

STORIES of CHANGE

Plan International Ethiopia



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Message from the Country Director



On behalf of Plan International Ethiopia, I am happy to present these Stories of Change that demonstrates the real and positive changes in the lives of the most vulnerable children and community members in Ethiopia. These stories have always been a strong source of inspiration for our team as well as for our colleagues from our partner organisations.

Plan International has been working in Ethiopia for the last two decades in partnership with a range of actors including the Government of Ethiopia, local NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies, various donors, academic organisations and corporate organisations to bring long lasting

positive changes in the lives of the poor and vulnerable children and community members. We have been working in five regions of Ethiopia (Gambella, Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Addis Ababa) to address children's needs and issues related to education, protection, health including WASH and nutrition, early child care and development, disaster risk mitigation and response to emergency situations. Children and youth are at the heart of whatever we do in Ethiopia.

In the last two decades, our efforts have demonstrated a number of positive changes in the lives of our targeted groups. You can see a glimpse of some of these changes in this booklet.

I would like to thank our team for their continued dedication and commitment to work with our targeted children and community members to help them find sustainable solutions to their challenges. Plan International Ethiopia will continue its efforts with more enthusiasm and professionalism in coming months and years to reach out to many more children in Ethiopia to help them realise their dreams. We would also remain committed to continuously improve the quality of our programmes and strengthen our accountability to all our stakeholders, primarily to the targeted children and community members.

Best wishes,

Manoj Kumar
Country Director
Plan International Ethiopia
February 2015



Our Organisation

Plan International is a child-centred community development organization that works with communities and local organizations to bring about change, encouraging the active participation and contribution of children since 1937.

Pan International is independent, with no religious, political or governmental affiliations and works in 71 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, Australia and the North Americas.

Pan International has been working in Ethiopia since 1995. Currently Plan Ethiopia operates in Addis Ababa City Administration, Oromia, Amhara, Southern Nations Nationalities People regions and Gambela Regional State.

Plan's vision

is to create a world in which all children realize their full potential in societies, where people's rights are respected and their dignity is up held.

Our priority programme areas

are protection of children from violence, early survival and development of children, a better childhood development and education for all and emergency preparedness and response. Mainstreaming gender and inclusiveness towards disability are strategic priorities in all programmes.

Our Approach

Fulfilling the potential of boys and girls requires the active collaboration of children, families and communities. This is why Plan has chosen child-centred community development (CCCD) as its guiding theoretical framework. The CCCD approach is guided by the following principles:

- Children at the centre, both benefiting from programmes and taking an active part in solving their own problems
- Human rights standards and principles
- Responsibility and accountability
- Inclusion and non-discrimination
- Gender equality
- Participation of stakeholders at every level

Our programmes



Protection of children from violence

Interventions will seek to address three widespread forms of child violence and abuse - child marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual violence. In order to achieve this Plan will focus on

- ➔ Strengthening government, community and village level frameworks, systems and structures for enhancing children's protection
- ➔ Promoting economic opportunities and life skills for young people, particularly young women, through skills development
- ➔ Facilitating child friendly psychosocial support, rehabilitation and integration mechanisms



A Better Childhood Development and Education For all

Interventions will seek to address the minimal access to early childhood care and the insufficient quality of primary education by

- ➔ Promoting home-based care and development for children aged 0–3
- ➔ Establishing and strengthening community managed early childhood care and development centres for children aged 4–6
- ➔ Improving the quality of pupil friendly primary education, with a particular focus on widening opportunities for girls



Early survival and development of children

Plan is also tackling the high levels of illness and death among children under five years of age. Interventions focus on

- ➔ Strengthening health systems across the continuum of care for better service delivery
- ➔ Improving mother, new-born and child health
- ➔ Improving sanitation and hygiene practices and expanding access to sustainable water and sanitation
- ➔ Supporting the development of social and economic opportunities for women and other home-based healthcare givers

Emergency Preparedness and Response Programme

Its objective is to save the lives of those affected by natural and human induced crisis, and building resilience of vulnerable families and their children. Interventions focus on

- ➔ Strengthening capacity of vulnerable households and communities
- ➔ Developing more effective and coherent strategies to provide protection and assistance to children affected by disasters and emergencies

Cross-cutting priorities

Creating an equitable environment for girls and children with disabilities and mitigating the effects of disasters are important focal areas in all programmes. The following concerns are given priority and woven into the design of all programmes

