

Because I am a Girl: A year of action and innovation



Because **I am a Girl**

Acknowledgements



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All data in this report, unless otherwise noted, are based upon Because I am a Girl campaign monitoring data from Plan offices. The data are intended to help Plan assess its own work implementing the campaign and progress toward its goals and targets. The data are self-reported and therefore may be subject to interpretation.

Unless otherwise indicated, financial values expressed are in euros.

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Acronyms

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	(Plan) Country office
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSW	(UN) Commission on the Status of Women
EU	European Union
FCNO	(Plan) Field Country National Office
GGIP	Global Girls Innovation Programme
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PEASS	Promoting Equality and Safety in Schools (GGIP programme)
PU	(Plan) Programme Unit
ROSC	Civil Society Forum for Child Rights (Mozambique)
SRGBV	School-related gender-based violence
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGEI	United Nations Girls' Education Initiative
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme



Introduction

Plan's Because I am a Girl Campaign: One Year On

The first International Day of the Girl Child – 11 October 2012 – was a landmark date. On that day, Plan International's **Because I am a Girl** campaign was launched in 70 countries around the world.

Because I am a Girl is Plan's global initiative to end gender inequality, promote girls' rights and lift millions of girls out of poverty. We aim to support girls to get the education, skills and support they need to transform their lives and the world around them. Plan's 75 years of experience has shown that real change can take place when girls are valued. We are working with girls, communities, traditional leaders, governments, global institutions and the private sector to address the barriers that prevent girls from completing their education. Supporting girls' education is the right, fair and smart thing to do. It is one of the best investments we all can make that will help to end poverty for generations to come.

Girls' rights are human rights. The single, most powerful way to achieve girls' rights is through quality education for girls. Girls are too often denied their right to education because of the barriers they face. Child marriage and school-related gender-based violence are two of the most critical barriers that Plan is tackling. Plan's **Because I am a Girl** campaign aims to have a lasting impact on the lives of millions of girls. We are committed to:

- **influencing policy**
- **working with girls and their communities**
- **mobilising the public**
- **raising 500 million euros to move girls from poverty to opportunity**

To be held accountable on our commitments, we have put in place a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to capture the breadth and depth of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign (see Appendix A). We

are carefully tracking our progress towards the goals and targets of the campaign. We will not only measure and report on our progress – we will also use this data to drive continual learning and high-quality performance across Plan's work for girls' rights. This is a profound journey to which we at Plan are deeply committed. By generating credible qualitative and quantitative data, alongside case studies to profile our learning, we are demonstrating our commitment through action, with girls' rights as our central, constant focus.

This report charts Plan's journey, progress and achievements one year into the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. Here you will find highlights of this first year – the 1.5 million hands raised for girls' education and the youth call to action on education led by Malala Yousafzai at the United Nations, to name but two. We chart the reach of **Because I am a Girl** programmes, which in one year alone have worked with an estimated 20 million girls. We show how Plan's advocacy for **Because I am a Girl** is already changing minds at community, national and international levels. Underpinning all this is our bedrock belief in gender equality.

As this report shows, this first year has put the **Because I am a Girl** campaign on a firm footing and has positioned Plan as a world leader in fighting for girls' rights to a quality education. We are now working to build on these achievements to bring lasting benefits to millions of girls and their communities.

“In Malawi, especially in rural areas, girls meet a lot of challenges and because I am a girl I would like to fight for my rights and girls' rights too. We are also human beings who need to be respected.”

Elizabeth, secondary-school student from Malawi.

1. Campaign snapshot in numbers¹



Programmes

- We are **firmly on track to meet the five-year global targets** of 4 million girls reached directly, 40 million girls reached indirectly, and 400 million girls and boys reached through advocacy.
- **Because I am a Girl** programmes worked with nearly **2 million girls directly** and just over **18 million girls indirectly** – that’s an estimated total of **20 million girls** in this first year (see Appendix B).
- **Because I am a Girl** projects and programmes totalled **249 globally** – that’s 57 reported projects in Asia, 64 in East and Southern Africa, 62 in West Africa, and 66 in the Americas (see Appendix C).
- Primary research undertaken in **39 countries** on improving girls’ lives – and within those countries, **57 research initiatives on key girls’ rights issues** (i.e. access to quality education and freedom from harmful practices such as child marriage) (see Appendix D).

Fundraising

- **Dramatic progress made towards the five-year fund raising target of 500 million euros.**
- National organisations raised more than **335 million euros** in net income (see Appendix E).
- Institutional grants totalled more than **136 million euros** for programmes and advocacy (see Appendix F).
- **Public awareness of the Because I am a Girl brand leaped ahead** in countries with Plan offices, especially Canada, France, India, Japan and Netherlands according to selected data (see Appendix G).

Advocacy

- Plan advocacy activities reached nearly **55 million boys** and **58 million girls** (see Figure 5.4 and Appendix H).
- Plan offices conducted advocacy across the six campaign goals. Most offices achieved **results on girls’ secondary school completion, ending child marriage** and **ending gender-based violence** in and around schools (see Figure 5.7).
- High-level support for **Because I am a Girl** activities came from **33 government representatives from 22 countries** including a head of state and a vice president, four first ladies and various government ministers (see Appendix I).
- Plan has influenced changes in laws and policies in 12 countries, and achieved advocacy results on girls’ secondary school completion in 27 countries.

**“When we go to school and do well,
the world forgets what you cannot do
and starts seeing what you can do.”**

Female, 19, India

¹ Source: Plan Office Global Report data received at the time of writing. Please note, all numeric data in this report was derived from Global Reports received from a total of 65 out of 70 Plan offices. Data from Plan offices of Denmark, Colombia, Italy and Korea were missing at the time of writing. All data in this report, unless otherwise noted, are based upon Because I am a Girl campaign monitoring data from Plan offices. The data are intended to help Plan assess its own work implementing the campaign and progress toward its goals and targets. The data are self-reported and therefore may be subject to interpretation.

Plan listened to 6,000 girls and 3,000 boys and here's what they said:

3/4

Forced into marriage

Three out of four girls interviewed said they don't see themselves as having the power to decide over pregnancy

Many girls say they don't have the power to choose if, when or whom they will marry



Forced out of education

Over two-thirds of girls and boys said early pregnancy is driving girls out of secondary school

over

2/3



Because I am a Girl – year 1

What Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign has achieved

249

projects on girls' rights and empowerment

57

research initiatives across 39 countries on critical issues like girls' education and child marriage

fr



Plan mobilised the public and raised over

1,500,000

hands in support of girls' education



The campaign reached

nearly
2 million girls
directly

just over
18 million girls
indirectly

nearly
58 million girls
through advocacy

Real change for girls

Plan's advocacy work led to results towards

girls' secondary education



IN
27
COUNTRIES

ending child marriage



IN
19
COUNTRIES

ending gender-based violence in and around schools



IN
18
COUNTRIES

2. Global highlights: Year one



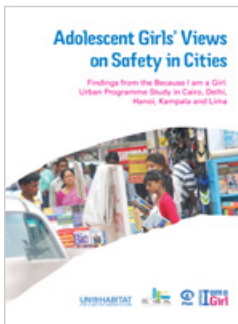
October 2012: Global campaign launch

Glowing pink landmarks, rock concerts and events in more than 70 countries marked the global launch of Plan's **Because I am a Girl** campaign on the first-ever International Day of the Girl Child, 11 October. As part of this day, the sixth report in Plan's State of the World's Girls Report, *Learning for Life*, launched in 70 countries taking a critical look at the state of girls' education. Every Plan office took part in the day's campaigning, with coverage including 703 online stories featuring Plan on 11 October alone. Plan France's erasable billboard excited major national media interest and went on to win Citizenship Campaign of the Year from the AACC (French Association of Communication Agencies). Plan Belgium's viral video, *Belgian girls forced to labour at school*, gained 150,000 views and shares.



January 2013: At the World Economic Forum

Plan launched a **report** on the impact of the global economic recession on women and girls. Findings included increased mortality rates, reduced life expectancy and fewer opportunities. Plan called for targeted support in social protection, job creation and education.



December 2012: Global Girls Innovation Programme launched

Plan launched the Global Girls Innovation Programme (GGIP) with the objective to reach thousands of the poorest and most vulnerable girls with cutting edge, high-quality programmes that achieve tangible results for girls around world. One of the GGIP programmes, the **Because I am a Girl** Urban Programme, embarked on a unique study on safety and inclusion involving more than 1,400 adolescent girls and boys.



March 2013: At the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Youth delegates participated in the 57th Commission on the Status of Women. Plan launched two major reports – one on **girls' safety in cities** and the other on **school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)** – securing extensive international media coverage. Over 300 delegates took a copy of Plan's SRGBV report, and a UNICEF tweet about a *Huffington Post* article by Plan on violence in schools reached 1.5 million people.



March 2013: *Girl rising*

The Plan-supported 10X10 documentary *Girl Rising* was screened at the United Nations and reached number five on the *New York Times Most Popular Movie* list in March. It debuted on CNN in June, and is being launched in more than 35 countries.



May 2013: At the UN Human Rights Council

Plan launched the report *A Girl's right to say no to marriage* at a special UN Human Rights Council event in Geneva. The event was organised in cooperation with several UN agencies, and UN member states including Canada, Netherlands, Benin, Ethiopia and El Salvador. Plan called for UN member states to work together to adopt a UN General Assembly Resolution on child marriage by 2015. In September 2013, for the first time in history, the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva adopted a resolution dedicated to the issue of child, early and forced marriage.



April 2013: At the UN Education Summit

Youth members of the Plan-supported Youth Advocacy Group put girls' education in the spotlight at the *Learning for All* ministerial summit in Washington D.C. The high-profile event was organised by the UN Special Envoy for Global Education Gordon Brown, who raised his hand in support of girls' education. Plan convened a global policy dialogue on gender equality in education, in partnership with UNGEI.



May 2013: Because I am a Girl on top of Everest

Flying the flag for *Because I am a Girl*, Nishat Majumdar became the first Bangladeshi woman to scale Mount Everest.



June 2013: *I'll take it from here*

Plan International's video *I'll take it from here* won the UNICEF award at the International Animation Festival in Annecy, France. The stop-motion video about child marriage was made with the support of Plan Malawi. It has been shown on many TV shows there and viewed almost 30,000 times on YouTube.



July 2013: First UN Youth takeover

Malala Yousafzai celebrated her 16th birthday by leading a youth takeover of the UN. Young people from around the world – including a Plan-supported youth delegation – agreed to a youth ‘call to action’ for the UN’s education work after 2015. **Malala claimed, “One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education first.”** During Malala week, 8 to 15 July, the Plan Global Twitter handle achieved 2.9 million impressions. Traffic to Plan International’s Facebook page grew by 455 per cent and Plan’s Malala Day press release was picked up 515 times around the world.



July 2013: Independent advocacy research

Plan and Ipsos launched an innovative advocacy evaluation on how stakeholders and staff view Plan’s advocacy work on girls’ rights to education. Ipsos interviewed 90 stakeholders in Canada, El Salvador, France, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and the European Union.



August 2013: Plan heard from 6,000 girls and 3,000 boys

Plan puts the **voices of girls** at the heart of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. Between June and August, Plan developed two innovative programme tools, including the **Girls Empowerment Star** and the **School Equality Scorecard**, and heard directly from 6,000 girls and 3,000 boys in 11 countries around the world.



September 2013: 1.5 million hands raised

The **Raise Your Hand** for girls’ education campaign achieved 1.5 million hands, with numbers still rising. Among Plan countries, Bangladesh contributed the most hands raised by 5 September: a massive 289,868. Indonesia was the next largest contributor with 135,219 hands. Belgium was the third with 85,625.

Much more besides...

This short section does not have room to do justice to all the communications achievements and highlights of Plan offices in the first year of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. For more information

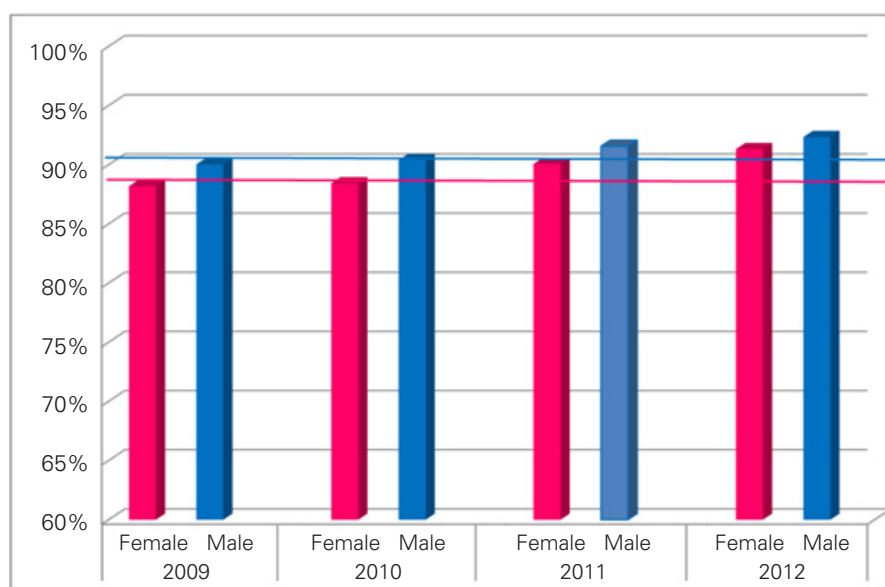
3. Status of girls' education around the world

Every girl has the right to education, but around the world 65 million girls do not go to school.² As girls reach adolescence, they are expected to take on more household work to the detriment of their learning. Despite reaching global parity in primary school enrolment,³ secondary completion rates for girls still lag behind rates for boys. During adolescence, the pressures of poverty and discrimination drive girls from school. They may be expected to help at home; their families may not be convinced of the value of their education; they may experience violence at school; they may get pregnant or married; school may be too far away, leading parents to think that their daughters, and their reputations, may be at risk.

In order to understand the situation for adolescent girls and their ability to complete lower secondary school, we are tracking the educational progress of girls and boys sponsored by Plan in the 70 countries where we work. Plan is also analysing changes in government education statistics in these countries to obtain a more in-depth picture of the current state of girls' education.

As illustrated in Figure 3.1, the last four years have seen a 3 per cent increase in Plan's sponsored girls' and boys' school attendance. The gender gap between sponsored girls and boys who attend school is beginning to close; in 2012 only 1 per cent more sponsored boys attended school than sponsored girls.⁴ When looking at school attendance ratios by age, we find that both sponsored girls and boys have been dropping out of school from the age of 12. However, sponsored girls have been dropping out at a much faster rate than boys (see Figure 3.2). The gender gap widens further between girls and boys aged 12 to 18 who drop out of school. At the age of 12, there are 2 per cent more boys attending school than girls of the same age; at the age of 17, this widens to 4 per cent, and at the age of 18 to 8 per cent. More than 75 per cent of sponsored boys are still in school by the age of 18, while fewer than 70 per cent of girls still attend formal school at the same age.⁵

Figure 3.1: Percentage of children sponsored by Plan attending formal education



Source: Plan International Sponsored Children N 2009 = 932,967 N 2010 = 647,372 N 2011 = 1,028,929 N 2012 = 1,016,797

“Many of my friends and girls I know from home are married already; some were as young as 12. I don’t want to be married yet. I want to stay in school and then, only after I have achieved something for myself, I will think about marriage. Being in school is what is important.”

Faith, 19, Zimbabwe

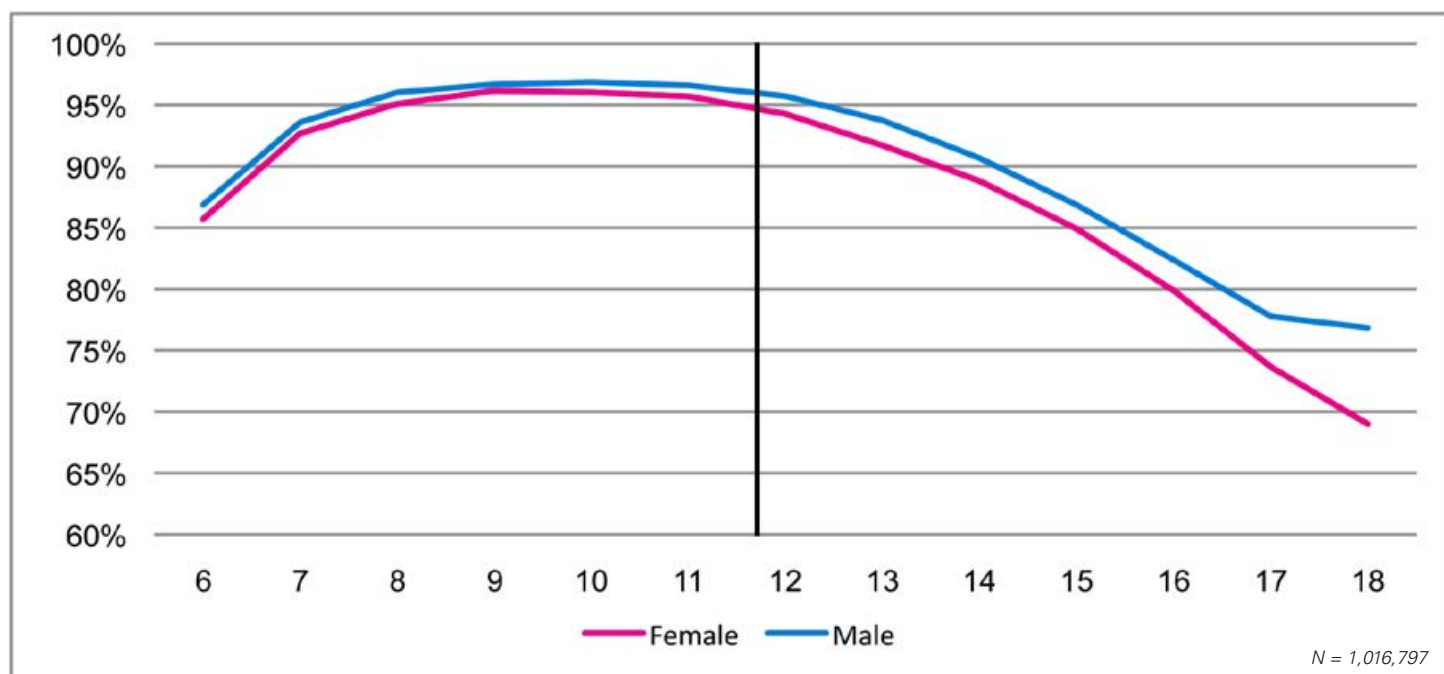
² UNESCO (2012) *Education for all Global Monitoring Report: The Hidden Crisis: Armed Conflict and Education*. Paris: UNESCO.

