



PLAN
INTERNATIONAL

Bringing hearts and minds
together for children

STORIES OF **CHANGE**

PLAN INTERNATIONAL ETHIOPIA

SECOND EDITION

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COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S REPORT



I am delighted to present our second edition of Stories of Change. Plan International Ethiopia team draws great strength and inspiration from these individual stories which illustrate the impact we can have on the health, happiness and prosperity of Ethiopian families.

Plan International has been working in Ethiopia for the last two decades. Our projects bring long lasting change in the lives of vulnerable children in the regions of Addis Ababa, Amhara, Gambella, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region. The following stories provide an insight into some of these changes.

Of course, none of these life changing stories would be possible if it weren't for the support of and collaboration with the government of Ethiopia, local and international non-governmental organisations, United Nations agencies,

donors, academic institutions and corporate organisations.

We are currently developing our Country Strategic Plan for the next five years. During this process we reflect on our strengths so that we can replicate our successes more broadly. We also review our projects to consider how we can better serve the vulnerable children of Ethiopia. The stories contained in this book show that we have gone some way in improving the lives of vulnerable children. However, we constantly strive to improve the way in which we can help children, their families and their communities.

I would like to express my gratitude and admiration for the Plan International Ethiopia team who work every day to bring to fruition Plan's vision of a world in which children can realise their potential.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Manoj Kumar'.

Manoj Kumar
Country Director
Plan International Ethiopia
November 2015



OUR ORGANISATION

Founded in 1937, Plan International is one of the oldest and largest children's development organisations in the world. We have a presence in over 70 countries worldwide to create lasting change for children and their communities. Everything we do is based on our firm commitment to children and ensuring they can claim their rights.

We see a clear link between fulfilling children's rights and ending child poverty. Every child has the right to be healthy, educated, protected, valued and respected in their own community and beyond.

Plan International has been working in Ethiopia since 1995. Currently, our four main focus areas in Ethiopia are education, protection of children from violence, emergency response and early survival. There are certain considerations that cross-cut all our projects such as gender and disability as these can influence the vulnerability and marginalisation of children.

PLAN'S VISION

Our vision is of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity. And our vision of rights and opportunities for every child can only be realised by working together with communities.

HOW WE WORK

We work in partnership with children, communities and other organisations to develop and run innovative programmes that transform lives across eight key issues: education, water and sanitation, sexual and reproductive health, early childhood care and development, disaster risk management, economic security, child protection and child participation.

As well as our ongoing programming, we work during and after natural disasters, emergencies and conflicts to respond to children's immediate needs and protect their rights. We also work with local and national governments and global organisations to influence policies and laws that improve children's lives.

SNAPSHOT OF OUR PROGRAMME AREAS



Addis Ababa Programme Area

Area: 527 sq km
Population: 2,739,551*
Plan sponsorship communities: 11
Caseload: 5,200
Sponsored children: 3,840

Amhara Programme Area

Area: 154,709 sq km
Population: 17,221,976*
Plan sponsorship communities: 13
Caseload: 8,116
Sponsored children: 7,346

Gambella

Plan International Ethiopia's focus in Gambella is to provide services to the South Sudanese refugee communities. The refugee camp at Kule has reached capacity and Plan currently provides Child Protection in Emergency, Education in Emergency, Early Childhood Care and Development and youth services to 47,000 refugees. Plan also provides services to the Jewi camp (50,000 refugees), Pugniudo 2 camp (20,000 refugees) and host communities.

Oromia Programme Area

Area: 284,538 sq km
Population: 26,993,933*
Plan sponsorship communities: 20
Caseload: 8,213
Sponsored children: 7,226

SNNP Programme Area

Area: 105,887 sq km
Population: 14,929,548*
Plan sponsorship communities: 16
Caseload: 7,913
Sponsored children: 6,512

*Central Statistics Agency (2007), Population and Housing Census Report – Country 2007

EARLY SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN (ESDEC) PROGRAMME

WHAT PLAN DOES

The interventions of the Early Survival and Development of Children (ESDeC) Programme seek to address the high levels of illness and death among children under five years of age. The goal, objectives and activities focus on strengthening health systems across the continuum of care for better service delivery; improving mother, newborn and child health (MNCH) behaviour and practices through community mobilisation; improving sanitation and hygiene practices; expanding access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities; and supporting the development of social and economic opportunities for women and other home-based health caregivers.

WHY PLAN NEEDS TO INTERVENE

Whilst the health service delivery system has expanded over recent years, problem areas persist including pharmaceutical supplies and equipment, skills of health workers, skills to design and monitor evidence-based interventions, poor health referral systems, limited community knowledge about MNCH (such as the link between breastfeeding and reduced incidence of child malnutrition), lack of access to WASH facilities which contributes to childhood illness and death and the inability of women to knowledgeably and fully carry out their role as primary care givers due to their low socio-economic status.

HOW PLAN INTERVENES

Plan International Ethiopia works towards its ESDeC objectives by:

- using the government Health Development Army (HDA) structure to improve awareness of MNCH issues.
- engaging males to improve awareness of and support for MNCH interventions.
- consulting women, children and people with disabilities including their caregivers.
- capacitating health extension workers and health workers.

- strengthening the existing primary health care system in terms of essential equipment and supplies.
- providing training, including gender awareness training, to health staff to support the provision of quality MNCH services.

WHERE PLAN INTERVENE

Plan, with local NGO partners, implements the ESDeC programme in eight districts of Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) Regions. Plan improves MNCH for an underserved population of 622,170 through building the capacity of communities, especially women and their male family members to recognise, prevent and respond to basic MNCH issues.

WHAT PLAN HAS ACHIEVED

A) *Improving MNCH behaviour and practices through community mobilisation. Plan has:*



- provided basic emergency obstetric care, equipment and drugs for health centres. As a result, the delivery service coverage in each district has increased by two- to three-fold as compared to pre-project implementation.

- strengthened the referral linkage in the health care tier system. For example, Plan has provided fuel for the government ambulance service over a three year period for pregnant mothers and sick children.
- created awareness on MNCH issues among Health Development Armies. Plan works in association with district health offices to provide training and equipment to communities. Government Health Extension Workers train a number of community members on a range of health issues. These community members in turn train five more members making up the Health Development Army. Plan ensures that issues such as anti-natal care, post-natal care, family planning, sexually transmitted infection, harmful traditional practice and gender issues are on the HDA agenda.

B) *Improving Sanitation and Hygiene Practices and Access to Sustainable WASH Facilities.*



- So far more than 62 water schemes (hand dug wells, protected springs, shallow wells, boreholes, roof water harvesting structures, and pipe extensions) have been constructed or rehabilitated with a total budget of USD 1,218,588.
- Water quality tests have been conducted for 19 water supply schemes which are both new and rehabilitated.
- To maintain the sustainability of the programme, water and sanitation committee caretakers have been organised and trained. This construction and training has benefited more than 59,934 peoples, of which 49% are female.
- A total of 564 communities (comprising more than 2.8 million people) were declared Open Defecation Free. These communities have benefited from access to latrine and hygiene facilities.

C) *Social and Economic Empowerment of Women and Home Based Health Caregivers.*

Plan supports mothers and other care givers through two main interventions:



1. To improve the nutritional status of households and the income of women, Plan supports women to establish income generating activities and to improve the value of their enterprises. Projects include:
 - Improving and increasing sustainable mango production and economic return for the development of poor mango producing farmers in East Wollega Zone.
 - Increasing the value chain of honey in Lasta and Lalibella districts by training farmers in beekeeping.
 - Tackling the shortages of bee colonies through queen rearing training. The project multiplied bee colonies, increased farmers' stocks and provided income through farmers supplying colonies as a business.

- Urban agriculture programmes (e.g. vegetable production).
- Providing almost 4,000 improved and grafted seedlings, carrying out market assessments, and supporting cooperatives to sell 17.2 metric ton of fruit.

2. *Village Savings and Loans Schemes: To support women to be able to save and access credit, Plan, through its partners:*

- Facilitated training for 30 Community Volunteers (CVs) in the community managed Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) approach. This approach provides training on the benefits of group saving and loans, even for those who consider themselves too poor to put any money aside. Plan trained 2,325 beneficiaries (90% women) and promoted the formation of 41 VSLAs who accumulated ETB 13,078 (USD 620) in the first year.
- To date, 5,556 (5,438 adult and 108 youth) VSLA groups have been formed.
- Among the youth, 792 members have received training in vocations such as masonry and brick work, metal work, carpentry, catering, hair dressing and weaving.
- Members have benefited by engaging in self-employment or finding employment in other firms. As a result mothers have secured access to finance and gradually improved their decision making status.
- VSLA forums have also strengthened social relationships among the members.

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

Total beneficiaries (including districts out of Plan's operational area due to ODF interventions) are

3,063,696

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

USD 29,340,629

(this includes emergency projects which Plan runs in addition to planned ESDeC projects)

CHALLENGES

- Low employment status of youth skill trainees (about 30 %);
- White scale insect that attacked mango trees and fruits;
- Fund shortfall to implement planned interventions



VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN SCHEME

Women and girls' low status as a result of cultural and traditional practices tend to deprive them of access to credit and other financial services. Women are often the primary caregivers of children and they make decisions that affect their children's well-being. Many children suffer and die because mothers are unable to provide them with adequately nutritious food. Plan International Ethiopia's Village Savings and Loans Groups financially empower women to engage in small commercial businesses. Often people living in poverty cannot envisage putting money aside as they have so little. However these groups demonstrate the benefits of saving even the smallest amount on a regular basis; provide group members with training in vocational skills, business development and financial literacy and support agreement with markets and formal financial institutions.

