

## Country strategic plan summary for 2000-2010

This document describes how Plan Cameroon and its partners will mobilize the different resources to improve the welfare and prospects of vulnerable children. It provides the strategic framework for consistent and continued action from 2000 to 2010.



### About Cameroon

Cameroon is situated in the central African region with an estimated population of 16 million. With 33 persons per km<sup>2</sup>, it is one of the most densely populated countries in the central African sub-region. About 50% of the population lives in urban areas. It is ranked 148<sup>th</sup> out of 177 countries in the 2005 human development index report.

### Plan Cameroon's program

Plan signed a protocol agreement with the Government of Cameroon on September 6<sup>th</sup> 1996. Ten years later, Plan Cameroon supports over 22,000 sponsored children in three of the 10 provinces. Plan Cameroon currently works with over 350 communities on long-term community development projects. In 1999, Plan Cameroon conducted a study that led to the preparation of the first country strategic plan. Plan Cameroon designed two sets of medium term country programs to address the issues highlighted in the country strategic plan. The first set of programs were implemented from 2000 to 2005. The second phase of these programs run from 2005 to 2010 and these programs directly address issues affecting the development of children. The preparation of Plan Cameroon's country strategic plan involved the collection and analysis of data, thorough community need assessments and extensive consultations with community members and other development institutions.

The country strategic plan highlights five fundamental issues that impede the development of children in Cameroon:

1. Low quality and low achievement in basic education
2. High rates of infant, child and maternal morbidity and mortality
3. High level of poverty in rural areas
4. Underdeveloped relationships/partnerships amongst the development stakeholders
5. Poor awareness of children's rights in program areas



Poor school infrastructure, which affects quality education

### Child survival and early development:



Nutrition rehabilitation centre for malnourished children

This program addresses health issues relating to children under five such as malaria, malnutrition, pneumonia, diarrhea and vaccine preventable illnesses. It also aims to increase access to services for early childhood stimulation, increase early birth registration, and promote behavior change in hygiene and sanitation at the family and community level.

Plan Cameroon is also supporting the government in its approach to childhood illness. For early childhood development, the program focuses on encouraging and supporting rural communities to open pre-school centers.

**Childhood development:** This program addresses issues affecting children between 6 and 12 years old, with a focus on quality education, life skills development, good hygiene behavior and promotion of child participation in development. Recent research in Cameroon shows that the enrolment rate in primary education is still very low in rural areas. A survey carried out by Plan reveals that only 56% of children enrolled in primary school effectively complete primary education. The program supports the government of Cameroon through the ministry of basic education to carry out effective and regular supervision of schools and teacher training. In addition, the program promotes classroom construction and renovation.

**Towards a productive adulthood:** The focus of this program are children and youths above 13 years. The program ensures that young adults in the rural areas have adequate life-skills for a balanced and productive life. The program promotes participation in community development and decision-making processes, HIV/AIDS prevention, life skills and vocational skill training.



Grain mill - source of income generation

### Sustainable rural livelihoods:

This program addresses issues related to food security and family income by promoting agricultural production and access to finance services for small-scale business development. It also aims to increase access to financial services by promoting non-agricultural income generation activities. Support to agricultural production is the main emphasis of this program.

“We are always happy when our sponsors visit us. Through this visit we feel they are people who really care about us.” *(Olinga D. 14years old)*

### Building relationships:

This program supports the strengthening of local development institutions, associations and other organisations to respond to the development needs of their constituencies. The program also assists these organizations/institutions to develop and maintain critical relationships through which they can mobilize resources for development. Sponsorship communications are facilitated through this program.



Cross-cultural relationship

### Baka/pygmy rights and dignity:

This promotes the integration of the ethnic group, the Bakas (Pygmies), into the mainstream of Cameroonian society. This group, which consists of forest dwellers who have until recently lived as hunters and gatherers, is slowly being introduced to education, improved hygiene practices, agriculture, and modern health care practices. The program also seeks to build self-esteem among this group as they deal with the challenges of integrating with the rest of society and offering them recognition and nationality.

**Program approach:** Plan Cameroon engages children, their families and communities to play leading roles in the implementation of the above programs along side other partners and the government. By enabling the children, families and communities in general to be partners in the implementation of these programs that address the needs and rights of children, Plan Cameroon is assisting the Cameroon government to address issues that impede the development of children.