

MAPYA

NEWS



WE STRIVE FOR A JUST WORLD THAT
**ADVANCES CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
AND EQUALITY FOR GIRLS**

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AGAINST ALL ODDS
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COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

Welcome to this issue of Mapya News!

I am proud to say that indeed, in this first quarter of 2019, Plan International set the agenda high for girls and young women in Kenya through the launch of our new global social change campaign dubbed **Girls Get Equal!** In an exciting and vibrant launch on 8th March that brought together key stakeholders including young women and men, Government, Judiciary, Law Makers, Activists, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and the Media, rich conversations on Gender Equality were held at the national and counties levels.

Young women and girls raised their voices to speak out on issues affecting them and in a rallying call demanded for **Equal Power, Equal Representation and Equal Freedom!** We must all join forces and inspire a movement of change agents echoing this call for gender equality. Those of us in leadership must share our power and mentor girls and young women. As Ralph Waldo Emerson put it 'Our chief want is someone who will inspire us

to be what we know we could be.' Share your power!

Other important happenings include the commemoration of the Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation which is key for us as an organisation as we strive to change harmful cultural practices in the communities we work in. I was able to interact with reformed female circumcisers in Tharaka Nithi which gave me a firsthand experience of the great influencing work our programme teams are doing. Seeing boys and men involved in ending this harmful vice was also very encouraging. We cannot do this alone.

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I visited all our 7 Programme Units across the country in Nyanza, Coast and Eastern to not only connect with staff, but to also understand our programme implementation model in efforts to push for Programme Excellence. Interactions with county government officials reaffirmed the supportive partnership Plan International Kenya has had for many years in these regions and an assurance

of continued support as we continue to advance children's rights and equality for girls.

Our work in Child Protection continues to thrive and is evident through strengthening community based child protection and reporting mechanisms as well as the construction of Safe Spaces that are run in partnership with the Department of Children Services. These spaces provide refuge for both boys and girls as well as young women who are in conflict with the law or those escaping gender-based violence. Indeed, we are making deep-rooted and lasting changes in the lives of children; especially girls and in communities as a whole.

As Plan International, our commitment remains to serve children; especially girls and enabling them to claim their rights, free themselves from poverty and live positive fulfilling lives.

Thank you!

Kate Maina-Vorley

Kate Maina-Vorley
Country Director

#GIRLSGETEQUAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCH



The Girls Get Equal campaign was launched through a panel discussion on 8th March. The event was aired live on NTV and moderated by Olive Burrows, a celebrated TV News Anchor.

The panellists were Hon. Amb. Ukur Yattani - the Cabinet Secretary for Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Lady Justice Martha Koome - Judge in the Court of Appeal, Kate Maina-Vorley - Country Director for Plan International Kenya, Hon. Esther Passaris - Nairobi Women Representative, Boniface Mwangi - a renowned activist as well as two youth advocates - Hope Nyokabi and Jeremiah Ngonja. The launch was themed 'a candid discussion on Gender Equality.'

The Girls Get Equal campaign is a youth led social change by girls for girls which seeks to work with different stakeholders as allies to ensure every girl enjoys **equal representation, freedom and power**. The campaign aims to ensure girls are equally seen, heard and valued. The conversation centred on ensuring every girl and young women has power over her own life and can shape the world around her.

"I have grown up in an informal settlement and for a long time, I would get disturbed by the fact that young girls would drop out of school and get married. Unfortunately, this has been the norm which needs to stop now!" Declared Hope Nyokabi.

"Whereas it's easy to make laws, implementation of the same is a huge barrier and especially on Gender Equality! There needs to be a total mind-shift across the board on how to address challenges faced by women and girls. There has to be a deliberate effort by decision makers to create a culture that is gender conscious and gender transformative." Said Lady Justice Martha Koome.

"When young women and girls are able to speak up and speak out in pursuit of their ambitions against threat of violence, intimidation or harassment, they will be represented equally in the social, economic, political sectors as well as in the media. In the end, they will feel valued as change agents in leadership." added Kate Vorley.

While responding to the failure of passing the 2/3 Gender Rule by Parliament, Boniface reiterated that Gender Equality must start with H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta who is married to a woman, has a daughter and was born by a woman. "When the President took action on the issue of women being stripped, it stopped immediately and now women can walk without fear of harassment. If he takes up the issue of 2/3 Gender Rule, nothing will stop the Parliamentarians from adopting it. It is a constitutional right." He added.

The Girls Get Equal campaign is a youth led social change by girls for girls which seeks to work with different stakeholders as allies to ensure every girl enjoys equal representation, freedom and power. The campaign aims to ensure girls are equally seen, heard and valued.

The Girls Get Equal campaign was launched across the Programme Units and coincided with International Women's Day, a time to reflect on progress made towards women's empowerment and call for a change on Gender Inequality.



AGAINST ALL ODDS

SPONSORED CHILD SUSTAINS DREAM OF A GOOD EDUCATION

Dressed in a navy blue trouser, white shirt, a navy blue sweater, and a matching tie, Ronald looks resplendent in his new school uniform. He just joined form one at a school in Migori County. One cannot stop noticing his striking candidness—he is clear on why he is in high school and on what he intends to achieve. Behind the candor however, is a life history that is riddled with twists and turns that have severally threatened to cut short the youngsters' education and life. Ronald's story is a miracle of sorts.

Born in 2004 in Homa Bay County, Ronald is a sponsored child under the Plan International-Homa Bay Programme Unit. He is the first born in a family of five—three brothers and two sisters. His Father died when he was still young. His mother who is the sole bread winner is a peasant farmer. Because of poverty in the family—Ronald spent most of his childhood life staying with his grandmother.

In November 2018—just a few days to KCPE exams, Ronald was bitten by a snake on his right hand—severely affecting his two fingers. He was quickly rushed to the Rangwe Sub-county hospital. The hospital could however not help because there was no anti venom. He had to be transferred to the Homa bay county referral hospital where he underwent surgery that resulted in the loss of the two fingers. Plan International supported him throughout his treatment and recuperation—catering for the hospital bills and ensuring that he receives quality treatment. This was especially given the fact that during the period, public hospital medical practitioners were on a go slow. Additionally, Plan International worked with Education officials to ensure that Ronald undertook his KCSE exams from the hospital bed. Despite all the challenges he emerged top in his school with 281 Marks. "I could have performed much better were it not for the accident. In the last exams before KCSE I scored 351 marks" he adds. The Principal of his school Mr. Evans alludes to this fact saying that Ronald is so far proving to be

a good and promising student. The school is awaiting results of the forthcoming exams to further gauge his abilities and determine how to support him achieve his dreams.

