

# Plan Bangladesh



## Country strategic plan summary for 2006 - 2015

This document describes how Plan Bangladesh and its partners will mobilise the different resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued action from 2006 to 2015.

### About Bangladesh

Bangladesh is located in southern Asia, bordering the Bay of Bengal, between Myanmar and India. Present population is estimated to be about 145 million (2005) being one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Bangladesh has made major socio economic progress in recent years. Economic condition of the country is better than it was ten years ago; health and education have improved and there is gender equality in primary and secondary education.

### Plan Bangladesh Programs

Plan began working in Bangladesh in 1994 and has focused on developing programs that strengthen the community to deal with their issues and influence institutions for better service provision. At present, Plan works in seven program areas located in the central and north western region of the country. Also, Plan Bangladesh encourages and supports its partners to expand child focused programs to their respective areas so that more children benefit from Plan's programs.



*"We love playing in school with friends."*

### Current issues affecting children of Bangladesh

Although Bangladesh has improved remarkably, in the socio economic development over the last two decades, maternal and child death rates continue to be high. Despite the increased enrolment the quality of education is still poor. Gender discrimination and child abuse in many areas continue due to lack of awareness and respect for the rights of children. Due to the geographic location of the country it is vulnerable to natural disasters such as cyclones and floods. In consultation with children and families Plan is working with local development agencies in the areas of education, health, economic security and child rights and human rights.

### How does Plan Bangladesh hope to address these issues?

The following four programs will enable Plan Bangladesh to work holistically and build on the positive results and strengths of its previous interventions:

**Enabling Environment program** is creating a safe and conducive environment in which the participation of children, adults and local government institutions are supported. They are provided with training and information on the issues, needs and rights of children. For example, the street children project supports drop-in centres for the street children. Children organisations continue their active involvement in various awareness raising activities related to children's rights for example the importance of birth registration and children's participation.



*"It is nice to be at the drop-in centre and we love singing with our teacher."*

**Community Learning program** is providing opportunities for children's interactive learning and training for parents and the community to provide children with a supportive and stimulating environment for their development. The Early Child Development (ECD) program has been established for 3-5 year old children. These programs are helping children's physical, social, mental and emotional growth. Children who attended ECD tend to be more prepared in entering the formal education system. Also the Basic Education and Alternative Education program has been established for special groups i.e. working children. Community forums have been initiated for the people to provide feedback and ideas to the school management for improvement.

**Community Health Care program** is working with health service providers to increase knowledge of the members of the community on health issues and provide access to primary health care. This program focuses on improving general health conditions and protecting pregnant mothers and young children from diseases. Health committees and volunteers including children focus on health education on sanitation and hygiene to prevent diseases and death. A part of the program focuses on strengthening local knowledge and practices on health and nutrition.

**Family Economic Security program** is focused on the economic development of poor families through a microfinance program. Adolescents and women are given opportunities to improve their livelihood skills by receiving vocational training i.e. embroidery, tailoring, vegetable gardening etc. to take up small businesses. Poor farmers are provided with training on environment friendly modern agriculture practices. The crop diversification project works with poor farmers and links them with the market.

Adolescents and children have opportunities for savings through this program. Over 50,000 people are receiving Plan's flexible credit services at their door step, most of them are from poor families who are mostly women.

**Building Relationship:** Plan Bangladesh is using the media and involving children in raising awareness on issues that affects the lives of children. Young journalists trained through Plan's support are actively involved in collecting information and writing in local and national newspapers. TV spots and episodes on child rights and adolescent issues and other community development issues have been telecasted through the national and most popular TV channels.

Awareness raising campaigns on child rights is enhanced by involving children and the community in various awareness raising activities i.e. rally, theatre, cultural, musical and dance events. Sponsored children and other children in Plan working areas are provided with the opportunity to share their views about issues and their experience in development activities with their sponsors and other people as part of promoting unity for the realisation of children's rights and potentials.

### **Program approach**

Plan facilitates communities to take the lead role in the development processes through an approach called child centered community development; where community wide participation leads to formation of local groups and organisations of children and adults. Child centered programs are developed which are based on the rights of children to survival, development, protection and participation. Plan's local partner organisations carry out these programs to the communities with greater involvement of children, women and men.



*Girls learning intricate embroidery work at training centre to earn extra income for her family*