³ United Nations (2012) *The Millennium Development Report 2012*. New York: United Nations.

⁴ In Asia, there are more girls attending school than boys in the countries where Plan works.

⁵ It should be noted that the research population for Plan's sponsored children aged 18 is only 3,395, as opposed to the research population of children aged 17 of 38,257 which might impact these results. In addition, this data does not provide us with any information regarding the quality of education.

Figure 3.2: Attendance rates among girls and boys in Plan countries ages 6 to 18



To understand further the educational progress for girls and boys in the countries where Plan works, we reviewed government data and household surveys using the most recent information from external sources, including UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics and its *Education for All: Global Monitoring Report*. Figure 3.3 (page 13) shows the completion rate of lower secondary education for girls in Plan countries. Countries with lighter blue shading means a higher completion rate and countries with darker blue shading indicates a smaller percentage of girls completing lower secondary school. The tables further outline the ten countries with the highest and lowest completion rates for girls, whereby Malawi has the lowest completion rates for girls in lower secondary education (30 per cent).

Figure 3.4 (page 14) illustrates enrolment rates for girls and boys in lower secondary education using a gender parity index. It highlights the countries where boys are enrolled in lower secondary school at higher rates than girls and vice versa as well as countries that have achieved parity in enrolment rates. Based on available data, only nine Plan countries have reached gender parity in lower secondary education enrolment (South Korea, Italy, Finland, Sweden, Norway, France, Japan, El Salvador and the USA).

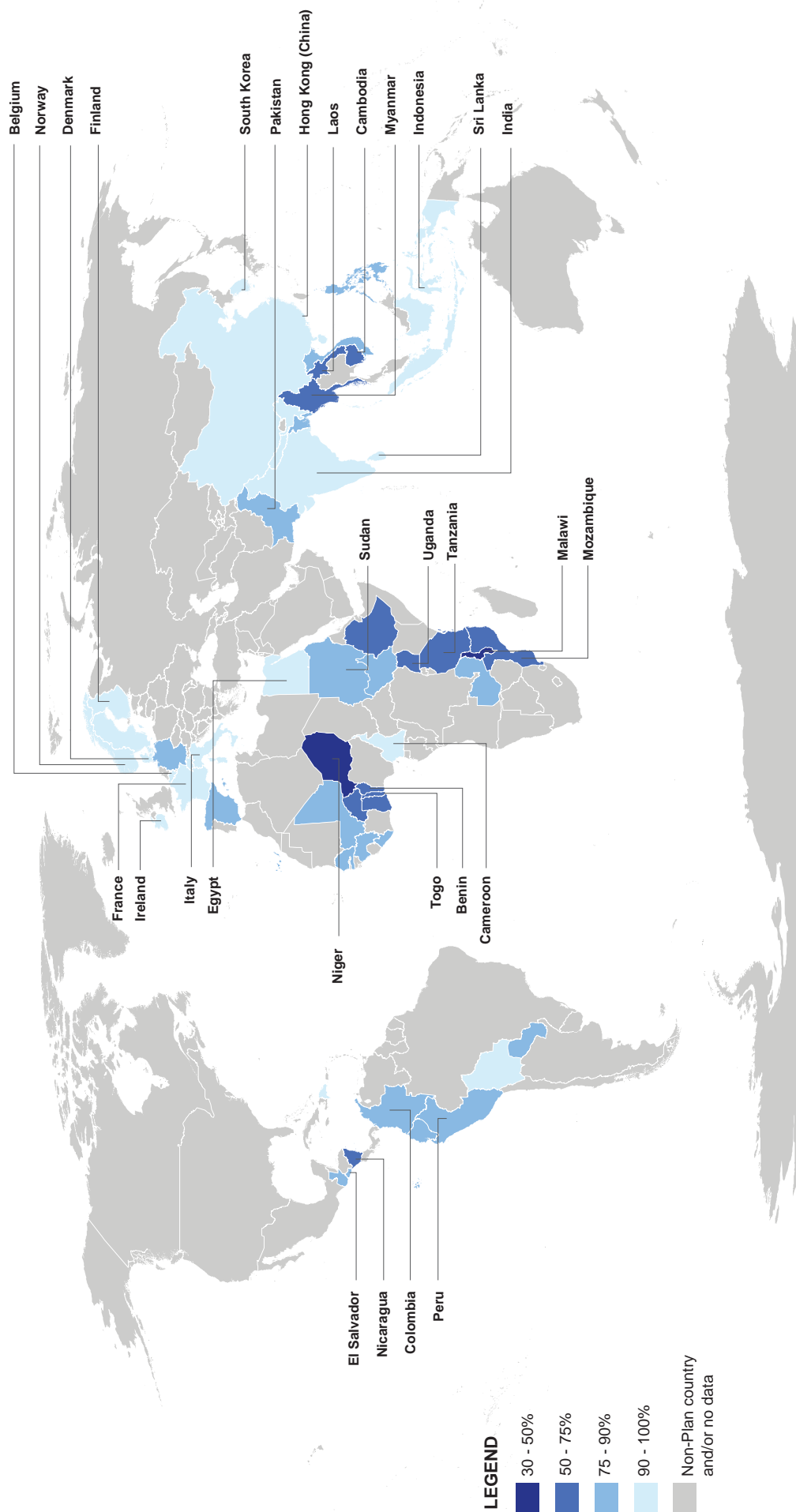
Girls’ rights are human rights and Plan believes that girls’ rights can be achieved through the power of quality education. Our goal with the **Because I am a Girl** campaign is to achieve a lasting positive impact on the lives of millions of girls.



“Boys and girls are equal, and parents shouldn’t discriminate against girls in terms of their school fees.”

Justice, 16, Zimbabwe

Figure 3.3: Completion rates for girls in lower secondary education in Plan countries, per cent

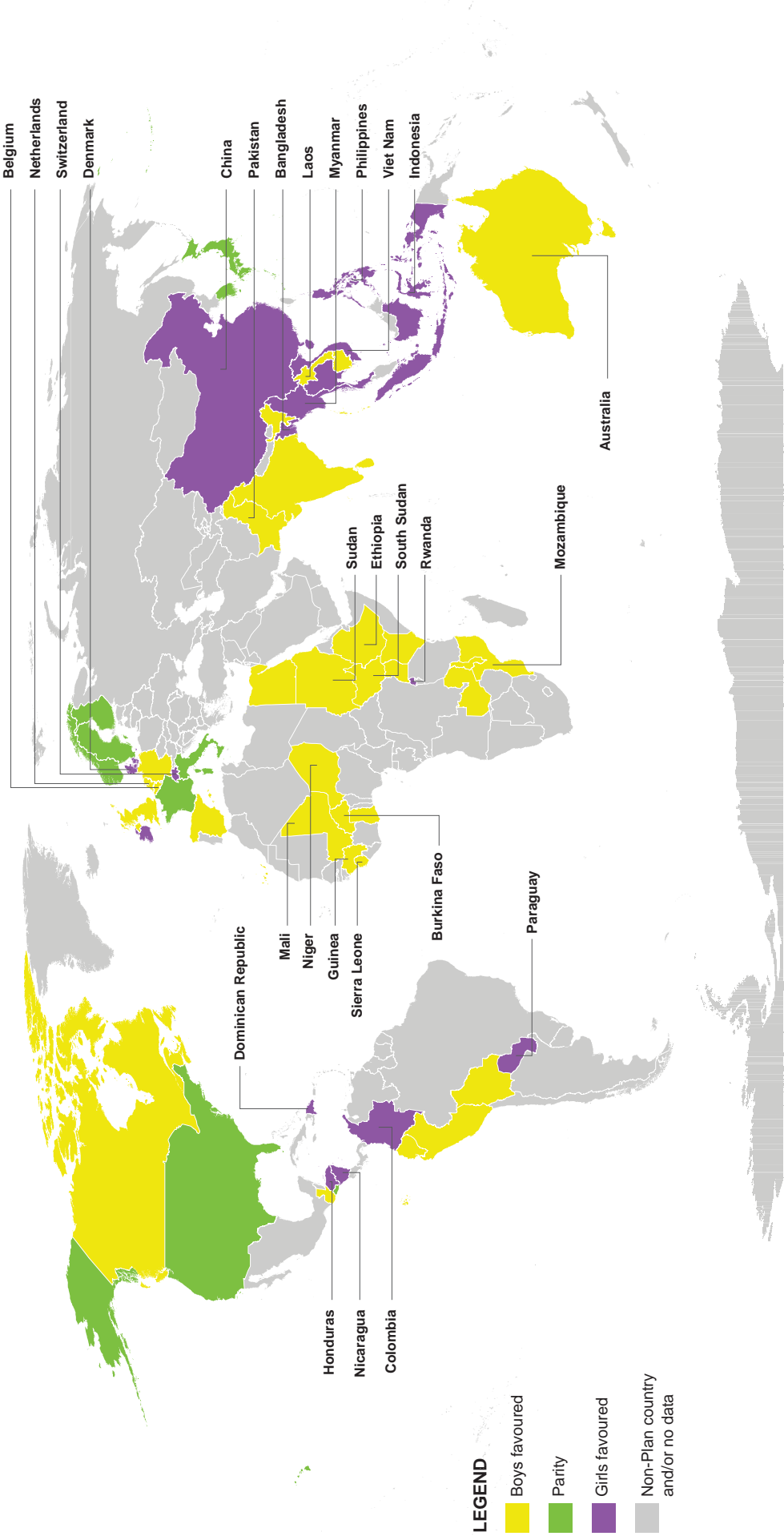


Completion rates for girls in lower secondary education:
Source: UNESCO, 1999-2012

Lowest completion rates for girls in lower secondary education				Highest completion rates for girls in lower secondary education			
Country	Rank	Rate %	Country	Rank	Rate %	Country	Rank
Malawi	1	30	Tanzania	6	63	Belgium	1
Niger	2	46	Cambodia	7	64	Finland	2
Uganda	3	57	Mozambique	8	67	France	3
Togo	4	57	Nicaragua	9	70	Hong Kong (China)	4
Benin	5	60	Laos	10	70	Italy	5
						South Korea	10
						Denmark	7
						Ireland	8
						Norway	9

Lower secondary continues basic primary level education, but is typically more subject focused. Lower secondary completion often means the end of compulsory education.

Figure 3.4: Lower secondary education enrolment in Plan countries – Gender Parity Index



A value of less than one identifies countries in which there is a higher enrolment of boys in lower secondary education than girls. A value of greater than one identifies countries in which there is a higher enrolment of girls in lower secondary education than boys. Gender Parity is achieved where a country scores 1, or very close to 1, in the index. Lower secondary continues basic primary level education, but is typically more subject focused. Lower secondary completion often means the end of compulsory education.

Highest enrolment of boys compared to girls					Highest enrolment of girls compared to boys						
Country	Rank	Score	Country	Rank	Score	Country	Rank	Score	Country	Rank	Score
Guinea	1	0.61	Burkina Faso	6	0.82	Bangladesh	1	1.25	Philippines	6	1.05
Niger	2	0.71	South Sudan	7	0.83	Honduras	2	1.14	Myanmar	7	1.05
Mali	3	0.75	Sudan	8	0.83	Rwanda	3	1.09	Nicaragua	8	1.04
Pakistan	4	0.77	Laos	9	0.84	Colombia	4	1.06	Viet Nam	9	1.04
Sierra Leone	5	0.79	Ethiopia	10	0.84	China	5	1.06	Dominican Rep	10	1.03

Gender Parity Index Source: UNESCO, 2012, Education for All: Global Monitoring Report.

4. Achievements to date: Programmes

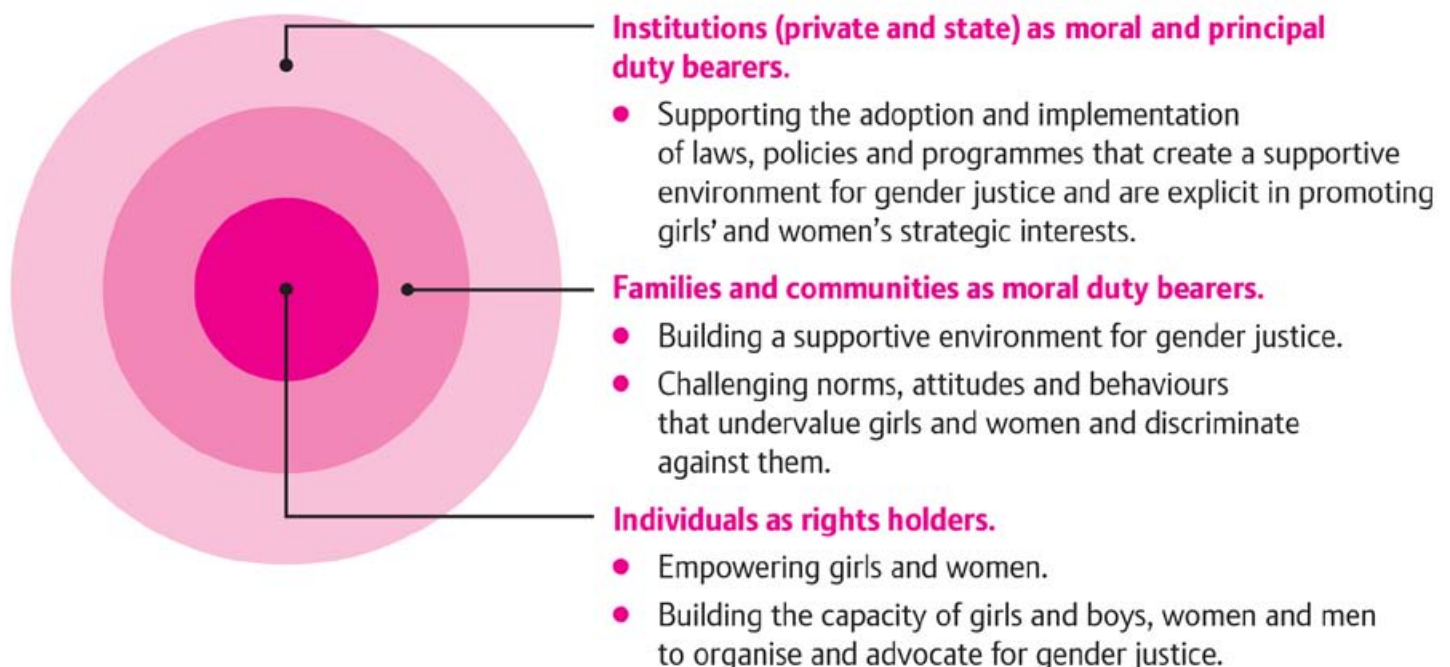
Goals and strategies

Plan's programmes are driving real improvements in the lives of girls around the world. Our programmes put girls' rights and empowerment at the very centre of development work. We work hand-in-hand with communities to tackle the barriers girls face in completing a quality education. These barriers include their vulnerability to child marriage, the violence they face in and around schools, and the harmful gender norms that persist in their homes and communities.

Plan's **Because I am a Girl** programmes work at three dimensions of change. We know that girls need a range of assets and capabilities at specific stages throughout their lives in order to enjoy their rights. We are working with girls directly through a strategy of empowerment to build their skills, develop their sense of self-worth, and strengthen their ability to make choices about their lives and future. We are working with families and communities to support girls' rights and to change the way girls are valued in society. Finally, we are working with governments and community leaders to put in place services, policies and laws to protect girls' rights.

"Being part of [the Young Health Programme] is a unique experience for me. When I became part of this programme my life changed completely because I learnt about my rights and the way I can request them in my personal life and also in social life. I feel myself to be an example to other adolescents."

18-year-old female peer educator in Brazil



Plan innovates for girls' rights and empowerment

In 2012, Plan launched the **Global Girls Innovation Programme (GGIP)**, an initiative of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. The objective is to reach thousands of the most vulnerable girls with cutting edge, high quality programmes on girls' rights that drive learning and results at scale.

Themes

- Child Marriage
- Safe Schools for Adolescent Girls
- Safe and Inclusive Cities for Adolescent Girls
- Adolescent Girls: Active Citizens
- Youth Employment Solutions for Girls
- Adolescent Boys: Champions of Change

Key elements

- Putting girls and girls' empowerment at the centre
- Focus on sustainable girls' empowerment
- Follow Child Centred Community Development operational standards
- Gender-transformative programming
- Evidence based programming and strong monitoring, evaluation and research
- Geo-targeting
- Programmes aim to document a model

These innovative programmes are testing and implementing new solutions to old problems. They have the potential to be replicated all over the world.

