



Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations Office at Geneva,
CH 1211 Geneva 10
Email: registry@ohchr.org

25 November 2016

SUBJECT: Submission to HRC report on “Realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl”

Dear Sir/Madam,

Plan International, Inc. is a non-governmental organisation in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1981 and in special consultative status with the ECOSOC since 2011. Founded nearly 80 years ago, Plan International is one of the oldest and largest rights-based children's development organisations in the world. We strive for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for all girls. Working with children, young people, our supporters and partners in more than 70 countries around the world, we tackle the root causes of inequality faced by children, especially girls.

In 2015, Plan International worked with 100.5 million children in 85'200 communities. Plan International is independent, with no religious, political or governmental affiliations.

We welcome the forthcoming report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl. We are confident that this report will enable a better understanding of the related laws, policies and practices for the improvement of girls' right to quality education. **In response to the call for contributions by OHCHR, Plan International would like to share a number of publications that address issues specific to girls**, which we believe could inform the preparations of the report.

Plan International works to ensure children and young people are aware of their rights and encourage them to engage with decision-makers, monitor children's rights, and hold government and service providers to account. We work substantially with both girls and boys for gender equality, focusing on impact, consequences and solutions to the issue that affect their lives. Girls' rights are at the centre of Plan International's advocacy and programming work. This includes work on changing gender norms, developing gender-sensitive curricula, advocating for comprehensive sexuality education as a core component of the right to education, as well as, inter alia, the eradication of barriers to education such as school-related gender-based violence and child, early, and forced marriage.

The following is a list of resources that Plan International believes are of relevance on the on girls' equal right to education, and that could inform the forthcoming Report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on realizing the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 32/20 of the Human Rights Council.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne-Sophie Lois".

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COMPILATION OF INFORMATION AND RESOURCES REGARDING REALIZING THE EQUAL ENJOYMENT OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION BY EVERY GIRL

PLAN INTERNATIONAL, NOVEMBER 2016

Please see the following documents for your consideration:

Girls' Education: General

1) Plan International UK, [Girls' Education Policy Briefing](#), June 2016.

(Please copy and paste link into browser for automatic download)¹

This policy briefing from Plan International UK includes an overview of the gendered issues that prevent girls from accessing quality education, and also provides an overview of some of Plan International's *Girls' Education Challenge* in Sierra Leone (page 5). Some testimonies from girls are featured in the report, commenting some of the challenges faced by girls in exercising their right to education. There are also some recommendations to governments (page 6);

2) Plan International, [Because I am a Girl, The State of the World's Girls 2012: Learning for Life](#), 2012.

This report details different aspects girls' education, including the various barriers to access as well as examples of practices to improve access (see specifically pages 160-166). The report also includes case studies on programmes to enable girls to stay in or return to school, girl-friendly schools, and community involvement in girls' education. Solutions addressed include decent water and sanitation at schools for safe menstrual hygiene management, teacher training and teacher attendance, school-feeding programmes, etc.

Girls' Education: Topic-specific

1) Plan International, [Champions of Change](#)

(Please see attached – link not available)

Plan International has developed comprehensive curricula for boys and girls for promoting gender equality and social norm change through youth engagement and peer to peer mobilization. The Champions of Change model works to foster intergenerational dialogues to ensure boys, girls and youth's commitment to gender equality is supported by their families and their communities. The Girls Champions of Change curriculum is an innovative and comprehensive global curriculum for girls'

¹ https://plan-uk.org/file/girlseducationpolicybriefingpdf/download?token=cEqEK_HX

empowerment. The curriculum brings together Plan International's experience in the field with best practices of peer organizations to offer engaging, adaptable activities that encourage girls to build new knowledge, attitudes and skills based on their own lived experience. There is also a curriculum for boys. The attached document provides an overview of the two curricula.

2) **Plan International UK, "[We Want to Learn about Good Love](#)": Findings from a qualitative study assessing the links between comprehensive sexuality education and violence against women and girls, 2015.**

(Please copy and paste link into browser for automatic download)²

This report draws on global evidence and a primary research study of Plan International's programmes in Cambodia and Uganda, to explore the extent to which comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) may be a key mechanism to promote gender equality, shift harmful social norms and prevent VAWG. The report finds compelling evidence that CSE should be seen not only as part of a quality education, but also as part of a holistic approach to preventing VAWG;

3) **Plan International, [Girls' Learning: Investigating the classroom practices that promote girls' learning](#), 2013.**

This paper looks at the intersection between learning outcomes (the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy) and girls' access to education, providing information on gendered curriculum, assessment and learning and on implications for girls' education programming. It focuses on the need to improve learning as well as access, i.e. *quality* education;

4) **Plan International, [Victims of school: School-related gender-based violence stands in the way of girls' and boys' right to an education](#), October 2014.**

Providing information on school-related gender-based violence as a barrier to education, as well as strategies for preventing SRGBV, this report draws on studies and programmes by Plan International and our partners. It aims to highlight the problem of SRGBV and share Plan International's experience and recommendations, e.g. making sure children are safe on the way to school (coordinating with transport ministries, etc.). An overview of the recommendations begins on page 60;

5) **Plan International & University of Toronto, [A girl's right to learn without fear](#), 2013.**

This report addresses the issue of gender-based violence in schools as a barrier to education, giving recommendations (pages 37-45) and promising solutions from field research (pages 47-53). When it comes to girls' education, girls themselves must be included as key decision-makers in policy and governance. This document uses the example of girls' and boys' participation in developing solutions to SRGBV (principle 8 page 45);

6) **Plan International, [A girl's right to say no to marriage: Working to end child marriage and keep girls in school](#), 2013.**

Research conducted by Plan International shows that the constraints of poverty, long distances to schools, gender stereotypes, discriminatory social norms, customs and harmful practices can hinder girls from realising their right to education. While this publication focuses on the eradication of child marriage, it marks education as a key solution. The report draws on Plan International's own primary research as well as a wide range of external studies, and the section 'Education: key to giving girls choices and opportunities' (page 31-39) provides some examples of possible initiatives to improve quality and reduce drop-out rates.

² <https://plan-uk.org/file/we-want-to-learn-about-good-lovepdf/download?token=6cwiNa5M>