



# PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK **OUR STRATEGY** 2021-2023

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This photo: Luz Clarita, 8, and her family during lockdown in Peru. Luz Clarita home schooled using a radio for lessons  
Cover photo: Pupils attend a primary school in Siem Reap. Plan International has been operating in Cambodia since 2002, helping children access their rights to education

# INTRODUCTION FROM OUR CEO, ROSE CALDWELL

We have seen unprecedented progress in the fight against global poverty in recent decades, but we have a lot of work to do if we're going to protect that progress against emerging challenges.

More than a billion people have been lifted out of extreme poverty in the last 25 years, with global poverty rates halving since 2000. Deaths of children under 5 halved between 2000 and 2015 and girls are less likely to be married and to have children before the age of 18.

Young people, including girls and young women, are increasingly rising up to take action. From Malala Yousafzai to Greta Thunberg, girls are calling out injustices and challenging decision-makers to do better. Movements such as #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter have drawn attention to huge societal injustices and have galvanised change.

And in 2015, the world came together to agree the Sustainable Development Goals, aiming to end poverty and create a more peaceful, prosperous world for all on a healthy planet by 2030, with a key commitment to leave no one behind.

But huge challenges are threatening to roll-back this progress. The climate crisis is reversing hard-won development gains and exacerbating poverty. COVID-19 is devastating the lives and livelihoods of many and threatening long-term setbacks. There is shrinking space for citizens, including girls – to speak out and challenge injustices, and there is a pushback against

progress on gender equality. The rights of the most marginalised are particularly affected, and gender inequalities are magnified.

It's in this context that I share Plan International UK's strategy for the next three years. We remain committed to our global purpose – to advance children's rights and equality for girls. We work for all marginalised and vulnerable children, but we recognise that often girls are the most disadvantaged and face their own distinct limitations on their rights. We know that achieving girls' rights and having girls' voices heard is not only crucial for girls themselves – it is also vital for bringing about lasting beneficial change for the whole of society. We champion and prioritise girls' rights at every opportunity and are proud to be a leading voice in the UK for girls' rights globally.

I am ambitious for Plan International UK. I want to build on the great work and achievements from our past in order to maximise our contribution and impact. I think this new strategy reflects that ambition.

In drawing up this strategy, we've recognised our strengths, identified where we need to do more and pinpointed what will support us on this journey. There is a lot to do. This strategy would be ambitious at the best of times, but

I am delighted to continue to be involved with Plan International UK over the next three years. Having been Chair of Trustees for over two years, I am excited by our ambition and our plans. The global challenges facing us will mean different ways of working and responding to the difficulties we all face, but we're not in this alone. Working with the Plan International global family, I know we will have considerable impact on the lives of millions of children and especially girls and continue our work for a just and equal world.

**Professor Sir Ian Diamond, Chair**

in the world with COVID-19 we're in uncharted waters. The pandemic has had, and will continue to have, a devastating impact on the lives of children, and in particular girls, all over the world. Our programmes are continuing to adapt and how future funding will be affected is unknown. We have entered a global recession and raising income from our diverse range of supporters, including the general public, will be challenging. We recognise that this strategy will be delivered against this backdrop of economic and operational uncertainty.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in this and helped to get us where we are today. This strategy was written with wide consultation and involvement from staff, trustees, volunteers, young people and wider stakeholders. I have been delighted by the passion, and engagement from all and am looking forward to our journey over the next three years. **Rose Caldwell, CEO**

## ABOUT PLAN INTERNATIONAL UK

Founded over 80 years ago, Plan International is a global development and humanitarian charity, striving to advance children's rights and equality for girls.

Together we empower children, young people and communities to make vital changes that tackle the root causes of gender inequality. We drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels through our reach, experience and knowledge of the realities children face. We work with children and communities to prepare for and respond to crises, and support the safe and successful progression of children from birth to adulthood.

The Plan International global family is active in 77 countries around the world. The global family is organised into National Offices, which engage in activities including raising funds, recruiting supporters and campaigning in their nations, and Country Offices, which deliver our programmes on the ground in the countries where we work.

As a National Office, Plan International UK is the UK representative of the global family. We raise vital funds through child sponsorship, individual giving, trusts and corporate partnerships, and from institutional and major donors, as well as leading change-making advocacy and campaigns for girls in the UK and globally.

We work in partnership with Plan International Country Offices to ensure the effective management and implementation of programmes we fund. We also deliver programmes for girls in the UK, often with partners.