Ronald has made remarkable recovery. His resolve to convalesce and get back to his feet again is impressive. He has already started using his right hand and can easily write and undertake other chores. "Now I can even wash my clothes. No one helps me" he says. Ronald aspires to be an engineer and is very thankful to Plan International for saving his life and giving him an opportunity to continue his education.

Plan International Homabay Sponsorship programme started in 2002. It focuses on three sub counties; Ndiwa, Rangwe and Homabay. The sponsorship model has the sponsored children at its core. The children are linked to sponsors from all over the world. The raised funds are then pooled and used to undertake various community projects, especially in the 95 target public schools across the three sub counties. The Homa Bay Programme Unit has over 9,600 sponsored children. Thousands of other children and community members have benefitted directly and indirectly as a result of interventions from the sponsorship initiative. Some of the key projects undertaken in Homabay County include construction of classrooms in schools, ECD Centers, WASH interventions—including water tanks, hand washing equipment, and school fees interventions. This year alone, over Kshs 2,700,000



was paid out to 119 students in Secondary schools as school fees. Ronald is one such beneficiary.

Even before Plan International stepped in with the school fees assistance, Ronald had already thought ahead. Last year before the accident, he was engaged in livestock management- raising sheep, rabbits and pigeons. He additionally engaged in the business of selling firewood. He used part of the revenue realized to buy school shoes.

Ronald is a reflection of the struggles that many children from poor families go through. He is one of the lucky ones who with the assistance of Plan International weaved through health and economic challenges to advance to secondary school. He now looks to the future with optimism, looking forward to going through his high school education and qualifying to join University where he intends to pursue a course in Engineering. "I am promising that I will try to do my best and fulfill my dream. I would like to be an Engineer and I am aiming at getting a clean A in my KCSE exams" he concluded.

I WANT TO BE PART OF THE REVOLUTION



Tell us about yourself?

My name is Joseph Ochieng Odongo 32 years old. I am the last born in a family of seven. Five sisters and two brothers.

I am an ambassador for safe public transport under the Safe and Inclusive Cities project being implemented in Nairobi and Kisumu. Through my work, I try to create awareness on safety within the public transport system and the community with emphasis on girls and young women.

What do you understand by gender equality?

Simply put, gender equality is equal rights for all.

Coming from a large family, how was the dynamic on gender equality like?

At the time, there was little talk on gender equality. I grew up in a time where society had a lot of stereotypes based on gender norms. An example in my case, the boys in my family were taken through education. However, this was not the case for my sisters back then as the perception was that women and girls were primarily meant to do house chores.

Why focus on gender equality now?

There is a lot of abuse I have seen fall upon women and girls in the communities and most of them have

gone silent and without justice. Men have been perpetrators of Gender Based Violence, in most cases not by choice but by social cultural beliefs and norms passed down from generation to generation. I want to be part of the revolution which enhances equity in job opportunities as well as safe and free public spaces for all especially girls and young women.

Through the Safe and Inclusive Cities Project, what are some of the things you have noticed in regards to gender inequality?

Gender inequality in public spaces is real. Public transport is used by all including young girls and women as they access school and other social amenities.

Safe and Inclusive Cities project tries to reach out to not only the girls but also the public more so the transport sector that is the drivers and touts. The message is respect all. Accord the same respect and equity to all passengers regardless of their age, status or gender. Through community engagements with bodaboda riders as well as various government stakeholders, we partner in creating safe and free environments for girls and young women when utilising public transport and spaces within the city.

Has there been any change in the project in regards to gender equality?

Yes, there has been tremendous changes based on the work we do under the Safe and Inclusive Cities project. One because there has been civic education within the community based on the harassment cases that were occurring as well as to sensitise people on the rights that they are entitled to avoid harassment.

We have also encouraged partnerships with some of the matatu SACCOS such as Kiragi SACCO as we consider them to be change agents through their involvement in the project.

We also carry out different activities such as group visits to inform and create awareness on the do's and don'ts in various settings. This mostly appeals to *boda boda* riders as they usually cover large areas and they are of a vast majority.

What are you doing individually in regards to gender equality?

Through my involvement in the Safe and Inclusive project, I believe I am setting an example not just for men but also to boys, girls and young women that men too are advocating for equality.

Plan International recently launched the #GirlsGetEqual campaign. A campaign that aims at promoting gender equality especially for girls and young women. What are your thoughts on the campaign?

I am grateful that there are more and more platforms being created to advance the rights of everyone especially with emphasis to girls and young women. I hope and pray that boys and men are not left behind in this conversation of gender equality.

IN HINDSIGHT, I HAVE EXPERIENCED GENDER INEQUALITY



Catherine, 28, is a volunteer and community mobiliser with Young Health Programme (YHP) in Kibera. She talks to us on why the discussion on Gender Equality needs to continue.

Tell us about yourself?

My name is Catherine and I have three siblings; one brother and two sisters making it four of us. I am the third born in the family and a mother of one daughter.

What do you understand gender equality?

Both genders have the same equal rights whether men or women.

Have you experienced gender inequality?

In hindsight, I believe I have.

How?

When we were growing up, I remember instances where we girls within the house would always be told to look after the house and take care of any of the younger siblings. But it was never applied to my brother at the time. This was very evident when it came to education as my brother was the one who was always encouraged to complete his education or go to school. Instances like when we would go home because of fees, my brother was always treated as priority in terms of raising school fees for him to continue with his education. I remember we would always be told that he was likely to bring back more if he got his education while we girls would get married to someone else and leave home without bringing back anything hence not improving the current situation back at home.

Under the YHP programme, how are you advancing the conversation on gender equality?

The Young Health Programme aims to improve

health and gender equality for young people, aged 10-24, in Kibera; the largest informal settlement in Kenya.

We advocate for young people to make informed decision about their health and in regards to their future. For them to do that, we therefore pass the relevant and required information about their health in regards to Non Communicable Diseases and Sexual Reproductive Health.

A number of girls and young women in Kibera have experienced Gender Based Violence in various forms. When speaking to young people, we educate them on their rights in regards to their own bodies giving them the relevant skills to take charge of their health. To achieve this, we try and ensure that they are in a safe environment as well as lobby the government to create responsive services and policies on reducing Non-Communicable Diseases and promote adolescent health.

Gender Equality has been centred on girls and women, what are your thoughts on this?