- ➔ Gender mainstreaming
- ➔ Inclusiveness of those with disabilities

Organizational systems development

We are also heavily invested in developing stronger systems for working with colleagues both within and outside of Plan. The main areas of focus for systems development are

- ➔ Communication
- ➔ Learning, monitoring and evaluation
- ➔ Improved resource mobilization
- ➔ Supportive working environments



Addis Ababa Programme Area

Plan Addis Ababa Program Area has started implementation of its programs under the five years strategic plan (1996 – 2000) in Yeka Sub -city. Currently, we are implementing various projects in seven sub cities namely Yeka, Arada, Addis Ketema, Akaki Kalite, Kolfe keranio, Gulele, and Nifas silk Lafto sub cities.

Area: 527 sq km
 Population: 2,739,551
 (Central Statistical Agency 2007)
 Sponsorship communities: 11
 Current area of operation: 7 sub-cities
 Caseload: 4,200
 Sponsored children: 3,719

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I can make my child the happiest one

“Sometimes I was annoyed by Sofi’s frequent questions and seek of attention. I could not send her to KG as they are located far away and they are meant for well to do families. So quitting my small business, and spending much time to take Sofi to Kindergarten was a luxury for me as I have shouldered my family livelihood partly” Azeb Says.

Azeb Elias is a young mother, 24 lives at Feche Area in Akaki Kality Sub city about 30 km far from the center of Addis Ababa. Azeb is married and has a four-year old lovely baby girl. She runs a small café in front of her home to support her family livelihood.

Like any mother in the area it was a headache for her to make her child (Sofia) happy since there is no nearby Kindergarten in the area or primary school is unthinkable. She could not buy her play materials since they are expensive and not accessible neither have the knowledge to produce such materials at home.

Programme Implementation and its Impact

But the launch of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programme funded by Plan International Ethiopia- Addis Ababa Program Area and implemented in partnership with a local based NGO Ratson Azeb’s pressing challenges were solved. The programme has benefitted Azeb and her child in more ways than one. Her child Sofia has started attending community managed early learning center.

Through the programme Azeb and other parents are trained and equipped with parenting skill on how to raise their children, how to produce playing and stimulating materials from locally available resources, and how to keep their children healthy through attending parental training and parents’ group discussion.

“I did not have the knowledge and capacity to make my daughter a happy child before I have started participating in parenting discussion. I thought I could make her happy only through buying her playing materials and I believe only rich families can provide that. The parenting training and discussion has totally changed my attitude. Look at plenty of playing materials I have produced after the training”, says Azeb pointing her finger towards the playing materials put in order on the veranda of her decent home.

At the parenting discussion, Azeb and other mothers discuss on how to keep their children healthy and happy. They share their experiences on parenting, and other relevant social issues. They discuss on how to better support the early learning center. They also listen to stories on good parenting skills.

What Azeb feels about the Programme

Azeb says, **“One of the most important lessons I got from the training is that parents must give unreserved love and attention to their children. We might be busy in different activities like house chores, running small business and social engagement. But yet we need to give attention to our children. You may be rich and buy everything for your child. But without love and attention everything is meaningless.”** Azeb adds.

Her child Sofia spends half a day at the Community Managed Early Learning Center, which is one of the cornerstones of the ECCD project. She is the one who try every playing and learning materials at the center though she is younger than most of the children. In deed her mother’s close follow up and attachment contributed to her active participation.



“Sofi tells me how she spends her time at the center; about the play materials she likes; the numbers, and colours she identified. She has become more active after she started attending her class at the center .In the afternoon she enjoys playing with the materials I produced for her. I spend also good time with her. She asks everything. I’m very delighted to see her as the happiest child,” says Azeb.

Implementers’ View

Dawit Assefa, ECCD Project Coordinator at Ratson says, **“Azeb is one of the active mothers in the parenting groups established in the area. She regularly participates in parents’ group discussion which is conducted every 15 days. She shares her experience at the meeting and takes good lessons from other mothers as well.”**

“What I wonder is that Azeb knows the value of those play materials like numbers, puzzles, letters, colors shapes on the holistic development of the child. Her home looks like a friendly mini- early learning center. She also overcomes the meticulous demands of making the materials again and again.” Demeke Fekadu, ECCD Project Coordinator at Plan International Ethiopia Addis Ababa Program Area, says after looking at the playing materials produced by Azeb.