The GGIP has taken a pioneer role in promoting meaningful girls' participation in programme design and research. Innovative participatory feedback tools are used to facilitate, quantify and amplify the voices of adolescent girls across all GGIP initiatives.

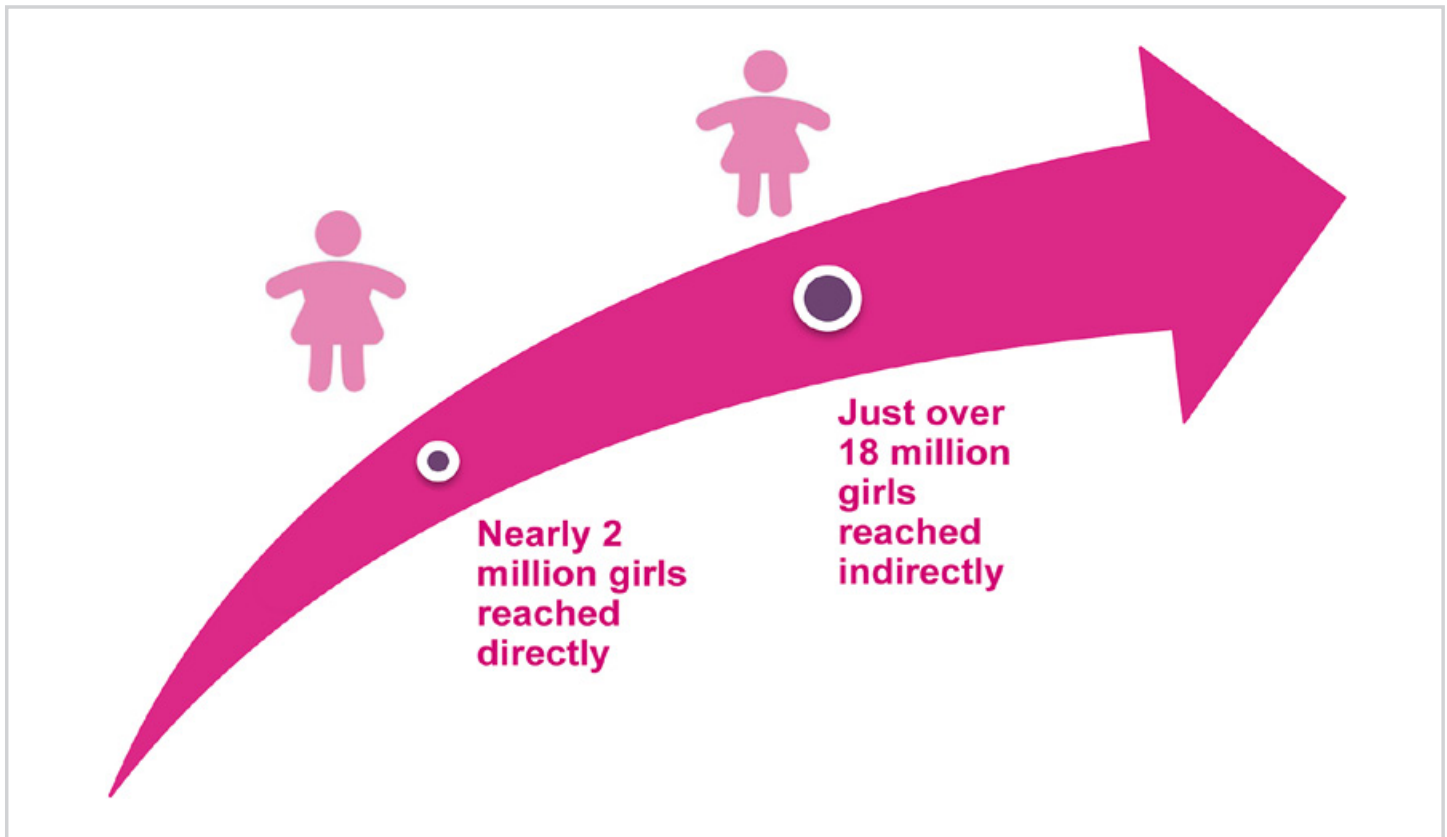
Highlights this year:

- Plan has built and strengthened several strategic partnerships with key institutions and actors that share our commitment to girls' rights and gender inequality, including academic institutions, UN agencies and the private sector.
- The **Because I am Girl Urban Programme** conducted a [unique study on safety and inclusion](#) involving more than 1,400 adolescent girls and boys from five cities across the world. The results of the study were used to design a unique and results-oriented programme that aims to bridge the gap between urban government policy makers and adolescent girls. This programme has been recognised as a promising model by stakeholders and donors, and is being implemented in partnership with UN-HABITAT and Women in Cities International.
- A GGIP initiative known as PEASS, or **Promoting Equality and Safety in Schools**, recently won a \$1 million grant from the very competitive UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. Only 17 proposals were accepted out of 2,410 applications across the world! This programme will be implemented in partnership with the International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW), local NGOs and the Hanoi Department of Education. Plan Vietnam will pilot the model of gender-responsive schools in 20 schools in Hanoi, which will be thoroughly documented and evaluated. The Hanoi Department of Education plans to replicate it in 785 schools in the city, reaching more than 500,000 adolescent girls.
- Another GGIP programme, the **Asia Child Marriage Initiative**, was recently recognised by a new \$1.7 million grant for Plan's innovative approach to end child marriage in Pakistan. We have joined forces with UNFPA and ICRW to develop programme guidance on tackling child marriage.
- An essential part of promoting girls' rights is to engage men and boys. This year Plan has worked across five countries (Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Germany) to build a network of adolescent young men who are **Champions of Change for gender equality**. New methods and youth friendly training material have been developed to allow for a self-reflection process on issues of equality.
- **18+**, a programme to end child marriage in Southern Africa, has developed an intervention strategy to reach a large number of adolescents and children. The programme supports the creation of a girl-led social movement to eradicate child marriage.

Activities and results

Because I am a Girl programmes have reached new heights since the inaugural Day of the Girl Child. This year Plan implemented a total of 249 projects and programmes on girls' rights and empowerment across Asia, Africa and the Americas. Plan is implementing the **Because I am a Girl** campaign evenly across these regions and prioritising girls' education (see Appendix C).

In 2013, these programmes reached a total of nearly 2 million girls directly. But that is just part of the story. These programmes have also reached a total of just over 18 million girls indirectly through mass communications, awareness-raising or public engagement activities on girls' rights and empowerment (see Appendix B).



Plan has tackled the root causes of inequality and improved the social position of millions of girls through gender-transformative programmes such as: Stop Child Marriage of Girls in Bangladesh; Girls' Empowerment through Education in Ethiopia; Girls Promoting the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence in El Salvador; and Promotion of Girls' Leadership through Soccer in Togo.

Programme lessons learned

Plan has learned that girls' empowerment flourishes in societies where girls' rights are fulfilled and where girls and boys are valued equally. This requires an enabling environment where families and communities value girls and believe in their potential, and where institutions enact laws and policies that promote gender justice. We also learned about the power of listening to girls.

Stop Child Marriage of Girls (Bangladesh)⁶

“My parents are aware about the bad impact of child marriage and now I am free from such kind of violence. I have received vocational trade courses that involve a little bit of earning. Now my parents have agreed to admit me in school again.” Jasmin, 14, Dinajpur

“Tell everybody what is happening to our girls all over the world. If everybody knows then we can make a change”. Tamanna, 13, Dhaka



The situation for girls

In Bangladesh, child marriage is very common for girls, especially in poor rural areas. Girls aged 10 to 18 years old are most vulnerable to this harmful practice. The marriage rate of adolescent girls in Bangladesh is 11 times higher than among boys.

Putting an end to child marriage continues to be challenging in communities. Parents who understand the negative consequences often find it hard to resist economic pressures and social expectations. Addressing attitudes that condone child marriage is vital to eradicating it.

How the project aims to improve girls' lives

This programme aims to reduce the incidence of child marriage among girls in nine areas of four districts in Bangladesh. Plan is accelerating progress through mass awareness-raising and by supporting a local movement to create 'Child Marriage Free Zones' in Bangladesh. Plan is also working with the media to increase the focus of media attention on the issue of child marriage. The programme has supported the government in setting up an online Birth Registration Information System to prevent the tampering of birth dates to falsify the age of a girl at marriage. Plan is also supporting girls and boys to monitor the situation of child marriage in their communities.

Plan aims to increase girls' average age at marriage from 15 to 18 years in all programme areas by 2015.

Changes achieved

Changes in girls' lives: Families and girls now have better access to social and economic protection against child marriage. Children's organisations have received life skills training and are empowered to negotiate and delay child marriage in their communities.

Changes within communities: Continuous and concerted action has brought remarkable achievements in recent years in reducing child marriage incidence in Plan's programme areas. Child Marriage Free Zones is a movement led by local government, facilitated by Plan Bangladesh with other partners. Child Marriage Free Zones have been declared in 22 zones where Plan Bangladesh operates. The aim is to stop future child marriages through sustained dialogue in the community and a formal declaration by the local government.⁷

Changes in institutional protection of girls' rights: There is now greater legal protection for girls from child marriage, achieved through Plan's leadership with coalitions on child marriage in Bangladesh. Plan produced a [National Survey on Child Marriage in Bangladesh](#), launched with the government of Bangladesh at an event that drew attention from stakeholders and the public.

Standing up for schoolmates: Girls and boys can be powerful advocates for their own rights. As Shobna, 17, explains: **“At home no one listens to a child, but when we work together people listen.”** When one group of young people found out that their friend “Samina” was to be married, they went to her family on her wedding day and asked that the wedding be stopped. Samina's father became angry and asked them to leave, but rather than give up, the children immediately went to lobby their local union council and took the members down to the wedding venue. The wedding, already in progress, was interrupted and eventually stopped. Samina was able to go back to school and is now very happy to be studying at college. She is very thankful to her friends for stopping the marriage.

⁶ Supported by Plan UK (2012 to 2016)

⁷ For further information see: www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Plan-Bangladesh-Report-on-Child-Marriage-Free-Unions.pdf



Girls' Empowerment through Education (Ethiopia)⁸

"My favourite training was leadership and life skills, because it taught us what is expected of a leader, who is a good leader, and how to be a good leader. I want to be a leader in my community." Eden, 13

The situation for girls

Girls' education is not part of the cultural fabric in Ethiopia. Girls are often forced to drop out of school and devote their time to household chores or marry at a young age.

How the project aims to improve girls' lives

The Girls' Empowerment through Education project tackles record-low levels of primary education enrolment in Ethiopia. The project's key objectives are to:

- Increase girls' access to education by improving schools' facilities and supporting households to invest in their daughters' education.
- Improve quality education and learning opportunities for girl students. For example, the project has created a tutoring programme for girls, girls' clubs, an annual girls' day in schools, as well as separate girls' bathrooms in schools.
- Ensure that girls have a safe, supportive educational environment to help realise their full potential.

The project targets more than 5,000 girls between the ages of 7 and 14 in sub-cities of Addis Ababa.

Changes in girls' lives: More than 400 girls have benefited from training sessions on girls' rights, public speaking, reproductive health, leadership and life skills, as well as maths and English tutoring. Some 1,200 girls are now better equipped with the tools to succeed in school, and more than 1,300 girls received supplementary school fees and sanitary supplies, which encourage girls to stay in school.

Changes within communities: Support for girls' rights has been successfully promoted through community awareness campaigns. Economic barriers to girls' education are being addressed through village savings and loans associations for girls' families.

Changes in institutional protection of girls' rights: Institutional support for girls' rights is growing through strategic meetings with community leaders and school administrative personnel. The project has built a network of government and community stakeholders that has raised awareness about government measures for girls' education.

⁸ Supported by Plan US (2012 to 2016)



Girls Promoting the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence (El Salvador)⁹

“(I learned) to not keep silent. Last week, a group of boys were waiting near the high school until we came out; they followed us and said offensive things. I decided to break the silence and told the watchmen. The boys haven’t come back because the gate is now being guarded.” Girl from El Salvador

“I have learned that girls, boys, men and women are all equal, and that we all have the same value.” Mirna, 13

The situation for girls

High levels of crime, gang violence and instability have instilled a culture of violence in El Salvador. Girls and young women are deeply affected by this violence. Not only are girls regularly at risk of physical, emotional and sexual abuse both inside and outside the home, but they are growing up in an environment in which violence is increasingly accepted as the norm.

How the project aims to improve girls’ lives

Plan is addressing both the effects of violence on girls and the culture of violence at the root of the problem. Plan aims to protect girls from violence. We are also equipping girls with the tools to protect themselves and their peers. The Girls Promoting the Reduction of Gender-Based Violence Project will equip 1,800 girls and 180 boys to prevent and respond to violence in their communities. Plan will train girls in methods of violence prevention and support them to educate their peers and communities on gender-based violence through art-based methodologies. We will also work with local government to create safe healing spaces for girl survivors of violence.

Changes achieved

Changes in girls’ lives: The project supports youth groups to organise anti-violence festivals and community outreach events. Girls are learning how to protect themselves and their peers from gender-based violence. Boys have been trained to support this work. Girls now have more access to safe spaces and social networks in the community that will prevent, protect and support girls affected by violence.

Changes within communities: Community leaders and school administrative personnel have been engaged on issues of gender-based violence in five districts across the country. Community awareness campaigns have raised the public’s awareness of gender-based violence and girls’ rights.

Changes in institutional protection of girls’ rights: The project also engages in advocacy efforts with the government to create safe spaces for girls affected by or at risk of violence. It aligns with the government’s efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and prevent violence, and helps to strengthen violence-reporting channels.

⁹ Supported by Plan US (2012 to 2015)



Promotion of Girls' Leadership through Soccer (Togo)¹⁰

"Before the project, I could not hold the microphone and speak in front of two people, but today it's so easy for me to speak, even in front of a thousand people." Girl from Kassena

"There has been a change in the old perceptions about girls, in particular about women in general." Leader of Tabinde-Piyo

The situation for girls

Like most countries in the world, Togo has signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, the vast majority of the population is unaware of these rights and gives children little opportunity to express themselves or participate in the development of the community. For socio-cultural reasons, girls are at a particular disadvantage. Their education and development are hampered by early child marriage and the many household tasks they must perform. Girls who go to school are often harassed by boys or even teachers. They are also more vulnerable to child trafficking, which is particularly widespread in the central and plateau regions.

How the project aims to improve girls' lives

- Promote and reinforce female leadership by supporting the community's efforts around girls and soccer.
- Contribute to the reinforcement of girls' leadership through soccer and other activities about soccer (reporting, refereeing, writing newspaper articles, developing sketches and awareness projects) at school and in communities.
- Train, inform and raise awareness about responsible behaviour on STIs and HIV, child trafficking and the importance of girls' education.

Changes achieved

Changes in girls' lives: The project has reinforced girls' social position in their community through increased opportunities to take part in meetings with peers to discuss problems, rights, responsibilities and needs; to be referees of soccer games; to speak publicly about the sport on radio; and to be players of a game previously seen to be exclusively for boys.

Changes within communities: Traditional and religious leaders have mobilised themselves and the populations around them to support girls going to school and playing soccer.

Changes in institutional protection of girls' rights: The Ministry of Sports and Recreation participated in organising the national educational championship. The project aligns with the government's national policy that has made gender equality its main goal.

¹⁰ Supported by Plan Germany (2007 to 2015)



Because I am a Girl: A campaign that listens to girls

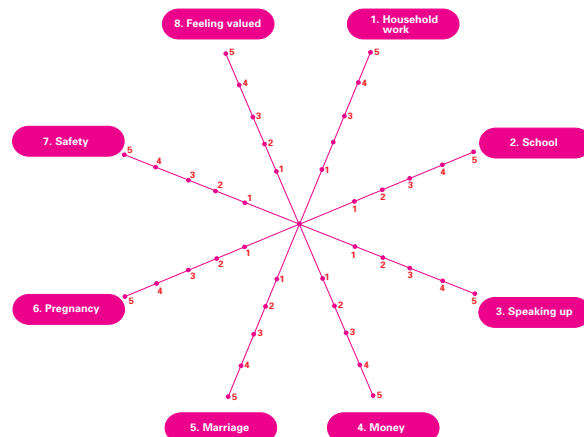
Plan has put the voices of girls directly at the heart of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign this year. The campaign developed two innovative programme feedback tools: the **Girls Empowerment Star** and the **School Equality Scorecard**. The Girls Empowerment Star asks girls aged 12 to 16 about their perceptions of their opportunities and empowerment. The School Equality Scorecard asks girls and boys (also aged 12 to 16) for their views about gender equality and safety in their school.

The tools were piloted in two countries then implemented in 11 different countries¹¹ during this year. They were developed with wide input from specialists across Plan, drawing extensively from established literature. The tools proved highly relevant across all these diverse settings when accompanied by appropriate training for sensitive implementation.

This process has allowed Plan to hear directly from more than **6,000 girls and 3,000 boys** around the world, generating an invaluable data set to influence campaign activities. The tools also supported girls' and boys' own reflections and aspirations to improve their lives. The process as a whole has aligned our monitoring activities with our campaign goals, helping ensure that girls have opportunities to develop safely into healthy and educated young women who become active citizens and leaders.

Plan listened to 6,000 girls and 3,000 boys in Year 1 of the Because I am a Girl campaign!