Haha..well I agree with that. I, however, feel that there is a reason for that. For far too long, women have been boxed within their gender roles and limited on their rights. This is because there has not been a distinction in gender rights and gender

roles. Women at a young age have been categorically told what they can do and not do by the society. A mentality that has plagued them for a long time.

And now, there is a voice arising, a voice telling women and girls that they too can lead, learn, decide and thrive. So yes, there is a focus on gender equality especially on young girls and young women because the time is now.

Are there any personal efforts you are doing in regards to gender equality?

As a mother, I feel I have a duty to my daughter to not only care for her but also nurture her in a way that informs her of her rights. I would like to give her a better and equal platform to dream and achieve every opportunity she may come across as she grows up.

Plan International recently launched the #GirlsGetEqual campaign. A campaign that aims at promoting gender equality especially for girls. What are your thoughts about it?

It's a good platform for our young girls in this case my daughter to know that by the time she is old enough, she won't be subjected to the same environment I grew up where I was limited due to gender norms.

LOCAL ADMINISTRATORS' DIALOGUE

Plan International in collaboration with Kwale County Commissioners Office organised a local administrator's dialogue that brought together 37 chiefs from different locations and public officers representing each of its four sub counties.

This is against the backdrop of an increase in child abuse cases in the county such as child neglect, labour, trafficking, defilement and Gender Based Violence. The county also faces an increase in drug and substance abuse, teenage pregnancies and child marriages as a result of negative peer influence.

The four-day forum focused on:

- The County/National Security in relation to Child Protection,
- Current status of Kwale County Education,
- Why Police department is critical in protecting Children's rights,
- The role of Local Administration in Child Protection and safeguarding children's rights to education,

- Working together as education stakeholders in safeguarding the rights of children to education in Kwale County.

It was established that there is a dire and urgent need to boost security efforts at the lower levels by equipping the local administration with knowledge on Child Protection and establish a localised structure that will hold the local administration to account for the different issues affecting children.

"We will work with the police to raid the night ceremonies and all disco matangas to bring to justice criminals who are destroying the lives of our school children and young people" said Senior Chief Mundu.

Education sector has been negatively affected as reports in early February 2019 indicated that transition rate from primary to secondary schools stood at 48%. This means that up to 52 % of children supposed to enroll in form one were still at home. The low transition rate

in the county could be attributed to child neglect and teenage pregnancies considering that Kwale is among the counties with the highest rate of child pregnancies and child marriage.

"We are now one family united against retrogressive cultures, fighting against all forms of child abuse that affect the quality of education for our children," said the County Director of Education, Madam Jane Njogu. She expressed her appreciation to the Chiefs for their commitment to work with the Education Officers and to ensure that children's rights are defended

52%

of children supposed to enroll in form one were still at home.

The four-day forum also saw the local administrators develop an action plan by local chiefs per Sub-County to combat the vices.



A STORY OF SECOND CHANCES

At just 21 years, Nashipae has had her fair share of struggles. At the age of 14, she became pregnant and had to drop out of school. This devastated her. After staying home for a long time and seeing no chance of getting an education, she opted to get married. "I've always wanted to pursue a course in hospitality and management but when I dropped out of school, I knew I may never see my dream materialize." She said.

Plan International through the Yes I Do project in partnership with Keenkonyokie Community identified girls who were at risk of Female Genital Mutilation, teenage pregnancy and child marriage.



As fate would have it, seven years after Nashipae dropped out of school, she was among 37 young women identified and was given an opportunity to enroll for vocational training.

"I have now completed a three months course and I am currently on attachment. I am very excited about this. I know I have always been passionate and wanted to join the hospitality industry, so I am looking forward to work. My husband has been very supportive through the entire period too and for this, I am delighted that I can pursue my dreams." She said.

Plan International through the **Yes I Do project** in partnership with Keenkonyokie Community identified girls who were at risk of Female Genital Mutilation, teenage pregnancy and child marriage.

The Yes I Do Project is implemented in Kajiado County with the intention of empowering girls and young women. The project works with local leaders, cultural leaders, men, boys, religious leaders, health practitioners, teachers and parents to change mindsets and the Government to implement existing legislation to ensure protection of girls and young women against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), teenage pregnancies and child marriages.

POULTRY FARMING:

A SOURCE OF LIVELIHOOD IN MACHAKOS

Approximately 90-100% of Matungulu/Masinga Households practice indigenous poultry production system; this means that they have a range of unconfined birds whose movement is not confined in the homestead. In addition, approximately 90% of eggs and poultry meat in these two sub-counties contribute greatly to the family income thereby alleviating poverty.

Margaret a tailor and a beneficiary of this initiative is a single mother of three children. The family lives in a place called Kyaani which is a relatively dry area where crop farming doesn't do so well. She was among the farmers who gained from the poultry trainings that were sponsored by Plan International in 2016. Over the last three years, she has managed to rear an average flock



of 150 chicken and generates an annual income of Ks. 210,000. The poultry trainings enabled her to have the relevant knowledge on vaccinations for the poultry, as well as proper feeding options.

"This poultry farming has given me a chance to educate all my three children and to also take care of my elderly parents. I am able to meet most of our domestic needs and I intend to expand the business to have more poultry and grow my income." Said Margaret.

Poultry farming is one of the interventions under Disaster Risk Management and seeks to enhance food security and household income. Approximately 2000 households have benefitted around Masinga and Matungulu Sub-Counties.



MEET RAPHAEL AOKO

THE AREA MANAGER, NYANZA HUB

WITH OVER 15 YEARS EXPERIENCE IN THE HUMANITARIAN WORLD, RAPHAEL AOKO, SHARES WITH US WHAT HIS JOURNEY HAS BEEN LIKE; GROWING UP UNDER THE CARE OF HIS FATHER WHO SERVED AS A CHIEF IN HOMA BAY COUNTY WHO INSTILLED IN HIM THE PASSION TO SERVE COMMUNITIES.

What does your work as The Area Manager entail?

My work as the Area Manager revolves around leadership and management of operations and programmes. I have to ensure that I have an oversight in all the aspects of operations specifically procurement, logistics and administration and an oversight on all the programme interventions across Kisumu, Siaya and Homa Bay Programme Units.

I ensure that our operations are in line with the objectives of the Country Strategic plan to improve the quality of life of children we target through a focus on impact oriented programming as well as putting in place timely and efficient operations mechanisms. I also see to it that we enforce compliance to donor requirements to ensure that the standards are met. My work also involves profiling and positioning Plan International's work in Nyanza Hub among like-

minded organisations and County Government. This means collaborating and networking for partnership building and strengthening.