All mothers participating in parenting program produce playing materials for the early learning center as well as to help their children at home. **“I understand that there is individual difference among parents while participating in the program. But no-one is in parallel with Mother Azeb. Her contribution is superb. Hence, we will scale up her experience at parents’ day so that we will see more mothers to follow Azeb’s footsteps,”** Demeke adds.

The ECCD project aims at helping all children (birth to 8) in targeted communities to develop and learn to their full potential through effective, inclusive and holistic supports. In parenting program, the project has an objective of empowering parents to impart quality support for their children independently.



Battling Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Ethiopia

Harmful practices may be traditional or emerging, but generally have some cultural, social or religious foundation. Common for most harmful practices is that they have devastating consequences on the child's life, development, health, education and protection.

In different countries, many boys and girls suffer from various forms of harmful practices which include female genital mutilation, early and forced marriage, breast ironing, son preference, female infanticide, virginity testing, and child labour among other many unknown practices.

One against all, the struggle of a Girl

Kebebush Birre, 22, from Wome Bunamo Kebele of Goriche district of Sidama Zone in southern Ethiopia. Unlike many other girls in her community, she was taught by her father about the dangers of female genital mutilation (FGM).

At 18, she married and moved away with her husband - but soon after her new family especially Kebebush's mother in-law demanded that she undergo FGM.

"I suffered with frequent nagging from my husband's family to undergo circumcision. I was discriminated against and was not regarded as normal. I even didn't enjoy my social life as a member of the community group since they considered that I lacked something," Kebebush says.

Her mother-in-law pleaded but Kebebush resisted. She reported the matter to the community's change agent - a voluntary government official who acts as a bridge to communities in dealing with multi-faceted issues affecting their respective community. They convinced her husband that FGM could cause health problems.

Female genital mutilation includes diverse traditional rituals that involve the surgical removal of some or all of the external female genitalia. It can lead to bleeding, infections and childbirth problems.

Thanks to the change agent, Kebebush was spared from what many girls struggle to challenge.

"After my first child, my father-in-law again demanded that I undergo FGM saying it was vital for my baby's health. I reported to the change agent who took him to the Women, Children and Youth Affairs office to explain the harmful effects of FGM. He agreed not to raise the issue again," recalls Kebebush.

Kebebush now lives happily with her family and prevented her sister-in-laws from FGM. She no longer faces discrimination due to her uncircumcised status.

"My husband's friends realized that marrying an uncircumcised woman will not result in any negative effects as perceived by the community," says Kebebush.

Plan's intervention

To help children from undergoing harmful practices that would hinder them from developing, Plan International works with partners including children's parliament, girls' clubs and local communities to create awareness and encourage them to discuss their roles and take part in activities advocating for the elimination of female genital mutilation and child marriage.

"We acknowledge that harmful traditional practices may not be deliberate acts of parents/community against the wellbeing of children. It is rather, resulted from a long-standing tradition which is embedded with various misconceptions," Ephrem Belay, former Child Protection Program Specialist for Plan International in Ethiopia says.

"But we are working with communities to give them knowledge and change attitude and practice through dialogues, empowering young girls about their rights, education and campaigns. This is helping and we are slowly beginning to see results towards reducing these harmful traditional practices," he adds.