Girls Empowerment Star



Issue	Key Question	Response (circle)				
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Household work	Do girls and boys share household work equally, including childcare?	1	2	3	4	5
2. School	Do girls complete at least nine years of school?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Speaking up	Do girls say what matters to them in front of an adult male?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Money	Do girls help decide what to spend money on?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Marriage	Do girls decide when they marry?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Pregnancy	Do girls decide if they get pregnant?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Safety	Do girls feel safe in this community?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Feeling valued	Do girls' concerns matter in this community?	1	2	3	4	5

School Equality Scorecard



SCHOOL EQUALITY SCORECARD		Please circle one response per question.				
Girl _____	Boy _____ Age: _____	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
1. Sports participation:	Do girls participate in sports activities as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
2. Class participation:	Do girls participate in class as often as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
3. Chore burden:	Do girls spend the same amount of time doing chores (tidying, sweeping, cleaning) at school as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
4. Latrines:	Are there toilets at school that girls feel comfortable to use?	1	2	3	4	5
5. Seeking help:	Do girls talk to teachers about their concerns as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leadership:	Do girls participate as leaders of student groups as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
7. Encouragement:	Are girls encouraged to succeed in their schoolwork as much as boys?	1	2	3	4	5
8. Safety going to school:	Are girls as safe as boys on their way to and from school?	1	2	3	4	5
9. Safety at school:	Are girls as safe as boys when they are at school?	1	2	3	4	5
10. Early pregnancy:	Do girls continue to attend school after having a baby?	1	2	3	4	5

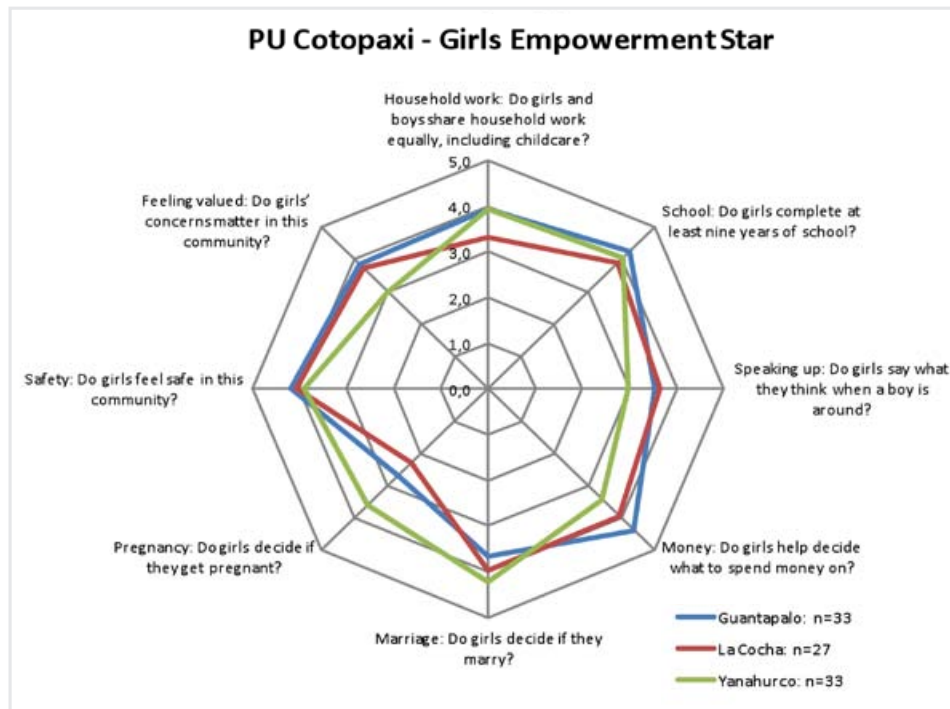
¹¹ Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ecuador, Egypt, Liberia, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Uganda, Zimbabwe

Striking findings

The Girls Empowerment Star and the School Equality Scorecard generated ratings on a scale of one to five reported by girls and boys. Quantitative ratings from the tools were averaged within participating Plan Programme Units (PUs). Ratings helped identify both accomplishments and critical issues in girls' empowerment and gender equality in schools—from their own perspectives.

For example, here are graphs from findings of the Girls' Empowerment Star from Plan Ecuador:

Plan Ecuador – PU Cotopaxi and PU Ventanas Average Ratings¹²

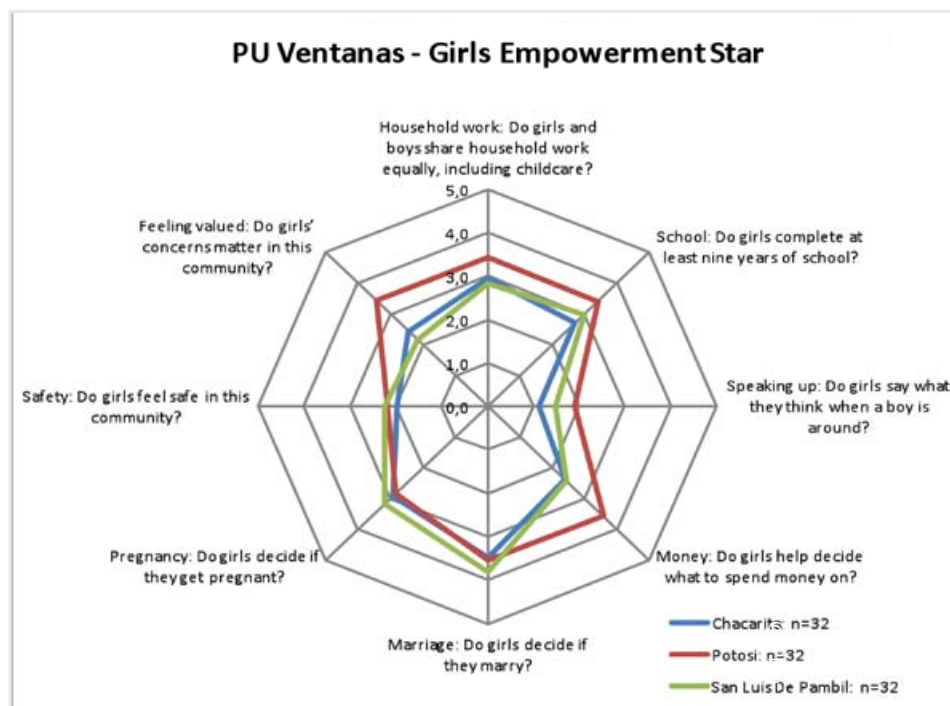


One of the striking findings is about girls' sense of their own safety. These charts clearly show that girls in Ventanas PU feel much less safe than girls in Cotopaxi PU, and also much less able to speak up in their homes or the community.

"Girls never speak about important issues in front of adult men because they are embarrassed, because men should not know girls' problems, and because men will disclose what the girls say and do." Girl, Ecuador

"Girls never feel safe because they are afraid something will happen to them. There have been cases of girls who have gotten raped by their fathers, brothers, uncles and cousins. Additionally, the rapists threaten the victim to kill their family if she is to tell anyone."

Girl, Ecuador



This comparison is invaluable for interpreting the data, allowing field staff to pinpoint key issues that are of concern to specific groups of girls. The tools and discussion enable Plan to understand more deeply the range of girls' concerns and priorities, and to hear which are the most pressing issues in the girls' lives. Plan staff can then follow up on the specific issues and devise strategies to address them.

¹² Coloured lines plot the average ratings from each of three communities per PU where focus group discussions with girls aged 12 to 16 took place. Four focus group discussions with six to eight girls each were conducted per community. A total of 189 girls participated across three communities in two PUs.

Powerful trends

Emerging patterns across countries suggest some positive findings as well. For example, between 53 per cent and 90 per cent of girls interviewed in Ecuador, Nicaragua and Paraguay reported high average ratings of four or greater on the “encouragement” and “class participation” dimensions of the School Equality Scorecard. These girls “often” or “always” feel encouraged in the classroom and able to participate equally with boys. Between 74 per cent and 87 per cent of girls interviewed in Uganda and Zimbabwe also rated “encouragement” and “class participation” highly. Below is a sample table showing the distribution of School Equality Scorecard results for all dimensions, with “class participation,” “encouragement,” and “leadership” all showing high average scores.

The tools also identified a number of troubling trends. Between 36 per cent and 61 per cent of girls Plan interviewed with the Girls Empowerment Star said that boys “never” or “seldom” share household work equally. A further 30 to 40 per cent of girls Plan spoke with said that boys “sometimes” share domestic chores, but they usually took on stereotypical ‘boys’ chores that are less time-consuming. Inequitable household responsibilities are a great barrier to girls’ success in school.

“Boys do not do housework – they do not even sweep the yard or fetch the water – because girls are made for these chores and for taking care of children. It is also for this reason that girls must not go to school.”

Girl, Benin

Plan has learned that efforts to advance girls’ lower secondary school completion must tackle the burden of chores that girls face at home. This can only be done by engaging the household and community about girls’ right to a quality education.

A particularly striking trend emerged from both tools. An average of 75 per cent of the girls Plan interviewed with the Girls Empowerment Star said they “never” or “seldom” perceive themselves as having the power to decide over pregnancy. This was a common theme across countries: girls say that decisions concerning their bodies are seldom “up to them”.

“Girls get pregnant because their partners often deceive [for] them. [Male partners] tend to decide whether or not to use condoms, and therefore many girls have undesired pregnancies.”

Girl, Ecuador



Plan Uganda – PU Tororo North – School Equality Scorecard – Girls (N = 160)

Dimension	1-Never (%)	2-Seldom (%)	3-Sometimes (%)	4-Often (%)	5-Always (%)	Average Score
1. Sports participation	4	11	54	8	23	3.3
2. Class participation	2	4	19	15	5	4.3
3. Chore Burden	6	9	23	10	52	3.9
4. Latrines	39	5	16	9	32	2.9
5. Seeking help	11	20	38	6	25	3.2
6. Leadership	1	3	14	14	68	4.4
7. Encouragement	2	2	9	13	74	4.6
8. Safety going to school	13	16	39	8	24	3.1
9. Safety at school	15	8	34	10	33	3.4
10. Early pregnancy	20	18	46	8	8	2.7

“We do not plan to have pregnancies as most sex [is] not protected and not planned. There are high chances of being raped or forced into having unprotected sex.”

Girl, Zimbabwe

Related to this, many girls explained that they do not see themselves as having the power to choose if, when or whom they will marry:

“Girls never choose when they will marry. According to tradition, girls have no say in that regard: the decision is entirely their parents’. However, in families where the parents are educated, girls sometimes have the freedom to choose when they will marry.” Girl, Benin

These findings are reinforced by the School Equality Scorecard: between 67 per cent and 97 per cent of girls and boys in each country perceived ‘early pregnancy’ as a driver of girls’ secondary school dropout. Through this process, Plan has learned that our programmes on girls’ education must address reproductive and sexual health rights, and work with young men and boys as allies in girls’ empowerment and gender equality.

From insights to action

Plan invested in this large-scale and programme feedback listening project so that girls’ voices will be amplified in the **Because I am a Girl** campaign and in how Plan promotes girls’ rights and development. The Girls Empowerment Star and School Equality Scorecard encourage girls and other local actors to reflect on girls’ situations and how they can improve them. Running through this data is a common theme: girls need support to be girls and to be valued as powerful decision-makers over their time, bodies, minds, relationships and futures. Field managers can use insights from the tools to drive continual programme improvements.

Plan will respond in communities and schools through action on sexual and reproductive health education; community engagement on girls’ rights; girls’ leadership training; civic activism; and by engaging men and boys for gender equality. Plan also intends to publish these programme feedback tools so that other NGOs can use them to better understand and advance girls’ rights.



5. Achievements to date: Advocacy

Goals and partnerships

The central plank of our advocacy work is to ensure that all girls complete at least nine years of quality education. To achieve this, the campaign has **six global advocacy goals**:

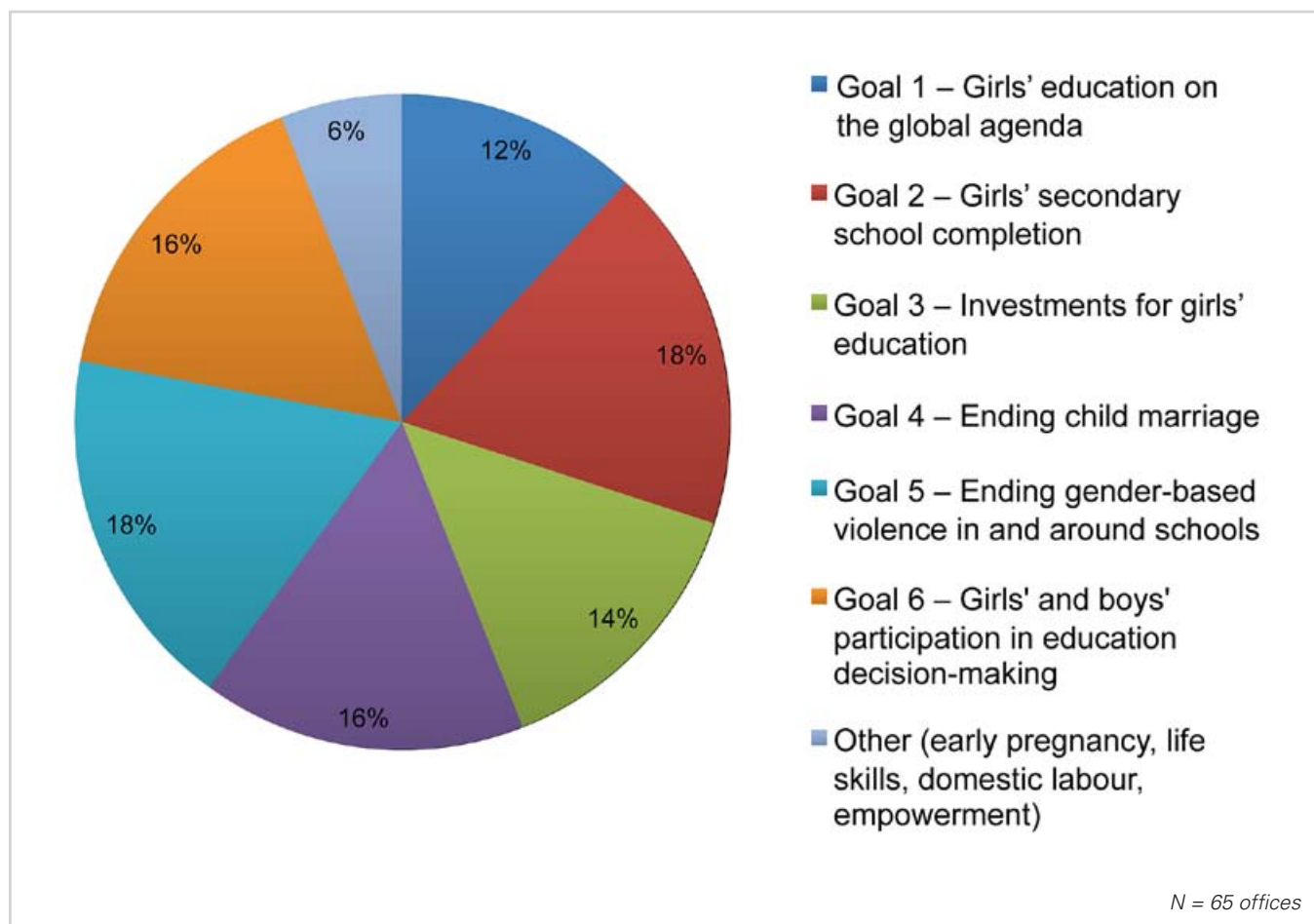
- 1 Put girls' education, as a vital development strategy, at the centre of the global political agenda.
- 2 Promote girls' successful transition to, and completion of, quality secondary education.
- 3 Leverage global institutions, governments and the private sector to increase funding for girls' education.
- 4 End child marriage.
- 5 End gender-based violence in and around schools.
- 6 Enable girls and boys to participate in decision-making and inspire action in education.

This year Plan has inspired action on these six goals around the world. The majority of Plan offices are advocating on girls' secondary school completion (18 per cent) and on gender-based violence in and around schools (18 per cent). Many offices are also inspiring change on ending child marriage (16 per cent) and participation of girls and boys in decision-making processes (16 per cent) (Figure 5.1).

“All I want is an education to know how to read, to give back to my community and to be something more.”

Nourhan, 15, Egypt

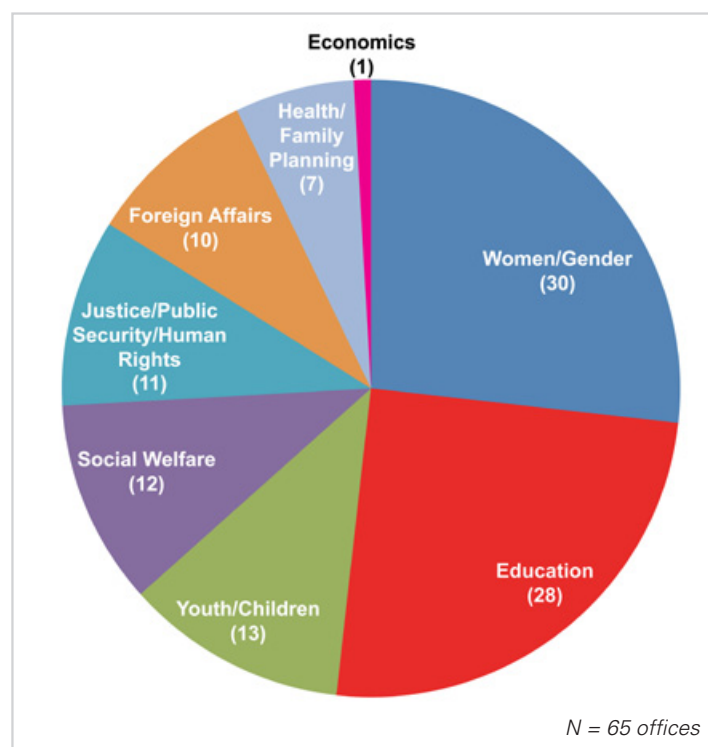
Figure 5.1: The Because I am a Girl advocacy goals focused on by Plan offices, per cent



This year, Plan has worked with an impressive range of decision-makers to influence key institutions in support of girls' rights. Plan is working directly with national government departments for gender/women's affairs in 30 countries. We are working with education ministries in a further 28 countries, with the ministries of youth/children in 13 countries, and with ministries for social welfare and in 12 countries (Figure 5.2).