Plan International / Quinn Neely

Zainab, 17, is an outspoken advocate against FGM, here she is with her mother



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**I FIND IT VERY UNFAIR FOR WOMEN TO BE DEPRIVED OF ANYTHING. BEING WITH PLAN INTERNATIONAL AND MEETING PEOPLE WHO ALSO THINK THIS WAY MOTIVATES ME TO GO BEYOND AND BREAK DOWN BARRIERS.**

**VAL, 19, PARTICIPANT IN PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S LEADERSHIP SCHOOL PROJECT, BRAZIL**

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Jackline, 19, South Sudanese refugee in Uganda

## OUR PURPOSE AND VALUES

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

By engaging people and partners, we empower children, young people, communities and girls in particular, to tackle the root causes of gender inequality, exclusion and vulnerability, and to prepare for and respond to crises.

We use our reach, experience and knowledge of the realities faced in different contexts by children and in particular girls, to drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels.

Everything we do contributes to delivering the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular for those who are most left behind. <https://www.globalgoals.org/>

**We're committed to Plan International's Global Values:**

#### WE ARE OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE

We create a climate of trust inside and outside the organisation by being open, honest and transparent. We hold ourselves and others to account for the decisions we make and for our impact on others, while doing what we say we will do.

#### WE ARE INCLUSIVE AND EMPOWERING

We respect all people, appreciate differences and challenge inequality in our programmes and our workplace. We support children, girls and young people to increase their confidence and to change their own lives.

#### WE WORK WELL TOGETHER

We succeed by working effectively with others, inside and outside the organisation, including our sponsors and donors. We actively support our colleagues, helping them to achieve their goals. We come together to create and implement solutions in our teams, across Plan International, with children, girls, young people, communities, and our partners.

#### WE STRIVE FOR LASTING IMPACT

We strive to achieve significant and lasting impact on the lives of children and young people, and to secure equality for girls. We challenge ourselves to be bold, courageous, responsive, focused and innovative.

# THE WORLD TODAY

THE WORLD IS HOME TO NEARLY

**605 million**  
ADOLESCENT GIRLS<sup>1</sup>



AS A RESULT OF COVID-19, A PREDICTED  
10% DECREASE IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH PROVISION COULD LEAD TO:

**49 million**  
MORE WOMEN AND GIRLS

with unmet need for modern contraception.

INCLUDING

**14 million**

more unintended pregnancies.<sup>4</sup>

IN SUMMER 2020 IN THE UK

**51%** OF GIRLS

experienced public sexual harassment.

COMPARED TO

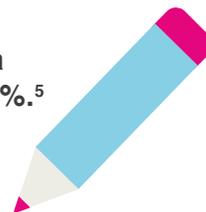
**19%** OF GIRLS

during the first national lockdown.<sup>2</sup>

ONLY

**50%** OF REFUGEE  
CHILDREN

have access to primary  
education, compared with a  
global level of more than 90%.<sup>5</sup>



WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCOUNT FOR

**71%** OF GLOBAL HUMAN  
TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

And girls represent nearly the same  
proportion of child trafficking victims.<sup>3</sup>



AROUND

**650 million**  
WOMEN AND GIRLS ALIVE TODAY

were married as children. Unless we  
accelerate our efforts, 150 million  
more girls will be married by 2030.<sup>6</sup>



1 UN Population Division, World Population Prospects, (2019); 2 Plan International UK, 2020; 3 Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, Human Trafficking and Gender: Differences, Similarities and Trends, (2019); 4 Gutmacher Institute, Estimates of the Potential Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Sexual and Reproductive Health in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, (April 2020); 5 UNHCR report, Missing Out: Refugee education in crisis, (2016); 6 UNICEF, Child Marriage: Latest trends and future prospects, (July 2018).

# OUR STRATEGY

## 2021-2023

Our strategic goals set out what we intend to achieve over the next three years.

Our strategic enablers are the key ways of working and infrastructure which will support us to deliver those goals.



# OUR FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS



Plan International has set up youth clubs in schools across Rwanda

# GOAL 1: PROGRAMME WITH IMPACT

- We'll continue to build on the strengths of our long-term development and humanitarian programming work, focusing on the areas that we know can make the biggest impact in advancing girls' rights.

We'll continue to ambitiously mainstream safeguarding throughout our activity so that everyone we work with and for is safe and able to thrive. Working closely with our partners and those we seek to support, we'll continue to deliver impactful programmes that meet the needs of the girls and wider communities we serve.

