

A photograph of a group of children in a dusty, outdoor setting. A young girl in the foreground, wearing a floral dress and sandals, holds a water bottle and looks directly at the camera. Other children are visible in the background, some looking away and others towards the camera. The ground is dry and dusty.

REALIZING FULL POTENTIAL FROM CHILDHOOD TO EMPOWERED YOUTH

Partnership Programme 2015–2017
Final report

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ACRONYMS

CB	Children's Board
CBCPM	Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms
CBR	Community-Based Rehabilitation
CCCD	Child-Centred Community Development
ChSA	Charities and Societies Law (Uganda)
CLAC	Community-Led Action for Children
CM	Child Marriage
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DR	Dominican Republic
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GCE	Global Citizenship Education
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HVCA	Hazard Vulnerability and Community Capacity Assessment
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ICT4D	Information and Communication Technologies for Development
IME	Intercultural Multilingual Education
INFOTEP	National Institute for Technical Training
ISG	International Solutions Group
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NO	National Office
PSGC	Participatory School Governance for Children (project in Uganda)
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
RSR	Really Simple Reporting
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDEGES	Departmental Social Services (Bolivia)
SMC	School Management Committee
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VECD	Village Education Development
VSLA	Village Savings and Loan Association
WDA	Wolaitta Development Association
YAN	Young Adults' Network
YEE	Youth Economic Empowerment
YLE	Finnish Broadcasting Company

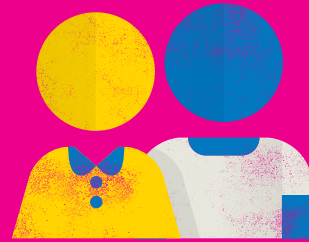
2015–2017 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

156 000 **163 000**
CHILDREN ADULTS

IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND IN FINLAND
BENEFITTED FROM THE DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME OF PLAN FINLAND.

PLAN FINLAND'S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROJECTS DIRECTLY REACHED:

117 000 **62 000** **55 000**
CHILDREN GIRLS BOYS
117 000 **66 000** **51 000**
ADULTS WOMEN MEN



17 000 PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAD
BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD PROTECTION AND
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE.

CHILDREN IN A TOTAL OF

715

ECCD CENTRES BENEFITTED FROM
THE ECCD PROGRAMMES THROUGH
BETTER EDUCATION, AVAILABILITY
OF PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL AND
IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE.

TEACHER SKILLS AND
CHILDREN'S
PARTICIPATION IN
SCHOOL GOVERNANCE
WERE IMPROVED IN

234
SCHOOLS.

3 700 YOUNG PEOPLE
BECAME BETTER PREPARED TO START
THEIR OWN BUSINESS OR ENGAGE IN
INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES.

IN FINLAND, PLAN'S GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION
WORK RAISED AWARENESS OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS,
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY
AMONGST

40 000 **46 000**
CHILDREN ADULTS



2015–2017 IMPACT AT A GLANCE

BOLIVIA

After long-term work on gender and inclusion of fathers, fathers' participation in childcare and development has increased significantly. Authorities at the local level work together to promote integrated early childhood development, and the municipalities that were part of the project have demonstrated their commitment to early childhood development through increasing municipal budget allocations for the theme.

TOGO

Community outreach activities have contributed to the changing attitudes at community level towards people with disabilities, which are now seen as an integral part of the community. Community-Based Rehabilitation Centres provided services and activities to girls and boys with disabilities within project communities.

FINLAND

Plan's Global School Child Rights Ambassadors organised 2,214 sessions in 619 schools or organisations in the Helsinki region, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu and Rovaniemi. Children's Board and Young Adults' Network participated in numerous advocacy events directed at youth, with the aim of inspiring and engaging youth to take action over global issues.

CAMEROON

The long-standing work with the Baka people has led to a better understanding of human rights and minority rights within the project areas. The school enrolment rate for the Baka children in the project area rose to 70% with the average being 30%. Baka children have been able to study in their own language for the first time.

EAST-TIMOR

Children in 29 communities actively participated in preschool and informal play group activities. Communities gained skills in centre management and they have created action plans for the post-project period. Finland: Plan's Global School Child Rights Ambassadors organised 2,214 sessions in 619 schools or organisations in the Helsinki region, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu and Rovaniemi. Children's Board and Young Adults' Network participated in numerous advocacy events directed at youth, with the aim of inspiring and engaging youth to take action over global issues.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The "18-no-menos" campaign contributed to the approval of a proposal to ban under-18 marriages by the Parliament. Plan Dominican Republic has been successful in bringing issues related to child rights and gender-based violence into the public discussion. Over 350 young people have better technical and life-skills and are better prepared to enter the labour market.

UGANDA

In Uganda, schools have become more child-friendly and the corporal punishment at schools decreased significantly. Children are involved in school governance through school councils and are able to influence issues concerning them. SmartUP hubs as youth-led innovation and training centres have been successful in transforming youth from disadvantaged backgrounds into problem-solvers in their lives and communities.

MOZAMBIQUE

Children enrolled in 95 ECCD centres have improved their performance in school readiness skills, 95% of the children enrolled in first grade demonstrated greater abilities to count, speak and relate to people. Children with disabilities now have access to education and relevant services within project communities.

PAKISTAN

Plan supported regional authorities in Punjab and Sind Provinces to develop and establish new Early Childhood Education policies. Plan Pakistan provided training for Master Trainers on implementing the Provincial goal to establish 5,000 new centres by the end of 2017 in Punjab Region.

LAOS

Plan Laos promoted a new curriculum of teaching Lao to non-Lao grade one pupils at in ethnic communities, which has increased the retention rate of non-Lao students in schools. School management practices have improved, and rural schools are increasingly implementing school development plans and requesting school grants to realise required improvements.

ETHIOPIA

Peer education groups and community dialogues have been effective in changing people's attitudes towards harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation and early marriage. Fathers engage more actively in childcare after role model fathers have been identified in communities to motivate others to participate as well.



1. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

This report presents the main results of Plan International Finland's three-year development cooperation programme funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA), covering the years 2015–2017. Initially, the programme consisted of 18 projects on four continents, and included, in addition, global thematic work in specific focus areas to support the programme work. By the end of 2017, the number of projects was 16.

Plan Finland's development programme consisted of projects in four focus areas implemented in Plan International country offices either directly by the offices or in partnership with local partner organisations. Altogether eight projects were implemented in the field of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), and three projects in Education, Child Protection and Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE) each.

THE MFA PROGRAMME INCLUDED **18 PROJECTS** IN 11 COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

Geographically, nine of the projects were conducted in Western and Eastern Africa, three were in Asia, and three were in Latin America and Caribbean. Two regional projects in East Africa and Asia were implemented. One project, a Global Education project, took place in Finland.

Furthermore, support was provided to selected global cross-cutting themes through a global thematic component that included work on gender, innovation, ICT4D, private sector relations, children with disabilities and a pilot component on resilience.

Table 1: Projects per thematic area

Theme	Number of projects		
	2015	2016	2017
Child Protection	4	3	3
ECCD	8	8	6
Education	3	3	3
Youth Economic Empowerment*	2	2	3
Global Education in Finland	1	1	1
TOTAL	18	17	16

* In 2015 YEE project in Pakistan was closed, in 2016 youth SmartUp Factory project in Uganda was initiated and in 2017 youth SmartUp factory Ethiopia was initiated

The original MFA budget approved in 2015 was EUR 18.6 million, the final budget 13.58 million and expenditure at the end of 2017 including carry overs from the previous frame was EUR 14 million.

During the three-year period, the supported projects changed from the original planned: the greatest challenge during the period was the funding cuts imposed by the MFA in late 2015, which forced Plan Finland to retire support from four projects between 2015 and 2016 in addition to implementing other savings measures. Two new projects on youth innovation were introduced during the programme period in 2016 and 2017.

This report will present the results of the three-year programme period. The first chapter will include a brief summary of the main results and challenges encountered followed by an introduction to the programme approach. The following chapters will present more detailed results organised by thematic area. Chapter two will concentrate on the direct programmatic work in Plan Finland's focus countries while chapter three will introduce the main results of

global thematic work. Chapter four will focus on general programme management and financial information. Project-specific results will be provided in a separate annex, including narrative information and information on project-specific indicators.

1.1. Results overview

Overall, the programme was implemented with good results confirmed by internal monitoring and external programme and project evaluations. In financial terms, budget expenditure occurred as planned – excluding the strong budget cuts in 2015. Total programme expenditure for the whole period was EUR 17,181,325 and in 2017 EUR 5,537,871.

Table 2: Programme expenditure by year

Year	Expenditure MFA	Total programme expenditure (MFA + self-funding)
2015	5 043 554	5 910 791
2016	4 876 560	5 732 663
2017	4 085 154	5 537 871
TOTAL	14 005 267	17 181 325

Figure 1 demonstrates the programme expenditure during the three-year period. The expenditure in 2015 and 2016 was at the same level despite changes in budget. This can be explained by lower-than-expected project expenditure in 2015 due to a late start of the projects following a relatively late announcement of the funds available for the new programme and the anticipation of funding cuts in the latter half of 2015. The large carryover from 2015 also helped to account for relatively high expenditure in 2016. The expenditure in 2017 was smaller, as the effects of the funding cuts were fully visible by then.