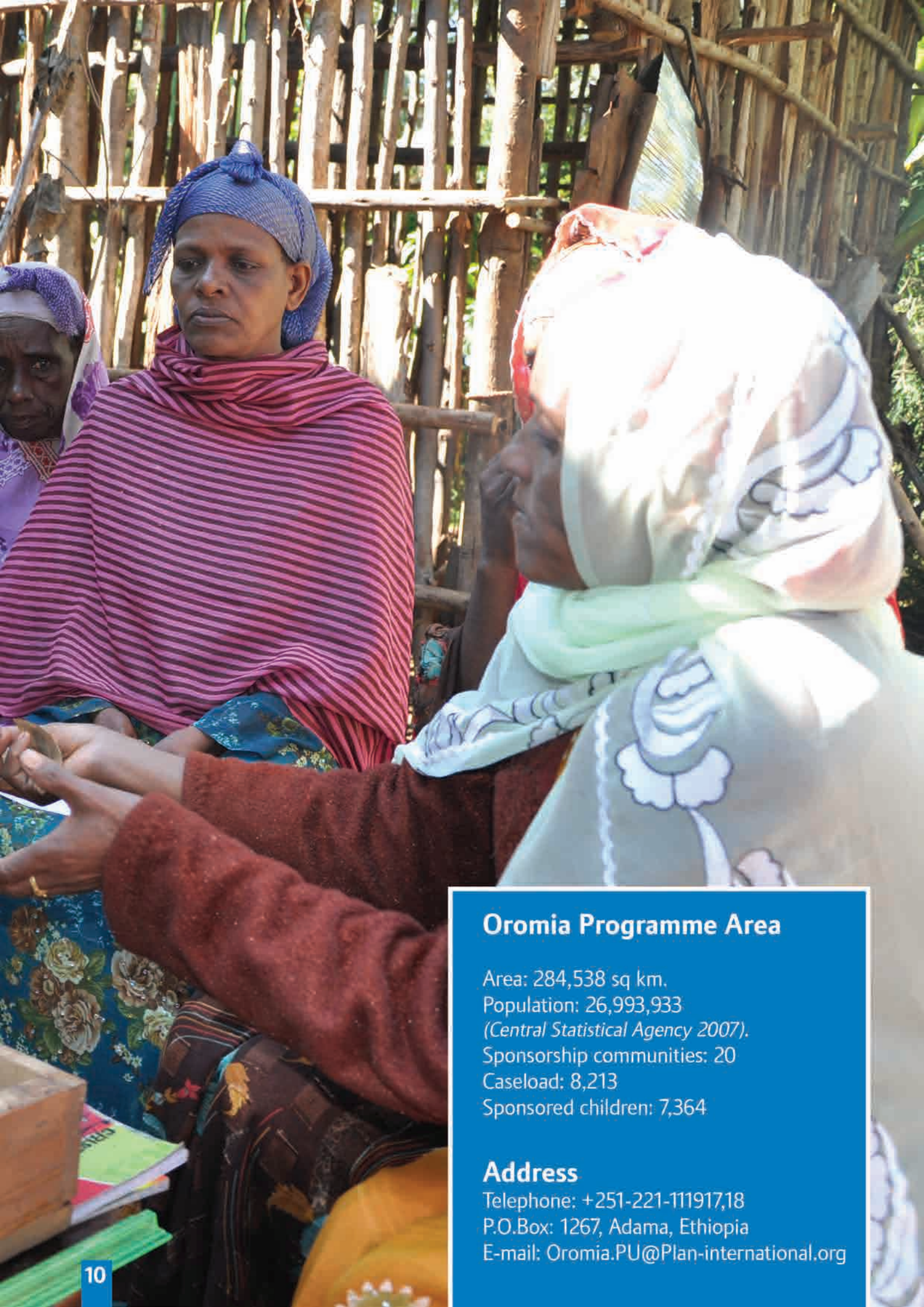


February 6, International Day
of Zero Tolerance to FGM





Village Saving And Loan Association, Jimma Zone



Oromia Programme Area

Area: 284,538 sq km.
Population: 26,993,933
(Central Statistical Agency 2007).
Sponsorship communities: 20
Caseload: 8,213
Sponsored children: 7,364

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A Single Mother who made life possible for her children

Plan through its community sponsorship project helped many families in Jimma Zone of Oromia region. It improved their incomes as well as the life of their children. Ever since the program was started, in June last year the mothers have been trained in how they can manage their income better through saving and loan association scheme .

Early Child Care and Development (ECCD) is one of Plan's interventions in the area, through the program child care centers have been established for children at young age to go to; mothers have been trained in how they should care better for their children from breast feeding to keeping their children's hygiene.

There are many women with many stories to tell who are part of the Jimma community

sponsorship project but Amina's story happens to be the best to tell for others.

It has been years since Amina Adem, 37 started running her family all by herself after her husband's death. Life has never been easy for her rising up her five children. The farm she has isn't that big enough. Besides, the labor force it need isn't something she couldn't provide as a woman.

Amina sends two of her young children to the newly opened Plan supported preschool. Her two other children are still in school while the elder has recently completed 10th grade and works at the local administration office, Kebele.

It has been 1 year 9 months since Amina started saving through the village saving and loan group that is supported by Plan and the local administration. She also explains that the amount of money she saves rose from time to time during her stay with the group.