How long have you worked for Plan International and in what capacities?

I have worked for Plan International for four years, I started as a Programme Unit Manager in Kisumu in December 2014. I then rose to the rank of Area Manager.

What is the difference between your role as a Programme Manager and an Area Manager?

The difference between these two roles is, as a Programme Manager I was only in charge of Kisumu Programme Unit. My work was tied down to Kisumu, my role overlapped a little to support Bondo and Homabay in line with operations. My role as an Area Manager is clearly cut out to strategically support the entire hub in addition to the role of operations and looking into policies across the regions that influence our work.

This role is also very distinct, because one of the things I have been able to do is to ensure that there is an integrated approach between the three Programme Units, to avoid disparities. For instance, the Ending Child Marriage project is implemented across and together with the county governments and partners like Kenya Human Rights Commission, we have been able to form Gender Technical Working Groups to look into these issues. It is also under this project that we partnered with World Bicycle Relief to provide bicycles for students.

I have also been able to influence County Governments to put in place policies that guide and support ECCD which cuts across the three Programme Units that I oversee.

My role has a lot of risk management because the role of operations has been centralized for the entire hub. This means I have to be on the look out to ensure that we enforce compliance on matters operations.



I have been able to ensure that there is an integrated approach between the three programme units, to avoid disparities. For instance, the Ending Child marriage project is implemented across and together with the county governments and partners like Kenya Human rights commission.

What is your motivation to work?

My children are my biggest motivation. I am a father of five children. I know that I need to give them a good education and ensure that they have good health and their needs are met, the thought of this drives me every morning. Besides this I have passion for working with communities, I look forward to touching the lives of the people in the communities. Cases of people who are in need of help are so many and sometimes it is overwhelming, but I look forward to changing even the life of just one child or person.

When not at work, what do you do?

I look forward to Fridays, because for the last 15 years working in the humanitarian world, I have never lived with my family. They live in Nairobi and I in Kisumu; so I look forward to Fridays because that is when I get to reunite with them. Weekends are very special for me. On Saturdays I catch up with my children as my wife goes to work and I catch up with my friends as well, On Sundays, we go to church as a family after that I give them a special treat and then I head back to Kisumu in the evening.

What is your favourite meal?

I love fish with Ugali. I always take fish to my family over the weekends.

What is your leadership style?

I have a mixed approach to leadership. I am both democratic but I also become authoritative when there is a need to make a decision mostly when people are in some sort of dilemma. When dealing with issues like change management, I have to be very consultative with colleagues and stakeholders.

What are the two greatest successes you can credit to your leadership within the Hub?

The Enactment of Child Marriage Policy is in progress; it is courtesy of our work under my leadership. The aim has been to influence the County Government to adopt some of the practices we put in place in our projects to end child marriages and teenage pregnancies.

At the Programme Unit level I have ensured that Programme Units speak the same language around the work that we do, the incorporation of integrated approach.

What does your typical day look like?

Sometimes I get to the office as early as 6am and sometimes I leave the office as late as 8pm. My day at work is not standard. My focus generally is setting people off to be able to work through supporting operations by signing off documents, ensuring that work plans are approved, and that programmes' teams can start off their day with ease. I get updates from PU Managers across the region to catch up on what is happening and building networks for our work across the region.



What is your Favourite Music?

I love Rhumba Music especially the song that says “Vunja mifupa kama bado meno iko”. I like that song because it tries to challenge young people to take advantage of their youth to engage in productive activities when they still have energy.

It was actually introduced to me by my Father. I draw a lot of inspiration from him, he served as a Chief and he was very particular about helping needy people and that is where I got the love for Community work. When we were young our home was a refuge for so many people, I learnt a lot of things from my father through his work.



IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE...

... BEING A GIRL

MEANS THAT YOUR RIGHTS ARE NOT ALWAYS GUARANTEED?

By Catherine Nyambura

According to UN Women, 1 in 3 women globally will experience violence in her lifetime; physical, sexual or psychological. As we come to the end of the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women in New York and reflect on the just celebrated International Women's Day, Kenya had a rallying call against the rising numbers of women and girls being killed due to violence and especially intimate partner violence. Through the campaign #TotalShutDownKE, women and girls marched against femicide in Kenya to deliver a petition to the President demanding a national emergency on sexual and gender based violence. This follows recent trends in other African countries like Sierra Leone, where the President and First Lady led the march on declaring sexual violence against girls and women a national emergency.

The situation above paints the picture of a world where women and men, boys and girls have different experiences. a clear illustration of the inequality between the sexes and deep-rooted structural barriers and gender norms holding women and girls back.

In 2015, world over, governments committed to #LeaveNoOneBehind by adopting the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, popularly known for its monitoring framework, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Kenya played a key role in leading the world to formulate an ambitious, bold, transformative and people centered blueprint to guide the world Sustainable Development Goals. One of the goals (SDG 5) particularly focuses on the

realization of gender equality and women's empowerment, with eight other goals having clear targets and indicators on gender equality and women's empowerment. The 2030 agenda illustrate that gender equality, women and girls' empowerment remains an important public policy issue at the sub national, national, regional and global level. Additionally, what this means is that we are still far behind with creating a world of equal opportunities for all men and women, boys and girls.

In Kenya, we find ourselves, in a public perception and heated about interventions aimed at fostering women and girls' empowerment and efforts on affirmative action being at the detriment of boys and men. What this does not consider is the fact, women and girls have been maligned historically and this imbalance needs to be redressed. In years past, there were laws prohibiting women and girls from participating in economic, social and political development and cultural norms and practices augmenting the laws. What this meant is that women and girls were relegated to the household, burdened by care work and stuck at the bottom of the society due to stratified gender roles that deprived them of power over their bodies, silenced their voices in communities and denied them access to education and control over resources. Essentially, the starting point for girls and women was miles apart from their male counterparts.

Personally, as a feminist, this shows the lack of understanding of what gender equality, women and girls empowerment is all about.

It also depicts a dichotomous and erroneous perception of men versus women, girls versus boys. It is important to emphasize that gender equality refers to the transformational commitment needed to make deliberate investments and interventions to afford women and men, boys and girls equal and equitable opportunities to exploit their full potential. Also, it is good to clarify that gender equality, women and girls' empowerment focuses on removing barriers and obstacles that women and girls face in their quest to enjoy their human rights. In sectors like education, this means ensuring sector plans are gender responsive so that in the planning process, gender norms, roles and relations are considered, and measures taken to actively reduce the harmful effects of gender norms, roles and relations, including gender inequality. It implies deliberate action-orientated approach to redress the imbalance between boys and girls.