Plan Finland strives to improve the lives of the most vulnerable girls and boys, through working with the most vulnerable areas or vulnerable groups within areas in which the projects are being implemented. One way to approach the issue is to revise the allocation of funding to the least developed countries. In 2017, 88% of direct programme funding was implemented in Plan Country Offices in developing countries and 62% of the funds reached the least developed countries, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 3 demonstrates the division of direct programme funding between different thematic areas in 2017. The main allocations have been made to ECCD, followed by education, child protection, and youth economic empowerment.

Plan Finland supported eight Early Childhood Care and Development projects in three continents during the programme period, of which six were operational in 2017, including projects in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda, Pakistan, and East Timor. Most of these projects have been operational for many consecutive programme periods from 2009. During this time, the ECCD approach developed into a holistic approach to Early Childhood Development (ECD) from 0 to 8 years, and included components on early childhood education, health, nutrition, inclusion, gender and resilience. During the past three years, 700 ECCD centres were supported or established and 57,000 children (30,000 F/27,000 M) and 66,000 parents (42,000 F/24,000 M) benefited from project activities. In all projects, children participating in ECCD education reached better age-specific development milestones and had better school-readiness skills compared

to their peers who had not attended ECCD centres. Increased parental responsibility and especially increased participation of fathers were also observed, with signs of changing gender relations at home in some of the projects. Especially projects in Bolivia and Pakistan were successful in engaging in advocacy and work with municipal and regional authorities to improve local and regional Early Childhood Education Policies. Meanwhile, the main challenges faced by ECCD projects included further changing gender roles and improving participation of fathers—which, despite positive trends is still lower than that of mothers—and ensuring technical assistance to local communities to manage and maintain functional and good quality ECCD centres after the projects end. A strategic decision to shift the focus away from ECCD work was taken at an early phase of the programme, and the year 2017 marked the end of the ECCD work in its current form within Plan Finland.

Child Protection projects aimed to ensure children's right to protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and harmful traditional practices (HTP) while ensuring that children are able to participate in issues regarding their own development. The three Child Protection projects in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia and Togo were all able to improve the realisation of the rights of children; in the Dominican Republic, the project challenged prevailing gender stereotypes among children and youth and strengthened the skills of community-based child protection networks; in Ethiopia, community discussions contributed to the decrease in child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM); in Togo, the project succeeded in changing positively community perceptions towards people with

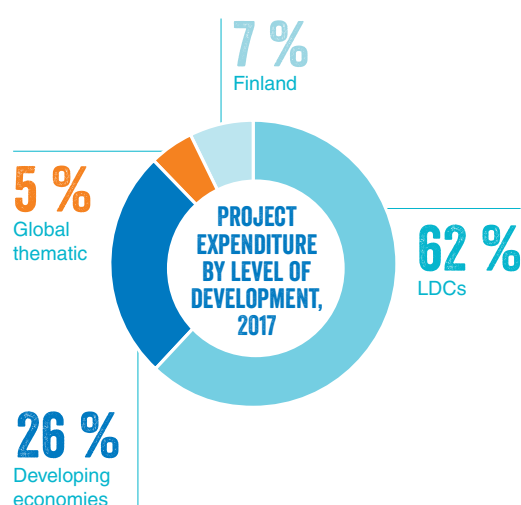


Figure 1. Programme expenditure by level of development of recipient countries, 2017

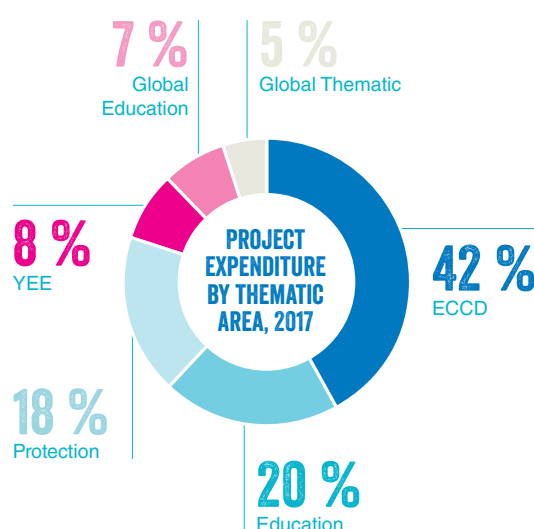


Figure 2. Programme expenditure by thematic area, 2017

disabilities. The projects also strengthened existing informal and formal child protection structures and processes and especially the project in the Dominican Republic was successful in raising child protection issues into public discussion through campaigns and advocacy work at national level. The three Child Protection projects were able to reach 17,000 children (10,000 F/7,000 M) and 17,000 adults (7,600 F/9,400 M) through different project activities including training, workshops, and advocacy. Challenges faced by the projects included guaranteeing permanent social change at the community level and ensuring that the capacities of the existing informal and formal protection systems are sufficient to function independently in the future.

Three Education projects, in Cameroon, Laos and Uganda, aimed to improve girls' and boys' access to education, to support school governance systems with participatory approach, and to improve the quality of education through teacher training and developing new educational models. Between 2015 and 2017, children's participation at schools has increased, and access to education for excluded groups such as the Baka minority in Cameroon and rural minority children in Laos has improved. Parents engage more actively in the education of their children. Altogether 234 schools benefited from the Education projects, and a total of 32,000 children (16,000 F/16,000 M) and 30,000 adults (14,500F/ 15,500 M) were reached. The main challenges faced by the Education projects include finding qualified teachers in the rural areas of Laos and teachers who possess Baka language skills in Cameroon, and ensuring that new skills and structures continue to be implemented at schools even after the direct support from the projects is withdrawn.

Youth Economic Empowerment projects were implemented in the Dominican Republic, Uganda and Ethiopia. The project in the Dominican Republic provided technical and entrepreneurship training for 384 young people, and developed training models for life skills, CV creation and green skills that have been utilised in other projects as well. One of the main lessons learnt was to engage private sector actors more actively already at the planning phase to guarantee internship places and financial support for entrepreneurship activities for youth. In Uganda, the project expanded from one SmartUp Factory hub established in Kampala in 2015 to five hubs in five municipalities in 2016. The hubs were successful in changing the mindsets of marginalised youth to become problem-solvers through engagement in the activities of SmartUp hubs, for example in innovation training, entrepreneurship, computer application development and design thinking. The rapid scale-up of the project and increased demand for the services exceeded the capacity of project management to respond to the increased needs for a while, indicating that in the future, a scaling-up process should be more carefully planned. In Ethiopia, the first trainings for youth started in 2017 and the offer included ICT skills and English complemented with life-skills and entrepreneurship skills.

In Finland, the Global Citizenship Education programme continued to improve the capacities of children, young people and education professionals on the rights of the child and development cooperation. The Global School project organised 2214 sessions in 619 schools or organisations in the Helsinki region, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu and Rovaniemi, and conducted 23 training sessions for teachers on child rights issues. 87% of the Child Rights Ambassadors' lessons were evaluated as very successful in terms of content and methods used. 121 teachers and educators received training on child rights, and 96% of the participants responding to the feedback forms stated having used the methods and materials they received. Children's Board (CB) and Young



Adults' Network (YAN) conducted numerous advocacy and awareness-raising events and social media campaigns throughout Finland. The activities within the Global Citizenship Education programme reached a total of 85,000 adults, young people and children between 2015 and 2017. Restructuring the project activities after funding cuts and maintaining voluntary networks operative with minimal support from Plan personnel were major challenges during the programme period.

Plan Finland thematic components were strengthening the programme work in many ways. Plan International country offices in the project countries have systematically introduced pilot activities to include disability and inclusion into existing projects, and Plan Finland in cooperation with Plan International and other relevant partners has produced toolkits and training materials on inclusion that will continue to serve the country offices in their inclusion work. Gender approach is now being tackled better at country office level and Plan Finland has supported the work to create frameworks and models to include fathers in ECCD work and increase their role in child rearing. Pilot projects within Innovation Challenge competition have supported winning country offices to try out new models to tackle poverty and improve the situation of girls and boys, and promoted the culture of innovation and experimentation.

Two programme evaluations—a mid-term evaluation in 2016, and Evaluation 2 on the Civil Society Organisations Receiving Programme Based Support and Support for Humanitarian Assistance (CSO2-evaluation) by the MFA—conducted during the programme period confirmed that Plan Finland's programme has a solid basis and, in general, the project results are good. Plan's strong human rights-based approach was recognised as a clear strength of the organisation. In addition, Plan Finland's extensive experience, good capacity and knowledge together with a child-centred focus are recognised as comparative advantages and factors of success. The programme was seen as relevant and being in line with the country strategies at the country level. A systematic gender approach was also recognised as a strength of the programme (further information about the evaluations was provided in the 2016 annual report).

Individual project evaluations, and especially the joint ECCD evaluation, revealed that projects are able to yield good results, especially in changing attitudes of people and achieving change at local level. Challenges were observed on providing systematic evidence on social change, even



when the evaluations confirmed that trends of such change can be identified.

