

“Plan involves children in forums where minds and hearts are engaged and children express their needs.”



their families. In the past, Plan operated under different corporate names and marks in different countries, resulting in a fragmented presentation to the outside world. We are now known as Plan throughout the countries where we work.

Plan in Malawi

Since 1994, Plan has been working in Malawi with rural and needy communities in some areas of Kasungu, Lilongwe and Mzuzu on development programmes that are designed in full partnership with the communities themselves. We have 67 employees (64 hired locally), 35 of whom are front line staff. Each of the front line staff has a responsibility for a number of villages which they help mobilise to address community problems. Nearly 150,000 children, from the 55 communities Plan work with, benefit from the projects we are supporting in four strategic fronts of;

- **Food security and natural resources management:** Plan has for a number of years provided communities with seed and fertilizer to make them food secure. With climatic conditions unfavourable for maize production, emphasis in these efforts is now falling on crop diversification.
- **Education, advocacy and community empowerment:** Plan has worked with communities in providing proper school infrastructure. We have also introduced preschools in our impact areas to activate cognitive responses of learning at an early age in children.
- **Community health care:** Plan Malawi has worked to combat disease by in part, promoting basic rules of hygiene at community level. Programmes aimed at combating HIV/Aids through awareness and achieving behavioural change are also in place.
- **Early childhood care and development:** Plan has provided communities with properly trained Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs).

Plan's ideals

As a global organisation, Plan has four key operating qualities that set us aside from other development organizations. These are;

- **Building relationships by bringing people together,** Plan creates links between the sponsors and the sponsored. Each sponsor is linked to one child, his/her family and community. Through this linkage, both parties are able to communicate with each other, through visits, exchange of letters, pictures and gifts.
- **Plan is a recognised voice for children through its child focused programmes,** Plan involves children in forums where minds and hearts are engaged and children are able to express their needs and views. Through listening to the children, we gain understanding of their needs before drawing up action plans. Children's needs are therefore incorporated in Plan's projects.
- **Plan ensures that beneficiaries fully participate.** We involve children, families and communities at grassroot level in efforts that mainly focus on survival, education and empowerment, all this in a process that the beneficiaries fully participate.
- **Plan aims to realise potential and achieve sustainable development.** Plan can commit to work with each community for a period of around 10 years. Occasionally (as at present here in Malawi) Plan will assist with short-term relief when our presence at grassroot level provides a suitable mechanism for facilitating relief.

Plan's Domains

- **Building Relationships:** This domain characterizes the whole concept of child sponsorship. Through corporate communication and direct communication between sponsors and sponsored children, Plan builds strong relationships between those in need and those who can help.
- **Growing up healthy:** Plan seeks to ensure survival and healthy development of children and adults, particularly women of child bearing age. In Malawi, this has been achieved through, among other ways, promotion and strengthening of community based primary health care systems.