“I get a loan of 200 birr (USD20) and made a profit of 50 birr(USD2.5) out of the sale of cash crop,” says Amina stating that the saving and loan groups besides being a source of finance for the women also strengthen their social bond.

“With our saving for social services, we support children who lost their parents as well as families who need support which is a good thing for those who need help,” Amina says.

Because she is part of the saving groups, Amina got trainings on modern beekeeping and vegetable plantation that aims at increasing her source of income. **“Looking at the changes that come to our lives, I say the trainings should have been given to us earlier in our lives,”** says Amina who claims that women like her would have a different life had they known sooner.

Amina, using her loans managed to change her thatch-roofed house with a bigger corrugated iron roof. **“I am doing everything I can to raise my children with everything they need in life,”** says Amina.

Amina says that she have seen how happy her children are after they started going to the nearby preschool, she says they started singing and playing a lot, there are changes even with the way they play according to Amina.

“I now care much about how my children go to school; I make sure they are well fed and are clean before going to school,” Amina says. Amina also says that clean water still remains a challenge for her talking of sanitation and hygiene.

She says she looks forward to increasing her income with all the trainings and the support she got from Plan; she hopes to strengthen her vegetable garden using the trainings she took. She also said she can't wait till she starts making use out of the honey she soon will produce being helped with the training.





The value of water

Hade Nezif, a 50-year-old mother and grandmother, just knows how crucial access to clean water is for families. She knows because she and her family lived without it for years.

"We got water from the river about an hour away on foot from our village," says Hade, a mother of seven and grandmother of many including Hayate, a six-year-old girl. **"It was a long distance to cover, and even then the water was not pure, but we had no other option."**

Lack of access to clean water takes a big toll on children, compromising their health, welfare, and even their education. When her own children were growing up, they each had to take their turn in helping to collect water for the family, a task that often falls to children, especially girls, in rural Ethiopia.

"In the dry season, when there is no rainwater, you must go to the river constantly. A child like Hayate couldn't go to school. Fetching water would be their primary task," says Hade Nezif.

But today, with the help of Plan, Hade and her family are just one of the many people benefiting from a source of clean water. One new water point has been constructed, bringing the total to 10 new clean water points serving 3,500 people. And with three more under construction, thousands more will soon benefit.

"I would like to thank Plan," says Hade. **"Now children are very happy. The water is pure and they do not have to go far any more to find it. Now they can stay in school and spend more time with their families at home and playing with one another."**

Through the continued construction and rehabilitation of water points in Jimma, the lives of families, like Hade Nezif's, are being transformed.





Solar Energy Project, Shebedino District



SNNP Programme Area

(Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region)

Area: 105,887 sq. km

Total Population: 14,929,548

(Central Statistical Agency, 2007, projected)

Sponsorship communities: 15

Caseload: 7,913

Sponsored children: 6,373

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Champions of Sanitation

From the entrance of this primary school in Addis Ababa, you can see rubbish bins and signs everywhere featuring short and snappy messages on the value of good sanitation and hygiene practices. Welcome to one of the most sanitary and hygienic school in Ethiopia's capital city, where Plan's Student Led School Sanitation and Hygiene (SLSSH) project has made a huge impact.

Like many schools in Ethiopia, children would openly defecate on the toilet floor and around the latrines. The school toilets were full of flies, smelly and did not have proper ventilation. Even in the classrooms, sanitation and hygiene conditions were not particularly sanitary for the 1,700 students and 100 teachers.

In addition to the neglected state of the toilets, the school did not have an appropriate waste collection and disposal system. The knowledge of the students, teachers and other school community members on sanitation and hygiene was inadequate.

"Students were not interested in using the latrines as they were filthy. They were not used to using rubbish bins despite the availability of a few bins in the school compound. The school community, especially students, were exposed to different disease like flu." Kassa Yimam, Vice Director of the school explains.

To address the issue, Plan Ethiopia in partnership with the Mothers and Children Development Organization (MCMDO), a local NGO, launched SLSSH project in September 2013. The aim of the project is to contribute to the improvement of quality primary education by creating a child-friendly school environment through the active engagement of students and teachers..

The project started by delivering a five day training session to five students, a teacher and school director from each school targeted by the project.