As a gender equality and girls' rights organisation, it's a priority for us to increase the proportion of our work that actively seeks to challenge and transform harmful gender norms and power relations. Over the period of this strategy, we'll further increase the proportion of our programming that is gender transformative.

- We'll enhance the focus of our long-term programmatic work across three key areas – Education, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Protection from Violence.

Access to quality education changes lives. We'll keep on enabling and delivering inclusive quality education, equal and safe access to education, and support for girls to stay in school or learning.

We'll also continue to promote sustainable models of education that are both inclusive and gender transformative.

With our work on SRHR for girls and young women, we'll keep on addressing the range of barriers that stand in the way of girls being able to access their rights. This covers themes such as eliminating harmful practices including child marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation; reducing unwanted pregnancy and improving access to quality SRHR services, comprehensive information and sexuality education; engaging boys and men to develop positive masculinities; and critically, addressing the barriers that social norms often pose to girls' agency over their own sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We'll focus on providing and enabling gender sensitive child protection. This helps children, and especially girls, who are vulnerable or excluded to grow up feeling valued, cared for equally, and able to live their lives free from discrimination or the fear of violence.

We'll also carry on working in other areas like youth economic empowerment and early child development, making the most of the expertise that's on offer in other parts of the Plan International family.



Plan International / Fran Afonso

Maireny, 15,  
Dominican Republic



Thayssa, 12, Brazil

● **In the context of a growing global need, we'll continue to build our work with people who are affected by humanitarian crises. This includes responding to needs that span the traditional development and humanitarian response.**

We'll keep growing our Girls in Crisis work with girls who are in settings that are fragile or affected by conflict. We'll retain our focus on Disaster Risk Reduction and resilience, and increase work that recognises the interrelationship between development and humanitarian programming ('the nexus'). In particular, we'll maintain a strong focus on supporting communities so that they're prepared for and resilient to shocks.

We'll also further build our focus and expertise in education, child protection and responding to the particular needs of girls in our humanitarian programming.

● **We'll continue to grow and build on our UK programming work by implementing our UK Programmes Framework and actively seeking funding partners.**

Through our UK Programmes Framework, we'll keep on transforming the lives of people who identify as girls and young women across the UK aged 8–25, and in particular supporting those aged 12–18.

We'll provide in-depth programmes that tackle the breadth of issues that affect girls' lives across the country, and we'll use our research,

campaigning and advocacy to contribute to wider change. We'll create meaningful opportunities for girls' voices to be both heard and acted on while we work towards a society where all girls can flourish and live free from fear, violence and discrimination.

We're all seeing the impacts that climate change and environmental degradation are having in communities around the world, as well as the disproportionate impact those changes have on children and on girls in particular. We'll build a stronger environmental focus into our programming, including themes around climate adaptation and mitigation.

Across all of our programming, we'll work closely with the Plan International family to deliver on our ambitions, actively contributing to ongoing learning and improvements to the impact we deliver together. We'll identify ways we can support changes to shift more power and resources to the Global South, enhancing the sustainable impact we can create for those we serve. We'll also make the most of the opportunities offered by our recent acquisition of Social Development Direct, mutually enhancing our work to transform the lives and futures of girls.

## GOAL 2: VOICE FOR CHANGE

### ● We'll continue to be a powerful influencing voice for change.

We have a strong track record when it comes to influencing change, but there's always more to be done.

### ● We'll place girls' voices at the heart of our influencing work, and further develop our ability to support girls meaningfully to advocate for change.

Enabling girls to use their agency and supporting them to lead are crucial if we're going to secure real advances to their rights through changes to the policies that affect them in the UK and around the world. We already engage with young people, especially girls, in our influencing work, and we're going to take this further.

### ● We'll develop and deliver impactful influencing strategies to meet our agreed change goals for both UK and global girls' rights.

We'll continue to engage with and influence the UK Government to help ensure it effectively uses its ability to achieve change for girls' rights and gender equality around the world.

We'll put a particular emphasis on girls who are affected by conflict and crisis, developing on our influencing work with and for Girls in Crisis over recent years. Key focus areas will include education, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and protection from violence, and we'll draw on our learning and expertise from our programmes as well as partnering with girls themselves. We'll harness key moments and events to amplify our messages, and we'll partner to support delivery of sustainable advocacy in some of the countries where we work.

Closer to home, we'll seek to create positive change on what we know are some of the key girls' rights issues in the UK, such as public sexual harassment and period poverty. We'll continue to highlight the overall situation for girls, as we have done through our 'State of UK Girls' Rights' reports, and we'll carry on supporting girls themselves to speak out on the issues that affect them.