TSEGE: SMALL SAVING FULFILLING BIG DREAMS

Arada Sub City of Addis Ababa

A year ago, sending her children to school and meeting their basic needs was nothing but a fantasy for Tsege Tolossa, a 32 year old divorced mother. Her daily average income from physically demanding labour was never more than 20 birr (USD 1). Her children were eager to go to school with their peers. Tsege dreamt of seeing her children at school and providing three meals a day and proper clothing for her family.



"I had been working hard as a daily labourer, and washed clothes for well-to-do families to meet my family's needs. However, **my income was so inadequate that the family could not stand on its feet.** Life was very challenging for me. I did not know what to do," says Tsege.

Plan International Ethiopia runs the Household Economic Empowerment Programme. It aims to reduce poverty by providing access to saving and credit services. In Tsege's area, Plan is working with the local NGO, Abebech Gobena Yehsanat Kebkabena Limat Mahiber (AGOHELMA) to found and support Village Saving and Loan Groups (VSLG). These microfinance groups are established by a self-selected group of economically marginalised women to assist members to generate income of their own.

Tsege realised that saving as little as 5 birr a week (USD 0.25) could have a profound effect. Her perseverance paid off. The programme creates employment opportunities for women and youth through vocational life skills training. Tsege embarked on a four month hairdressing training course.

"The training was very good. It was very practical. I attended the training seriously as I was determined to change my life to the better," Tsege says.

The word soon spread about Tsege's skill in creating cornrows (a style of braiding and plaiting hair in narrow strips to form geometric patterns on the scalp). She has an ever-growing customer base coming to her home. Her daily average income is between 80 and 100 birr; five times her income as a domestic worker.

"After I started my job, my life has changed completely. I was able to send both of my kids to private school. Fulfilling the basic needs of my family has not been a luxury anymore. Even I have started supporting my parents regularly. I have also continued as a member of VSLG through saving 20 birr every week," said Tsege.

Asked about her aspiration, she replies, "I want my children to get quality education so that they will have bright future. I also want to resume school in evening programme as I only completed grade eight due to poverty of my parents. Furthermore, I will try my best to open big beauty salon. I would like to thank Plan and AGOHELMA for supporting me to realise my dream. **I would be very happy if other poor young women get similar chance like me.**"

Since Plan rolled out VSLGs in Addis Ababa in 2008, nearly 800 groups have formed with 8,000 members. This format has also been implemented successfully in Plan International Ethiopia's other Programme Areas.





ACCESS TO WATER

All households need water every day. It often falls to the female children in the family to collect water. Water sources can be some distance from the girls' homes and are often unsafe as they can carry disease. Families are not able to collect enough water for their daily needs and bodies and clothes often go unwashed for days, or weeks, at a time. The children's education suffers, or stops altogether due to the long time it takes to collect the water. Sometimes several trips are made in a single day.

Plan International Ethiopia mitigates water collection problems through assisting communities to manage their water supply schemes. Plan provides hand pump water points in villages which provide clean and safe water which children don't have to sacrifice their education to collect. Water committees are formed to ensure a safe and sustainable supply of water to the village.

Below Semira and Bikitu explain how water pumps in their villages have changed their lives.

HAND PUMP REVIVES SEMIRA'S SCHOOL CAREER

Tiroafeta District, Jimma Zone, Oromia

People in Semira Ababiya's village were forced to drink muddy river water found far away. Semira was the member of her family responsible for water collection. "It took almost half an hour to bring water from the overflowing river," Semira, 11, explained. "Sometimes I went four times per day to collect water, when my mother and sister went to the market, as a result, I may not go to school. **Before last year I was dropped out of school when I was grade three.**"

Plan International Ethiopia constructed one hand pump water point in Semira's village, in addition to many others in the district. The village pump provides clean and safe water for 30 families. "We were fully participated in our labour when Plan constructed this hand pump water point," said Semira's mother, Mahida.

"In my belief, it was unfortunate for us to have water pump in our village" said Semira. She had never seen a hand pump water point before. "Now I am very happy to see this water point in my village. After the construction of this water point, I am free from going far to find water. No more muddy water. I will not miss my class as a result of water problem. Now I am successfully promoted to grade four," Semira said joyfully.

"Now we can wash our clothes every day, we can also wash our face; keeping our sanitation using this water," said Mahida.

"Currently, I have lots of time to study, to go to school, to play with my friends and to help my mother as I will not go far which almost took more than an hour in search of water," added Semira. "I want to be a teacher in the future. I like teachers, because they teach us for future."



BIKILTU: PUMP WASHES AWAY WATER WORRIES

Babo Village, Kersa District, Jimma Zone, Oromia Region

Water used to be a laborious and ever present burden for 15 year old Bikiltu Zinabe.

“Because of the large number of population in the village that used to have water from the distant stream, you may face a long queue which almost took an hour to get water. As a result of that situation, **I used to miss some of my class which directly affected my education** since I started learning,” Bikiltu said.

Water supply and cleanliness was a problem for her family. Clothes could only be washed once every two weeks and there were never enough water for all the household activities. “We used to put on unclean clothes and we couldn’t keep our personal hygiene.”

Bikiltu said. Her community, especially the children, suffered from waterborne disease in the river water.

Plan International Ethiopia, in partnership with the local NGO, Oromia Development Association, constructed a hand pump water point which serves more than 100 families across the village. Plan conducted a community discussion before the construction to see how a water point could best serve the village. “There was a community conversation on site selection and community mobilisation among members of the village, village administrator and children,” said Halima Shi Siraje, Bikiltu’s mother.

Now Bikiltu and her family are very happy, they have got clean and safe water supply close to their home which has been their dream for years. “After Plan Ethiopia constructed this water point, things have been changed. We can have pure water to drink. We can also wash our clothes daily. As you can see we are very happy and clean. My parents will not force me any more to bring water because it is found near to my home so that they can collect easily without any cost,” Bikiltu beamed.

From the time of the pump’s construction, people in the community have been fully involved in different ways. A committee has been formed to protect the water point and to ensure it will function for years to come. Following this, Bikiltu was nominated by the committee to have a key for the gate of the water point in this village.

“I am really happy to have the key for this water point. **Thanks to Plan, people in this village have got clean and safe water supply**, we may not expose to different waterborne disease. Now no more walk in search of water, I didn’t miss one of my class since this water started its operation before six months ago,” Bikiltu concluded.







A BETTER CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION FOR ALL (ABCDE for All)

WHAT PLAN DOES

The primary challenges in the education sector are limited access to care and development for very young children, low school completion rates and low quality of primary education. The two main components of Plan International Ethiopia's education programme are improved quality of primary education and Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD).

WHY PLAN NEEDS TO INTERVENE

There is a lack of awareness about the value and type of early childhood care and development and limited resources available. Restricted access to ECCD has long term detrimental effects on the development of children into adult life. It can lead to poor achievement in later school years and low primary completion rates. Primary school completion rates are poor, especially for girls. A range of issues contribute to early drop out including household poverty, poor quality education, inadequately trained teachers and the high prevalence of violence in and around schools. Inadequate hygiene facilities particularly discriminate against girls and children with disabilities.

HOW PLAN INTERVENES

Plan's objective to provide better childhood development and education for all includes:

- improving early age stimulation of children aged 2-3 years;
- influencing the continuing evolution of the current national ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) policy towards a holistic ECCD approach;
- establishing and improving the quality of services at early childhood centres (for children aged 4-6) and to support the smooth transition to primary school (for children aged 7-8);

- improving the completion rate of primary school children particularly that of girls, marginalised and disabled children;
- improving the academic performance of boys and girls in primary education; and
- supporting the development of an improved curriculum for primary education.

WHERE PLAN INTERVENES

Plan International Ethiopia is working in Addis Ababa City Administration and three regional states: Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR). Plan has strong formal relationships with their respective Education Bureaus, Zone Education Departments and District Education Offices.

WHAT PLAN ACHIEVED

- In the course of the Country Strategic Plan 2011 - 2016, Plan intervened in more than 187 primary schools, 12 post primary schools and 49 kindergartens. The interventions included upgrading, expansion, maintenance, material provisions and human capacity building.
- Approximately 37 ECCD centres were established and 223 parenting groups were organised based on Plan's new ECCD model. In addition, more than 2,000 education bureau experts, 3,500 teachers and 1,309 Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) members received training.



- Plan led the establishment of regional ECCD networks which bring together government and civil society organisations to facilitate conversations on common issues and to advocate evidence-based policy.
- Plan, in collaboration with local artists, story tellers, the government and other partners, has produced culturally responsive storybooks in local languages to enrich resources for the promotion of moral and intellectual development of children of diverse backgrounds. Five thousand copies of the storybooks were printed and distributed in early learning centres.
- Plan adopted and tested a new approach towards school sanitation and hygiene. The Student Led School Sanitation and Hygiene (SLSSH) approach empowers school students, as opposed teachers, to take control of the cleanliness of themselves, their compounds and their classrooms. They are trained in sanitation and hygiene and draft their own school guidelines. This approach has now been tested in 10 primary schools and has proved hugely successful. SLSSH will now be replicated in other schools.
- Plan established or strengthened more than 187 school clubs with the objective of building children's self-confidence and skills.
- PTSAs are now able to design and implement their own school-based projects through the active involvement of local communities. This exercise is increasingly devolving responsibility to schools and the communities, increasing their accountability and ownership. So far 187 PTSAs and 49 kindergarten management committees have been supported through capacity building training.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) centres have been established in more than 100 schools. Teachers and students are applying ICT tools to enhance the quality of education.
- Plan supports vulnerable primary school girls with Girls' Counselling and Service Delivery Blocks. They provide counselling rooms, rest rooms (necessary for menstrual management), reading material and indoor games rooms. The approach is currently operating successfully in 12 primary schools.



NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

The direct beneficiaries of the programme so far are **192,549** students (95,010 boys and 97,539 girls).

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

Total budget utilised to date is

USD 6,173,889

(USD 1,454,812 for ECCD and USD 4,719,077 for primary education).

CHALLENGES

The programmes are proving successful and, as such, community demand for ECCD provision is outstripping supply which is limited by funding and available land for the construction of early learning centres.

In some areas, the education programme has been challenged by the low level educational background of community members and inherent cultural barriers regarding the education of girls.

EDUCATION

There is a lack of awareness about the value of early childhood care and development (ECCD) and there are limited resources (such as buildings, equipment and teachers) available for it. Restricted access to ECCD has long term detrimental effects on the development of children into adult life. It can lead to poor achievement in later school years and low primary completion rates. Primary school completion rates are particularly poor for girls and children with a disability.

Plan International Ethiopia's strategy for improving education includes enhancing early age stimulation, establishing quality educational services for pre-primary aged children, improving primary completion rates especially for females and children with a disability and supporting improved academic performance and an improved curriculum. Other programmes also intersect with education. Children are educated in sanitation and hygiene and they, not their teachers, very successfully take responsibility for this at their school. Girls also learn about their potential, their rights and the law regarding harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and child marriage.

We will meet Workinesh whose granddaughter Hawi is the first in her family to attend early childhood education and Fetene, whose disability would have prevented him from accessing education if it weren't for the efforts of his local ECCD centre committee.



HAWI: LENCHA'S FIRST GENERATION OF EARLY LEARNERS

Lencha Community, Toke Kutaye District, Ambo, Oromia Regional State

"There was no school at all when I was a child in this village," said Workinesh Eticha, 48, a widow and grandmother to five year old Hawi Gudisa.

"My families had no knowledge of education at that time. I think due to this fact they didn't send me to school," said Workinesh. "There was no one taking care of us like today. If we got this chance by then, we would be somewhere in the world today." Workinesh's frustration showed in her face.

All of Workinesh's children could access primary education from the age of eight when they were sent to a distant school. The concept of ECCD and opportunities such as attending kindergarten were not known in the area. During their early years, Workinesh's children spent their time in the village where they were exposed to different accidents and violence. "One of my children was fall down from a donkey at the age of six while he was playing at the field, and his hand has broken till now." Workinesh spent money she could ill afford on medical care.

"But now thanks to Plan, I have seen such a wonderful kindergarten in my life in this village. **Now I have got a safe and secured place for my granddaughter at her early age.** It is also a blessing for me because I can't afford to pay 150 - 180 birr (USD 7.50 – 9) per month for her to attend such a kindergarten which is found at Guder, the nearby town which is 25km away," said Workinesh.

Workinesh has also benefited from parental education which informs communities of the benefits of ECCD. She is now very proud of Hawi's achievements at the nearby community-managed ECCD centre.

"Hawi was somewhat silent. She didn't play with children and she was not active. But now after she joined this centre at the age of four she developed her social skill and she can play with children. As she comes back from school she will tell us different stories and sing a song. Now, she can wash her face and hands fully by herself; which was not so before," Workinesh beamed.

Bizunesh Sisye, Hawi's teacher and ECCD centre facilitator, said, "She is developing self-confidence after she joined the centre. Last year she was very fearful, even she couldn't tell us her name. As we took the attendance she was crying instead of saying 'yes'. She was lonely and she didn't play with children. Now she is well and she can play with children. She is able to ask her needs from her parents, teachers and friends."

Now Hawi understands and explains her desires and needs. She can freely express her thoughts at home and at school.

Driba Deksis is the director of Toke Geba Kemisa primary school, which Hawi will attend after the ECCD. She has welcomed a number of children from the ECCD centre to her school. **"Children like Hawi who come from this centre have different skills and they are very fast.** They know their responsibility and they express their feelings freely. They can easily associate with the school community as it is not new for them," Driba explained.

Plan International Ethiopia and its local partner, Ratson, are determined to construct additional ECCD centres across the Ambo District of Oromia Regional State so that more children can share Hawi's transformative experience.





FETENE BECOMES VISIBLE

Wonjeta Kebele, Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda, Amhara

“In our locality, parents didn’t allow children with disabilities to come out of home. No one could see them,” said Farmer Tilahun Alemu, father of five. “The community attributes as the cause of such disability is due to the fact that parents have a sort of generational curse. Due to this, even the community outcasts their parents.”

In rural areas characterised by high illiteracy and low access to information, children with a disability are overlooked and denied access to education and socio-economic services.

This is the story of Fetene Fentabil, a little boy in Lata Gote with mental and physical disabilities who was marginalised by his community. A little boy who, without anyone to champion his cause, would have no friends, no social contact beyond his family and no chance to realise his potential as a member of his community.

“Neighbours and other members of the community had never seen Fetene since he was forced to be confined to bed due to illness. His birth parents believed what happened to the child was to be God’s punishment,” said Nigstie Lijalem, caregiver at Lata Gote Early Learning Centre,.

Plan’s Connecting Ethiopian Children to the Future Project in rural areas of Bahir Dar Zuria Woreda is an example of how consideration of children with disabilities is a fundamental principle of all our programmes.

The Lata Gote Early Childhood Learning Centre was constructed by Plan International Ethiopia in partnership with the Development Expertise Centre. It was the responsibility of the Centre’s committee caregivers to enrol all children.

“Members of the committee and we caregivers came round to all households and proved that three children with disabilities were living in the Gote,” Nigstie reported. “While we visited Fetene’s home, his parents weren’t interested to let him be seen.”

Fetene was not allowed outside to play with his peers. “**As we scared very much and felt shame, we never allowed him getting out from home rather he stayed bedridden,**” Zeneb, Fetene’s mother, said.

Nigstie described her meetings with Fetene’s parents, “We repeatedly met and tried to let them be informed and sense how he can learn and change himself and get into better life status. Eventually his parents agreed so that Fetene has been enrolled in the nearby community managed Early Childhood Learning Centre.”

Fetene faced a number of challenges such as acceptance by his peers, his own willingness to be socialised, feeding, playing with others and participating in activities. When Fetene’s father started to bring him to the Early Childhood Learning Centre he was extremely unwilling to attend.

Fetene’s interest increased as he became familiar with the centre. “He began getting into and staying in the class with his father occasionally and with his sister frequently. But he didn’t play with indoor and outdoor games like other children, or work on other class activities for some time,” Nigstie said.

Unlike other children who were attending the Early Childhood Learning Centre, Fetene’s family brought his meals to the centre and fed him at lunch time.

The way his peers in the centre behaved towards Fetene reflected community attitudes to disability. “The children weren’t interested to sit beside him and be engaged in learning. No one played and had lunch together with him,” recalled Nigstie.

The next six months proved life changing for Fetene. “Fetene and other children came near each other, began talking and continued interacting with one to the other and so forth as they went on to be engaged in class activities and other indoor and outdoor games. We have been observing that he has stepped up his interaction with other children,” said Nigstie.

“Fetene is now coming to the centre independently without help of others. He is now bringing his meal and having lunch together with his classmates. In the class activity, **he sits and learns together with his classmates as do classmates** behave in the same manner. Fetene mixes with his group without the caregivers’ guidance and plays indoor games or watches what his friends do. **He comes out in front of his classmate and leads counting alphabets like other children;** he plays outdoor games and sings songs.”

None of this would have been possible for Fetene if the centre had not challenged the community norm of hiding children with disabilities.







PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM VIOLENCE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

WHAT PLAN DOES

Plan International Ethiopia works to reduce and eventually eradicate illegal practices that are physically, emotionally and psychologically damaging to a large number of children, and to girls in particular. There are three widespread forms of child violence and abuse – child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) and sexual violence.

WHY PLAN NEEDS TO INTERVENE

FGM prevalence is estimated at 45%, child marriage at about 21% and marriage by abduction at about 12% in Ethiopia. Other forms of violence are also common. The vast majority of children are exposed to some kind of violence at home, in school or in the community on a regular basis. According to the civil society survey, 68% of young women said they had been sexually abused in one form or another as a child. Violence against girls can be considered a key manifestation of societal gender discrimination and gendered power relations.

These problems are further aggravated by traditional values, attitudes and practices that reinforce and glorify male dominance and superiority which tend to tolerate or even justify violence against women and girls. These practices are further fuelled by structural and root causes including lack of public awareness of the negative impacts of these practices; low household income and lower economic status of girls and women; poor education; limited opportunities for children's participation; lack of capacity for law enforcement; and lack of access to psychosocial and educational services.

HOW PLAN INTERVENES

Plan International Ethiopia targets primarily children, communities, and government institutions at all levels to address these problems. Plan:

educates and trains girls and boys – both in and out of school on child wellbeing and life skills.

supports child-led clubs in schools to take action in protecting themselves and other children in their community.

builds the capacity of community-based child protection mechanisms through training and consultation and supports mechanisms for reporting violence against children.

builds the capacity of formal child protection structures and supports the establishment of referral systems/linkages for health, counselling and rehabilitation services.

mobilises communities for change using structured and continuous Community Conversation (CC) and Intergenerational Community Dialogue (ICD) approaches.

strengthens the livelihoods of vulnerable families and adolescent girls and boys through the provision of vocational skills training and support to set up small businesses.

supports state structures to implement policies and enforce laws protecting children from harm.

supports and build the capacity of Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MoWCYA) structures at all levels, building its capacity to mobilise relevant stakeholders including the law enforcement and judiciary.