Training activities included creating a sanitation map, calculating the amount of faeces produced in the school each day and producing a waste flow diagram. These activities helped the participants to have a better understanding of the sanitation situation in their school.

Bethelm, a grade eight student took part in the training initiative: **"The training was unique and very interesting as it was practical. We learnt how we can improve the sanitation and hygiene in our school and how we can be agents of change to reverse the situation."**

Following the training, all participants returned to their respective schools fully motivated to pass on their knowledge to fellow students and other school communities. They organised one day awareness raising training sessions with the other students to promote good sanitation and hygiene practices in the school. Using media, plays and posters they ensured that every student understood that it was their duty to keep the school, particularly the toilets, clean and tidy.

Most importantly, the students and teachers established a sanitation and hygiene club, recruiting 50 student members. There are at least four students members from each class in the club and it is the most active club in the school.

The results have been amazing. The club has coordinated and motivated the students to improve and maintain the sanitation and hygiene levels in the school. And their hard work has paid off as all the students have supported the initiative and tried their best to keep the classrooms, latrines and school compound clean. The school has also received recognition from the local school administration for being the most sanitary and hygienic school in the area.

"We are very satisfied. We are very happy to see our school like this. Earlier on we are expected to coordinate the students, but now every student is ready to actively participate in the sanitation and hygiene initiative. They also take their learning home to pass on to their family and neighbours," Bethalem says happily.

Demesesachew Alemu, a teacher and chairperson for the club, explains, **"The most important thing from the project is the behavioral change of the students. They know that the issues are directly related to their lives. Even when the project phases out at end of December 2014, the club will continue coordinating the students and the school administration has also been supporting the club in many ways."**

A Day in the Life of a Rural Girl Child

Rural girls and women play a crucial role in the life of their families and community. They manage the burden of all indoor household tasks. These days, they are also involved in outdoor activities which were once considered as men tasks like ploughing up farm land, harvesting crops, and other on farm and off farm activities.

Young girls are particularly continues to be raised in households where they are expected to shoulder the burden of house hold labor alongside their mothers. Studies show that girls spend between 33 and 85 percent more time on unpaid care work than boys.

Rahma, 12, from Kersa District of Oromia region is the second child in her family but the first daughter. Like other girls in her age, she helps her mother in the house cores and her father with the farm.

Fetching Water and collecting Fire Wood

Collecting fire wood and fetching water are among her day today activities. People in Rahma's village use fire wood to cook food and use water from half an hour away pond. Rahma is involved in the food preparation with her mother and younger sister.

Rahma and other teenage girls in her village take small jerry cans to fetch water from a stream that is thirty minutes walk away from their village. After fetching, they carry the water either on their hands or on their heads to get it home.

Going to School

She wakes up at around 6 to get herself ready for school after helping her mother with the preparations of breakfast. She leaves home an hour before school time as she has to walk for an hour to get to her school. She is a fifth grade student. Afan Oromo and Math are her favorite subjects.



Helping out Her Parents

Rahma joins her parents in the farm when she comes back from school. She helps them with weeding and watering the farm, taking care of the vegetable garden they have in the back of their house and collect the cattle from the field. Rahma after taking training in vegetable growing representing her mother started growing onions and other vegetables; she takes good care of it as she likes eating vegetables. Rahma also makes coffee for the family two times a day.

After Dinner Time

After dinner Rahma and her sister clean up all the equipments they used for dinner. After a long day of work and schooling, Rahma and other girl children in her village sit down to study late at night. She always do her home work lighting up the gas burner they use as a light at night as there isn't an electricity in the village.

