0	1,968	39,800	146
0	291	20,246	96
0	259	22,232	122
0	46	29,285	35
0	140	15,500	49
1	471	29,948	158
0	58	12,152	53
0	143	32,521	84
2	1,110	1,500	49
0	242	23,734	99

## Appendix 3 - Summary of expenditure per domain, 2003 to 2006

Total number of sponsored children				
	2003	2004	2005	2006
Assigned sponsored children	1,040,712	1,073,707	1,114,852	1,179,973
Enrolled sponsored children	1,274,609	1,297,207	1,346,819	1,391,927

Total expenditure in the field (US\$000) <sup>102</sup>									
		Growing up Healthy	Learning	Habitat	Livelihood	Building Relationships	Program Support	Administration	Total*
ARO	2003	7,088	14,745	11,622	5,773	5,414	7,597	5,958	58,197
HACI	2003	714	1.2	0	0	280	0.4	3,977	4,973
RESA	2003	20,401	7,096	11,925	4,852	3,888	5,903	9,987	64,051
ROA	2003	9,634	17,314	21,867	3,243	6,579	9,220	9,326	77,184
WARO	2003	7,842	13,437	13,462	1,435	5,042	6,091	7,078	54,388
TOTAL*	2003	45,679	52,594	58,877	15,303	21,202	28,811	36,326	258,792
ARO	2004	8,825	16,128	13,590	6,347	7,321	8,110	5,849	66,171
HACI	2004	4,020	0.9	0	0	379	0.4	1,902	6,302
RESA	2004	20,754	12,864	12,665	5,305	4,878	6,586	9,608	72,661
ROA	2004	10,730	19,827	23,300	3,522	8,628	9,533	9,605	85,145
WARO	2004	11,194	16,260	11,964	2,216	6,276	6,349	7,579	61,839
TOTAL*	2004	55,523	65,081	61,520	17,390	27,483	30,578	34,544	292,118
ARO	2005	12,364	20,532	16,707	8,166	11,047	10,693	7,339	86,850
HACI	2005	2,999	0.5	0	0	513	0.2	1,567	5,080
RESA	2005	14,669	16,474	14,345	5,505	6,275	9,222	12,878	79,367
ROA	2005	11,738	19,782	22,337	3,535	11,141	12,697	10,783	92,014
WARO	2005	12,944	22,854	16,280	3,381	8,506	9,500	9,528	82,995
TOTAL*	2005	54,715	79,643	69,669	20,588	37,483	42,113	42,096	346,306
ARO	2006	16,949	29,991	28,030	12,399	15,978	16,731	8,324	128,403
HACI	2006	4,390	0.2	0	0	146	9.4	1,807	6,353
RESA	2006	27,806	19,227	11,767	7,505	8,778	17,437	12,546	105,065
ROA	2006	13,293	23,809	18,087	3,716	15,563	24,462	13,102	112,032
WARO	2006	14,072	22,134	11,912	5,834	11,064	13,936	8,976	87,929
TOTAL*	2006	76,511	95,161	69,796	29,454	51,529	72,576	44,754	439,781
Total expenditure per domain per region per year 2003-2006 (US\$000)									
ARO		45,227	81,398	69,949	32,686	39,761	43,131	27,470	339,621
HACI		12,123	2.7	0	0	1,318	10	9,254	22,708
RESA		83,630	55,661	50,702	23,167	23,818	39,148	45,018	321,144
ROA		45,395	80,732	85,592	14,016	41,911	55,912	42,816	366,374
WARO		46,052	74,686	53,619	12,867	30,888	35,877	33,161	287,150
TOTAL*		232,427	292,479	259,862	82,736	137,696	174,078	157,719	1,336,997

\* Totals may not sum due to rounding.

<sup>102</sup> Figures from Plan Worldwide Combined Financial Statements.

## Appendix 4 - Where Plan works

Program countries
  Donor countries

Plan opened offices in Laos, Liberia and Rwanda in the second half of 2006, in addition to the 46 program countries mentioned in this report.





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