1.2. Programme Approach

Plan Finland supports country offices and local implementation offices (PUs) in implementing and managing the projects. Operating under the umbrella of a strong global organisation helps to gain efficiency and value for money: the organisation can benefit from well-researched programme models, enhance learning through experience from various countries and access to opinion leaders and policy-makers to channel the voice of voiceless and unprivileged groups. Global presence helps to tackle many development issues that do not respect borders, or to promote certain development approaches, such as ICT4D on a more effective basis. Despite

being a global organisation, the approach of Plan International ensures a strong local presence; Plan has a strong presence in communities worked with, most staff are hired locally, and the Community Development Facilitators are from the communities. Thus, Plan is not seen as a “foreign” actor in countries where it operates, increasing trust and helping to achieve permanent results.

Child centredness and a holistic approach to the rights of the child are the cornerstones of the programmatic work of Plan International. The Child Centred Community Development (CCCD) approach is based on the principles of Human Rights Based Programming and guides all programme work. Plan International not only implements basic community development work but seeks to involve children in matters that concern them and seeks how to alter power relations in societies in favour of those who have little recognition. The MFA programme was strongly based on the CCCD approach of working in partnership with various actors at different levels—from local to national—which is elemental in achieving permanent change in society and guaranteeing the realisation of human rights for all children. The projects work to change community perceptions, engage with civil society, and advocate local and national governments.

In 2016, Plan International approved a new 5-year global strategy. The new strategy places girls at the centre of the work even more visibly than in the past throughout the whole organisation. The aim is that by 2022, 100 million girls will be able to learn, lead, decide and thrive, bringing a real gender transformative approach into the core of future programming. In the 2015–2017 MFA programme, gender issues are already mainstreamed in all of the projects to address the everyday discrimination that girls and young women face; however, this approach will be further strengthened in future programming and further steps will be taken to alter the underlying causes and power relations that support unequal gender relations.

In 2016, Plan Finland revised its strategy approved in 2015 to be in line with the new Global Strategy. No major reformulations were needed and, overall, the work of Plan Finland already incorporates a strong focus on gender and implements aspects of gender transformative programming. The new Global Strategy indicates even stronger focus on gender transformative approach in Plan Finland’s programme work towards the future.



Plan Finland promoted four distinct thematic areas in the 2015–2017 MFA programme in which the “value added” of Plan Finland within a strong organisation becomes most visible. Plan Finland is recognised within the Plan Federation for its work in ICT for development and innovations. Other areas include gender and inclusion. Moreover, the programme included a pilot component to respond to the changing climate through a resilience approach. After years of experience in corporate partnerships in other projects within Plan Finland, the year 2016 saw the addition of a corporate partnerships approach to the MFA programme. The aim of Plan Finland is to shift increasingly towards implementing a “shared value” approach to work in cooperation with the corporate sector, seeking to enhance the ways in which corporations integrate human rights into their business by utilising the core competencies of Plan Finland in child rights and community development.

The MFA funding cuts had an effect on the cross-cutting themes within Plan Finland and the impact of these were partially reduced during the programme period. In order to minimise the impact on ongoing projects, resources in Finland were cut dramatically as a whole in late 2015. As a consequence, Plan Finland no longer had a full-time gender advisor and gender work was supported at country office level and in many cases with the support of local gender advisors. Resilience work, on the other hand, was promoted in Ethiopia, which received technical support from Plan Sweden in addition to monetary support from Plan Finland, but the planned expansion of resilience work to all other projects was cancelled.



2. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT – ECCD

2.1. Summary

Early Childhood Care and Development is the largest thematic component in the current MFA programme in terms of number of projects, budget allocation and Plan Finland's historical expertise. Plan International has a well-established model of community-based ECCD centres adapted to local communities and managed by communities or local partners with close cooperation of local and national education authorities that has been successful in promoting early childhood development in vulnerable areas across the world. Plan Finland supported projects follow a general model with local variations. During the period 2015–2017, Plan Finland supported six ECCD projects in Bolivia, Pakistan, East Timor, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Mozambique. Initially, the programme included an ECCD project in Kenya and a regional project for Southern and Eastern Africa, both of which were ended in 2016 after the funding cuts on the part

of the MFA. The Education project in Cameroon to support the rights and education of Baka children also includes an ECCD component.

Most of the ECCD projects are a continuation from the previous framework agreement (2012–2014) and have reached important results during a long implementation period. A synthesis evaluation report by International Solutions Group (ISG) of the ECCD projects concluded that strong and consistent trends exist in demonstrating positive change in all of the main project components: parenting sessions have been popular, and fathers have started to take more responsibility in child-rearing activities. Local communities have a good understanding of the benefits of early childhood education, and teachers recognise that the skills gained at preschools have resulted in improved school readiness of children. Plan, through its country offices, has been positioned as a credible and respected actor, and—often in alliance with other

stakeholders—it has had a significant influence on government policy, practice and quality of ECCD education.

The challenges faced by ECCD projects include high rotation of teachers in the centres, and demand for ECCD services exceeding supply in certain areas. One of the key challenges at the end of project implementation period is achieving a full community ownership of the management of the centres. In some countries, Plan country offices will continue to provide monitoring and technical assistance to some of the centres which still need reinforcement to operate fully independently.

The ECCD evaluation suggests that data collection should be improved to provide more reliable and systematic information about positive impact and change at the local level. Currently, mostly anecdotal data is available about social change. The evaluation also highlighted that significant efforts were made to tackle inclusion and sustainability within the projects, yet skills in how to be more systematic in including and implementing the approaches should be increased.

2.2. Results

ECCD projects take an integral approach to early childhood development. The projects aim to increase the quality of early childhood education, increase parental involvement—especially participation of fathers—and general understanding about the importance of ECE. In addition to preschool activities, they incorporate essential related themes such as early stimulation, health, nutritional support, inclusion, and community resilience. The projects include training of parents and community members in child development milestones, positive parenting, health, and gender equality. Advocacy efforts and engaging local and national authorities are key components of ECCD work, but the possibility and capacity of local country offices to engage in advocacy varies. Especially the projects in Bolivia and Pakistan have been successful in advocacy on early childhood education and supporting the government in early childhood policy formulation and implementation.

In general, participation in ECCD education has dramatically increased in the project intervention areas, children are increasingly reaching age-appropriate development milestones in terms of cognitive and psychosocial development, fathers are engaging more in child-rearing activities and local and national authorities have introduced supportive ECCD policies in many of the project countries.

"IN ETHIOPIA, IN THE PROJECT INTERVENTION AREAS, THE PERCENTAGE OF NEW ENTRANTS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL WHO HAD ATTENDED PRESCHOOL ROSE FROM 9% BEFORE THE PROJECT TO 23% BY THE END OF THE PROJECT."



Table 3: Early Childhood Care and Development – Results 2015–2017

	Girls/ Women	Boys/ Men	Total
No. of ECCD centres established, managed or supported			715
No. of children enrolled in Plan Finland supported ECCD centres	11 800	11 300	23 100
No. of parents involved in project activities	42 000	24 000	66 000
No. of children involved in project activities	30 000	27 000	57 000
No. of children with disabilities reached	196	165	361

The ECCD projects benefitted 580 ECCD centres in 2017, and altogether 715 ECCD centres were reached during the programme implementation period. 23,000 children (11,800 F/11,300 M) were enrolled to the ECCD centres. Altogether 57,000 children (30,000 F/ 27,000 M) and 66,000 (42,000 F/ 24,000 M) parents and caregivers benefited from the different ECCD activities.

Improved child development and school readiness

Qualitative monitoring information and project evaluations confirm that children who participated in early childhood education in preschools met child development milestones, and that the school readiness skills had improved in all the projects. ECCD centres cooperated with local primary schools to promote a smooth transition from preschool to primary school, and most of the children who attend ECCD education continued to primary school, which is not self-evident in all the programme countries.

The projects monitored achievement of child development milestones in various ways. In general, either monitoring tests are implemented or preschool teachers and volunteers observe the achievement of milestones as a part of regular monitoring of the children. Primary school teachers confirm that children who have attended ECE activities generally demonstrate an improved school readiness compared to their peers. In Bolivia, the proportion of children who were able to timely reach the milestones in the local “Abbreviated Child Development Scale” rose from 45% (40% F/49% M) in 2014 to 71% (72% F/70% M) in 2017 in the project implementation areas. The performance of girls, which was below the boys at the beginning of the project, equalled during the project period. In East Timor, the trend was improving but mixed, yet in general 73–83% of the children participating in project preschools performed well in tests applied to measure skills in different ambits regarding fine and gross motor skills, as well as cognitive, social and emotional skills. In Ethiopia, the academic performance of 667 children transiting to primary schools was reviewed, and they were found to perform generally better than their peers who did not attend preschool.

In general, the projects have been able to demonstrate positive influence of preschool attendance to school readiness skills, yet the final evaluation of the Plan Finland supported ECCD programme suggests that measuring and evidencing this change should be improved in the future.

Supporting positive parenting and changing gender norms

Parental education is one of the key components in all ECCD projects. Monitoring data and project evaluations strongly suggest that parental education programmes and parenting groups have had a positive impact: parenting practices have notably improved, parents spend more time with their children and listen to them after participating in the parental education programmes. In addition to parents of ECCD children, many projects include sessions for parents of children under three years old.