Since the start of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign, Plan has established strategic partnerships with 568 government ministries and departments in 65 countries to promote girls' right to education. This has included establishing formal Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with governments in several countries signifying our joint commitment to girls' education (see page 28). Our relationships with government ministries are very supportive and show the power of Plan's partnerships to bring about policy change and to build support for girls' rights.

Figure 5.2: Number of Plan offices working with government ministries globally



A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear

Plan Canada led the development of a report on school related gender-based violence titled *A Girl's Right to Learn without Fear*. The team launched the report with Canadian Members of Parliament in Ottawa and called on the Canadian Government to deliver a national action plan to address gender-based violence in and around schools. Through the development of an online email tool and downloadable letters to Members of Parliament (MPs) available on Plan Canada's website, the Canadian public was encouraged to write letters to their MPs supporting the call for a national action plan. The launch of the report garnered significant exposure and coverage in Canadian media outlets, and these activities reinforced Plan's leadership, voice and expertise on issues that affect children, particularly girls, both in and outside of Canada.

Manifesto on Girls' Education Endorsed by President Sirleaf in Liberia

Girls in Liberia gathered to create a manifesto to highlight the numerous gaps and challenges identified throughout the educational system in their country. The manifesto was finalised during the National Girl's Empowerment Forum held during the Malala Day celebrations in July 2013, wherein Plan and partners organised 100 girls from fifteen counties to share their ideas on how to strengthen the educational system in Liberia. At the end of the Forum, the girls' manifesto was presented to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, government officials, and key stakeholders, and President Sirleaf endorsed the manifesto and signed the endorsement banner at the close of the ceremonies. Plan, the Ministry of Gender and HOPE are leading the process of implementing the recommendations enshrined in the manifesto. Some of these recommendations include addressing the special needs and situation of girls, empowering students and teachers, ensuring that all girls and boys enrol in school, allocating more funding towards girls education, and addressing the plights of persons with disabilities. Providing a space for girls to interact with government stakeholders and participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives is central to the **Because I am a Girl** campaign.



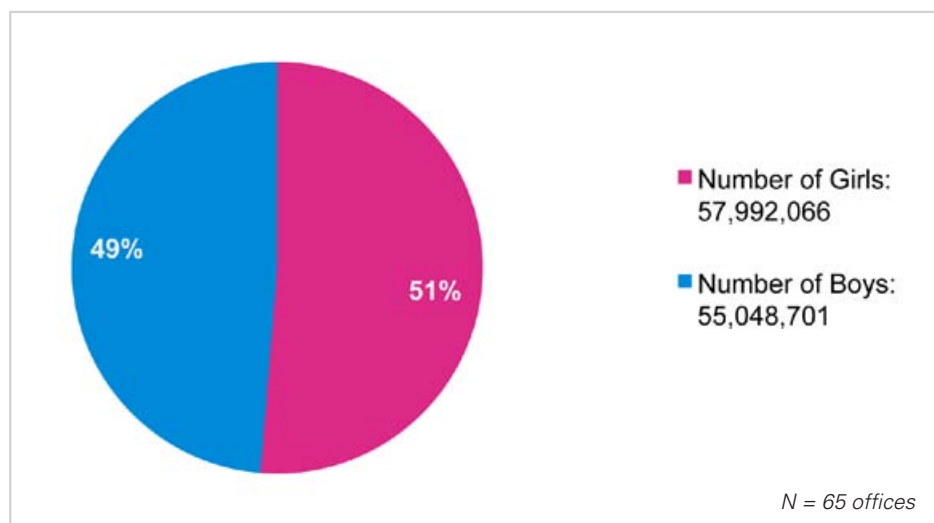
Plan Pakistan formalises relationships with provincial governments

Plan has taken the lead in developing formal partnerships with several provincial governments across Pakistan in support of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. In September 2013, Plan Pakistan and the provincial government of Gilgit-Baltistan signed an MoU in support of girls' education and ending child marriage. The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has promised already to increase its education budget and Plan is supporting this effort. In Sindh province, the ministry of education has agreed to increase the budget for girls' education and Plan is meeting with the ministry shortly to finalise this budget allocation. Lastly, the provincial government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir expressed interest in formalising a partnership with Plan and an MoU will go for signature later this year. These MoUs position Plan as a leader on girls' education. Such formal relationships enable Plan to ensure that girls' education is prioritised within government agendas and policies. They also empower Plan to hold those governments accountable for girls' education.

Activities

Since the launch of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign in 2012, Plan's advocacy initiatives have promoted positive change in the lives of more than 113 million girls and boys (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: The number of children positively affected by Plan's advocacy initiatives



"I am the only one in my family who attended university. I am a role model in my family and my community, and I always try to encourage the girls of my village to strive for the best, despite the poverty that seems to be a barrier to their dreams."

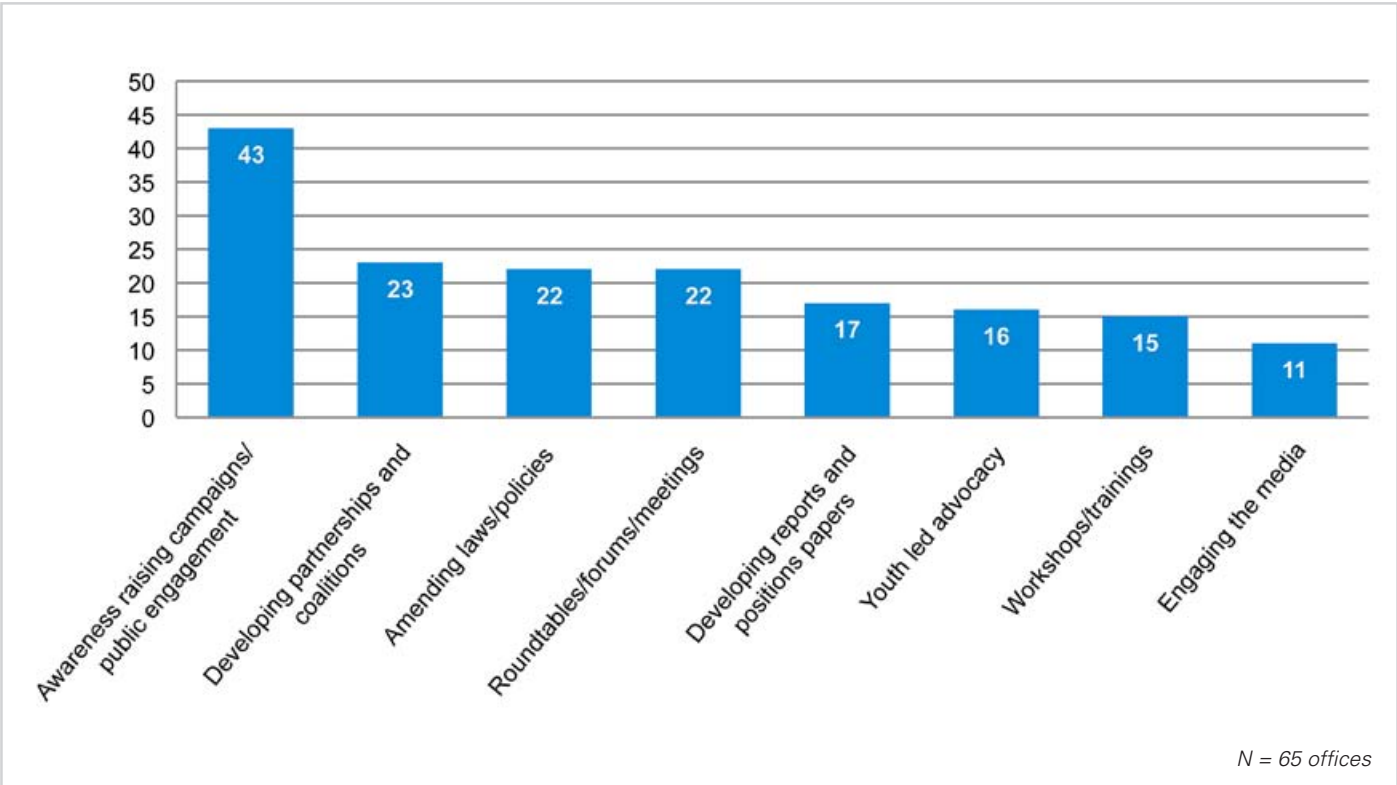
Firehiwot, Yemane, 24, Ethiopia

This year, Plan has successfully undertaken a range of international and national advocacy activities to promote girls’ and boys’ rights (see Figure 5.4). Here are some key highlights:

- **Awareness-raising campaigns and public engagement:** 43 Plan offices ran awareness-raising campaigns and organised events on girls’ education.
- **Amending laws and policies:** Plan lobbied 22 governments to change laws and policies in support of girls’ right to an education, eg. increasing the legal age of marriage as a means of eliminating child marriage.
- **Organising roundtables, forums, symposiums and high-level meetings:** At the Human Rights Council, Plan organised a side event on harmful practices with a special focus on child marriage and sexual and reproductive rights.
- **Organising training workshops:** Plan India organised consultations with adolescent girls and boys, community-based organisations and government stakeholders on the issues of girls’ education, child marriage, female foeticide and child trafficking. Through these advocacy efforts, Plan reached 20,000 girls and 5,000 boys.

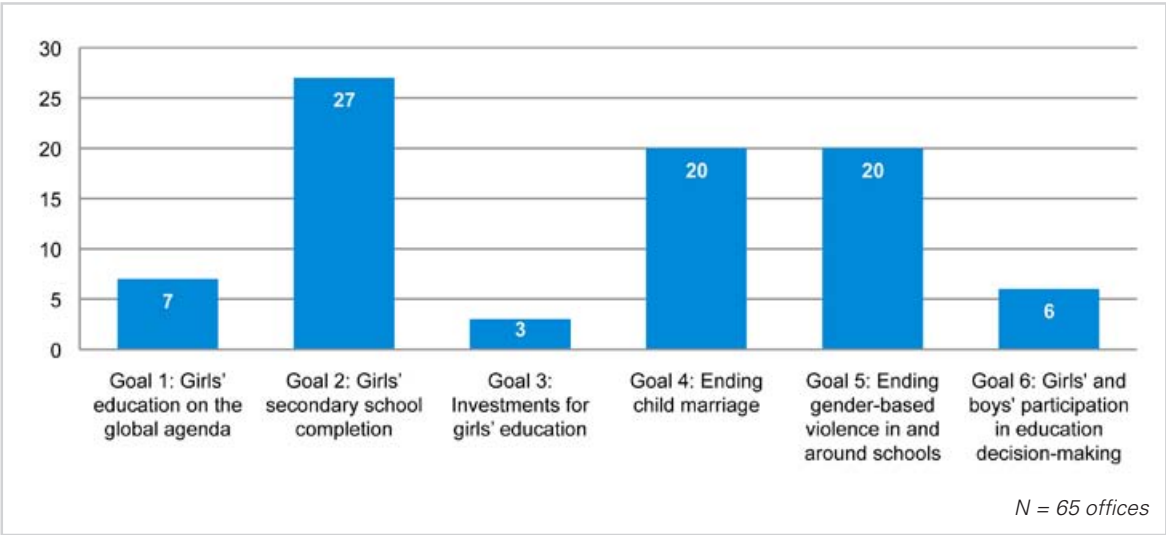
- **Developing partnerships and coalitions:** Plan Mozambique and partners created a coalition to eliminate child marriage. The coalition has developed a national strategy to reduce child marriage by 12 per cent by 2020.
- **Engaging with the media:** Plan Egypt developed a digital media strategy to support their **Because I am a Girl** activities and to improve the role of media in advocating for the rights of girls and boys.
- **Youth-led advocacy:** Girls in Liberia created a manifesto to highlight the numerous gaps and challenges identified throughout their educational system (see page 27).
- **Developing research reports and position papers:** Plan Canada led the development of a report on school-related gender-based violence entitled *A girl’s right to learn without fear* (see page 27).

Figure 5.4: Total number of Plan offices implementing advocacy activities, by type



How these activities correlate to the campaign goals is shown in Figure 5.5. The majority of Plan offices have implemented activities to achieve the advocacy goal of girls' secondary school completion (27 offices) followed by ending child marriage (20) and ending gender-based violence in and around schools (20).

Figure 5.5: Because I am a Girl advocacy activities linked with campaign goals



Plan Mozambique and partners form child marriage coalition

Plan Mozambique has been at the helm of creating a coalition to eliminate child marriage nationwide. In Mozambique, 51.8 per cent of women aged 20 to 24 are married by the age of 18. In partnership with UNICEF and the Civil Society Forum for Child Rights (ROSC), the coalition has developed a national advocacy and communication strategy to reduce child marriage by 12 per cent by 2020. The coalition also produced a national statistics report on child marriage. The report will be launched on 11 October 2013, the International Day of the Girl Child, to raise awareness about child marriage and its root causes.

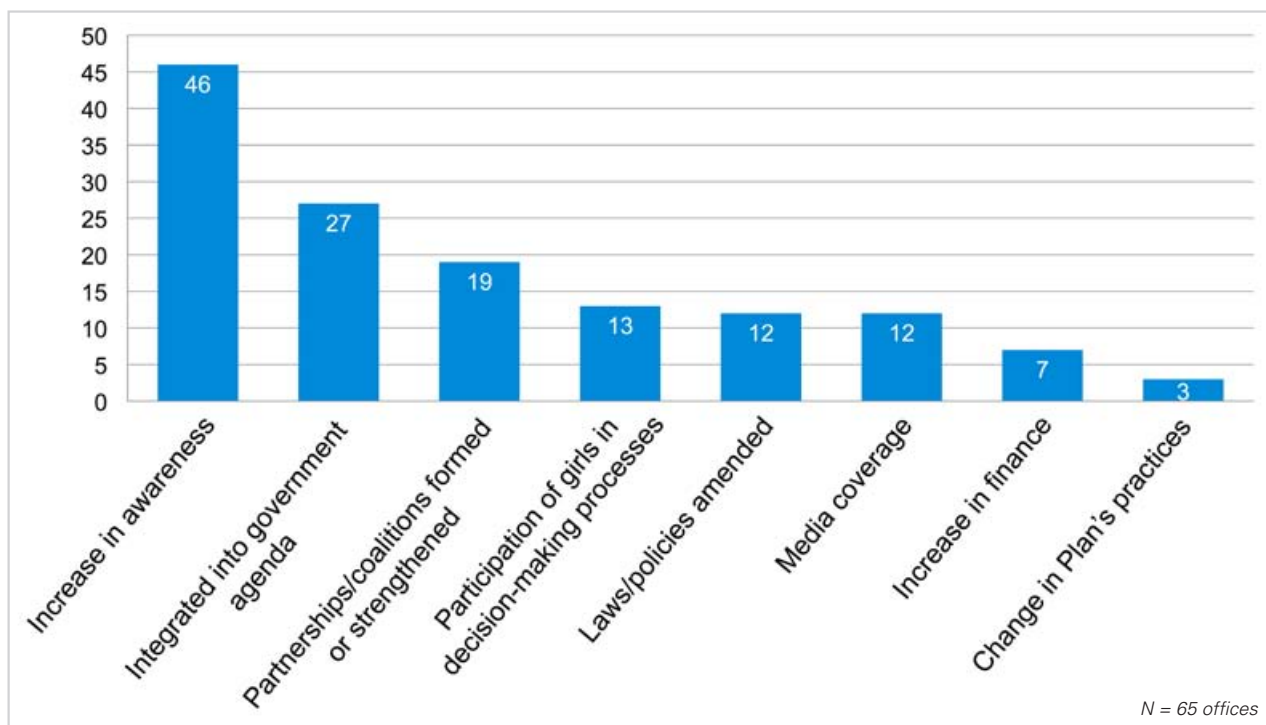
Plan Mozambique and ROSC together submitted a position paper to the Republic Assembly advocating for penal code reform and a new legal article criminalising child marriage. The position paper will be discussed in the next parliamentary session. If successful, Plan and partners will support the government in drafting the new law criminalising child marriage and will help raise awareness about the new penal code.

Plan, ROSC and the National Human Rights Council also developed a position paper to revise the Republic Constitution. This included advocating for the elimination of traditional harmful practices, making primary education compulsory and ensuring gender equality in access to education. The paper will be presented to the Republic Assembly in the next general assembly meeting. Plan continues to be a leader in advocating for the elimination of child marriage in Mozambique.