If we're going to succeed, we'll need strong foundations to support our influencing work internally. We'll make sure that we can draw effectively on our skills and knowledge across the organisation to achieve our aims, and we'll maximise coordination with the wider Plan International family to achieve the biggest impact possible.



Atlanta, 18, UK



Plan International / Joyce Nicholls

Nyamburi, 24, is learning tailoring skills as part of our vocational training programme in Tanzania

## GOAL 3: YOUTH CENTRED

- **We'll become a more youth-centred organisation.**

In order to be an organisation that truly works in the interests of girls and young people, we need to work with them. We'll put their views and experiences at the heart of our work wherever and whenever we can.

We're really proud of our youth engagement activity to date, including the work done by our well-established Youth Advisory Panel and our growing focus on Girls Centred Programme Design. We know, though, that we can do much more to become a truly youth centred organisation.

**With that in mind, we'll develop a cross-organisational plan and a Youth Engagement Approach for embedding youth engagement even deeper into everything we do.**

## GOAL 4: MAXIMISE INCOME

- We'll re-examine our funding model and maximise our resources for impact.

Just like organisations and businesses the world over, we're currently operating in a changing and challenging economic environment. With that in mind, it's vital that we take a close look at our funding model and at how we best use our resources.

- We'll have an agreed funding model that maximises our resources for impact – both within Plan International UK and across the Plan International family.

We'll review our funding model with a view to protecting the long-term financial sustainability of both Plan International UK and the wider Plan International family. We'll strive to maximise the funds we have available and we'll use those funds to create the biggest sustainable changes we can for children's rights and for girls' equality.

- We'll develop and deliver a three-year Fundraising Strategy which will continue to put Child Sponsorship at the heart of our individual giving fundraising and explore new opportunities to maximise our income.
- We will maximise funding for long-term and humanitarian programmes from institutions and prioritise opportunities that transform the lives of girls and young women.



Mohamed, 16, Egypt

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**WELL I MEAN THE GENDER PAY GAP CRISIS IS STILL ONGOING, AND WOMEN ARE SCARED TO LEAVE THEIR HOUSES AND THERE IS A 1 IN 5 CHANCE THAT WOMEN MIGHT EXPERIENCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE. SO, SOME PEOPLE SAY THAT WE'RE EQUAL, BUT I THINK THEY'RE ILL INFORMED.**

**HANNAH, 15, SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS,  
SCOTLAND**

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# OUR FOUR STRATEGIC ENABLERS



Nya Lat, 16, (right) and her sister, South Sudanese refugees, Ethiopia

# OUR STRATEGIC ENABLERS

Our goals set out what we intend to achieve over the next three years. Our strategic enablers are the key ways of working and infrastructure which will support us to deliver those goals.

They do more than that, though. By recognising and investing in these key areas now, they'll also enable us to create meaningful change and advance both children's rights and girls' equality on a global scale for many years to come.

## ENABLER 1 THRIVING CULTURE

**To enhance our organisational culture to allow our organisation and people to thrive.**

A positive working culture is essential to creating change and getting results. We're proud that the Plan International UK workforce is passionate and engaged in what we do. We'll carry on working on our culture so that it evolves as our environment and ambitions change. That way, we can continue to deliver the best results for those who need us. This will include a focus on the themes of inclusion, empowerment, wellbeing, agility and taking action to diversify our workforce and our Board.