Positive change can be seen in many different areas related to child rearing and wellbeing of children. Thus, not only do parents spend more time with their children, but they also know the importance of hygiene, health, and nutrition. The holistic approach to child development has succeeded in bringing about positive change in different ambits: For example, in Bolivia, malnutrition of children between 0 to 8 years has decreased from 29% to 15% in the project areas during the intervention period. In Ethiopia, understanding of personal hygiene has increased and waterborne diseases have decreased, and early stimulation has improved.

All in all, nearly 16,000 (10,200 F/5,600 M) parents have participated in parenting sessions during the three-year programme.

All the projects have made serious efforts to tackle prevailing gender norms according to which bringing up children is primordially the task of mothers. The first steps have been to increase the involvement of fathers in parental education programmes and parenting groups. Country-specific strategies have been adapted: in Ethiopia and Uganda, fathers-only groups were formed, and in East Timor, home visits to fathers were introduced.

BETWEEN 2015–2017, THE ECCD PROJECTS REACHED AN ESTIMATED

1 600

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Efforts to increase the involvement of fathers in project activities have led to changes in gender roles at home. According to the ECCD programme evaluation, a coherent trend exists that men increasingly see their role as important in child rearing and they try to create more harmonious relations between spouses and the family at home. Based on monitoring information and project reports, for example, the continuous focus on gender education and the role of fathers in Bolivia throughout two project periods have resulted in increased participation of fathers. In Ethiopia, family relationships have improved: both parents have started to spend more time with their children and especially fathers have shown positive behavioural changes such as increasing household budget and having regular family discussions. The proportion of fathers who have engaged in at least one playing activity with their children during the past three days increased from 6% on the baseline to 57% at the end of 2017. Fathers have also engaged actively with the ECCD centres, for example through engaging in playground construction, as was observed in both Uganda and Ethiopia.

An unintended result in parental education is the case of Ethiopia, where interested illiterate parenting group members were encouraged to attend literacy classes. Around 1280 parents chose to participate in adult literacy activities.

Tackling exclusion

The projects in Kenya, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Pakistan and Bolivia all included specific activities to promote the participation of children with disabilities within communities, to increase their participation in early childhood education when possible, and to refer the children to adequate services when needed. Between 2015–2017, the ECCD projects reached an estimated 1,600 children with disabilities and 300 of them were incorporated in ECCD education, while others were referred to pertinent services.

These were very initial steps for many of the country offices to mainstream work with children with disabilities, and many projects reported that the teachers and educators in ECCD centres would require more capacity-building on how to include children with disabilities in their activities. Some of the projects cooperated with other Non-Governmental Organisations specialised in disability issues and obtain their expertise in this thematic area. For example, the project in Mozambique cooperated with two organisations specialised in inclusion of children with disabilities: Light for the World and Uhambo. Other projects, especially the ECCD project in Bolivia, worked directly with local governmental institutions providing services to children with disabilities, helping in such issues as obtaining identification documents and finding existing suitable services for them.

The work on inclusion has had different manifestations depending on the context, and based on Plan's approach on inclusion, it can be extended to vulnerable groups other than disabled children. In Bolivia, for example, the project helped to strengthen and revitalise the indigenous identity and culture in the corresponding regions by working together with indigenous authorities to create a community-based early learning curricula adapted to local indigenous languages and culture. In Pakistan, a pilot component to target ethnic minorities in four disadvantaged communities with a specific focus on children from 0 to 3 years old resulted in improved access to health and improved nutrition intake amongst women in these vulnerable communities. Pregnant women and mothers of young children were provided education about health and nutrition, and volunteers and health personnel and traditional birth attendants were trained. The Education project in Cameroon, meanwhile, has incorporated an ECCD component in the programme, contributing to the increased school enrolment rates amongst the often-excluded Baka minority group, which—until now—has achieved very low levels of education. As a whole, each of the Plan Finland supported ECCD projects work with vulnerable communities and with families with limited resources.

The ECCD evaluation recognised the efforts made in the theme and pinpointed some limitations regarding inclusion; most of the projects still recognised that children with disabilities are most likely to get excluded. The evaluation also highlighted the role of income: the tendency of children from the poorest families to drop out or present irregular attendance existed if school fees were collected or other contributions, such as providing snacks, were required. Thus, even more attention to inclusion should be paid already at the design phase.

“Working together with the project, we have developed a regional educational model with a focus on integrated child development that draws from our ancient Quechua culture that is still being practiced in the communities, but combines it with the existing early education strategy. This way of working has helped us to gain high legitimacy at grassroots level. We wanted the backing for the Ministry of Education for the initiative

to be able to support the development of our girls and boys in the best possible way through education. Plan (Bolivia) promoted the whole process and has helped us to understand what an integrated approach to early childhood education means and why it is important for the wellbeing of our children.”

- **Loudres Pilacano**, Educational Council of Quechua

Advocacy and cooperation with local and national authorities

Plan is recognised as an expert in early childhood education in most of the project countries and on many occasions, projects have been successful in influencing governmental policies on early childhood education, which is a result of consistent and long-term investment in ECCD with the support of the MFA.

In Pakistan, Plan Pakistan gained momentum when Punjab and Sindh Provinces demonstrated strong interest in ECE and started to formulate their own ECE policies; the focus of the project was partially restructured to support and influence these processes. Both provinces formulated and approved a new ECE policy during the project period and Plan Pakistan participated actively in the formulation processes.

At the provincial level, Punjab Province introduced a rapid expansion plan for ECE aiming to establish 10,000 ECE centres by 2018, and Plan has supported the implementation of the plan through being involved in the formulation of the ECE teacher's guide and training 163 Master Trainers in 2016. By 2017, 5,000 new centres had been established. In addition, Muzaffargarh District Education Department in Punjab Province formed a public-private partnership with Plan and established 100 additional ECE centres in April 2016. In Sindh province, Plan participated in the formulation of ECE policy that was officially launched in early 2017.

In Bolivia, the efforts to work closely with municipal authorities, improving the capacities of local authorities in integrated early childhood development on issues of health, nutrition and gender have contributed to the increased understanding of local authorities about the importance of investing in early childhood, which has also turned into higher municipal investments in the theme. According to the project monitoring report, the aggregate municipal investment in integral early childhood development increased

from 3% to 5% between 2015 and 2017. The project has also worked in close cooperation with departmental social services (SEDEGES) and the District Education Directorates, and the communal play centres have been transferred to these local institutions to ensure sustainable operation of the centres in the future.

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education adapted the parenting model of Plan as a model to incorporate parenting activities to ECCD. Moreover, Plan International Uganda facilitated the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to disseminate information about the National Integrated Early Childhood Development policy approved in early 2016 across Kampala, Kamuli, Lira, Tororo and their neighbouring districts in departmental multi-sectorial meetings and through facilitating local-level action planning committees. The new policy has become a key milestone in the implementation and support of the ECD interventions in the country, and relevant government departments and partners have acknowledged the importance of the theme and become more aware of their respective roles and responsibilities in ECCD.

Working closely with the Educational Authorities has also paid off in Ethiopia: the salaries of the facilitators in all the 48 centres were absorbed by District Educational Authorities, which contributes significantly to the sustainability of the actions. In East Timor, 14 out of 29 ECCD centres received governmental accreditation during the project period.

Improving existing models

Plan Finland supported a regional project aimed at strengthening ECCD work in the Southern and Eastern Africa region that encompassed four project countries – Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique. The project supported the Plan Regional Office for Southern and Eastern Africa in further developing ECCD work in the region and consolidating the community-based action for children (CLAC) model, in sharing results and



good practices and in improving the model for fathers' engagement in ECCD work and producing training materials for the model. The project also provided technical assistance to gender and inclusion work in ECCD. Specific workshops were conducted on strategies for sustainability and resource mobilisation, and for the Mozambique country office on utilisation of digital tools in monitoring and the use of the POImapper digital data collection tool. Additional support for M&E in ECCD was provided to offices in Kenya and Mozambique. The project ended in 2016.

Sustainability

The year 2017 marked the final year of the current MFA programme, and at the same time the end of the ECCD programme of Plan Finland. The decision to reduce and retire support to ECCD projects, many of which had been operative for several consecutive programme periods, had been taken already at the beginning of the programme period. Thus, sustainability and exit plans are key aspects at this point.

Overall, many programme components were directed to achieve social change and improve understanding about ECE, through parental engagement, teacher training and engagement with educational authorities at different levels. Changes in attitudes and increased skills contribute to the sustainability of project results.

Sustainability of ECCD centres has been organised in different ways in different

projects. The two most common options were to encourage community ownership and management of the centres or to encourage local educational authorities to take over the management of the centres. On occasion, arrangements have been a combination of these two. The anticipated results are mixed: while some of the communities, especially communities in which ECCD centres have operated for several years, clearly have the capacity to independently continue to manage the centres, not all may have the same capacity to do so. On many occasions, ECCD centres are established in communities in which Plan has active presence through child sponsorship activities and, in those cases, the local office will continue to monitor and provide support to the centres. For example, three recently established centres in Ethiopia will continue to receive support from Plan, as well as 15 centres in East Timor.