Results

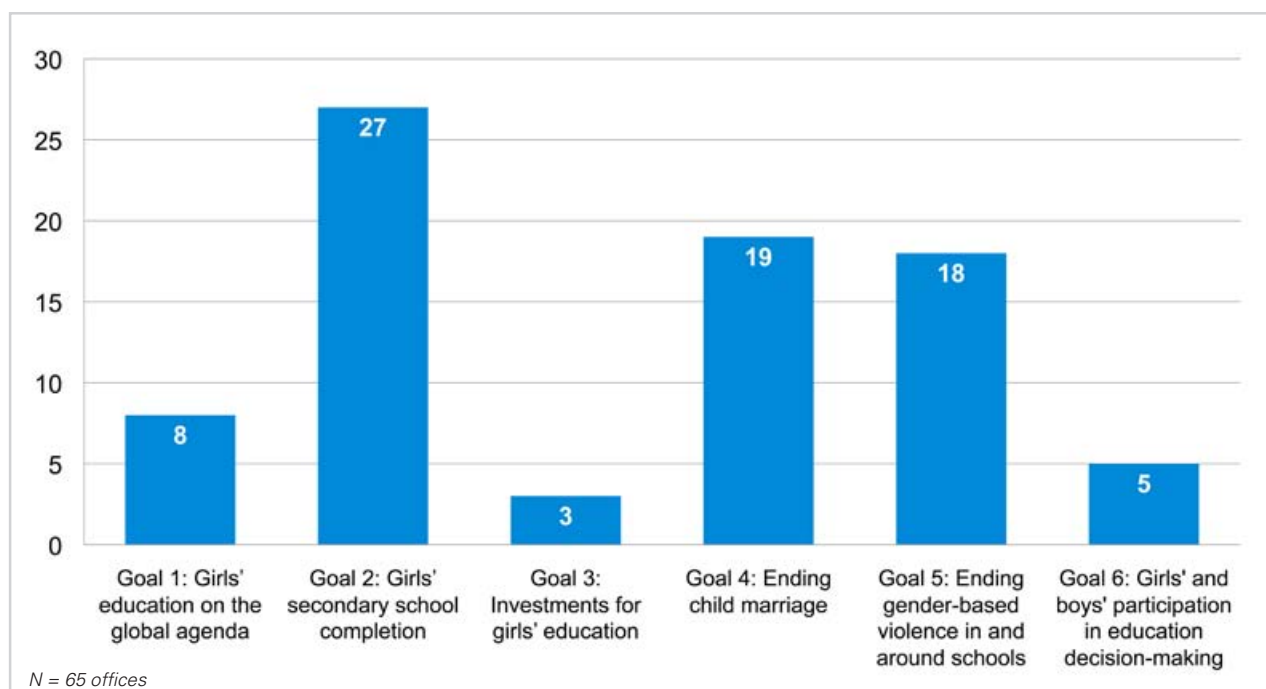
Plan has increased the awareness and support from stakeholders in 46 countries, and influenced the agenda and strategies of governments in favour of girls' rights in 27 countries (see Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Number of Plan offices that have achieved advocacy results



Plan has achieved results through integrative advocacy efforts on girls' secondary school completion in 27 countries around the world. This year, Plan's advocacy work led to results towards ending child marriage in 19 countries, and towards ending gender-based violence in and around schools across 18 countries (see Figure 5.7). These are tangible results with a phenomenal reach towards girls' right to education.

Figure 5.7: Because I am a Girl advocacy results linked with campaign goals



Because I am a Girl advocacy results include:

- **Amending laws and/or policies in support of girls' rights, including access to quality secondary education:** Globally, 12 laws and policies were amended in Plan countries to support girls' rights to an education, including laws pertaining to child marriage and gender-based violence in and around schools.
- **Government integration of Because I am a Girl goals into government agendas and strategies:** Plan Germany is a member of the German coalition of the Global Campaign for Education, and through these efforts the ministry of development agreed to incorporate gender as a separate point in their education strategy.
- **An increase in financing in support of girls' rights, especially girls' right to an education:** Plan Japan organised a symposium on girls' education in Africa and the role of the Japanese government. The Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs agreed to strengthen Japan's ODA contribution in support of girls' education.
- **Participation of girls and boys in decision-making processes:** Plan Benin supported a youth-led advocacy initiative involving 7,000 girls and boys to end corporal punishment and sexual harassment in school. This initiative resulted in the Mayor of Boukombe introducing an account line in support of girls' education as well as an increase in sexual harassment cases being disclosed and reported.
- **Substantial media coverage and support, including social media:** Plan Guinea-Bissau signed an agreement with the national TV station resulting in gender equality and girls' empowerment issues being integrated into national TV programmes for children.
- **Forming or strengthening partnerships and/or coalitions to support girls' rights to education:** Plan Nicaragua signed an agreement with the ministry of family affairs to work in partnership on promoting girls' rights, particularly girls' right to an education.



Plan Norway increases financing for girls' education

Plan Norway led an innovative and strategic advocacy campaign on financing for education, including girls' education, ahead of the 2013 parliamentary elections in Norway. They challenged all of the top candidates in each of the nine biggest political parties in Norway to promise to increase aid to education, with an emphasis on girls, with NOK 1 billion during the next four years. A few weeks prior to elections, 56 per cent of the candidates had already said yes – including six out of eight party chairs, and the most likely next prime minister and the current minister of development. All of the candidates' photographs are featured on Plan Norway's website and their photo turns pink once they have confirmed their support (<http://jentemilliard.plan-norge.no/>). These advocacy efforts illustrate how Plan can galvanise an entire government to stand behind girls' education.



Plan's global advocacy on girls' right to a quality education

The **Because I am a Girl** campaign is working directly with governments, policy makers, international organisations and other partners to galvanise advocacy for girls' right to a quality education. Central to Plan's approach is building well-informed support for gender equality.

One year on, there has been marked progress. We have seen gains by working closely with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI), the Global Partnership for Education, the Global Campaign for Education, the Brookings Institution, Girls Not Brides, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Global Education First Initiative Youth Advocacy Group. Plan International has also been pleased to contribute to the work of the UN Special Envoy for Global Education.

Plan has launched three major policy research reports on girls' education over the last year. Plan report launches engage and seek to influence policy makers to end human rights violations that keep girls from school.

At the 2013 United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, Plan launched *A girl's right to learn without fear: Working to end gender-based violence at school*. This was organised by Plan, UNICEF, UNGEI and 10x10. Plan moderated a panel of experts, practitioners, government representatives and a girl delegate who discussed critical insights into making schools safe places for girls' education. UNICEF made an official endorsement of Plan's report and policy recommendations.

Plan also launched *A girl's right to say no to marriage: Working to end child marriage and keep girls in school* at a special event at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The event was organised in cooperation with several UN agencies and UN member states including Canada, Netherlands, Benin, Ethiopia and El Salvador. The Deputy UN High Commissioner for Human Rights gave the keynote speech. The event critically highlighted child marriage as a human rights violation. Plan called for UN member states to work together to adopt a UN General Assembly Resolution on child marriage by 2015. Plan also emphasised the importance of incorporating indicators for eliminating child marriage in the post-2015 development framework. In collaboration with Girls Not Brides, Plan will continue to build momentum and support to end child marriage at national and international levels.

Plan has laid important foundations in the first year of the campaign to ensure that the rights, needs and aspirations of girls are an integral part of education policy and planning at national and international levels. Plan was a key player at the Ministerial Summit on *Delivering Quality Education & Learning for All* at the World Bank in 2013. Plan co-hosted a roundtable on *Gender Equality in Education: Shaping the Global Policy Dialogue* which resulted in a girls' education 'call to action'. Plan was also instrumental in putting education financing on the summit's agenda.

Because I am a Girl ambassador Frieda Pinto delivered the campaign call to action alongside the UN Secretary-General and President of the World Bank at a World Bank Gala on education.

How do stakeholders and staff view Plan's advocacy work on girls' right to education?



In collaboration with Plan, the independent global research company Ipsos conducted a new research study to explore this question. This innovative research provides strategic insights to guide Plan's future advocacy work on girls' right to education. It also contributes to the field of advocacy research as a compelling example of how NGOs can monitor external perceptions of advocacy influence. The methodology and findings are a unique and powerful example of advocacy evaluation that is sure to spark discussion.

Ipsos interviewed 90 stakeholders in: Canada, El Salvador, France, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and the European Union (Brussels).¹³ External stakeholders represented a range of influential actors in girls' education including government, multilaterals and international institutions, partners of the Global Partnership for Education, teachers' unions, and other NGOs.

The process was rigorous and included open interviews to gauge decision-makers' views on Plan's advocacy work and the extent of Plan's reach, and on why they hold these views. Interviews also included a series of benchmark questions to rate five dimensions of Plan's advocacy efforts.¹⁴

Highlights: Decision-makers' perceptions of the Because I am a Girl campaign

External stakeholders' awareness of both Plan and the Because I am a Girl campaign is high

Because I am a Girl is a well-known campaign. Visibility is particularly high in Canada among both the public and policy makers. In countries where Plan is very active in programme implementation, such as Pakistan and Sierra Leone, stakeholders tend to be more aware of Plan's projects and programmes than of its advocacy work. Overall, there is a good understanding of the campaign objectives on girls' education among external advocacy stakeholders.

"Plan has done an incredible job in building up public awareness on the issue in Canada."

External stakeholder, Canada

Stakeholders typically view Plan and its work positively

Plan is seen by many to play an important part as an advocate of a shared global mission around girls' rights to an education. Plan is generally seen to be making significant progress in its advocacy efforts for girls' education.

"Plan takes its objectives very seriously." External stakeholder, Pakistan

"They are mission-driven, not just organisationally driven." External stakeholder, Canada

Across the five countries, most stakeholders agree that Plan would be one of the top five organisations invited to a roundtable policy discussion on the issue of girls' right to an education. Several stakeholders in Canada suggest Plan could be at the helm steering the debate.

¹³ This paper is based on initial analysis of findings across all countries, with the exception of the EU level where interviews and early analysis are still underway. Findings presented here are subject to change following further in-depth analysis currently underway in each of the participating countries.

¹⁴ All data gathered as part of this research is qualitative and as such is illustrative and explorative rather than statistically reliable. The responses to the quantitative-type questions provide a useful indicative assessment for decision-makers' perceptions, rather than robust quantitative evidence.

Partnership working is seen by many stakeholders as a critical strength

There is a clear perception that the success of Plan's advocacy work on the issue of girls' right to an education will ultimately be a shared one. Stakeholders at all levels suggest that Plan's collaborative working is not just important for successfully delivering projects but also for boosting Plan's credibility at the policy table. In France, for example, external stakeholders reference Plan's influential role in leading a workshop on gender and equality at the foreign ministry, bringing together many different players in the field.

Plan's role as a 'collaborator' on girls' education comes across strongly in the way that both stakeholders and staff speak of the organisation. Plan is seen as successfully bridging the gap between policy makers, and both large and small civil society organisations (CSOs).

"Plan's contribution is very important because of its positioning. [Plan has] awareness-raising strategies which help other stakeholders to get involved in advocacy work." External stakeholder, El Salvador

Plan is also widely valued as a capacity builder, helping smaller organisations boost the skills of their staff and providing them with tools and resources to assist the development of their own projects and initiatives on girls' right to education.

"[Plan] has increased our portfolio of activities and this has made us very pivotal in the campaign for girls' right to an education. [They] have helped to build the capacity of our staff." External stakeholder, Sierra Leone

Research findings also point to strategic opportunities for enhancing the visibility of Plan's advocacy efforts on girls' education, given that not all stakeholders were familiar with Plan's policy work or policy positions. There is also scope for Plan to disseminate its research outputs more effectively and to a wider audience, which would help to boost its profile on this issue. To this end, Plan has just published policy research reports on [A girl's right to learn without fear](#) and [A girl's right to say no to marriage](#).

Future Actions

Plan will continue to invest in innovative advocacy and policy research on girls' right to education. In the coming year, Plan will position our expertise to drive further and wider change in the laws, policies, practices and funding investments needed to dramatically increase girls' secondary school completion. Plan will continue to build public support at national and international levels for girls' education. We will work closely with local leaders and decision-makers, and build alliances with girls and professional women to raise awareness of girls' right to education.



6. Because I am a Girl: State of the World's Girls report series



Plan's annual report on the world's girls looks at how girls so often get a raw deal – because they are female and because they are young. It investigates how their needs and rights are often ignored and shows why girls need to be treated differently from boys and women.

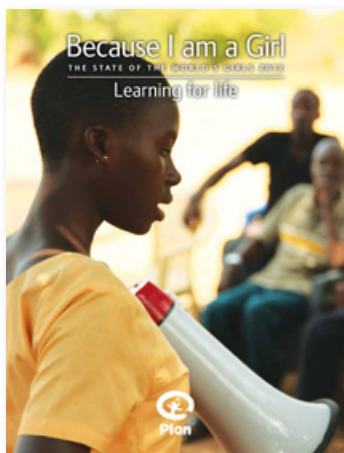
Since 2007, the *Because I am a Girl: State of the World's Girls* reports have had a strong track record of tackling issues that are off the beaten development track. The report series has remained true to its founding principles, uncovering the state of the world's girls, by:

- keeping girls, and their rights, firmly at the centre of every report
- actively promoting a vision of equality between the sexes

- focusing on power relations
- taking a life-cycle approach
- looking beyond existing practice to future trends

In 2007, we gave an overview of the [global situation of girls](#). In 2008, we looked at girls affected by conflict – those growing up [In the shadow of war](#). The 2009 report focused on economic empowerment, [Girls in the global economy: Adding it all up](#). In 2010, [Digital and Urban Frontiers: Girls in a Changing Landscape](#) looked at adolescent girls in two of the most dynamic arenas of the world today – cities and new technologies – and examined the opportunities and the dangers that these present. In 2011 the report, [So, what about boys?](#) looked at the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

2012 State of the World's Girls Report: *Learning for Life*



The sixth report in Plan's annual State of the World's Girls series, *Learning for life*, takes a critical look at the state of girls' education. The report argues that behind the success of global parity in primary education enrolment figures lies a crisis in the quality of learning. All over the world poverty and discrimination continue to have a

detrimental effect on girls' attendance in school. This is particularly true when they reach adolescence when, in many families, a daughter's domestic and reproductive role takes precedence over her right to education. Violence in schools, early marriage, pregnancy and housework continue to constitute significant barriers to girls' education around the world.

The challenge now is to make sure that all girls, however poor, isolated or disadvantaged, are able to attend school on a regular basis and gain a good quality education that equips them for life.

The 2012 State of the World's Girls report catapulted Plan to global attention as an international thought leader on girls' education. It achieved 28 million media impressions in Canada in the last year alone. It was featured at global policy events such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Irish Gender-Based Violence Consortium, the UN Commission on the Status of Women and the European Union. It was discussed at university-run events on girls' education and added to academic reading lists. Seventy-five per cent of Plan offices surveyed have successfully used the report to strengthen their advocacy work on gender equality and education, and a further 53 per cent have used it to strengthen programme work on gender and education.



“[A] striking thing happened at the launch of the 2012 report when the Minister of Education responded to a question on the report... There were statistics, facts, which she saw could serve as a didactic tool for teachers. She called upon all teachers to read the report because it was rich and could help them tremendously in their work. As a result, the report was shared with six national teacher training schools to raise the teachers' awareness on girls' education.”

Plan Burkina Faso

7. Gender equality: The foundation of Plan's Because I am a Girl campaign

Plan is absolutely committed to the promotion of girls' rights. The foundation for this commitment is gender equality, a principle that guides our campaigning and the way we function as an organisation. We strive to reflect the values and principles of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign: gender equality inclusion and human rights.

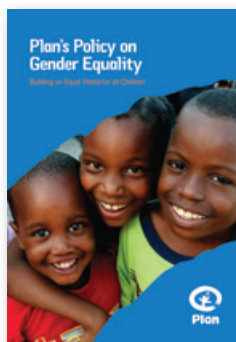
Plan believes that gender equality is central to achieving our vision for change: a world in which all children, both girls and boys, realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity.

Both gender equality and girls' empowerment are at the heart of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. Plan has mobilised and invested in the technical, financial and human resources to make this vision a reality.

Highlights - Plan's Gender Strategy Review

- The majority (62 per cent) of Plan country offices are training staff on Planting Equality when orienting new staff.
- Across Plan, more than 40 per cent of offices have completed a Gender Equality Self-Assessment process.
- Half of Plan offices have a completed a Gender Action Plan, which enables offices to identify how they will move forward on gender equality over the next five years.
- The majority of Plan offices (49) have a dedicated Gender Advisor who leads the work on gender equality.
- A quarter of Plan offices have identified internal Gender Champions, individuals in senior management who promote gender equality and support staff learning about gender equality.
- Staff have assessed our programme work and found that approximately 60 per cent of our development grants are either gender-aware or gender-transformative.

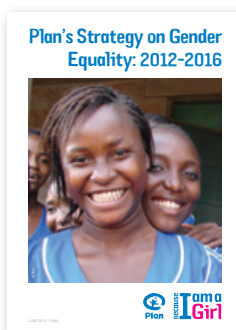
As a first step, we have established a policy, an operational strategy and organisational tools on gender equality. These represent Plan's core foundation of the **Because I am a Girl** campaign.



- 1 Plan's *Policy on Gender Equality*** sets gender equality as a core objective of Plan's work as an organisation dedicated to child rights. It includes standards of performance on gender equality for our offices and staff, programmes, partnerships, advocacy and communications.



- 2 A staff training programme, *Planting Equality: Getting it Right for Girls and Boys*, helps staff build knowledge and skills to ensure gender equality is central to our work.**



- 3 *Plan's Strategy on Gender Equality*** is our approach for implementing the *Policy on Gender Equality* commitments through operational plans linked to targets and results. A Gender Strategy Review Tool has been put in place to chart our progress.

In 2013, 71 Plan offices across the world completed a dynamic Gender Strategy Review Process to monitor systematically our achievements on gender equality. Highlights of these findings are in Appendix J.

8. Conclusion

Because I am a Girl is a campaign that has touched the hearts and minds of people around the world. It has the power to unite the public, governments, business, international organisations and Plan International around a common mission to ensure all girls, everywhere, can grow to their full potential as valued citizens in societies that respect girls' rights.