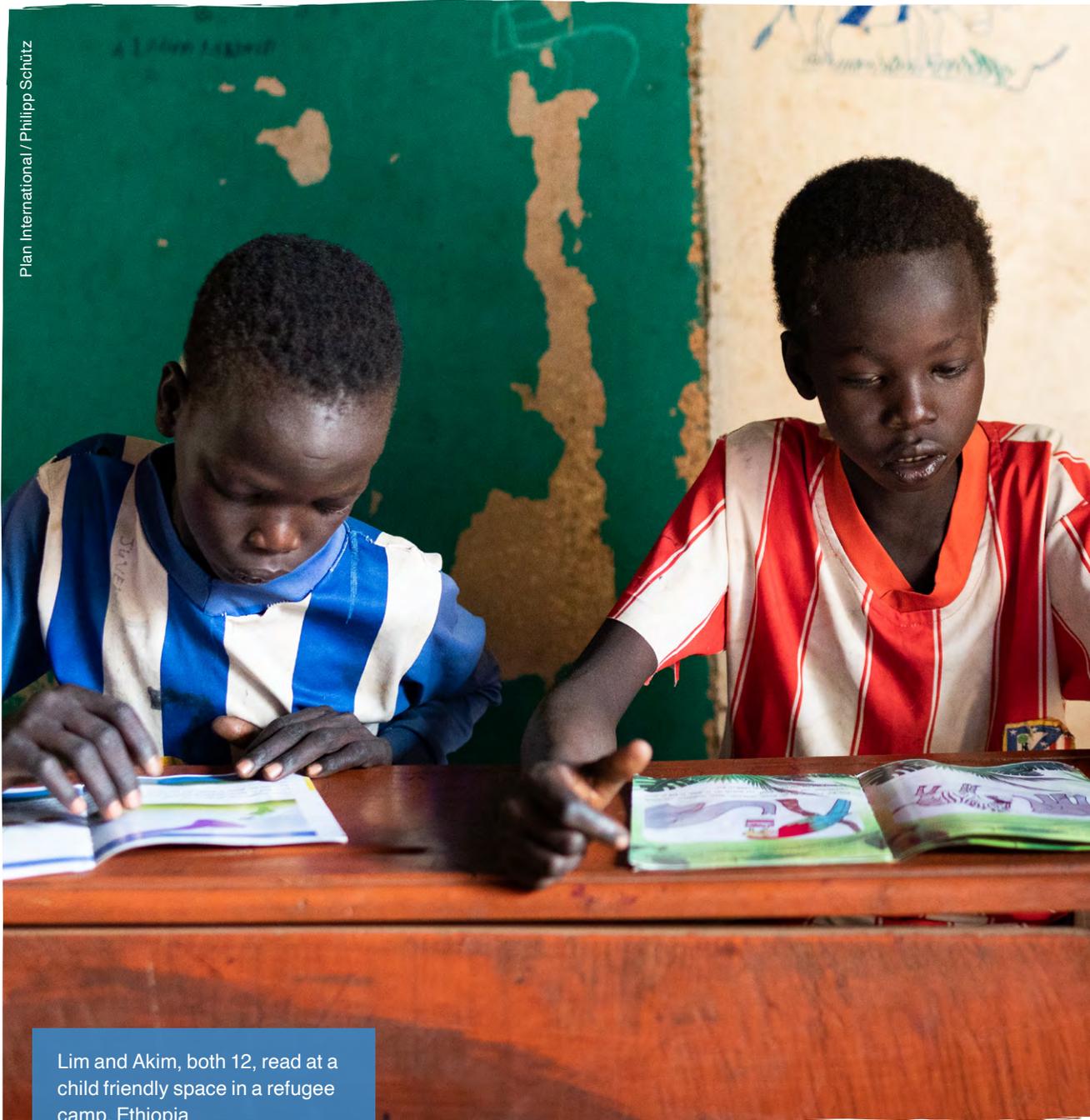
## ENABLER 2 INSPIRING BRAND

**To strengthen our brand to maximise our ability to fundraise, influence and programme.**

When you're leading the case for change, the way your brand is perceived by those outside your organisation really matters. We'll strengthen our brand in the eyes of our priority audiences, making sure that Plan International UK continues to be seen as a relevant, expert organisation. This will enable us to maximise our fundraising, our influence and the impact of our work.



Miriam, 18, Brazil



Lim and Akim, both 12, read at a child friendly space in a refugee camp, Ethiopia

## ENABLER 3 THINK DIGITAL

To develop our ability to operate effectively in our digital age.

To keep up with our changing world, Plan International UK must become a truly digital organisation that applies the culture, practices, processes and technologies of the Internet-era to respond to people's raised expectations.

- We'll use the resources available to us to move towards this space, embedding digital practices and the use of data in how we think and work. We aim to meet the expectations that our stakeholders and audiences have of us, harnessing the opportunities offered by digital to build and enhance public engagement.

## ENABLER 4 ONE GLOBAL PLAN

To embrace our role as an active member of the global Plan International family.

Being part of the wider Plan International family comes with responsibilities as well as bringing opportunities. We'll embrace our role as a member of this global family and actively contribute to working collectively in order to best achieve our shared objectives through all of our programming and influencing work. We'll work with the wider Plan International Family to ensure power is shifted from the Global North to the Global South.



Participants in Plan International Bangladesh's campaign to ensure that every girl and young woman has power over her own life and can shape the world around her

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