Her Dream

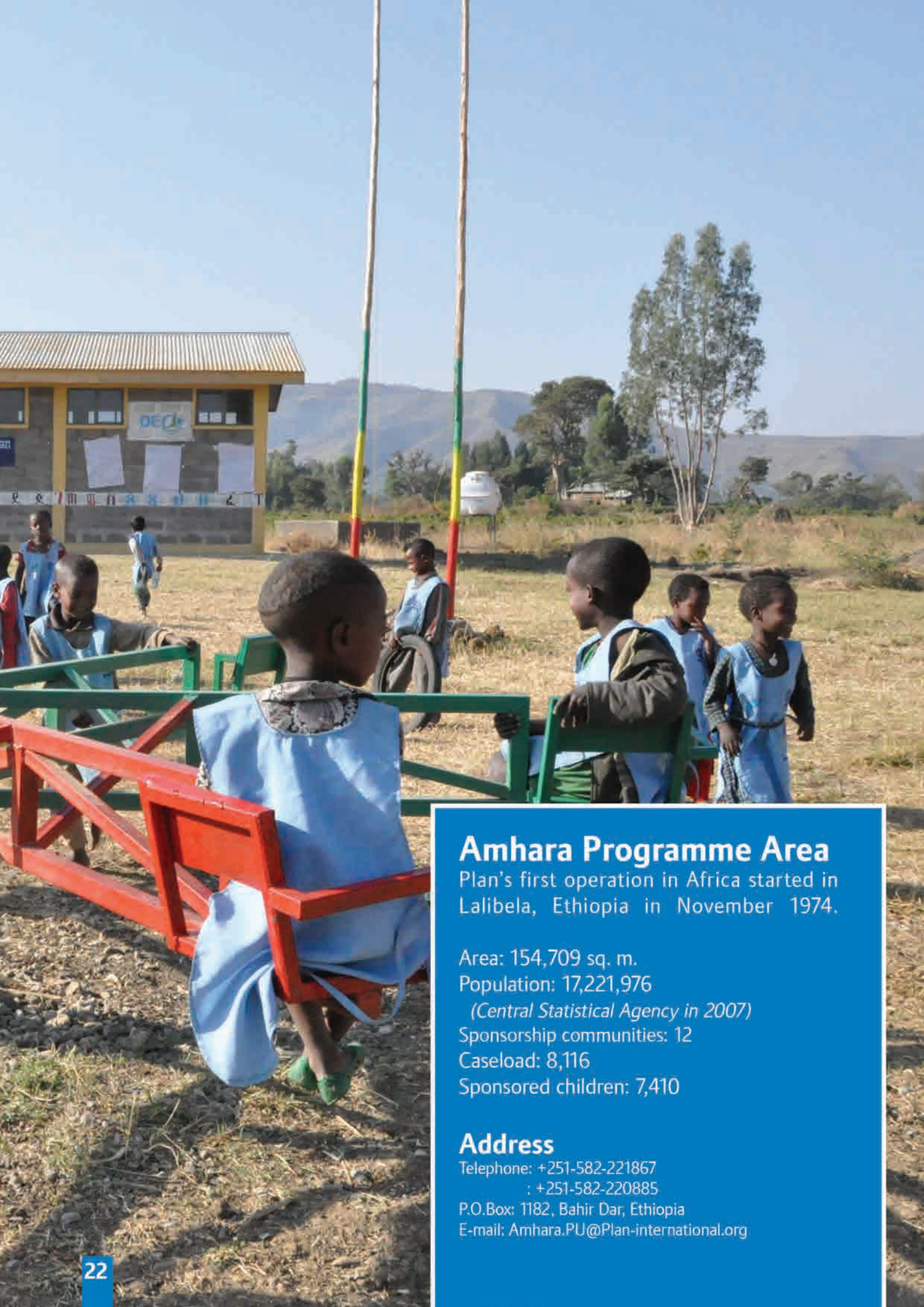
Rahma wants to be a doctor when she grows up; she then wants to help and treat the people in her village when they get sick.

Plan recognizes the burden on girls as domestic chores limit their ability to develop their intellectual potential, which finally leads to child poverty. Plan believes that investing in girls and young women has equal benefiting effect on alleviating poverty, not only for the girls themselves but also for their families and their community. Social justice, equal opportunity and development impact are the three reasons why Plan has made Because I Am A Girl campaign.





Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) center, Amhara Region



Amhara Programme Area

Plan's first operation in Africa started in Lalibela, Ethiopia in November 1974.

Area: 154,709 sq. m.

Population: 17,221,976

(Central Statistical Agency in 2007)

Sponsorship communities: 12

Caseload: 8,116

Sponsored children: 7,410

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Our Emergency Response: Lubaba's Case



September 2013, Amhara, Ethiopia: A torrential rains caused serious flash flooding and affected the livelihoods of the people who rely on the land for subsistence in Amhara Region, Antsokiya district. During the severe flood households experienced negative impacts as well as many people like Lubaba lost their crop and livestock which are relied upon sale and consumption.