This report brings together highlights of the journey and progress achieved one year into the **Because I am a Girl** campaign. It provides clear evidence that the campaign has started to make a difference in the lives of girls and is having a measurable impact on debates and policies related to girls' rights all over the world. This is just the beginning. Plan will continue to be a bold and relentless advocate for girls' human rights. We have begun on solid ground, and we will drive forward until four million girls get the education, skills and support they need to move from poverty to opportunity.

By 2016, we will know the **Because I am a Girl** campaign has been a success because:

There are proven changes in the lives of girls and their communities:

- Four million girls around the world have been empowered to enjoy their rights.
- More girls will have transitioned successfully into secondary education, and they will be on track to complete quality secondary education.
- More girls will have been empowered to make their own choices about who, when and whether to marry. Child marriage will not be a major barrier to girls' completion of secondary education.
- Schools will be safer and more secure places of learning for girls.
- More men and boys will value girls' potential, and will challenge the harmful gender norms that prevent girls from accessing their rights.
- More girls will have developed the confidence and have the support to become leaders and advocates on gender equality in their own communities.
- More girls will be valued and empowered to be active citizens in their societies, make decisions about their own lives, and reach their full potential.



There are demonstrable changes in policy and legislation in support of girls' rights:

- Girls' right to a quality education will have become entrenched in the global political agenda. The landscape of this agenda will have shifted from its focus on primary education to quality secondary education. There will be a quantifiable increase in the financial commitments made to girls' education.
- There will have been focused efforts to influence programmes, legislation and policies on child marriage and school-related gender-based violence as two of the most significant barriers to girls' quality education.
- New and compelling research and substantive evidence will exist to inspire action on girls' rights.
- A sustainable social movement on girls' rights will have been created; one that inspires global action by girls and the public.

There are sustainable changes across Plan:

- Plan will be recognised as a trusted, reputable thought and practice leader on girls' rights and gender-transformative work.
- 500 million euros will have been raised to achieve a lasting impact in the lives of girls.

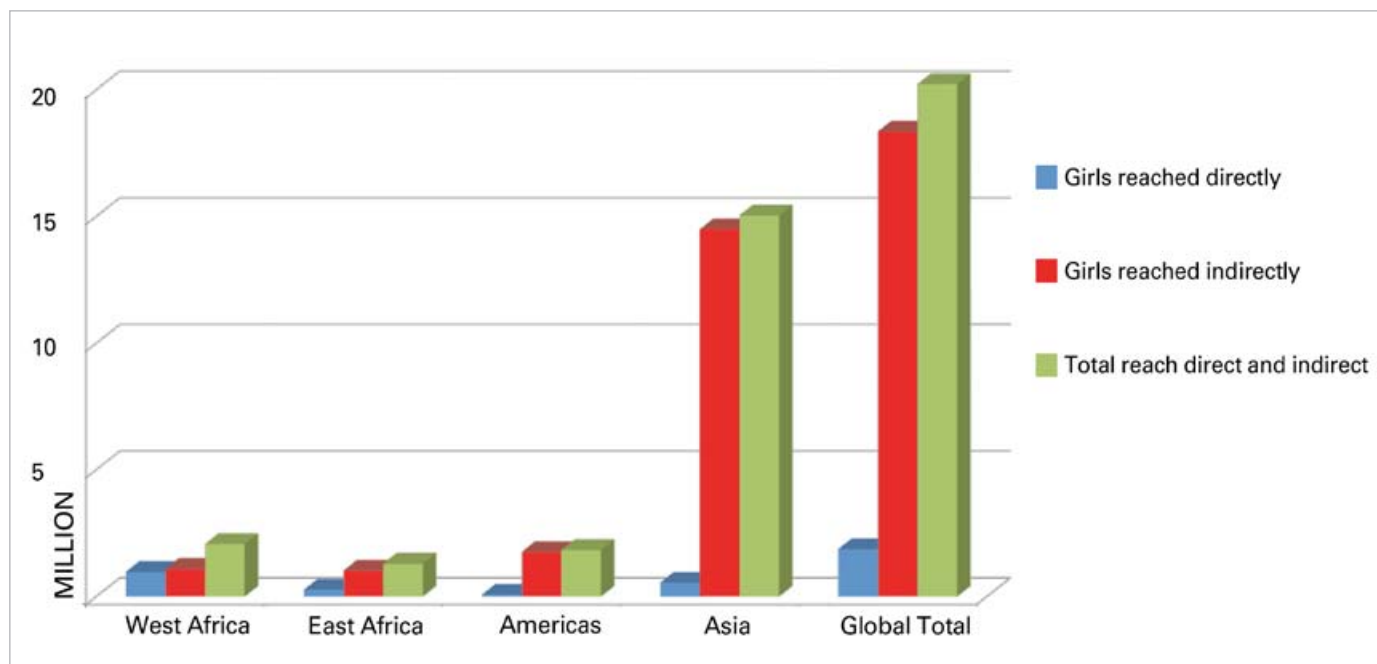
We will connect people together to inspire change. Together, we will build a better world for girls.

9. Appendices

Appendix A: Because I am a Girl Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

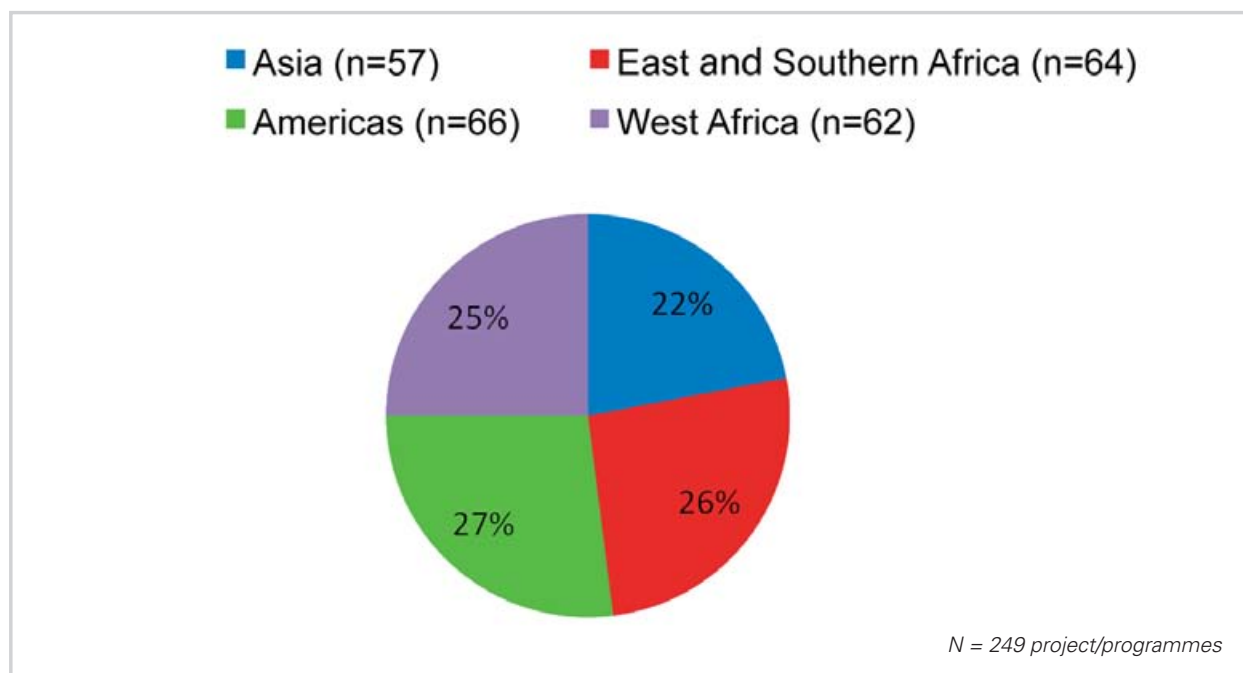
Campaign Goals	Indicators
<i>Marketing, communications and fundraising</i>	
1. Raise funds under the Because I am a Girl brand that can be utilised for girls or gender-sensitive programming.	1. Amount of euros (cash only) Plan will raise as net new income for Because I am a Girl in NOs, FCNOs and COs, from the outset of the campaign until the end of financial year 2016.
2. Drive awareness and build the Because I am a Girl brand and Plan brand.	2. Increase in unaided brand awareness for (a) Because I am a Girl and (b) Plan among key targeted audiences in select NO and FCNO countries.
<i>Global and national advocacy</i>	
3. The development priorities of influential international institutions reflect an increased commitment to ensuring at least nine years of quality education for all girls.	<p>3a. Specific actions by governments, multilaterals and international institutions that (a) increase funding for girls' right to education and (b) have been influenced by Plan's advocacy work.</p> <p>3b. Specific policy actions by governments, multilaterals and international institutions that (a) remove barriers that girls face in realising their right to education and (b) have been influenced by Plan's advocacy work.</p> <p>3c. Plan's level of influence on decision-makers at national, regional and international levels in relation to girls' right to education, measured through the Advocacy Index.</p>
<i>Programmes and advocacy</i>	
4. Girls enrol and complete quality primary and secondary education in a safe and supportive community environment.	<p>4a. Change in the number of girls who complete lower-secondary school (at least nine years of schooling).</p> <p>4b. Change in the number of schools in Plan PUs that achieve at least a "moderate" rating on the School Equality Scorecard.</p> <p>4c. Number of rigorous impact evaluations which (a) are relevant to policy makers and (b) are of initiatives aimed at increasing girls' completion of lower secondary education.</p>
5. Girls have time and space to become active citizens and develop safe social networks and life skills.	5. Girls' perceptions of their empowerment using the Girls Empowerment Star.
6. Girls are empowered to enjoy their rights: they have increased financial skills and economic assets, and their social position and value are recognised in society.	6. Girls' perceptions of their empowerment using the Girls Empowerment Star.
<i>Girls report</i>	
7. Increase influence of key duty bearers / change agents through the <i>State of the World's Girls Report</i> .	7. Increase in the number of citations and references of the Girls' Report (including media, publications, events/conferences, policies, programmes) as measured by both general and key duty bearers annually.
<i>Institutional changes</i>	
8. Ensure each Plan office is adhering to and embodying the principles of gender equality documented in the Gender Equality Policy and the Because I am a Girl campaign.	<p>8a. Number of Plan offices meeting minimum standards set out in Plan's Gender Equality Operational Strategy.</p> <p>8b. Number of NOs and COs which roll out the Because I am a Girl campaign measured by adoption criteria.</p>

Appendix B: Girls reached directly and indirectly through programmes



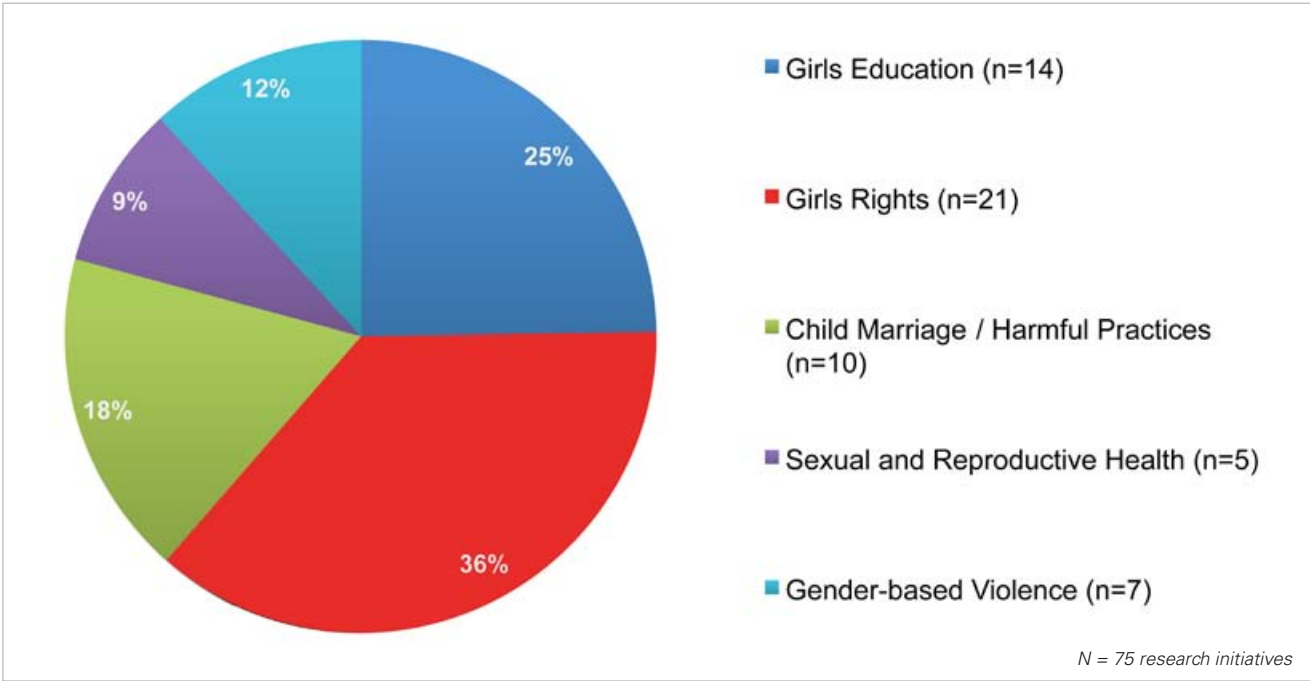
N = 65 offices

Appendix C: Because I am a Girl projects and programmes global distribution

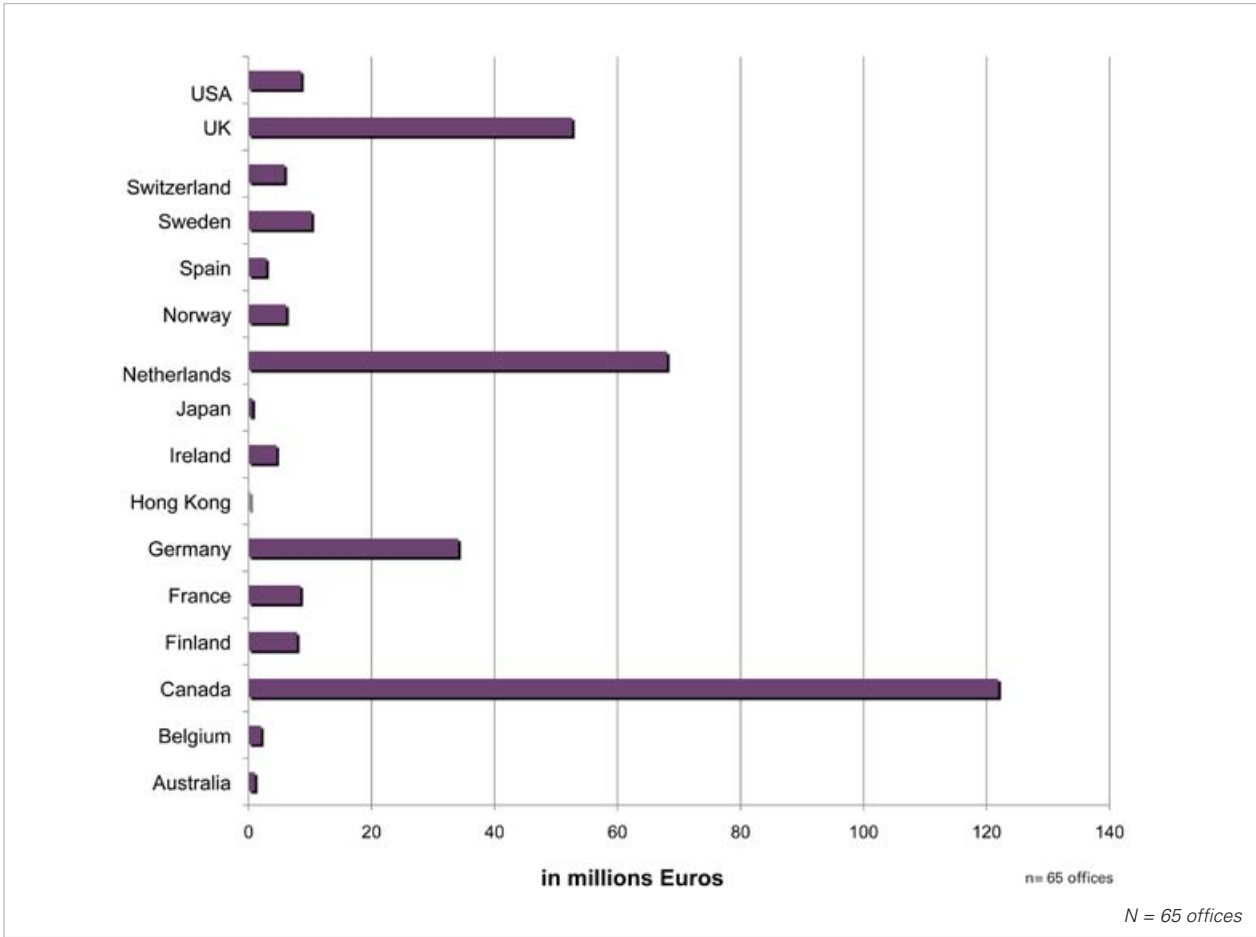


N = 249 project/programmes

Appendix D: Primary research on girls

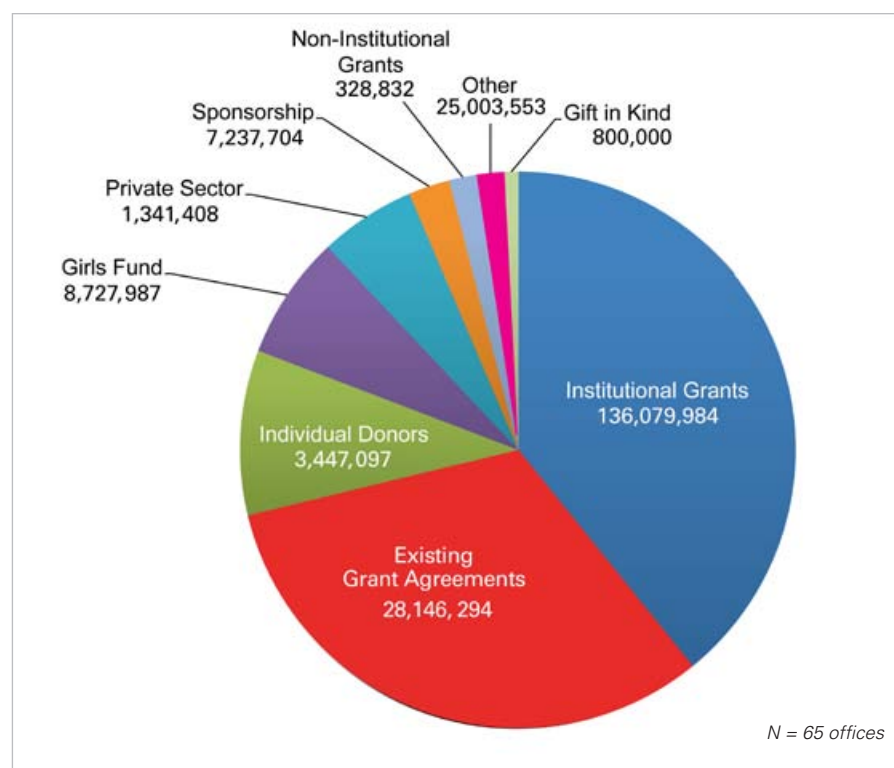


Appendix E: Plan National Organisation net income (Total: 335,224,342 euros)¹⁵



¹⁵ This includes euros raised from the 'quiet phase' of the campaign since 2010.