On many occasions, Plan together with local partners and communities has been successful in receiving governmental accreditation for the centres or the centres will receive financial support from the government. In East Timor, 14 out of 29 ECCD centres were accredited by the government, and even if this does not automatically translate into a budget allocation, governmental accreditation helps to formalise the status and receive some support and technical assistance from the government. In Pakistan, the project seized the opportunity to

work with the government from early on, and the government assumed the salaries of ECCD centre facilitators while Plan helped to equip the centres and engaged in teacher and parental training, making the transfer for the government-owned model easier at the end of the project. In Ethiopia, training, collaboration and networking efforts ensured that District Education Offices took over the management of the 24 ECCD centres previously supported by the project. In Mozambique, the ECCD centres are operated by the communities, but receive monitoring and support from local educational and social welfare authorities. In Uganda, most of the 24 centres supported were still in the process of receiving government registration when the project ended in 2017.

In Kenya, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Uganda, the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) that were established and/or supported within the projects received training on issues such as child rights and child protection. In the long term, the goal is that VSLA groups would help either support the community-based ECCD centres directly or help to support parents to allow their children to take part in ECCD activities. This would ultimately increase community ownership and contribute to project sustainability. The evaluation found that the savings groups have been a very popular component likely to maintain their activities in the future, but the linkage to management ECCD centres was not always so clear. For example, in Mozambique it was identified that the savings group members did not have children in ECCD centres, even if they did have younger children that could benefit from the centres in the future.

Government replicates “0” class in Remote Ethiopia

Birtukan Assefa, 6, proudly says that she can count and write letters. She also knows letters and figures she sees at the centre. She is a bright girl but would not have learnt all the things she has if it weren't for the Afama Bancha ECCD centre, the first centre of its kind in Boloso, in the Sore district of the SNNP region.

Birtukan joined the centre, which was established by Plan International in partnership with Wolaitta Development Association (WDA) and managed by the community. “I come here to learn, study and play”, she says. Previously, Birtukan used to handle responsibilities that no one can imagine that a girl of her age would. She used to work at home all the time. “I collect firewood, fetch water from a river”, she says. She also mentions that she had to herd the cattle her family owns.

Birtukan says she had never heard of education, and there was no school for children around her village. “It was a long tradition that many children would have been sent to school at the age of 10 in the community”, explains **Tadelech Meskele**, facilitator and teacher at the ECCD centre. “This is because of absence of early childhood education in the area.” The centre also provides parenting sessions to create awareness on childcare and access to education for children amongst the community.

Assefa Dana, Birtukan's father, also agrees

with Tadelech. “She is very lucky by getting this opportunity. The rest of my children left for school after the age of 10 with a long journey on foot”.

Birtukan gets up early, washes her hands and face, packs breakfast and leaves for the centre that is working on improving the social and cognitive skills of 39 children, including Birtukan. “Since joining the centre, Birtukan's self-confidence has improved, and her creativity has grown”, confirms Tadelech. Birtukan, too, is sure that she would not be as good as she is now if it were not for the centre. “Now I know numbers, alphabets and I can even write. I might not have the knowledge that I have today if I did not get the chance”.

For families in Afama Bancha, they also have other reasons to celebrate the centre. “When children are at home, we cannot work properly”, says Assefa. “Now we are free to work, and we also know that they are in a better and safe environment. They get all necessary teaching and playing materials too”, he adds.

This has led to increased demand of application from the community. However, the centre has limitation of capacity and cannot accommodate all the children who show up with the interest of joining. The local government has already taken the initiative to replicate the experience and has started implementing “0” class as an early learning school inside the primary school.

2.3. Challenges and lessons learnt

While in general, the ECCD projects have reached good results, inevitably, challenges have emerged during the implementation. The challenges include challenges in the project monitoring and management, responding to changing public policies and requisites, and challenges in centre management and sustainability.

Regarding project management, the final evaluation of ECCD projects reveals that while qualitative information exists about results and changes obtained, more attention should be paid to systematically collecting data to evidence change through, for example, longitudinal studies. Technology could be utilised more systematically in project monitoring. While a significant amount of anecdotal data about change is available, the capacity of the projects to provide systematic information should be strengthened.

The ECCD project in Mozambique encountered a series of difficulties in the mid-implementation phase. Due to restructuring of the country office and high rotation of staff, the operations nearly halted for six months in 2016 before the project was properly staffed again. In addition, a new approach to ECCD implementation was adopted to increase the community ownership of the centres. Staff reductions combined with implementing this change led to uncertainties in the communities about continuity of the project and the ECCD centres, some of which were closed before the project was fully operational again. A good part of 2016 was utilised in reopening the centres.

Most of the projects work closely with local and national educational authorities, and participate in advocacy for improved early childhood education policies. However, on some occasions, changing policy and requisites for educational centres have provided challenges for the ECCD centres. In East Timor, the Ministry of Education introduced a new ECE policy in 2016 with set criteria for educational centres and teaching staff. Part of the centres established by the project did not meet the new requirements and required re-equipment. Moreover, Plan experts highlighted that the requisites for the educational level of ECE teachers were high and would be hard to fulfil in rural areas; most of the current teachers would not be officially qualified for the job they were doing. Similarly, in Pakistan, it was difficult to encounter personnel in rural areas who would have the required educational level and who would remain in the post.



Sometimes the demand for ECE education exceeded the supply. In Ethiopia, some communities introduced an afternoon shift to provide the opportunity for more children to attend the centres. The project was strict on not accepting too many children per teacher or caregiver. In Pakistan, a similar situation was solved by accepting more children leading to a high ratio of teacher to kids on some occasions. As a result, as noted in the evaluation, teachers were struggling to maintain the expected quality of education in those settings.

Strong evidence exists to support the notion that children who have attended early childhood education are more likely to enter primary schools, yet some challenges in the access to schools were noticed. In Bolivia, migration from rural areas is high, and when a family is migrating, the project workers lose track of whether children will continue attending school – which is not necessarily the case. In East Timor, it was noted that when ECCD centres are located in the communities, centres have high attendance ratios, and most of the children transition to schools. Due to longer distances to primary schools, some of the children, however, drop out during the first months because of being unable to commute the distance.

Sustainability and the ability of communities to manage ECCD centres proved to be a challenge on some occasions. In countries where most of the centres are community-managed, the ownership the communities have of their centres becomes paramount. Mixed results exist related to this: in Mozambique, 12 of the centres were closed due to the low commitment of local communities, related both to the problems in project implementation and to the preference to raise children at home. However, new centres were established in communities that demonstrated high interest and ultimately created a high rate of ownership. In countries and areas where Plan continues to operate in the intervention areas through sponsorship funds or other projects, technical support has been offered for centre management, facilitating the transition. However, the doubt remains whether all the communities have sufficient capacity to produce and provide good quality child-friendly early childhood education services.



3. EDUCATION

3.1. Summary

Plan Finland supported three Education projects as part of the 2015–2017 programme: in Cameroon, the project offered Baka ethnic minority children the possibility to study in their mother tongue for the first time; in Laos, the project supported the education of rural and minority children in Bokeo Province, being successful in increasing the school retention rates of rural children; in Uganda, the focus was on participatory school governance and pupils were involved in improving school management systems through student councils. In all three countries, education projects were a continuation of the previous programme period.

The main results of the Education projects supported by Plan Finland between 2015 and 2017 include significant gains in the school retention rates and a decrease in the dropout rates, increased incorporation of child-centred teaching methods into classrooms, and improvements in participatory school governance. All the projects promoted gender equality within schools, leading to more equal treatment of

girls and boys in the classroom, and more equal participation in children's clubs in Cameroon and children's councils in Uganda. Moreover, important steps have been taken to include children with disabilities into schools and school governance systems in some of the projects.

The main challenges included how to guarantee that skills gained in teacher training become implemented in schools, and offering continuous teacher training due to high levels of teacher rotation.

3.2. Results

Plan Finland's Education projects seek to improve girls' and boys' access to education and learning, to support school governance systems with a participatory approach and to improve the quality of education through training and developing new educational models. A special focus is made in improving access to education for children from vulnerable backgrounds, including children with disabilities and children of indigenous and ethnic minorities.



“IT IS DIFFICULT TO FIND A CHILD IN OUR SETTLEMENT WHO IS NOT ENROLLED AT SCHOOL AND WE THANK PLAN INTERNATIONAL FOR THIS. SOME YEARS BEFORE, IT WAS ALMOST THE CONTRARY WITH MANY CHILDREN WANDERING WITH CARERS WITHOUT ANY CONCERNS FOR SCHOOL”

- Mrs Elegna of Lossou, Cameroon

Table 4: Education projects – Results 2015–2017

	Girls/ Women	Boys/ Men	Total
Number of schools directly worked with			234
Number of children reached	16 000	16 200	32 200
Number of adults reached	14 300	15 300	29 600
Number of persons with disability reached			160

The Education projects supported by Plan Finland with the funding of the MFA had direct interventions in 234 schools in three countries on two continents, and the project interventions reached an estimated 32,200 children (16,000 F/16,200 M) and 22,700 teachers, parents, caregivers and government officials (14,300 F/15,300 M). In Cameroon, the project worked actively in 32 schools, in Uganda 125 schools and in Laos 77 schools. All projects report that in addition to schools targeted directly, additional schools have benefitted from the project mainly through teacher training.