Raises public awareness by working with the media to disseminate messages on the wellbeing of children.

supports regional and national child-focused networks and coalitions (and takes an active role) so that harmful traditional practices are prioritised in policy discussions.

supports Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and the civil society to take a greater role in child protection.

improves child protection systems internally and within partners and promotes inclusion of the most marginalised members of the community.

WHERE PLAN INTERVENES

Plan implements the PCV programme in three of the largest regional states of Ethiopia: Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR), and Addis Ababa City Administration. Plan International Ethiopia specifically works in Fagita Lekoma district of Amhara, Diksis and Guna districts of Oromia, and Bona Zuria district of SNNPR, each comprising an average of 25 communities with a population of close to 4,000 people each.

WHAT PLAN ACHIEVED

In three years Plan:

managed to reduce by half the prevalence of FGM and early marriage in project communities.

supported 34 communities to declare laws banning FGM and early marriage.

successfully prevented and saved over 6,500 girls from planned FGM and over 4,200 girls from arranged early marriage through community based child protection mechanisms.

supported a total of 280 traditional FGM practitioners in abandoning the practice.

supported over 15,000 adolescents to improve their livelihoods thereby reducing their vulnerability to violence.

supported 600 school clubs and trained 500 children in life skills.

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

Since 2012, Plan International Ethiopia invested **USD 2,450,153** to implement six projects working together with five like-minded local civil society partner organisations.



CHALLENGES

The delivery of some PCV Country Programme projects was hampered by delays in establishing partnership agreements and the limited staffing numbers of some partners.



VIOLENCE

Plan International Ethiopia addresses child violence and abuse by strengthening government, community and village systems; promoting economic opportunities for young people through skill development; and facilitating psychosocial support, rehabilitation and integration.

The main areas of violence against children are child marriage, female genital mutilation and sexual violence. The underlying causes of this violence are generally poor education, traditional values, low household income and lack of capacity for law enforcement.

Plan targets the government, communities and children to ensure laws are in place, there is community awareness and to empower children to secure their own protection. For example, child marriage is illegal in Ethiopia. Plan educates children at school so that they are aware of the law, their rights and what to do in case their community is arranging a child marriage. Plan also works with communities so they understand that female children have the same potential as boys and taking them away from school increases their risk of living a life of violence and poverty. Plan also works with local government offices to ensure that children receive support from the moment they tell someone they are being subjected to an illegal marriage until the matter is satisfactorily closed before the law.

In the following pages we will meet Sitote and Tadelech who were supported by Plan to assert control over their futures.



SITOTE: GIRL EMPOWERMENT FOILS EARLY MARRIAGE

Leku Town, SNNPR

Child marriage is common in Ethiopia despite it being illegal. It is reckoned that one in five girls are married before they turn 18, the legal age of marriage. This is a serious problem as, not only does it rob girls of their childhood but it also forces them out of education and into a life of poor prospects, with increased risk of violence, abuse, ill health or early death.

Sitote Petros is 14 years old and is in grade four. She had just moved to Leku Town and settled cheerfully into Nigat primary school. Her happy life of playing with friends at school, studying and dreaming of her future was threatened one day in November 2014. She came home from school to find the community elders of her old town in her living room. They had requested that Sitote return to their home to marry a rich man. They paid Sitote's father 20,000 birr (USD 1,000) for his compliance.

Fortunately for Sitote, she had been the beneficiary of Plan International Ethiopia's education campaign to help girls realise their potential and provide them with resources to avoid child marriage. Plan International Ethiopia, in cooperation with local partners such as the African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Children against Maltreatment and Neglect, ANPPCAN, deliver training for girls in school on harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation.

Sitote knew to speak with the government Women and Children Affairs (WCA) office with the help of her classmates. She also drew on support from her mother and brother. The legal officer at the WCA office, accompanied by the police, attended Sitote's house.

The district court, after investigating the case with the police of Sitote's former town, identified the perpetrators of the intended child marriage. All elders who came to propose the marriage, the proposed husband and Sitote's father were all found guilty of an offence.

Plan International Ethiopia was able to assist Sitote by educating her about self protection, communicating with judicial bodies and providing support right up until the verdict was passed by the court.

Sitote said "I have almost become the victim of a traditional practice. My mum has done great job of opposing the proposal for marriage. My father was tricked by the amount of money he receives. **Previously this kind of proposal succeeded on girls who live in remote areas but these days due to the consciousness created by Plan with ANPPCAN I am saved.** I was well informed of the measures I take during experiencing such traditional practice on me and my friends. As far as I can I will try to help girls in similar circumstances by reporting to my teachers and to the nearby police for such successful act of breaking untimely marriage proposals."

Sitote is an energetic student who wishes to make the most of her future. She feels her future success (she wants to be an engineer) will show her gratitude to her mother who has shown so much love and care for her.

Martha Beyene the district WCA office head said that the coordination of Plan International Ethiopia, ANPPCAN and government was vital for the interruption of Sitote's illegal marriage proposal. Martha reports that she has seen a number of cases of early marriage proposals carried out successfully in secret. The incidence of illegal child marriages is decreasing due to the efforts of the government, Plan and ANPPCAN.



TADELECH: HOPE FOR THE HOPELESS

Shashamene town, West Arsi Zone of Oromia Region

Tadelech Basa, 17, is physically disabled and lost her parents when she was three. Her situation seemed to improve when, at five, she moved to Shashamene with a relative and was able to go to school. However, hope turned to despair when she was forced to leave school in grade nine and she became the victim of labour abuse at the hands of her relatives. Tadelech became homeless when she was forced to leave the house.

Tadelech was exposed to much suffering and humiliation during the years she spent on the streets. She explained how she felt at the time, **“I have nothing to live my life, no hope, no parents and no one who take care of me.** I don’t have a word to explain. I thought that I didn’t get opportunity to live in this world again.”

“Life was very difficult for her with such condition,” witnessed Kidist Getu, a friend of Tadelech.

Labour abuse and other child-related problems including rape, child trafficking and child marriage were prevalent in Shashamene and the surrounding district. This prompted Plan International Ethiopia, in partnership with the local NGO, Enhancing Child Focused Activities, to initiate an intervention to improve the socio-economic empowerment of girls and young women in the area. The programme included a strong focus on disability.

Tadelech was able to benefit from this intervention through vocational and life skills training. “I was selected by the kebele administration as per my economic and social status,” she said. Tadelech joined a group of 12 young women. “I have got different lessons especially on child protection, female genital mutilation, community conversation and different trainings in our weekly meeting among the group.

“I have got a vocational skill training opportunity for free, and now I am a student at Shashamene Professional Hair Dressing Centre! I am so excited and interested in this training, because it is based on my interest and ability. Now I am fully engaged on it, I would like to thank Plan International Ethiopia for such lifesaving opportunity.”

“I couldn’t have had money or relatives who can support me to have this training, but now I have got it from Plan International Ethiopia; the hope for hopeless,” Tadelech said with enthusiasm.

Ruth Alemayhu, Tadelch’s teacher, noted, “She has full confidence among the students and aspires to have full knowledge in the training. She is very interested and I am very happy in such humanitarian support from Plan International Ethiopia for children like Tadelech,”

“Together with my colleagues I want to have my beauty salon when I completed this training. **Now I can start to think about life after so many ups and downs,**” Tadelech said.

Fantu Zewde, Head of the District Women and Children Affairs Office said, “Plan International Ethiopia is working closely with us and other sector offices are now fully participated in this project as they are aware of the benefits. After this project has been implemented in our district, the community’s awareness towards disability has changed. The project opens its door to disabled children and encourages them to participate.”

“Now we also realise the issue of inclusion. As a result we are planned to award disabled children on their educational performance on the ‘Day of African Child’, this will be the first of its kind in Oromia Region.” Fantu concluded.







EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE PROGRAMME



WHAT PLAN DOES

Plan International Ethiopia provides assistance and protection to children affected by emergencies and disasters. Following the development of the Country Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016 and the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis, Plan initiated an emergency response in August 2011 in 14 districts in Amhara, Oromia and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR). Plan is committed to working towards strengthening the capacity of vulnerable households and communities and developing more effective and coherent strategies to provide protection and assistance to children affected by disasters and emergencies.

WHY PLAN NEEDS TO INTERVENE

Ethiopia has experienced disasters of various types and magnitude over many decades. The vulnerability of communities to environmental risks is aggravated by climate change. It is the most vulnerable groups (children, orphans, women, elderly and the poorest) who suffer the greatest impact from disasters such as drought, flood and disease.

HOW PLAN INTERVENES

a) **Emergency Nutrition** follows the community-based management of acute malnutrition approach with a focus on outpatient therapeutic programmes, therapeutic feeding programmes including support in stabilisation centres, targeted supplementary feeding programmes and infant and young child feeding.

b) **Child Protection in Emergencies** interventions include identification, documentation, tracing and re-unification; psycho-social support; setting up child-friendly spaces; early childhood care and development in emergencies; community based child protection and training.

c) **Education in Emergencies** includes setting up temporary learning spaces to continue the education of children and providing learning materials and school facilities such as desks, chairs and blackboards.

d) **Emergency Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)** focuses on activities that can rapidly provide potable water for people affected by disasters such as rehabilitation of schemes, providing purifiers and chemicals for water treatment, water trucking, setting up roof water harvesting structures, provision of sanitation and hygiene kits and sanitary pads for school girls.

e) **Emergency Health** provides support for the treatment of medical issues such as acute watery diarrhoea, meningitis and scabies.

f) **Livelihood Recovery** includes a wide range of activities aimed at providing affected communities with a means of sustainable economic support. Examples are providing pack animals to destitute women, providing community-based employment and payment in cash-for-work programmes and agricultural support in the form of providing seeds, tools or beehives.