Lubaba Mohammed is a 60 years old woman who lives in Ansokia district, Amhara region. Lubaba is divorced mom of six children; three female and three male. Farming is their source of household income.

“It was a terrible accident. I have lost my entire crop and my three sheeps in the flood accident. After the accident life has not been easy for me and my neighbors”, says Lubaba. **“It’s a daily struggle for me to find enough food to feed my family”.** Lubaba adds.

“But thanks to Plan and ADHENO (Integrated Rural Development Association) I got three sheep. Now my two sheep were delivered and have a total of five sheep. Thus, I am planning to start small dairy sheep farm and grow my income and get more money”, says Lubaba.

Following through the field assessment and the recommendation from the regional and district government offices, Plan international Ethiopia in collaboration with ADHENO (Integrated Rural Development Association) provided sheep for Lubaba and many others who are affected by the flood.

Sitina Ali is the other woman who has also benefited from Plan’s restocking and livestock distribution programmes. She is widowed and a mother of two children. She is the only sole breadwinner of her family and uses the money she generates from petty trading.

“I lost my household equipments during the flood accident. The flood completely wiped out my production. I couldn’t even farm since the land is covered”, says Sitina.

In this restocking, 210 (52 M and 158 F) were selected and restocked with 630 sheep which is 3 sheep per household. Out of the distributed sheep 90 of them were delivered offspring as a result the total number reached 720, with a further 54 pregnant unfortunately, 14 female sheep were died during delivery time because of complication of delivery.

Lubaba and her neighbor Sitina expressed their gratitude towards Plan and ADHENO (Integrated Rural Development Association). They further said **“we are now very happy since we recover our asset”.**

This restocking approach will increase income (asset) distribution between the flood affected poorest of the poor and others livestock owners and promote animal management as those households who have many animals will sale and those do not own before (restocking beneficiaries) will get opportunity of getting it and participate in the management-in efficient way.



The Journey to Change the Life of a Family

Serti is a small village in Babo community of kersa district. More than 100 family heads are living in the village with meager economy and backward agricultural system. Kemeru Abanega, 35, is married and a mother of eight children. Kemeru and her husband Temmam Ababbori lives in this village since they get married. Like many women in the village Kemeru's livelihood was predominantly depends on backward agricultural practices.

"Life was somewhat difficult and we even couldn't feed our children properly as we used to practice poor agricultural system", Kemeru says while explaining her past experience. **"We used to live hand to mouth, no saving and no surplus production in our agriculture. As a result of these we were exposed to extreme poverty. Our children become the number one victim",** Kemeru adds.

"My fourth child, Abdella, had dropped out of school because of lack of uniform and supplies. He spent one year at home and now he is a grade seven student. He could have been at grade eight by now, if we could afford to buy the school materials for him" Temmam describes the level of the then situation.

They were tried so many things to change their life and economic conditions for years by their own; but no improvement as they were not supported by new ideas and modern agricultural trainings. In the mean time, Plan International Ethiopia, along with its local partners Hope for Children and Government offices introduced village saving and loan association in this village and organized various self-help development trainings to change and improve the life of the community.

"I have got training on VSLA, poultry production, modern agricultural practice and provisions of modern bee hiving material", says kemeru. **"Moreover I received 10 breeding hens from Plan International Ethiopia",** She adds.

Having these trainings and Plan's support, Kemeru and her husband, Temmam, started their journey to change their life. Now they are practicing modern agricultural systems and start producing three times a year and can feed their children properly. They are also a member of VSLA group in their village. Currently, they are saving 10 Birr (USD 0.5) per 15 days; they increased their saving by three birr (USD0.15) after they got extra income in exchange of eggs from the modern hens.

"My two children are attending at Plan supported kindergarten/Early Child Cara and Development/ center in the village. The rest of my children are learning at Serbo Primary School. Now there is no more school dropped out. We are in a way to improve our life," Kemeru explained with hope.

"I am practicing a modern agricultural system in line with the training and modern bee hiving mechanism. Plan Ethiopia provided a modern bee hives. Previously I used the traditional way of producing honey, but currently we got seven kilograms of honey from one bee hives and sold it around 350 Birr(USD17.50)." Temmam explained the present situation.

"We are a happy family and many thanks for Plan International Ethiopia for its tireless support we are striving to have a better future. I hope Plan will continue its support to the community until we accomplish our change journey," concluded Kemeru.







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