Improved school enrolment

All three projects have made significant results in improving the school enrolment and retention rates in the project intervention areas. The projects have actively implemented community awareness campaigns to motivate enrolment of children from ethnic minorities or children with disabilities.

In Laos, according to district and provincial statistics, the net enrolment rate increased in two of the three project districts, reaching almost 100%. However, in one of the districts, Pakhta,

the enrolment rate dropped 10%, mostly due to high migration. The first-grade repetition rate dropped from 25% to 7% from 2015 to 2016 in the project schools, yet between 2016 and 2017 the government introduced a no-repetition policy and further data is not available. While the net enrolment rates are relatively good and equal for girls and boys, the primary completion rates are low: out of the three project regions, only Pha Oudom has reached the national primary completion rate of 81 %. The completion rate for Pakhta is 76% and for Meung 63%. Further actions are needed to maintain children in schools after the first grades.

In Cameroon, continuous sensitisation at the community level and monitoring of registration at school by community leaders and community-based organisations contributed to the increased school enrolment rate, which reached an average of 70% in the project area in 2017 while the average for Bakas in the region at the beginning of the project has been 30%. Overall, the drop-out rates in primary school have dramatically dropped for first graders from 11% in the baseline to 3% in 2017, and for pupils in second grade from 24% to 6%. However, attention should still be paid to maintain children at schools.



Equally in Uganda, an increase in the school enrolment rate for boys and girls in target schools was observed, increasing from 30% since the project beginning to 58% in 2017.

“ALL OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES HAVE MADE A CHANGE IN OUR COMMUNITY AND VILLAGERS HAVE PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THESE ACTIVITIES. I AM ONE OF THE SEVEN VILLAGE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (VECD) MEMBERS AND WE OFTEN DISCUSS HOW TO INCREASE THE SCHOOL ENROLMENT RATE AND FIND SOLUTIONS TO SCHOOL ISSUES. OVER THE FIVE YEARS, THE ENROLMENT RATE INCREASED EACH YEAR”.

- Village Head, Mueng District, Lao.

Improved teaching practices and gender equality

All Education projects include components of teacher training, they promote child-centred teaching methods, and methods to teach children with special needs or multilingual teaching.

In Uganda, the schools have become more child friendly. For example, corporal punishment reduced from 90% on the baseline to 40% by the end of the project in the schools in which the project intervened directly, as a result of 621 teachers (361F/260M) in project schools having been trained on learner-centred approaches. A further 129 teachers (56F/76M) were trained in supporting children with special needs.

In Cameroon, the monitoring report reveals that at the end of the project in 2017, 57% of teachers in the intervention area were implementing child-friendly teaching methods. 87 teachers (26F/61M) were trained in intercultural multilingual education (IME) and learner-centred approaches as an integral part of IME. 10 schools took part in an IME pilot for grades 1 to 3, which successfully increased Baka children's participation and performance in class.

In Laos, teachers' enhanced skills in teaching Lao to non-Lao speaking pupils have improved school performance and have contributed to the reduced drop-out rate of non-Lao speaking children. After introducing this component, teachers and parents report that children have become more fluent in using the Lao language, and absenteeism has reduced. Learner-centred teaching methods have become slowly adopted, as a study conducted in 24 of the 109 schools indicated. In 50% of the schools surveyed, such methods were utilised consistently.



“TODAY I VALUE ALL MY LEARNERS IN CLASS REGARDLESS OF THEIR GENDER. I USED TO ALLOW ONLY BOYS TO ANSWER MATH AND SCIENCE QUESTIONS WHILE I LET GIRLS RESPOND TO ENGLISH AND SST QUESTIONS. BUT SINCE I GOT INVOLVED IN PSGC ACTIVITIES, I SELECT ALL MY LEARNERS— BOTH GIRLS AND BOYS—TO RESPOND TO ALL QUESTIONS IN CLASS”.

- Bernanda, teacher at Morikiswa P/S, Tororo district, Uganda.

Promoting gender equality and schooling for girls were continuous goals in all of the Education projects. In Cameroon, both girls and boys now have access to children's clubs and girls' representation rate in leadership positions in these clubs reached 42%, while in Laos, monitoring sessions conducted by Plan demonstrate that teachers largely pay equal attention to boys and girls in the classroom and give equal opportunities for boys and girls to answer questions and share opinions. Equally, a survey of 80 students revealed that children feel they are being treated equally within the classroom. In Uganda, teacher training on gender issues has contributed to teachers being more sensitive to gender roles. Uganda took measures to ensure that children's council representatives include both girls and boys, and to ensure participation of both mothers and fathers into the parents meetings and workshops. Challenges still remain: girls are disproportionately burdened with housework, and adolescent pregnancy and early marriage still remain as problems to be tackled.

Participatory school management

Both Uganda and Laos have implemented processes to improve school management systems. In Laos, special attention was paid in training authorities, principals and teachers on

the new school-based governance guidelines that were finished in 2016. However, children's participation in school governance remains limited in many schools and principals generally have limited experience in involving children in school management. Parent-Teacher Associations were established in almost half of the schools, and training was provided on school management to teachers and the communities alike. Yet, the project recognised that it will take time until new practices of more participatory management will become rooted in all communities.

In Uganda, the 125 schools participating in the programme have become more child friendly, they better address the basic needs of children and grant better possibilities for children to influence school-related matters. This was enabled by establishing functional structures to improve children's participation, School Councils, and improving teacher and parental engagement through Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA) and School Management Committees (SMC). Through better understanding of school governance bodies, children's capacity to identify problems and to seek assistance have increased, and 82% of the children report that they are being consulted by student councils. The participation of parents in their children's

education has increased as well: most parents believe that the responsibility for a child's education lies not only with the school but with parents as well (the opinion varied between 99% and 57% among the project districts), and they increasingly discuss with teachers matters related to the education of their children.

The use of an SMS-based school monitoring system in school governance has been vital for revealing the gaps that exist within the school governance system in Uganda. On many occasions, SMS messages revealed inconsistencies in the roles of the inspectorate and of parents in promoting transparent school governance. Almost 200,000 messages were recorded in the SMS monitoring platform and 47% of these messages were from the children while the rest were from parents, teachers and local leaders.

In Cameroon, school clubs for children were introduced for the first time during the project period. At the end of the project, 38 clubs were established in 32 communities to increase the participation of children in school-related matters. Most of the children's clubs extended their work to the community, participating in environmental

campaigns and participating in awareness raising campaigns to enrol out-of-school children to schools.

"346 GIRLS AND 69 BOYS IN UGANDA WERE ABLE RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER DROPPING OUT AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT ACTIVITIES."



Participating in a Children's Council helps to build confidence

Federes is a 13-year-old female student at one of the project schools in Kamuli, Uganda. Before the PSGC project started, her school routine consisted of attending classes, playing with her few friends and then going home. She was shy and did not even think that one day she would stand in front of the whole school and address the audience. "As a young village girl, I never even felt the need to be a leader at the school level," she remarks.

When the PSGC project was introduced in her school in 2015, the children's council as a channel for the children to participate in school governance was formed. Federes was elected as a council member representing her class, P5. "For the first time I was a leader at school and even though I didn't know my role as a council member, I was happy my fellow children had elected me to represent them," she explains.

"As council members we were trained in our roles and responsibilities, communication and decision skills and how to conduct meaningful council sessions. Our Patrons, too, continued to mentor us to ensure we understand what we are supposed to do as a children's council. These enhanced our

communication skills, our ability to conduct meaningful council meetings and above all built confidence."

Today Federes is a confident girl, she represents her fellow children in SMC and PTA meetings and addresses her fellow children during school assemblies to explain the role of the school council. "In our school, no child had ever attended any parents meeting to make contributions on issues being discussed, but I have" says Federes. She adds, "today I have become more responsible because now I reach out to help my fellow children both at school and home." But most importantly, "I am proud that as a children's council we have been able to create change in our own issues. For example, we engaged parents and they agreed to increase the quantity of maize each child brings to school for lunch from 3kg in term one of 2016 to 6kg in term two."

Federes hopes that this practice can continue in her school as well as being rolled out to other schools because it empowers children to take charge of issues related to them, and create change on issues that affect the children, but have not been prioritised before.

Advocacy and work with local authorities

All the projects work in close cooperation with local and district authorities. As a result of continued work to promote Baka rights in Cameroon, for example, Plan Cameroon was appointed as a member of an inter-sectorial platform of institutions working with vulnerable minorities. In addition, the Government of Cameroon approved the IME model created by the project for lower grade curriculum contextualised for Baka culture and language, and the curriculum has been used as a model for multilingual education for other indigenous groups.

In Uganda, Plan has actively promoted the model for child participation in school management at the national level and has provided training on the issue to national authorities and other CSOs. Uganda's national child participation strategy 2017–2021 was developed with active support from the project and was approved in 2016. The project has also participated in the review of the Education Act.