WHAT PLAN ACHIEVED

Emergency Nutrition: more than 15,155 children under five and about 9,324 pregnant/lactating women with moderate acute malnutrition have been admitted to therapeutic and feeding programmes. A total of 6,744 children under five with severe acute malnutrition were admitted to Plan-supported stabilisation centres and were rehabilitated. As part of Plan's education campaign, a total of 115,791 people were reached with key health and nutrition messages on optimal breast and complementary feeding, hygiene and family planning.

Emergency WASH: A total of 55 small scale water schemes (springs and hand-dug wells) have been developed and 16 ventilated, improved pit latrines have been constructed in target communities and schools. Local government water offices benefited from training and other capacity building support such as the provision of water quality testing kits. To promote proper sanitation and hygiene practices, materials such as soap and water containers were provided. All these interventions have benefited a total of 123,297 people (22,417 households) directly and indirectly.

Emergency Health: In response, to the acute watery diarrhoea outbreak in SNNPR resulting from extremely poor personal and environmental hygienic practices, nearly USD 100,000 was spent to provide water treatment/purification chemicals, hygiene/sanitation materials and training in case management. This benefited more than 3,500 people including children (700 households). Financial and logistical support has also been given to vaccination campaigns to contain outbreaks.

Livelihood Recovery:

- In Borana, 1,700 households were re-stocked with goats.
- In Bona-Zuria and Dara/SNNPR farm tools and seeds were distributed to 1,450 households, 249 households were re-stocked with sheep and goats and a pilot cash transfer programme has reached 100 households.
- Providing cash-for-work for people who otherwise lost their livelihood has benefited 1,400 people.
- In Arsi, 2,400 households were provided with hybrid cereal seeds and fertilizers.
- In response to a flood and hailstorm disaster in part of Amhara Regional state, Plan supported a total of 2,860 households through provision of sheep and a cash for work programme.
- In response to the failed early crop season in SNNPR in previous years, more than 13,000 households received improved seeds of haricot bean and teff. Sweet-potato cuttings were distributed to over 4,300 affected households which enabled farming households to continue with their food production in the main crop season.

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

Over the last three years, Plan International Ethiopia has reached

and benefited **331,639** people directly and indirectly. Children account for more than 50% of beneficiaries in the case of Amhara, Oromia and SNNP regions and more than 90% in the case of Gambella.

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

Since Plan started emergency response in 2011, a total of **USD 16,038,482** was mobilised for projects. Donors include DEC, CIDA, Humanitarian Coalition, AusAid, UNOCHA, ECHO, OFDA, Plan National Organisations in Germany, UK, Denmark, Canada, Spain and others.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES

- Limited availability of funds/donors for Disaster Risk Reduction livelihood interventions and resilience building.
- There is increasing occurrence of droughts and food insecurity.
- The number of woredas identified as "hotspots", areas requiring increased assistance, are on the rise.

TELEMIT WOREDA

Telemit Woreda is a district where grinding poverty is deep-rooted. The area is characterised by limited access to infrastructure and facilities. An impoverished livelihood is the reality for the majority of the rural communities living in this drought prone district. The area is known for poor agricultural productivity and absence of opportunities to make a living due to deteriorated natural resources and a shortage of rain.

Plan International Ethiopia's Emergency Team established that the woreda had been receiving food assistance for nearly a decade. Without food aid, survival is very tough for many. Poor households rely on labouring work such as collecting firewood and grass to sell.

The government recognised the desperate situation of those living in Telemit. It was identified as a "hot spot" woreda due to the limited sources of income for its communities and the sky-rocketing price of food crops. A great number of the children are malnourished and so the government reached out for emergency support.

Plan developed the Complementing Emergency Nutrition Response Through Food Security Interventions for Telemit Woreda project in response. Centering on malnourished children, priority support was also given to pregnant and lactating women, female-headed families, housewives, and vulnerable and older people-headed households. Major project interventions were vegetable and fruit seedling support, awareness raising and capacity building training, promotion of vegetable gardening at schools, production and use of behavioural change communication approaches and the provision of fishing accessories and donkeys.

Plan International Ethiopia is grateful to UN-OCHA and the Plan Japanese National Organisation for funding and to the Woreda Agriculture, Health and Cooperative Promotion Offices who jointly implemented the project.

Following are the stories of Alem, Mekuriaw and Eshetie, all residents of Telemit Woreda who were able to engage in income generating activities as a result of Plan's intervention.

ALEM: FROM AGONY TO ASPIRATION

Telemit Woreda, North Gondar Zone, Amhara Region

"After shifting my resident place to Dejach Meda and surviving through food aid, once upon a time I heard my neighbour by chance asking someone to fetch water from a nearby Ateba River, and pay him... and, I became alert. Next day, I talked to the woman, who is my neighbour, looking for fetching water from the river to get money, but she declined. That day, I also visited others whom I presumed to have such need. Unfortunately, all replied 'they weren't interested to let a blind woman fetch water'. Though I was so worried for some time, I decided to buy few plastic jerry cans with what I had. Thereafter, guided by my daughter, I fetched water with jerry can from the river to home, carrying on my back and gripping it with my hand. Then, I kept my ear to the ground and waited my neighbor, the woman, until she called labourers to fetch water. Instantly, taking the jerry can to her home, I said 'here it is, and please take it for 50 cents'.

"Daily, I was fetching, keeping and selling from six to eight jerry cans water. Though I was running it well, I suffered much. My daughter in her under age, and made inactive in her schooling; this had always worried me," said Alem Tefera, who is 46 and has one daughter.

Before coming to Dejach Meda, Alem lived in Tara kebele. "Having my mother and father passed away, I was earning income by giving maid service, milling grain using hand-made stone for the residents," Alem said. She then suffered the trauma of losing her sight and was overwhelmed with stress as she failed to make a living to support herself and her young daughter.

A diesel motor grinding mill was introduced to Tara kebele, thereby cutting off Alem's means of livelihood. "**I was crying out for not able finding meal to eat and becoming dirt poor,**" she recalled. Her desperate situation obliged her to leave Tara kebele and migrate to Dejach Meda.

Alem, guided by her daughter, was fetching water in jerry cans from the Ateba River. This was a physically demanding task as they carried heavy jerry cans on their backs up steep slopes. The task was made all the more arduous by Alem's blindness. Many times

a day the mother and daughter team moved up and down the valley collecting water. The work was agony. The money they made was barely enough for their survival.

Then Alem became a beneficiary of Plan International Ethiopia's Telemit-focused project. The project supplied sixteen female-headed households with a donkey, jerry cans and locally made carts with metal saddle boxes. Owning a donkey and cart means she has been relieved of carrying the jerry can on her back. "I feel that God has sent the donkey, looking at my long time agony. I got relief and my daughter too. The donkey has given life to us," she said.

The material support has helped Alem to supply jerry cans of water in greater numbers and enabled her to grow her business as customers know she has a reliable supply of water. The donkey and cart haven't only considerably reduced the family's fatigue, but also provided food security. "The donkey transports four jerry cans water at a time so that we sale and stock lot of jerry cans of water in a moment. I've daily income, thanks to Him," Alem said smiling. "No longer worry for daily food. Living in comfort, I've sent my daughter to school. What made me happy is that my daughter has now got extra time to support me after school time and to study."

Such projects not only improve access to nutrition but facilitate access to sustainable income generating activities. After six months of working with the donkey and cart Alem engaged in asset creation. "Avoiding my heart's desire and saving continuously, I have built one small room from wood and mud by joining it with my home. And I'm now earning 100 birr monthly from its rent," she said.



MEKURIAW: FISHING FOR OPPORTUNITY

Telemet Woreda, Amhara Region

“Our land only grows sorghum though it isn’t productive,” said Mekuriaw Gebre Igzabhier, 27, a father of two. He described the area as “a place where you work hard but you reap less, and where a seed you have sown is dying. I’m dependent on food aid.”

The future for Mekuriaw looked bleak. However, there were lessons to be learned in nearby Tigray; lessons that proved life changing for Mekuriaw and his kebele.

In 2011/12 a dam was built on Tekezie River for hydro-electric power generation. This created a large artificial lake which is a breeding ground for 21 fish species. Jobless youths across the river in Tigray organised in Fishery Cooperatives and started fishing from the lake. They soon established a reliable income for themselves.

Those suffering food insecurity in Telemet were keen to establish their own fishery cooperatives. Telemet Woreda Agriculture Office organised community members into two fishery cooperatives. Unfortunately the Office was unable to secure any additional support for the cooperatives. It seemed that there would be no hope for Mekuriaw’s community.

However, when Plan International Ethiopia was establishing its project in Telemet, the Agriculture Office suggested that Plan include support for the defunct fishery cooperatives. The Iren kebele members were eager to begin their fishing cooperative.

Plan reorganised the two cooperatives with the support of the Telemet Woreda Agriculture Office. Currently, Mekuriaw is serving as Chairman of the Selam Tekezie Fishery Cooperative’s Control Committee.

Plan trained 90 members of the two cooperatives on fish food preparation, boat rowing, hook throwing, fishing net handling, shucking and scaling. It also provided the cooperatives with equipment including fishing hooks, gill-nets, cast-nets, fishing boxes and an aluminium table.

The 60 members of Mekuriaw’s Cooperative then contributed close to ETB 1,300 (USD 62) per head, and bought two fishing boats. Fishing from the Tekezie artificial lake started in October 2014. Using the two boats, two teams were fishing daily in turns. The Cooperative entered into purchase agreements with buyers in Tigray Region.