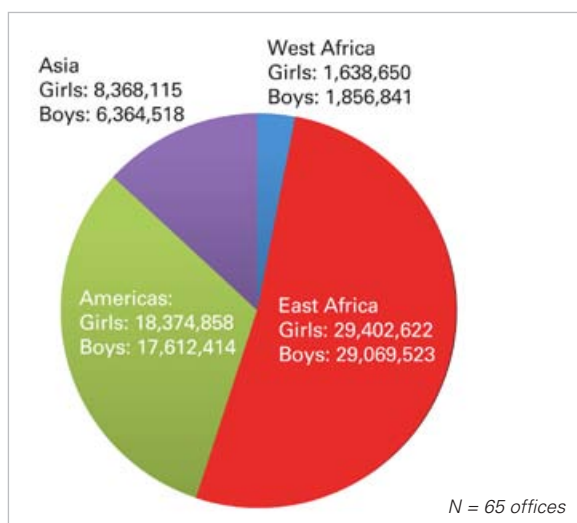
Appendix F: Euros raised by funding source



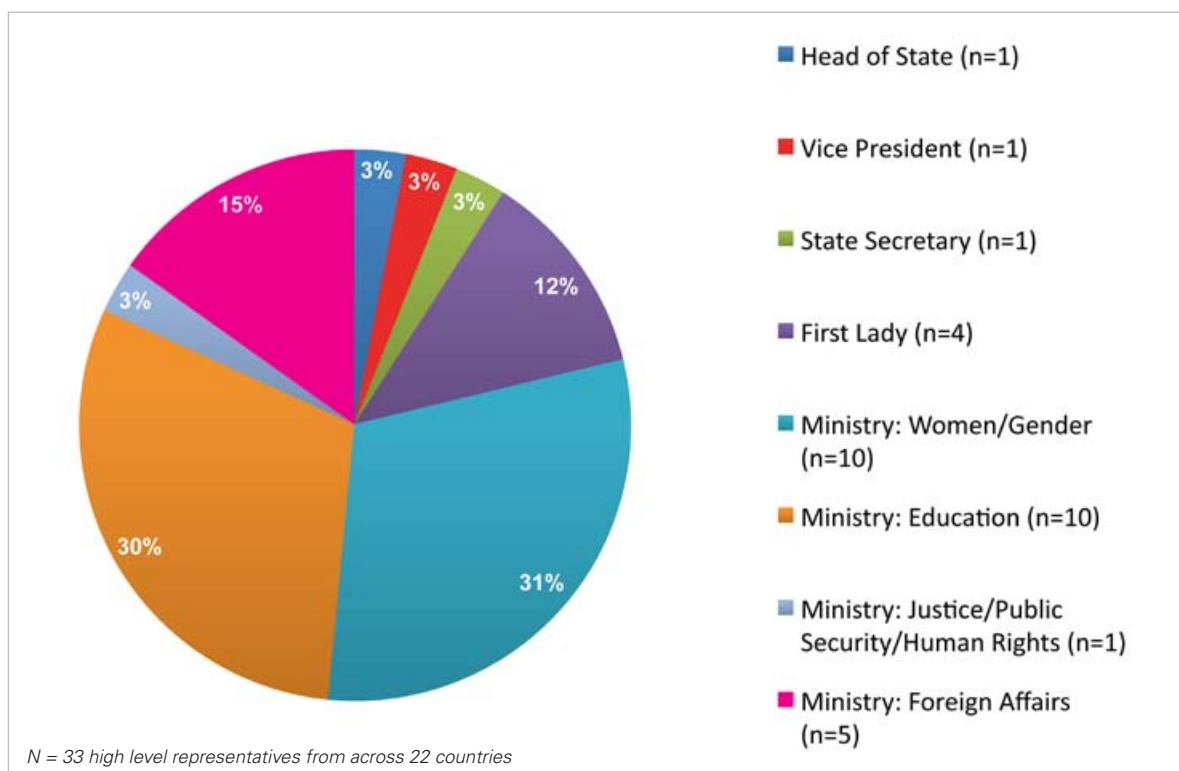
Appendix G: Public awareness of the Because I am a Girl brand

National Office	Baseline Study on Plan	Level of Awareness Among Public Market on Plan	Baseline Study on Because I am a Girl	Level of Awareness Among Public Market on Because I am a Girl
Canada	Yes	2% Unaided, 21% Aided	Yes	11% Unaided, 48% Aided
France	Yes	2%	Yes	6%
India	Yes	36%	Yes	47%
Japan	Yes	9%	Yes	25%
Netherlands	Yes	15%	Yes	16%

Appendix H: Plan's advocacy reach - girls and boys by region



Appendix I: High-level support for Because I am a Girl activities

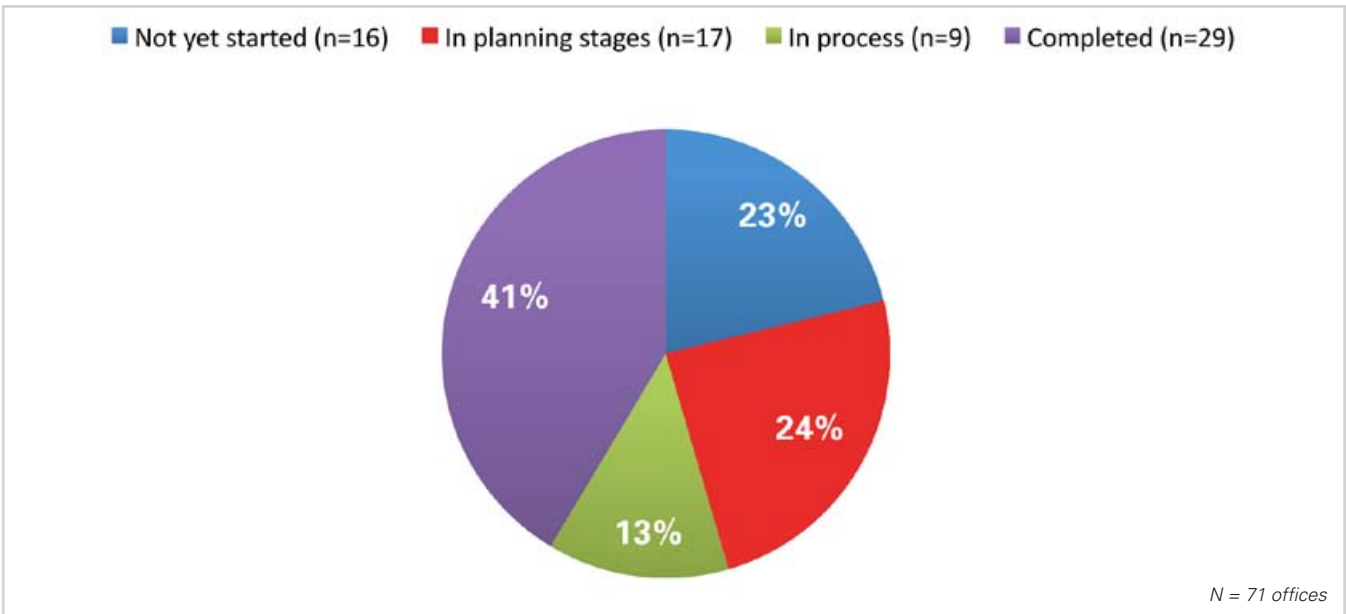


Appendix J: Gender Strategy Review Process

Progress made

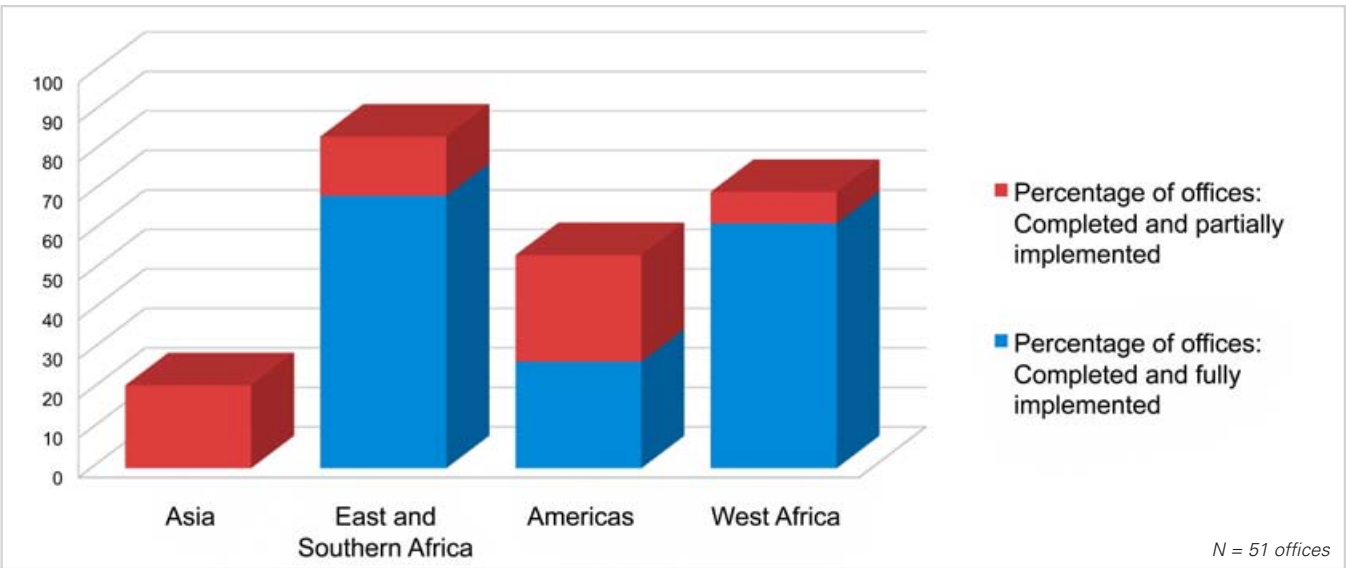
- The majority (62 per cent) of Plan country offices are training staff on Planting Equality when orienting new staff.¹⁶
- Across Plan, more than 40 per cent of offices have completed a Gender Equality Self-Assessment process.¹⁷ This is an intensive learning and reflection process on gender equality across all of Plan’s work, both internal and external. It enables Plan offices to identify the strengths and challenges of our gender work, to determine concrete steps for making improvements.

Progress towards a completed Gender Equality Self-Assessment



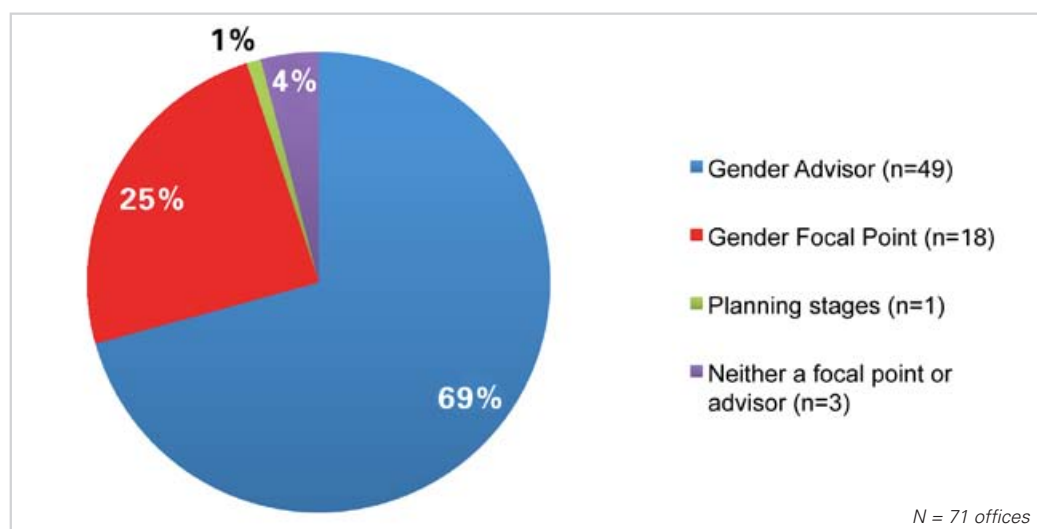
- Half of Plan offices have completed a Gender Action Plan, which enables offices to identify how they will move forward on gender equality over the next five years.¹⁸

Country offices’ completed Gender Action Plans



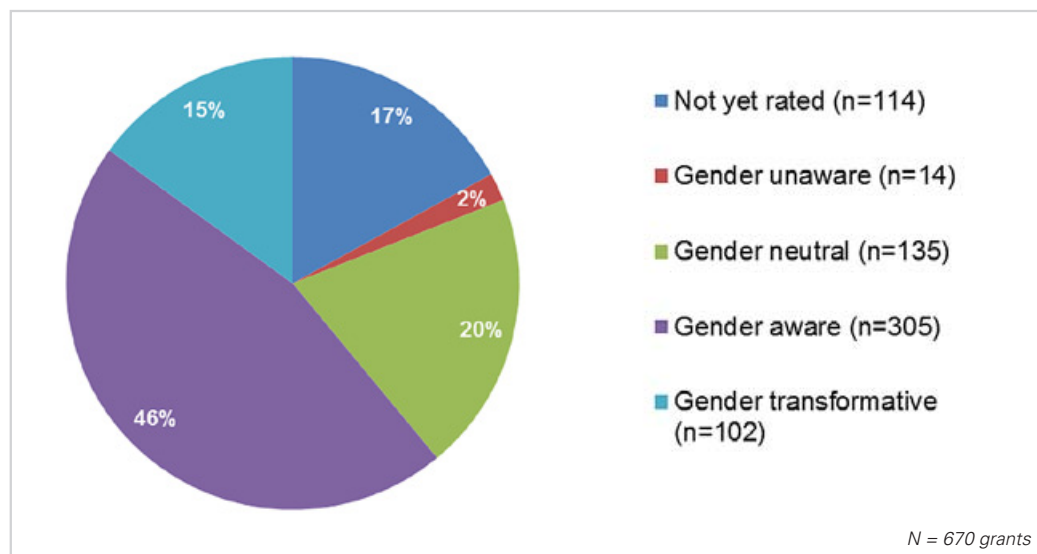
¹⁶ Sixty-two per cent of Plan’s country offices reported that they had included Planting Equality in new staff induction training (29 out of 47 offices).
¹⁷ Forty-one per cent of Plan offices have completed a GESA process, and an additional 30 per cent of offices are in the process or in planning stages.
¹⁸ Thirty-seven per cent of Plan offices have a completed Gender Action Plan (which is not fully implemented), and ten per cent of offices have a completed Gender Action Plan (which is fully implemented).

Gender staff across Plan



- The majority of Plan offices (49) have a dedicated Gender Advisor who leads the work on gender equality. An additional 18 Plan offices have a Gender Focal Point who helps to promote gender equality within the office.¹⁹
- A quarter of Plan offices have identified internal Gender Champions, individuals in senior management who promote gender equality and support staff learning about gender equality.²⁰
- Staff have assessed our programme work and found that approximately 60 per cent of our development grants are either gender-aware or gender-transformative.²¹

Rating of programme grants



- Sixty per cent of Plan offices have communicated Plan's Policy on Gender Equality to our partners; this includes sharing the policy during partner review meetings, discussing the policy during orientation workshops, and conducting gender training sessions with partners.²²

¹⁹ Of the total respondents, 70 per cent of offices reported that they have a Gender Advisor, and 25 per cent of offices have a Gender Focal Point.

²⁰ Twenty-six per cent of offices reported that they have identified internal Gender Champions, and an additional 36 per cent of offices are in process of identifying these individuals.

²¹ There are a total of 670 reported programme grants: 305 gender aware and 102 gender transformative (114 grants have not yet been rated).

²² Of the total respondents, 59 per cent reported that they have fully or partially communicated the policy to their partners.

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