The local government of Lira and Tororo debated an ordinance to recognise children's councils as one of the key platforms for meaningful child engagement. At the national level, children's participation in decision making helped the Ministry of Education and Sports to transform National Children's Council into an authority with more power and an increased budget allocation.



In Laos, projects are required to be implemented hand-in-hand with the government, thus a close working relationship with government educational institutions was established right from the beginning. For example, teacher trainings are part of the official teacher training curricula. This means that district education officers become familiar with the new approaches already at the project implementation phase, contributing positively to the take-up of new methods and, later, the sustainability of the project.

Sustainability

Sustainability of the project interventions is being tackled differently in each of the project countries. In Laos, it was observed that the three-year project produced promising results but the timeframe was too short to guarantee permanent change in teaching quality. Plan International will continue to support a phase-out project with a similar approach in the intervention area, and Plan Finland will tackle through the new MFA-funded programme some of the key issues related to high drop-out between primary and secondary school, which was identified as a key problem in the intervention area.

In Cameroon, the project counts on revised and approved curricula for multilingual education, which should allow to continue intercultural multilingual teaching in lower grades. While government approval of IME curricula is a positive sign, concerns exist about the level of appropriation of educational authorities on multilingual education and whether the approval will translate into concrete resources.

In Uganda, the project included strong components on training, and changing attitudes related to participation of children and gender roles. Subsequent changes in behaviour are one of the key contributors to the sustainability of activities. Close cooperation with local and national educational authorities will help to ensure monitoring of the schools.



3.3. Challenges and lessons learnt

Some of the main challenges faced in Education projects were the often low educational background or low skills of teachers, especially in rural and remote areas, and high teacher-to-pupil ratios. While teacher training partially tackled this issue, high teacher rotation in some areas affected the learning outcomes. Furthermore, the role and involvement of (local) educational authorities would be key in guaranteeing sustainable outcomes and was achieved only to a certain degree within the projects.

In Uganda, the teacher-to-pupil ratio can be up to 50–100 pupils per teacher, which affected the quality of education and contributed to high dropout rates. The project engaged in a campaign to increase the number of teachers available, especially in rural schools.

In Laos, teacher-training workshops have been organised as part of the efforts to improve teaching quality; however, limited evidence exists on whether the trainings have significantly improved the implementation of child-centred teaching practices that were implemented in approximately half of the schools by the end of the project. Plan is working in close cooperation with local and district education officers in the design and delivery of teacher training, with the goal of improving teachers' use of child-centred learning techniques, yet district level authorities seemed to prefer to focus on the core subjects leaving little time for child-centred learning techniques. Lessons learned during the project from activities such as summer preschool, demonstration schools, and the new Lao to Non-Lao supplementary curriculum for ethnic-language-speaking first grade students demonstrated that teachers are willing to utilise different techniques when they are provided

with sufficient resources, training and support. The need to strengthen the quality of teaching was recognised in the project evaluation and a second project period will be implemented.

In Cameroon, concerns exist about the extent and sustainability of the IME model. The doubt is whether the model is solid enough to function without external support, and the extent to which local educational authorities have appropriated the model and will be able to support the implementation. The main concern is how children having been part of the IME pilot curriculum will adapt to a traditional curriculum should the model be discontinued. In addition, availability of teachers with Baka language skills remained a concern, though the issue was partially overcome by providing language training for other teachers. A high level of rotation of teachers and project staff—especially close to the end of the project—further made achieving sustainability and continuity of the results obtained so far difficult.

The Cameroon project report highlights that children's performance at schools improved when meals were offered at schools, and parents were more likely to send their kids to schools on days when food was available. The project introduced school gardens and communities contributed to the school feeding programme, but overall, doubts exist over whether the feeding component will remain operational after the project ends.

In Uganda, deliberate steps have been taken to incorporate children with disabilities in schools, student councils and other school management bodies and altogether 109 children with disabilities were enrolled in project schools. The remaining challenge, however, lies in the cultural and traditional perceptions concerning disabilities, since parents of children with critical disabilities generally never bring them outside the home.





4. CHILD PROTECTION

4.1. Summary

The main results of Plan Finland's three Child Protection projects included strengthening of existing informal and formal child protection structures and processes, positive changes in attitudes and behaviour at the community level regarding child protection and inclusion, and active advocacy work at national level. Plan Dominican Republic has been able to raise concerns related to teenage pregnancy and early marriage into the public discussion, and with a joint campaign with other NGOs working with Child Rights, a proposal to ban marriage for persons under 18 years was approved in the parliament and advanced into the senate. In Ethiopia, peer groups for girls have led to empowerment and improved ability of children to influence decisions about their own lives, such as continuing school instead of getting married, and prevention of HTP. In Togo, understanding about inclusion and disability have increased at the community level, and people with disabilities are increasingly being seen as integral part of their communities.

The main challenges included concerns about guaranteeing sustainability of the child protection structures and processes established, such as child protection networks and community rehabilitation centres, after the projects end.

4.2. Results

Plan Finland's Child Protection work aims to ensure the fulfilment of children's rights to protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and harmful traditional practices and seeks to guarantee the rights of children to participate in issues regarding their own development and protection.

Plan Finland supported three Child Protection projects in the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, and Togo throughout the programme period. All three were a continuation from a previous programme. The projects in the Dominican Republic and Ethiopia had a focus on preventing violence against girls and women while the project in Togo focused on promoting inclusion and the rights of people with disabilities. A fourth

Table 5: Child Protection – Results 2015–2017

	Girls/ Women	Boys/ Men	Total
Number of children reached	9 000	5 700	14 700
Number of parents reached	7 600	9 400	17 000
Number of persons with disabilities reached	2 000	1 260	3 260



project—a regional project in the Asia region—was ended in 2015 due to the MFA funding cuts. The Child Protection project in Ethiopia was a joint project with Plan Sweden. This report separates the MFA contribution in the project whenever possible but doing a full separation of the two funding streams would hinder the understanding and meaningfulness of the results obtained; thus, when it comes to changes observed at the community level or within child protection structures, the results are reported for the project as a whole.

Child Protection projects supported with MFA funding reached an estimated 14,700 children (8,800F/5,700M) and 17,000 adults (7,600F/9,400M) during the three-year period through training, peer-to-peer groups and child protection networks. This number is slightly smaller than reported in 2016 due to revision of the methods to count beneficiaries. The project in Togo reached around 3,250 (1,990F/1,260M) persons with disabilities, of which 2,250 (1,220F/1,030M) were children. The projects varied in size and scope; in the Dominican Republic, the project operated in 25 communities and reached directly around 3,000 persons, while the public media campaigns had an even wider audience. In Togo, the project had presence in 40 communities with an estimated number of 9,000 persons reached with a more extended audience for broadcasts on community radio. In Ethiopia, the project encompassed 84 communities (Kebeles) in four districts (Woredas) with an estimated 42,000 persons reached, of which 19,000 were with MFA funding.

Changing attitudes at community level

All three projects included strong components of community work, focusing on changing peoples' attitudes regarding violence against children, gender-based violence, HTP and disability. Work directed to behavioural change at the community level resulted in positive changes in all projects.

In Togo, the efforts in the community work, such as outreach activities directed at both children and adults, radio broadcasts and workshops on gender, disability and child protection, were successful in changing the attitudes towards people with disabilities. The project evaluation reveals that 96% of the project beneficiaries interviewed thought that children with disabilities have the same rights as others. 79% of targeted children demonstrated an increased knowledge about child protection, gender dynamics and violence against children and 76% of the community members demonstrated good understanding of violence against children and children's right to protection.

In Ethiopia, changing attitudes have resulted in changes in practice: the evaluation of the Ethiopia Child Protection project indicates that the project has contributed significantly to the reduction of female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage (CM) in the project intervention areas. FGM has been reduced by 50% (44% baseline to 22% evaluation), and CM has been reduced by 38% (41% baseline, 25% evaluation). In order to achieve this change, the project has actively engaged communities using community conversations, intergenerational dialogues, awareness raising rallies, learning workshops, experience sharing events and other meetings on children's rights as tools for challenging prevailing norms and attitudes. Community members are now more likely to take action against HTP: according to the evaluation, parents and community members reported 1,358 cases of child marriage, FGM and child labour to child protection services by the end of the project while 286 such cases had been identified in the baseline. Many of the circumcisers themselves have banned FGM and participate in the anti-FGM efforts.

One of the success stories in Ethiopia has been the establishment of peer education groups for girls to protect them from harmful traditional

practices. The groups receive training, educate their peers, and jointly tackle issues such as early marriage or school absenteeism if identified in their communities or at school. Engaging young girls and boys as change agents has not only increased their knowledge about HTP and violence, but also contributed to increasing self-esteem and self-confidence. Girls have a greater voice over decisions related to their future, such as continuing their education, traditionally being taken by parents. Children also have more knowledge about existing child protection mechanisms. While 26% of the children surveyed in the evaluation stated that they had reported cases of HTP to informal or formal authorities, 38% admitted that they knew how and where to report such cases.

