

Plan Philippines



Country strategic plan summary for 2004 - 2009

This document describes how Plan Philippines 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 2004 to 2009.

Plan Philippines' country strategic plan describes the issues that prevent children from realizing their full potential and the underlying causes, as well as the strategic framework, to address them.

Philippines: an overview

The Philippines is home to more than 84 million people, of whom more than 40 percent are children under 18. It is an archipelago of 7,107 islands, mostly mountains with narrow to extensive coastal lowlands. Prone to natural hazards, it is visited by frequent typhoons, landslides, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. Subsistence farming and fishing are the most common sources of livelihood.

Plan in the Philippines

Plan began work in the Philippines in 1961 in the Luzon islands. Over the years it has been gradually phasing out operations from the Luzon islands and increasingly moving towards the Visayas islands. We currently work with families and children in more than 400 villages in eight poor provinces.

Key issues affecting the Filipino children

Philippine statistics show that at least 1/3 of the population cannot meet their basic needs. Surveys and consultations done by Plan revealed several interdependent issues that hinder the realization of the children's full potential. Among the most glaring include:

- Lack of household income and inability to meet children's basic needs;
- Inadequate basic social services to children and their families;
- Poor health practices and lack of access to primary health care services leading to malnutrition, sickness and child mortality;
- Lack of proper waste and water systems management and good hygiene practices resulting in water and sanitation related diseases;
- Poor state of the public educational system leading to children's inability to acquire appropriate developmental and learning competencies and life skills;
- Lack of awareness and attention to child protection issues resulting in children not being protected from abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation; and
- Needs of children and youth being relegated to the side.



"It feels good to be involved, we identify our problems and suggest what we think can be done to solve them," the children said as they work in groups to identify their issues and plan actions to solve them.

Plan's Programs

Plan Philippines' country strategic plan was prepared through a participatory process involving Plan staff, children, families, government and civil society. From 2004 to 2009, Plan will seek to improve participation of children, families and civil society in development programs focusing on:

- **Strengthening household economic and food security** by facilitating the provision of critical livelihood-related services, improving local government capacity to implement a mandate for livelihood development, advocating for a policy and livelihood action research.

- **Advancing child-friendly governance** by enhancing people's and children's participation in development activities, partnership and networking, lobbying for child protection laws and advocacy to influence policy and funding to address children's rights.



"At first, the children were very shy but they learned after a few weeks," parent volunteer Nerry said about the young children attending the playgroup session that she facilitates.

- **Nurturing child health** by helping set-up community-managed health systems covering both preventive and curative services, establishing a system for monitoring health performance and targeting children-at-risk, equipping health centers, strengthening referral systems, increasing health awareness and conducting health research.

- **Ensuring safe water and hygienic environments** by establishing community managed-rural water supply and sanitation systems in all Plan partner communities.

- **Enhancing learning competencies and life skills** by supporting the goal of quality education for all covering center-and-home-based early child care and development and school improvement, increase academic performance, raise teachers' competency and mobilize community support for education.



Women engaged in livelihood activities

- **Protecting children at risk** focuses on children in need of special protection, physically or sexually-abused, child laborers and children in conflict with the law. It seeks to build systems for detection, reporting, referral, peer support, legal assistance and rehabilitation of cases.

- **Reducing children's vulnerability to disaster** by helping increase the capacity of families, communities and government to cope with disasters and by advocating policies to ensure that children's voices are heard and that development plans respond to the issues and needs of children.

Program approach

Programs are carried out using a child-centered community development strategy, anchored on the basic rights of children: survival, development, participation, and protection. Child-centered community development involves children, families and communities in implementing programs for their own development. It promotes program ownership so that efforts are sustained long after Plan's phase out in the area.