Mekuriaw reported that his Cooperative has been supplying between six and ten quintals of fish monthly. He said, **“So far, we have earned over ETB 156,000 [USD 7,494] from October 2014 to May 2015 from sales; and we have more products in our store, which will be supplied for the market. In May 2015, our cooperative paid ETB 2,500 [USD 120] dividend for each of us.”**

The project has not only provided a means of livelihood for Mekuriaw’s community but it has supplied an additional food source for a kebele suffering food insecurity. **“Interestingly, what we are very much pleased with is that our children and we too are able to eat fish daily. This is helping us complementing our daily meal”**, Mekuriaw says.



After the fisherman scale and gut the fish they are packaged in a plastic container, and stored in a refrigerator. This is not something that was possible at the project’s outset. “Due to absence of refrigerators, at the beginning of our operation, we hadn’t able to preserve our products at a cold temperature; consequently, this had made 550 kilos of fish decay, which was estimated about ETB 25,000 [USD 1,195],” Mekuriaw recalls.

The Cooperative’s success means they have been able to buy new equipment including refrigerators, additional boats, uniforms and ropes.

Plan’s project in Telemet has afforded community members new skills with which they can carve out a living. Mekuriaw noted **“Previously, in our community, no one did capture fish as we all didn’t have fishing skill and tools, and the know-how on preparing fish meal; all in all, we hadn’t had the tradition.”** Members of the Cooperative are now skillful in the whole fish supply chain from catching the fish to preparing it, packaging it, storing it and marketing it.

ESHETIE: THE SEEDS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE

Eshetie Teferia, 35, supports his wife and three children. His family was driven from their home town of Tara Giorgis as it was impossible for them to make a living. Less than half the land area was cultivable and it was impossible to become a land holder.

Eshetie and his family moved to Dejach Meda hopeful of a secure future. He worked as a daily labourer but says, “I was earning miserable income from it. Was nothing but helped us to buy oil, salt, etc. and add relative flavour to what we had. Along with food aid, having breakfast for my wife and me was totally unimaginable and we have dinner as only situations allow. Buying our annual clothes for the family was even so hard.” Eshetie explains.

Eshetie was relentless in his search for securing food and an income for his family. He eventually came across vegetable production using traditional irrigation and he located a piece of land on the banks of the Ateba River. Eshetie was able to secure the land as it is common for land holders to pay land owners one-third of their harvest.

The small pocket of land was sown with pepper seeds. “My wife and I were eagerly engaged in watering the plant in the morning daily, imagining what we would harvest from it. And I was observing that leaves of the plants were gradually drying out and turned to be yellowish, and then steadily dying and plummeting on ground” said Eshetie.

His crop failed due to an unsuitable watering technique. “I was sprinkling the transplanted pepper plant with water using my hand. While watering the vegetable, its leaves were dusted with mud and prevented them to be exposed for sunlight; and roots of the plants were also exposed for sunlight and dried out. Having harvested nothing, I was deeply grieved. What most worried me above all was that I hadn’t ability to give a share to the land owner.”

Community leaders mediated between Eshetie and his land owner. It was agreed that he would make payment of the unsettled amount over three consecutive harvests. However, Eshetie’s problem remained: how to produce a successful crop?

Plan International Ethiopia’s Telemit project identified lack of seed, limited awareness and technical know-how, inability to access agricultural tools and facilities and limited water and land resources as challenges for the community. Plan responded by supplying vegetable seeds, fruit seedlings, watering cans and training to vulnerable households, schools and farmer training centres.

Eshetie was among the beneficiaries. He received a watering can, 250 grams of tomato seeds, 250 grams of red onions seeds, four avocado seedlings and training in effective gardening practice.

Eshetie describes what happened next, “I firstly sprinkled and grew the tomato seedlings with watering can. Then, I have transplanted and continued sprinkling the seedlings. The sprinkler showers the plant like rain. Oh, how it’s comfortable to water! At the end, after practising the training and the material, I harvested and gave the landowner over one-third of the harvest as previously agreed to settle unpaid share.”

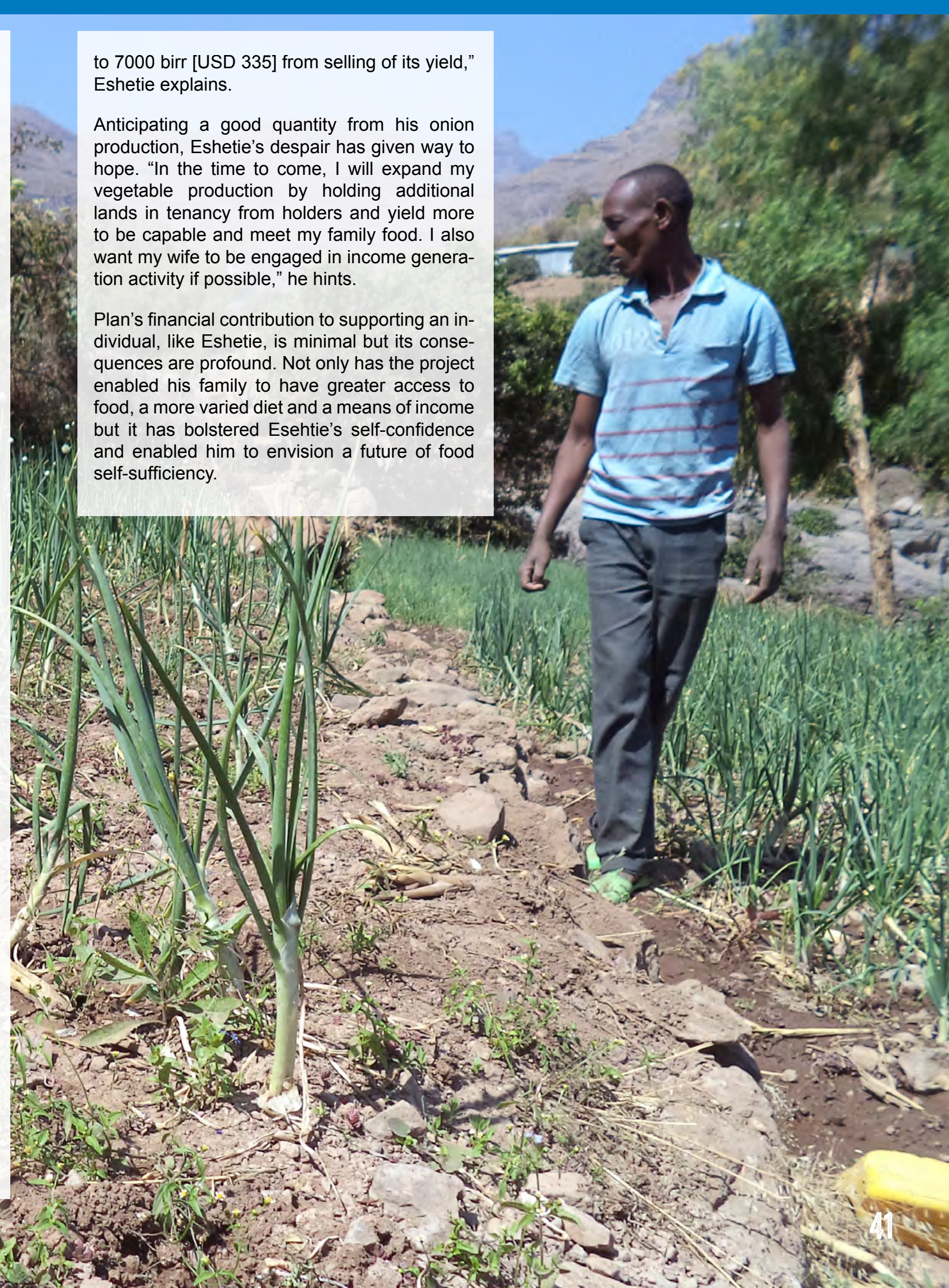
The tomato yield that he harvested within four months enabled the family to supplement and diversify their daily meal. Eshetie also sold a portion of the tomato yield at the local market. “I earned 800 birr [USD 38] from selling of the tomato. This helped me to buy clothes for my family, save a little money and other,” Eshetie says.

Since then, Eshetie has sown his red onion seed. “Not only I but also my wife is sprinkling the plants using the watering can daily. We are also weeding the field and fencing it. I expect that I will earn up

to 7000 birr [USD 335] from selling of its yield,” Eshetie explains.

Anticipating a good quantity from his onion production, Eshetie’s despair has given way to hope. “In the time to come, I will expand my vegetable production by holding additional lands in tenancy from holders and yield more to be capable and meet my family food. I also want my wife to be engaged in income generation activity if possible,” he hints.

Plan’s financial contribution to supporting an individual, like Eshetie, is minimal but its consequences are profound. Not only has the project enabled his family to have greater access to food, a more varied diet and a means of income but it has bolstered Eshetie’s self-confidence and enabled him to envision a future of food self-sufficiency.







GAMBELLA EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

WHY PLAN NEEDS TO INTERVENE

Plan International Ethiopia conducted a comprehensive assessment on the situation of children in Gambella region. It was found that there is a great and pressing need for child protection and access to education is limited. Child protection issues including separated and unaccompanied children; sexual, emotional and physical abuse; child marriage and marriage by inheritance; polygamy; traditional attitudes to children and limited or no access to education are pervasive in the refugee and host communities.

The influx of South Sudanese refugees has placed great pressure on the host community and aggravated children protection concerns. More than 220,100 people had fled to Gambella by November 2015, of which 90-95% are women and children.

Plan has been engaged in the South Sudan refugee response since June 2014 and provides Child Protection in Emergency, education (early childhood and primary education and Primary Education) and youth programmes in three refugee camps (Kule, Jewie and Pugnido-2) and the host community. This helps to ensure the peaceful co-existence of the refugee and host communities.