Statistically, we are still far from gender parity at the very least, leave alone a world where women and girls enjoy equal rights. According to the World Bank and echoed by the Global Partnership for Education, Children Investment Fund Foundation(CIFF) and Malala Fund, it is estimated that an additional school year can increase a woman's earnings by 10% to 20%. Globally 4 out of 5 (79%) girls' complete primary education, but only 3 out of 4 (77%) complete lower secondary education (which in most countries is 9 years of schooling). According to UNICEF, 23% of Kenyan girls are married before their 18th birthday and 4% are married before the age of 15. Kenya has the 20th highest absolute number of child brides in the world – 527,000.

From following the discourse on the two thirds gender

23%

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principle, it is obvious that we need to intensify political will to affirm women's participation in decision making. In elective positions, we do not have any of the posts at the minimum 33% even after political party nominations. Kenya though being lauded for leading in Global decline of FGM still has a prevalence of 21% with some regions at over 90% prevalence.

Gender equality, women and girls' empowerment remains a dream yet to be fulfilled across the world. In Kenya, the journey to be travelled is even further, so we need for this to be seen as a collective struggle for our society.

I personally look forward to the day when the world recognizes that 52% of the world, women and girls deserve to enjoy their human rights without ifs and buts.

Catherine Nyambura self identifies as a feminist. Catherine is a gender, public policy and sexual and reproductive health and rights expert. She has worked with FEMNET (a pan African women's rights network), Dandelion Kenya (a grassroots organization), as the Deputy Director. Catherine is affiliated with the ATHENA Network (a global women's rights network on global health, SRHR & HIV) and is currently a Consultant Advocacy Specialist (Africa region) for the Global Partnership for Education. This piece was written in Catherine's personal capacity.

10% to 20%

... estimated percentage that an additional school year can increase a woman's earnings.

527,000

The number of child brides in Kenya.

21%

... FGM prevalence.

PICTORIAL







TWAENDELEZA HAKI ZA WATOTO MASHINANI

KILIFI COUNTY HAS BEEN ON THE SPOTLIGHT CONCERNING TEENAGE PREGNANCIES AND DEFILEMENT CASES.

During end of year exams in 2018, reports indicated that over 13,000 cases of teenage pregnancies were reported while this year approximately 290 new cases have been reported to the Department of Children Services Office.

As a result of this, the Tulinde Tusome project collaborated with Department of Children Services to conduct reflection meetings in two schools in Kauma Sub-County of Kilifi County. The meetings brought together parents from different communities to discuss children's rights and the need to ensure that children have a conducive environment that enables them to reach their full potential both in and out of school.

"The meetings allowed us to discuss basic child protection issues that community members tend to ignore. For example, a girl may appear mature physically due to her bodily changes but as long as she is below the age of 18 years, the law considers her a child." Said Chege, Tulinde Tusome's Project Manager. "Any girl under the age of 18 years should be supported to complete her education and realise her full potential but not be made a mother." He added.

The parents also discussed child abuse and various forms of violence. They pointed out potential places where violence can happen to their children including in their homes, community and even at school and how parents can ensure that they protect their children from any forms of abuse.

"Parents need to be aware of emerging forms of abuse like online child abuse and cyber bullying

because many children are affected. Parents need to be vigilant." Said Mr Mbogo, a representative from Department of Children Services, in charge of Ganze and Kauma Sub counties said "At the end of the day, parents and community members must also develop homegrown solutions to address child protection and flash out perpetrators." He added.

The reflection meetings were also a timely reminder that parents have a primary and pivotal role to play in protecting their children. Parents need to work closely with teachers in schools to monitor academic performance of their children and their conduct.

Tulinde Tusome
Project goal is creating safe and protective spaces for improved learning in Kwale and Kilifi Counties.

Tulinde Tusome Project goal is creating safe and protective spaces for improved learning in Kwale and Kilifi Counties. The project is run in partnership with Global Affairs Canada through the Canadian National Office focusing on education and child protection.

TACKLING STREET HARASSMENT IN KONDELE

According to Stop Street Harassment, a non-profit organization; street harassment can be defined as any unwanted comments, gestures, and actions forced on a stranger in a public place without their consent and is directed at them because of their actual or perceived sex, gender, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

Street harassment includes unwanted whistling, leering, sexist, homophobic or transphobic slurs, persistent requests for someone's name, number or destination after they've said no, sexual names, comments and demands, following, flashing, public masturbation, groping, sexual assault, and rape. (www.stopstreetharassment.org)

Urban towns in Kenya have in the recent past seen an increase in street harassment. This is also attributed to the increase in number of unemployed youth.

In Kisumu, the Safe and Inclusive Cities Project has been conducting different awareness forums to sensitise the public on the need to speak up against any form of harassment. The training was conducted for different target groups; specifically, the youth and the police. Young people were encouraged not to be passive by-standers and



were challenged to speak up whenever they witnessed cases of harassment. Most people become passive on these matters because they are either afraid or ignorant of their rights. Women and girls tend to be the most affected people.

The training sessions gave the youth a chance to share their own experiences. Obiero said, "Through this training I now have the courage to speak up whenever I witness any form of harassment or injustice in the transport system,

I understand that I have a role to play to end harassment in Kondele."

The project also took the police through a training on making public spaces safe. It was interesting to note that even though the police are people in authority, some of them have been victims of harassment in public spaces mostly when off duty. "As a member of Kenya Police and as a parent, I will advise my children on how to stay away from situations that may fuel harassment. I also intend to treat survivors well whenever they come to report these cases." Said one of the police officers.

The trained officers unanimously agreed that harassment can only stop when all the community members come out to support one another.

The Safe and Inclusive Cities is a Project funded by DANIDA and targets young women and men aged 15-25 years focusing on strengthening civil society organisations to be able to influence urban governance and development processes and contribute to making cities safe and inclusive for young women and men. The project's three key intervention strategies are safe communities, safe public transport and access to decent income.



A football match organised by Safe and Inclusive Cities project in Kisumu County.

A FUN AND HEALTHY WAY TO TACKLE...

NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES IN KIBERA

For the last three years the Young Health Programme (YHP) has been working with 8 villages in Kibera to create awareness on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). Community dialogues have been a great component to the success of project which works with peer educators who mentor and educate the young people of the dangers of physical inactivity, harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, unhealthy diet and risky sexual behaviours. The project continues to work with theatre groups and artists from the community to create more awareness through wall murals. Recently, a skating group was formed as a result of the YHP interventions giving young people an innovative and fun way to learn about causes of and how to avoid NCDs. The skating club meets at different times in the week to

promote awareness of physical activities through peer education.

One of the skating club participants said, " Young Health Programme has enabled us to form the Skating Club and through it, we not only do the trainings, but also earn a source of income because we are being hired to perform at various community events. The skating also contributes to our health as we keep physically fit."

The Young Health Programme in Kenya is tackling the significant threat of NCDs by aiming to reduce the associated risk behaviours of harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity in Kibera. The YHP takes a holistic approach to

young people's health through also seeking to improve young people's Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and reducing gender inequality. The programme is engaging strategies including youth empowerment through peer education, community mobilization, health service strengthening and local advocacy.

The Young Health Programme in Kenya is tackling the significant threat of NCDs by aiming to reduce the associated risk behaviours of harmful use of alcohol, tobacco use, unhealthy diets and physical inactivity in Kibera.

The Young Health Programme is funded by AstraZeneca and is run in collaboration with Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team (AMURT).





Samuel Wainaina ('Shekii')



SERVICE RECOGNITION

FOR OVER 23 YEARS SAMEUL HAS BEEN A PART OF THE PLAN INTERNATIONAL FAMILY. LAST YEAR HE TOOK HIS RETIREMENT AFTER WORKING HARD WITH DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS TO ENSURE THAT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN ARE UPHELD. BEHIND HIS CALM AND WARM SPIRIT, THIS WAS WHAT HE SHARED ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCE AT PLAN INTERNATIONAL.

“Before I joined Plan International I had worked with the Childrens’ Department under the Government for over ten years. I had seen the problems affecting children in the society and it touched my heart that children were going through so much. So when I joined Plan International, I was even more motivated by the work being done to help the children and vulnerable people and for twenty-three years I worked hard in my capacity to ensure that I supported the course of ensuring that children were protected.

It has been a very fulfilling experience because the children who I interacted with when I started working are now adults. The most joyful thing is that some of them recognise me and they even stop to say hello! I remember one day I was assigned to go and collect a farewell cake at Adams Arcade, a young man from the cake shop offered to help me carry the cake to the car, in the process he confessed that he was a beneficiary of Plan International and were it not for the support he had received from the organisation, he wouldn’t have completed school because his mother couldn’t afford to support him through school. He also said that he was the one who was currently supporting his siblings. For me it was very heart-warming to see the sincerity and gratitude in the young man and that gave me a reason to continue waking up every morning.

Plan International has had a lot of changes

over time and when I look back I appreciate the changes that were taking place. I admit that though changes sometimes can be intimidating they are necessary for survival and growth of an organisation and individuals. My biggest lesson with all the changes is: Change can help people or organisations to move forward.

My encouragement is, “Don’t fear change, manage change.”

I am glad for the in-house trainings I had during my working time. They enabled me to improve my performance and deliver as expected. The performance management system was quite fair to all and policies were respected and followed. I also applaud the organisation for

My biggest lesson with all the changes is: Change can help people or organisations to move forward.

the retirement scheme. It is one of the best because it can enable one to retire without worry if one saves well. I have a special attachment to young people, the millennials my parting shot to them is “Do whatever you are doing with tomorrow in your mind.”

SIMPLIFYING...

HEALTH FINANCING

57-year-old Gladness, a resident of Taita Taveta County is the sole caregiver of her four grandchildren. Her daughter remarried and left the four children under her care. The journey of providing for her dear grandchildren has come with its fair share of challenges.

Initially Gladness relied on farming vegetables and would sell them in order to get an income; but there was never enough for food, clothing and school fees. She struggled to meet basic needs for her grandchildren. Early last year, her grandchildren were mostly out of school due to lack of fees and uniform.

In addition to this, she also struggled to put food on the table. With the little money Gladness made, she would almost spend it all on seeking treatment for the children and herself.

Nilinde Project carried out an assessment around its implementation area in Taita Taveta County. Her children were identified and classified among those at risk of dropping out of school. They were then supported to continue with education through school fees and purchase of school materials like uniforms. Further to this, Gladness was assisted to get birth certificates for the children which is a right that every child in Kenya is entitled to. Gladness too benefitted from various trainings and is currently a member of a Village, Savings and Loan Association (VSLA).

"I have greatly benefitted from the trainings on kitchen gardening, now I am able to provide for my grandchildren comfortably. Joining a VSLA group gave me an opportunity to buy a tailoring machine which I use to supplement my source of income. I have even been able to rent a business space at the shopping centre. Currently I make a profit of

KSh. 5,000 per month and out of this I save up to KSh. 500 for NHIF monthly subscription for my family. I no longer worry about medical bills" Said Gladness.

Using the VSLA platform, Nilinde Project has reached out to households on the benefits of the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF) scheme. By enrolling in NHIF, households are able to access appropriate healthcare services without having to sell assets, thus enabling them to protect and accumulate household assets and savings over time.

The USAID Nilinde project continues to enable caregivers make investments that improve the well-being of their families. These highly vulnerable households have been supported with productive assets to enhance household income and nutrition and assist them accumulate assets.

"I have greatly benefitted from the trainings on kitchen gardening, now I am able to provide for my grandchildren comfortably. Joining a VSLA group gave me an opportunity to buy a tailoring machine which I use to supplement my source of income.



ENHANCING...

FOOD SECURITY

BY LIETA HORTICULTURAL FARMERS GROUP



Group members with harvested vegetables ready to sell.

Agriculture has been and remains a fundamental part of Kenya's economy; however, due to structural changes in the sector, the economic crisis of the past decade and recent droughts, Kenya's agricultural sector has declined precipitously and many parts of the country are no longer food self-sufficient. Siaya County is one of the counties affected by food insecurity.

Plan International has been working with farmers in Bondo through provision of technical assistance as well as farming inputs. For ease of supervision, farmers are clustered into blocks. This has allowed the farmers to access training on crop management including land preparations, planting techniques, seed selection, pest control, water methods and harvest

management from the Ministry of Agriculture in Bondo.

Lieta Horticultural Farmers Group ventured into vegetable production along the lake to tap the potential of the available water supply from the lake shore and vast land, referred to as 'no man's land.' The group comprises of 16 youths most of whom were idle due to little knowledge in farming and shortage of farm inputs.