HOW PLAN INTERVENES

Plan strengthens community systems to create a safe and protected environment to enable children's growth and development. Plan identifies children, parents and community members as the key agents of change and works in close consultation with them to address the problem of host and refugee community children. Plan's priorities are:

1. Child protection in Emergency

- Identification, Determination, Tracing and Reunification: involves the identification and registration of separated and unaccompanied children, case management, administering the Child Protection Information Management System and family tracing and reunification.
- Establishment and functioning of child friendly spaces. Provision of psychosocial support.
- Establishment and strengthening of community-based child protection mechanisms to strengthen the social

cohesion between the refugee and host communities and linking with the newly established community structures.

- Provision of non-food items to unaccompanied minors and separated children
- Referring the children who are in need of tracing and family link restoration to ICRC and supporting the cross border reunification process

2. Education in Emergency

- Construction of primary schools (permanent and semi-permanent classrooms)
- Construction and establishment of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Centres
- Recruiting of teachers and ECCD facilitators
- Training provision for teachers from the refugee community and local government teachers, facilitators and parent teacher associations.
- Provision of school supplies

3. Youth Programme

- Establishment of youth centres
- Establishment of youth groups and provision of training including life skills, vocational skills, sexual reproductive health and child protection.
- Coordination of the youth activities with the existing child protection programme, education, livelihood and gender based violence programmes.

4. Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Programme

- Construction of WASH facilities in schools, child friendly spaces and in the community.
- Hygiene and sanitation training and empowering communities in community led total sanitation.

WHAT PLAN ACHIEVED

1. Child Protection in Emergencies

- Established 13 child friendly spaces which include indoor and outdoor play grounds. More than 33,650 children have access to the child friendly spaces and on average 4,200 children are engaged in different sport and simulation activities every month.
- Recruitment of 217 social workers, case workers and community outreach workers to facilitate activities in the child friendly spaces.
- Established 41 community based child protection committees.
- Identified, registered and appropriate care arrangement was provided for 6,521 separated and unaccompanied children.
- Supported the referral of 1,630 vulnerable children has been referred to the necessary services.

- With UNHCR, successfully reunified 21 unaccompanied minors with their parents.

1. Education in Emergency

- Established four education centres in Kule refugee camp, including 46 classrooms and three schools in Pugnido-2 camp comprising 24 classrooms.
- Plan enrolled a total of 13,361 students in grades one to four.
Four ECCD centres established with 2,500 children enrolled.

- Recruited and trained 146 refugee teachers
Two permanent schools have been constructed in host communities

2. Youth Programme

- Established three youth centres in Kule and Jewi refugee camp and benefited 2,734 youth members
- Organised and strengthened seven youth groups
- Established and chaired Gambella youth working group
- Developed Gambella region youth program strategy

3. WASH Activities

- The construction of nine single sex latrines, six hand dug wells and 17 water points in the camp and host communities.
- Provision of hygiene and sanitary kits for the adolescent girls and households

NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES

33,543 children and community members in Kule, Jewi and Pugnido-2 Refugee camp

12,800 children and communities in host communities

HOW MUCH IT COSTS

Over the past eighteen months a total of **USD 4.5 million** in cash and around **USD 2 million** donations in kind was mobilised from different donors (ECHO; German Federal and Foreign Office; the Sweden, Germany and Finland National Organisations; UNICEF; UNHCR and Irish Aid). A total of USD 5,900,000 is needed for 2016 for child protection, education and youth programmes. This request has been approved by UNHCR and included in the Regional Response Plan and annual Appeal. Plan intends to mobilise 60% from its bilateral donors.

KULE REFUGEE CAMP

The violence in South Sudan, ongoing since December 2013, has forced many thousands of South Sudanese to flee their homes to neighbouring countries. As of October 2015, it was estimated that 220,100 refugees had entered Ethiopia with 180 new refugees arriving daily. Kule refugee camp is providing humanitarian assistance to over 47,000 refugees. Plan International Ethiopia, in collaboration with UNICEF, UNHCR, Ethiopian Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, Irish AID, German Federal and Foreign Office and different Plan National Organisations, has made much headway in the areas of Child Protection in Emergencies, Education in Emergencies, ECCD and youth programmes in Kule, Jewi and Pugnido-2 refugee camps and Akula, War and Itang host communities.

Child refugees face a whole host of problems including violence against children, lack of access to education and safe places to play, psychosocial distress and separation from family. Plan International Ethiopia has established systems to address these problems and is working continuously with our partners to strengthen service provision.

Plan has established child friendly spaces; provides psychosocial support; works with foster families, social workers and community-based child protection committees to ensure child welfare; works with education bureaus to train teachers and has constructed early childhood care and development centres and primary schools. Currently more than 6,100 children are accessing primary education (grades one to four) and nearly 2,200 children attend an ECCD centre.

Plan International Ethiopia has also established youth centres to provide vocational and life skills training and to improve psychosocial wellbeing. Plan is supporting youth to become active agents of change in the community.

Sarah and Nyateika spoke to Plan International Ethiopia about their experiences in Kule refugee camp.



SARA: FINDING A BRIGHT FUTURE IN A REFUGEE CAMP

Kule Refugee Camp, Gambella

Sarah* is an 18 year old girl from Upper Nile, South Sudan. She has lived in Kule refugee camp since June 2014. Sarah is physically disabled and unable to walk freely. She was separated from her family as a result of the conflict. Sarah and her grandmother arrived at Kule refugee camp after a five day, bare foot journey.

“It was very horrible, many people were killed, raped and kidnaped, it was the worst experience that I have ever seen and really it is very difficult to remember that bad memory,” Sarah explained.

That was the most challenging time for Sarah and many other South Sudanese children. “I left my family, brothers and sisters. Oh! It was so hard, I left my beloved village. I am still worried the whereabouts of my brothers and sisters, every-

thing is destroyed there,” Sarah continued.

Entering Ethiopia was a journey fraught with danger as Sarah and her neighbourhood friends came on foot through the jungle. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Sarah and her grandmother arrived at Kule refugee camp safely. However, Sarah’s relief at reaching the camp soon turned to horror as she was raped by an unknown man. Sarah soon realised she was pregnant. “It was so hard for me, because as you can see; I’m not able to do anything by myself, I am disabled” said Sarah.

Sarah and her grandmother’s challenges soon mounted with the birth of Sarah’s son. Plan International Ethiopia’s programme for child protection in emergency was able to assist Sarah.

“I know Plan International Ethiopia. Plan has been providing a lot of things for us since we came in this camp; Plan has been providing me and my grandmother psychosocial support as well as materials provision.” Sarah said.

“Plan provided me blanket, mattress, and hygiene kit. Plan staffs are also visiting me and my child regularly to see how we are doing. They are also linked us with other NGO’s for nutrition food supply. Oh! Plan is doing good thing in this camp.” added Sarah. “Previously there was no school for children here, but now Plan constructed a school for us. Now children back to school. There is also a Child Friendly Space which was not in South Sudan; it is quite different, all children are happy to play there.”

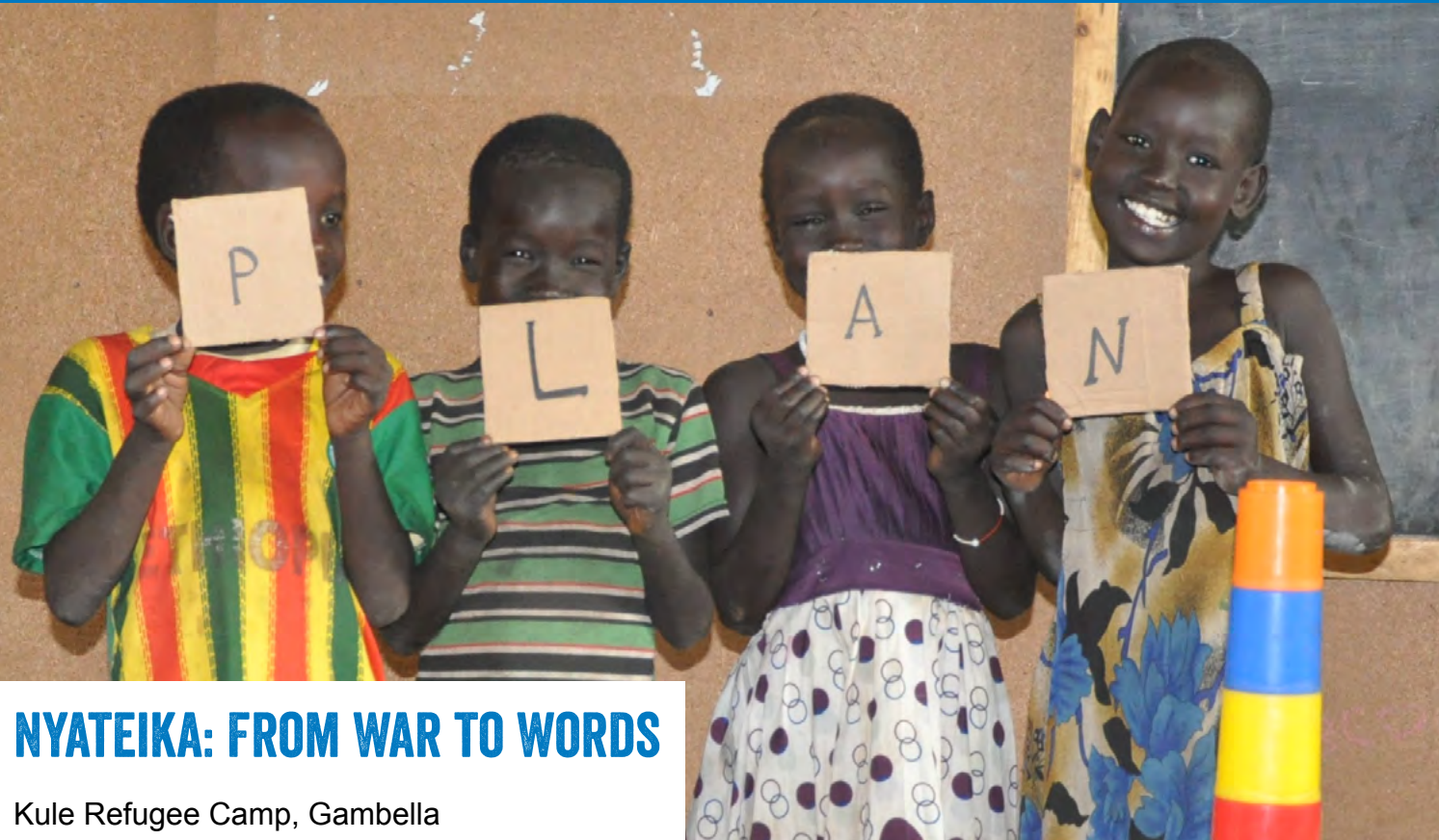
Peter Gai, a social worker in the refugee camp, reported that “Plan International Ethiopia has been trying to respond to the situation by providing training on the negative impacts of abduction, child protection and gender-based violence for refugee community through social workers and community leaders. Now the awareness of the community has been increased since the training started in the camp. If anything happens, people in the community report directly to the social workers so as to find an immediate solution. This is a great job that Plan implemented so far.”

“Establishing and promoting Child Friendly Spaces as well as case management activities like family reunification, foster care arrangement, psychosocial support and non- food item material supports are the major services that the project provides for the refugee community in the camp,” explained Hiwote Simachew, Child Protection and Education in Emergency Specialist at Plan International Ethiopia. Plan also works with like-minded NGOs to refer refugees to their services to ensure all their needs are met.

“Now I and my three months old child are doing well. We are normalising our life. I have never attended school before. I would like to take this opportunity to attend my education at Plan constructed school here in the camp. **I have hope; my future is bright with Plan support,**” said Sarah. “Now I am happy and I feel as if I am at home, I would like to thank Plan International Ethiopia for the good work they are doing. If Plan stops its support and operation for us here in Kule, life will be very complicated for many children and women including me.”

Plan International Ethiopia with the support of Irish Aid and other donors has been working hard to address the problem of many more South Sudanese children and women in Gambella. Despite Plan’s successes in Gambella to date, the need continues to grow with increased violence towards children and greater numbers of refugees. It is thought that 13,000 children have been recruited as child soldiers and are being used by all sides of the conflict.

* The name Sarah has been changed for the purpose of protection



NYATEIKA: FROM WAR TO WORDS

Kule Refugee Camp, Gambella

For children in South Sudan, war and violence are part of their everyday life. Their schools are frequently bombed or attacked due to civil war. Many children are at risk of abduction or trafficking.

Nyateika Kim Ruot is a seven year old girl who has lived with her mother at Kule refugee camp since 2014. Her father, two sisters and brother died last year as a result of the civil war. **Enjoying a typical childhood of learning and play were not an option for Nyateika.**

“When I was arrived here, I was sick and there was nothing around. I have supposed to do many jobs in this emergency tent. Cooking, looking for water and grinding maize are some of the works I did.” explained Nyateika. “There were no motivational materials at home because the war was displacing people from their home in South Sudan; we were faced with different challenges.”

Plan International Ethiopia and our partners have introduced an ECCD centre at Kule camp to address the refugee children’s physical, emotional and cognitive development needs.

Nyateika described how she benefited from the centre, “I couldn’t find these materials and a place where I play and learn with my friends like this before, but now we can have different playing materials and four classrooms. Now I am able to write and read English alphabets, count numbers, draw and paint different pictures. All these are not at home rather what Plan International Ethiopia provided us.”

John Majak, a refugee and ECCD Head Facilitator explained, “All these things remind me what was happening in South Sudan before the war. This place is good and safe not only for our children but also for us.

“We are really appreciating Plan International Ethiopia for organising the centre and responsibly receiving the kids. **Now South Sudanese children are very busy in this camp, they don’t have time to think of the war.** Kids are at the ECCD centre, youth are at primary school and the rest are at Child Friendly Space. The communities are actively sending their children to the centre and still the demand is very high regardless of the limit of the classrooms and we still need additional blocks,” said John.

Nyateika said, “**Now I am very happy and I have a bright future with Plan support.** When I completed my education, I want to be a teacher. There is no peace in a country without teacher. Teachers are very good since they are teaching us for future.”







THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL CHILD

Plan is delighted that the United Nations has recognized October 11 as the 'International Day of the Girl Child'. Plan International globally led the call for this 'world day' as part of its 'Because I am a Girl' campaign.

Designating October 11 as the 'International Day of the Girl Child' will encourage a robust focus on alleviating issues affecting the world's girls.

"THERE IS NO TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT MORE EFFECTIVE THAN THE EDUCATION OF GIRLS. IF WE WANT TO SUCCEED IN OUR EFFORTS TO BUILD A MORE HEALTHY, PEACEFUL, EQUITABLE WORLD, THE CLASSROOMS OF THE WORLD HAVE TO BE FILLED WITH GIRLS AS WELL AS BOYS."

Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary General

BECAUSE I AM A GIRL CAMPAIGN

Plan International launched its global campaign "Because I am a Girl" (BIAAG) on 11th October 2012, on the occasion of the first ever International Day of the Girl Child. Because I am a Girl is Plan's campaign to fight gender inequality, promote girls' rights and lift millions of girls out of poverty.

Plan International Ethiopia also colourfully observes the day on 11th October each year.

Across the world, girls face double edged discrimination due to their gender and age, leaving them at the bottom of the social ladder. Research has shown that girls are more likely to suffer from malnutrition; be forced into an early marriage; be subjected to violence or intimidation; be trafficked, sold or coerced into the sex trade; or become infected with HIV.

The main goal of Plan's 'Because I am a Girl' campaign is to build the human capital of girls through knowledge and skills, aiming to equip, enable and empower girls of all ages to acquire the assets, skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in life. Key to these are safe and quality learning environments both formal and informal.

The 'Because I am a Girl' campaign themes and outcomes include girls enrolling and completing quality primary and secondary education in a safe and supportive community environment and acquiring the skills they need to access decent economic opportunities; girls having the time and space to become active citizens and develop safe social networks and life skills; girls being empowered to enjoy and realise their potential; girls having increased financial skills and economic assets; and their social position and value being recognised in society.

Plan aims to reach millions of children through programme intervention and awareness raising over the next two years, amongst other areas. Plan Ethiopia focuses on two barriers: lack of an early learning foundation; and harmful traditional practices such as early marriage.

THERE IS
A FUNDING
GAP OF
\$26
BILLION
FOR BASIC
EDUCATION



1 in 5
girls
is denied an education



1 in 7 girls is married by 15



up to 50 % will have a child by 18 in developing countries



Violence against girls in school can mean they drop out

"I AM A GIRL CHILD DO NOT MAKE ME A CHILD MOTHER."

GETE PROJECT

The Girls' Empowerment through Education (GETE) project is funded by Plan International USA and implemented in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. GETE is one of Plan International USA's nine marquee projects associated with Plan's global 'Because I am a Girl' campaign. The project targets children in eight primary schools in 2 Addis Ababa sub-cities, namely Yeka and Akaki Kality. The project targets girls aged 7-14 from slums and semi-rural marginalised communities, both in and out of school. The direct project beneficiaries are 11,792 children (5,168 girls and 5,624 boys) enrolled in the eight target schools. The project aims to improve girls' access to quality education within the project lifetime, from July 01, 2012 to June 30, 2016. The total budget is \$ 800,000.

Major project implementation strategies include: training of teachers, creating awareness among parents and community members, promoting girls' participation in school and in the community, providing improved teaching aid materials, providing material and training support to girls, economic empowerment of parents and enhancing collaboration among government officials and school management committees.

"BEING A GIRLS' AMBASSADOR BOOSTS MY CONFIDENCE"

Plan International Ethiopia is using its expertise to ensure that girls fulfil their full potential in education. Our Girls Empowerment through Education project encourages girls to become ambassadors in their schools, promoting girls' rights.

"As a girls' ambassador in my school, I have enjoyed taking part in different big events," says Selamawit, 16. "My participation in all activities has boosted my confidence and I'm trying my best to promote girls' issue at different occasions."

Selamawit has been serving as a girls' ambassador for over a year after becoming involved with Plan International's scheme. We aim to promote leadership in girls' related issues through girls themselves by giving them the opportunity to participate in school, project and community activities that concern them.

"I took training on life skills, public speaking, violence prevention, safe school environment, and gender, among others," Selamawit explains. "Especially, I've enjoyed the life skills training, as it helps me to be self-confident. I want to be a cardiologist. I want to be very educated woman who can contribute to her community."

"Being girls' ambassador has also helped me to meet many people at different events. I was so lucky to participate in the celebration of Day of the African Child in 2014, which took place at the African Union. The event was a big opportunity to meet girls from different countries, establish friendship and share ideas. During the event I was privileged to be on the stage with other girls to interview prominent people on girls' issues. It was one of my happiest moments."

Selamawit concluded, "I clearly understand that girls have equal potential to compete with boys at school. I can learn freely and achieve whatever I wish, and I promote this to other girls in the school as well."







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UNLOCK THE POWER OF GIRLS.
1. STAND HERE
2. TAKE A SNAP
3. SHARE WITH
#GIRL4PRESIDENT

Because
**I am a
Girl**





#GIRL4PRESIDENT

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