"Access to agricultural inputs has been a great challenge to youth", said Jorim Guga, a group member. "Another challenge was that many of us don't have farming experience. Some even don't know how to pick the leaves and end up damaging the plant. Still, others can't really tell whether the crop is infested with pests or disease," he added.

The farmers group chose to do vegetables based on the high demand for the product.

Moreover, the short rains expected in the second season was not probable and predicatable for cereals. "In order to ensure proper and regular production, the reliability of the water source should be a major consideration. The quality of the water source is another significant consideration. We thus considered a watering system that is least expensive, and readily available", explains John Otieno, a group member. "As beginners in the horticultural farming we borrowed water pump to help us pump water from the lake to the shamba. However, once we stabilize and accumulate more savings, we shall buy our own water pump and a holding tank which is very necessary", adds Peter, another group member.

"Plan International also offered training to prospective farmers to improve their ability to identify good seed varieties. In addition to training in crop management we learnt other skills in marketing farm products, value chain, access to credit, financial management and record keeping. We received hands-on training and shared experiences from experts. Group savings methodology was also introduced to the farmer groups, which enabled the members to practice savings and invest the proceeds in sustaining the farm requirements such as inputs. Our farmer group is now more knowledgeable, proactive and fully prepared to improve food security in Lieta community", narrates group chair person.

"From the first harvests, we earned an average of KShs. 3,400/- per harvest. The harvests are being done twice per week. Seven leaves are sold for KShs. 10/=. We expect to continue harvesting for 16 weeks, and get an income of KShs. 108,800. This is besides the vegetables that are set aside for the members to feed their households," explains Ruth, group treasurer. "From the sale of vegetables, we have purchased more pvc pipes and farm inputs. We have started preparing two other parcels of land so that we maintain regular supply to our customers. We are currently serving our local community members but with more produce, we shall also target institutions like secondary schools and colleges in the area. Plan International linked us with stockists of farm inputs who have greatly given us good products such as pest control. We plan to continue working with them and consulting with Ministry of Agriculture extension officers in our ward and at sub county level", explains Jorim.

The farmers group model has proved to be an effective base for the economic and social progress of its membership.

FGM

NO LONGER CONSIDERED A TABOO TOPIC



In societies that regard Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as a rite of passage for girls and young women, the practice is shrouded in secrecy and transacted under opaque circumstances. Only very few and mainly women know how the activity is planned and executed. This has been the case in Tharaka Nithi County until recently.

Through engaging local community structures, the Obligation to Protect project has been able to work with female circumcisers, Njuri Ncheke Council of Elders, local administration, youth, young girls and boys to sensitise community members on the dangers of FGM. This has been instrumental in reaching out and influencing attitudes and behaviours for sustainable social change. Through sensitisation of youth, young girls, boys, parents, teachers, and community members are better positioned to discuss FGM related issues, clarify myths and disqualify negative information around FGM. Increasingly, young people, youth, parent's, elders and local leaders are now keen on tackling FGM practice. This indicates there is a positive behavior and attitude change in Tharaka Nithi.

"The practice had been tagged a women affair as men were remotely involved." Said Faith Mpara, the Obligation to Protect Project Manager. "But since 2014 when Plan International and likeminded stakeholders began sharing new insights on health risks associated with the practice as well as social economic and psychological drawbacks of the survivors and families, the practice is no longer regarded as a taboo." She added.

For the longest period of time, the traditional female circumcisers used this rite of passage as a source of income. However, a group of reformed practitioners have formed a self-help group. They are actively engaged in basketry and weaving, and have been trained on value addition, enabling them to take into consideration various customer tastes and preferences.

"We are glad to say that in the last two years, 8 circumcisers have reformed

and are now engaged in alternative sources of livelihood. It is interesting to see that the tools they used to circumcise girls and young women are now used to cut materials for making sandals." Said Faith.

Plan International Kenya continues to work closely with like-minded organisations such as the Anti-FGM Board, County Government of Tharaka Nithi, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior and the National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) to let everyone know they have an Obligation to Protect Girls against FGM/C.

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THE GENDER IS MY AGENDA CAMPAIGN (GIMAC)

Nicole was born and bred in Kenya as a refugee at the Kakuma camp. Life wasn't easy growing up in an environment that seldom thought of the needs of children and especially girls. Today though, she carries with her the story of resilience and hope that despite her circumstances, she was able to go to school and is currently pursuing her degree at The University of Nairobi.

She is also a Plan International youth representative and recently moved everyone at the 33rd Pre-Summit Consultative Meeting on Gender Mainstreaming in the African Union organised by the Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) in February, 2019. Nicole called on governments to take action to eliminate child, early and forced marriages, eradicate Gender Based Violence (GBV) spread and increase access to quality education and address heightened risks and increased prevalence of these practices amongst refugees, internally displaced and refugee women and girls.

The forum, which was held under the theme **'Towards Gender-Responsive Durable Solutions to**



"Governments need to strengthen the implementation of policies and budgets that aim to end child marriage as well as provide support systems for survivors of child marriage."

- Nicole

Forced Displacement', aimed to identify strategies and interventions that have continental implications to effectively address forced migration in a manner that includes and benefits women and girls.

"Governments need to strengthen the implementation of policies and budgets that aim to end child marriage as well as provide support systems for survivors of child marriage," she said.

She also underlined the need to enforce existing laws that criminalize perpetrators and supporters of child marriage.

Girls are almost 2.5 times more likely to be out of primary school in conflict affected countries, and nearly 90 percent more likely to be out of secondary school. In 2015 alone, an estimated 39 million girls were out of school because of war and disasters.

In addition, more than 70% of women in crisis situations have experienced one or more types of GBV in comparison to 35% of women globally. At least 1 in 5 female refugees and IDPs have been subject to sexual violence.

INFLUENCING AND ADVOCACY FOR A TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

By Naaman Ochieng



Did you say “everywhere” to the last question? Yes, that is right. You can actually advocate for a change both in your private space and in your regular work! And we primarily do advocacy in order to have voices of the most vulnerable people such as women and children, heard and their interests safeguarded by power holders and decision makers.

Now, think about putting together ideas to achieve a change you want to see. So you set out to design your approach by analysing power relations in your community and the underlying causes of rights violations affecting children, women and young girls - this initiative would be akin to carrying out a Policy research.

You then think through specific actions to make your desired change happen, for example partnering with like-minded people, packaging and communicating your change idea, and rallying people to support your mission. Now, all that would make up an advocacy process.

On one hand, the fundamental principle in achieving intended objectives in advocacy is, foremost, **being passionate about the change you want to see**, and putting efforts towards achieving it. However, while at it, always ensure the use of collaborative verbs in your communication, as opposed to unilateral or directive verbs. For example, say: “...we would like to work with you on.....” as opposed to “we would like to change your views on.....”.



On the other hand, Influencing is when you finally get to organize, integrate and coordinate your series of activities in order to cause change in the attitudes, behavior and action of power holders - at whatever level - in favor of the change you are pushing for. Influencing is likened to an umbrella covering the whole range of an advocacy process.

One day, the importance of girl-child education and how change of attitudes evolves struck me so vividly, yet in the most unexpected scenario and environment.

I was bundled up together with other eleven adults inside a five-seater probox van, and I knew it was going to be a tiring and long journey, as is usual any time I visit my home village. This kind of journey was not new to me, and all I wanted to do was sleep through the 32 kilometer journey. Before I could catch a wink, a woman - middle aged, who sounded semi-illiterate, introduced a discourse that would later stir up opinions, but which eventually, influenced many people to think differently.

She talked of a man in her village, to whom six daughters and two sons were born. The man, in a bid to give his children the best gifts in life, opted to take his daughters to school during the era when girl-child education was of no importance to most people. She went on, praising the man whose small income had to support the heavy responsibilities of taking care of his own large family and that of his late brother. He

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toiled to see his daughters study to the university - the first ever batch of girls from that locality to go beyond secondary school. "What a man!" she marveled.

A heated debate ensued. And yes, your guess is right, most men thought the man was short of wisdom to invest his little wealth in girls who would later get married and leave him poorer. It was until the woman narrated that these girls had helped their father educate their younger siblings including their two younger brothers, that jaws dropped, and patriarchy went silent!

Little did my fellow passengers know that the man in the story was my own father. Shock and silence greeted the vehicle more as I confirmed being the beneficiary of girl-child education, through my elder sisters, and that I deeply identify with the value of equal opportunities for girls - the reason I always invite fellow men to work with me in discussing such matters in our village.

But in your own world, you may have wondered if there is a missing link between achievement of various advocacy milestones in our society and real transformation. In Kenya for example, favorable policy and legislative landscape for girls and women has not always translated into actual freedom, power and representation for them.

Land ownership by women in Kenya, for instance, is just 1%, in the registered records, yet 70 % of labour in the agricultural sector is provided by women. Only 5-6% of women co-own land with their male counterparts. However, none of the formal laws regulating the land market prevent women and girls from ownership, but why do they own so little of it in reality? It means that we are yet to achieve practical equality intended by these legislations. The problem is in the attitudes and discriminative cultural orientations in our society. Take a look, for example, at representation of Women in Kenya.

The only way to thwart this glaring menace of inequality is by slaying the societal attitudes and stereotypical practices against Women, Girls and other Vulnerable persons in our society. We can do this by sharing practical counterevidence to influence power wielders and opinion holders; just like the story of my father was used as evidence that educated girls change communities.

It is never too late to impact lives through influencing and advocacy anywhere any time. No it isn't. Neither is influencing a far-fetched idea. You can start where you are.

Naaman is the Project Officer for Young Health Programme at Plan International Kenya.





GIRLS
GET EQUAL

WE WON'T STOP

UNTIL GIRLS ARE

**EQUALLY SEEN,
HEARD AND VALUED**

GIRLS GET EQUAL is a global youth led social change campaign that aims at ensuring every young woman has power over her own life and can shape the world around her. The campaign designed by girls for girls will accelerate progress on gender equality by putting girls' and young women's leadership and young people's actions at the forefront of global conversations.

The campaign seeks to add value to existing movements, using Plan International's platform and reach to support activists who know how to bring about change in their communities, with gender equality as the focus. Our aim is to amplify the actions and campaigns of young gender justice activists from grassroots to global.

WHY GIRLS GET EQUAL?

Girls everywhere are undervalued, undermined and under-estimated. In the Kenyan context, majority of girls continue to be trapped by outdated traditional practices that ignore their rights such as child marriages and female genital mutilation.

GIRLS GET EQUAL PILLARS

Equal Power - Support young women and girls to become leaders and take part in all decisions that affect their lives.

Equal Freedom - Young women and girls have the freedom to move, to live and to speak up without threat of violence and harassment.

Equal Representation - Call out discrimination and stereotyping where you see it on the screen, in print and in

advertising, to make room for stories of young women and girls' power and achievement.

Statistics show the following:

- 1 in 4 girls across the globe have suffered sexual abuse.
- 650 million women and girls in the world today were married before age 18.
- At least 200 million women and girls alive today have undergone female genital mutilation in 30 countries.
- Primary school completion rates are 10% lower for girls with disabilities than for girls without disabilities in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- In Kenya, there are 22% and 31% women representatives in the National assembly and Senate respectively.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- 1. Speak out against discrimination;** Don't be a passive bystander
- 2. Learn the facts;** The more you know about young women and girls' rights, the better ally you become
- 3. Make space for young women and girls to lead;** Get young women and girls into decision making places and listen to their opinions.
- 4. Support our work;** Provide platforms for young women and girls to be heard, seen and valued.



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Plan International Kenya Contry Office



ABOUT US

Plan International is an independent global child rights organisation committed to supporting vulnerable and marginalised children and their communities to be free from poverty. By actively connecting committed people with powerful ideas, we work together to make positive, deep-rooted and lasting changes in children and young people's lives.

Plan International has been operating in Kenya since 1982 and to-date continues to work in 18 counties: Nairobi, Machakos, Kajiado, Tharaka Nithi, Siaya, Bungoma, Busia, Taita Taveta, Kilifi, Mombasa, Kwale, Vihiga, Kakamega, Kisii, Migori, Homabay, Kisumu and Marsabit.

We place a specific focus on girls and women, who are most often left behind. For over 80 years, we have supported girls and boys and their communities around the world to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to claim their rights, free themselves from poverty and live positive fulfilling lives.

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OUR REACH

Plan International works in 18 counties:

- Nairobi
- Machakos
- Kajiado
- Tharaka Nithi
- Siaya
- Bungoma
- Busia
- Taita Taveta
- Kilifi
- Mombasa
- Kwale
- Vihiga
- Kakamega
- Kisii
- Migori
- Homabay
- Kisumu
- Marsabit



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