In the Dominican Republic, the positive impact of community awareness raising was equally highlighted in the project evaluation. 568 children aged 8 to 18 in five provinces completed a series of trainings on child protection, gender-based violence, and related themes through art, poetry, drama and other creative methodologies. 74% of them demonstrated a good understanding of violence against children and existing child protection systems, and are better able to protect them from violence. In addition, 50 young men have received prolonged training in gender issues with an aim of increasing their awareness of existing unequal gender relations and norms in order to function as change agents among their peers and at schools. This methodology has been successful in challenging and changing attitudes of youth regarding gender norms and roles. Other awareness raising issues include training for parents, the training of 40 school

counsellors and mass celebrations on different celebration days, including women's day and children's day.

Strengthening formal and informal child protection systems

All projects have incorporated activities to strengthen existing child protection structures, both informal and formal, which is essential to guarantee the sustainability of the efforts. While all projects demonstrated some advances in this theme, the grade of success varied between projects.

In Ethiopia, the project took a successful approach to work together with existing community structures, such as "Fiche-groups"—informal community-based child protection groups—and mobilise them to work against FGM, CM and GBV. Fiche-groups set their own by-laws banning harmful practices for their members, and 14 of them have set grants for awareness raising on HTPs within communities. Additional structures, such as savings groups, faith-based groups and Child Rights Committees were also trained on child protection and they have participated in reporting cases of child abuse to the official child protection units at Woreda level. Linkages and referral systems between these informal child protection mechanisms and formal child protection structures have been strengthened, and local community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs) have received training and technical support from Woreda-level child protection mechanisms. Cooperation between informal and formal actors is an important factor in the de facto reduction of HTP in the intervention area.

Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms protect girls in Ethiopia

Fiche associations are one of the community-based organisations that have had close collaboration with the project, and they are part of the CBCPMs within the project area. At district level, the project established and strengthened 28 fiche associations—one per Kebele—reaching 2,900 households. Groups received training on harmful traditional practises, child protection mechanisms and resource mobilisation and the project has provided additional technical and material support for the groups.

14 fiche associations have allocated a separate grant for community mobilisation and awareness raising on issues that affect the welfare of children within the communities. The groups have provided training to 14,000 community members

such as uncut girl's clubs, religious leaders, clan leaders, circumcisers and parents. In addition, all 28 fiche groups have incorporated articles in their by-laws that prohibit members from practicing HTP and GBV. Agreeing to these rules has been set as a pre-condition for new members.

"In the last summer, no single girl was circumcised in our Kebele. This is due to the fact that we have trained girls and their parents on the impact of female genital mutilation. We are preventing this evil practise from occurring in our Kebele. If any case happens, we are the ones responsible to report and follow up until a final decision is given by the Court," said Mr. **Atenafau Doyamo**, chairman of Melgano Kolisho Fiche Association.



In Togo, the project evaluation confirmed that child protection services in each district are now more sensitive to disability inclusion measures, and social welfare services follow up on cases of violence, including violence against children with disabilities. All 27 cantons (an equivalent to municipality or sub-district) that were part of the project have community action plans that include children with disabilities and 83% of them have allocated budget lines for it. Accessibility was improved in some schools and services,

but still remains an issue: for example, 60% of schools still lack accessibility measures. Through supporting community-level structures, such as CBCPM and Community Based Rehabilitation Centres (CBR), children with disabilities have better services available. Children who participate in activities organised by CBR centres have seen not only their condition improve but they have regained self-confidence when participating in socio-educative activities and inclusive games.

In the Dominican Republic, the project evaluation concluded that the work with strengthening the role of local child protection services reached the goals set to it only partially. Community-based child protection networks set up during the previous project phase have continued to operate, and the networks have received training and technical assistance from Plan project personnel. 17 of the 25 networks formed advocacy plans concerning child protection issues, yet only 4 networks have actively engaged in advocacy with local authorities. The aim to create linkages and synergies between the informal community-based protection networks and municipal-level child protection services did not succeed as planned: differences in scheduling resulted in joint workshops being implemented only during the last months of the project, leaving no room for further follow up or capacity-building. This brings a challenge to the sustainability of project activities.

Volunteering for the most vulnerable

Miss **Gentile** is a 29-year-old Community Based Rehabilitation agent in the canton of Ahassomé in Togo, and a mother of three children. Since 2015, she has been involved in working with children with disabilities in her community. She is a community volunteer responsible for facilitating the implementation of CBR activities, raising awareness about disability, its prevention and care. She engages in promoting the rights of people with disabilities and helps to locate, identify and monitor children with disabilities through home visits, school visits and visits to training workshops. She does functional rehabilitation for children requiring simple physiotherapy procedures, provides advice for the medication of children with epilepsy, and refers other children to appropriate care structures. Moreover, she collaborates with resource persons such as health professionals, teachers, social workers other stakeholders involved in promoting the rights of children, especially those with disabilities.

"With all these tasks", she says, "the job

of a CBR agent is not easy. To get there, you have to organise, be humble, patient, courteous and especially love children."

After the training received, Gentile has been able to raise awareness throughout her community to mobilise funds and support the journey of a boy with a cleft lip in Lomé for a surgical operation as part of the collaboration with the initiative "Chain of Hope".

Today, the community of Ahassomé has a CBR space for the supervision of children with disabilities. Gentile and her counterpart CBR agent organise themselves to facilitate work with children with disabilities and different CBR clubs in that space.

Ms. **Mawoulawoe** testifies: "I have a child with disabilities who participates in activities in the CBR space. Since then, I find him happy. At home, he assists in the household and is no longer a burden for us. It is thanks to the work of Gentile and her counterpart and we are proud to participate in the activities to which they invite us."

Advocacy and cooperation with local and national authorities

Plan Togo engaged with other organisations working with disability and child rights, for example to help the network of NGOs working for Child Rights, FODDET, to become more disability sensitive with an aim that FODDET would support the inclusion work of all its member organisations. FODDET, on the other hand, was active in the revision process of the child code. Equally, Plan Togo was active in promoting changes to the people with disabilities social protection policy, a process that remains pending.

In the Dominican Republic, significant advances were made in the field of advocacy. Plan DR was successfully advocating for elimination of exceptions for under-18 marriages – a proposal that was approved in the parliament and is pending in the Senate. The project contributed to this success with the campaign “#18NoMenos” conducted in 2017. The campaign “one country for the children” conducted together with Coalition

of NGOs for Infancy promoted issues related to child rights during presidential and municipal elections in 2016, under which 150 candidates made public commitments in favour of promoting child rights in the country. Both campaigns received significant public attention in social and print media. In addition to public campaigns, Plan DR conducted investigations related to child protection systems, early marriage and teenage pregnancy with the support of the project to provide evidence on the prevalence of these issues within the society and to raise up the issues into public discussion and debate.

Regarding strengthening civil society organisations, the project worked closely with the member organisations of the Coalition of NGOs for Infancy through joint campaigns and initiatives. The Advocacy Specialist project supported the Coalition to enhance advocacy skills of the member organisations and by the end of 2017, the Coalition had its own advocacy plan.

Plan DR was able to generate good working relations with governmental institutions responsible for child protection and was invited to be a member of the Committee for the Elimination of Violence against Children and the interinstitutional committee monitoring the National Plan to Prevent Pregnancy in Adolescents. Active advocacy helped the organisation to form alliances with UN organisations and NGOs working with children, which are expected to contribute positively to the advocacy efforts in the future. While the project contributed to the advocacy efforts of Plan DR with its strong focus on advocacy, overall the advocacy work related to child protection and reducing GBV is a combined effort of the whole Plan office in the Dominican Republic with additional funding from other projects.



In Ethiopia, due to the nature and political situation of the country, the focus was on working with the government rather than on direct advocacy. Cooperation with different governmental organisations led to increased support for law enforcement against female genital mutilation, child marriage and gender-based violence, and advocacy efforts made by various community groups and organisations increased the responsiveness of the formal protection mechanism against FGM, CM and GBV. For example, a tripartite agreement among law enforcement bodies (district court, prosecutor and police) was established against the practice of FGM, CM and GBV in the Bona Zuria district and special court days for women and children were assigned with a special judge, prosecutor and police officer on every Monday and Tuesday. Feedback from the community is encouraging since it has reduced the court process to a very short time in comparison to the past. The practice is highly acknowledged by the Bureau of Women and Children Affairs (BoWCA) and the government has shown interest in scaling it up to all zones and woredas of SNNPR.

In a joint 2016 assessment by UNICEF and the Overseas Development Institute, Plan's work with partner organisation Hundee in Ethiopia's Oromia region was selected as one of the few good examples of an organisation successfully addressing child marriage and Plan's work on the issue was acknowledged in a presentation by UNICEF in the national forum on harmful traditional practices.

Sustainability

The projects introduced different mechanisms to guarantee sustainability. First and foremost, changed attitudes at community level are one of the main forces guaranteeing the protection of children. In Ethiopia, the government has taken the decision to support existing regional child protection networks, guaranteeing continuity of the actions in the future. Some of the project activities will also continue in Ethiopia: some of the districts will be part of Plan Finland's new programme focusing on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and some of them will continue receiving support from Plan Sweden for a phase-out period. In the case of the Dominican Republic project, interventions were conducted in areas where Plan DR has a strong presence through sponsorship activities, and some of the local programme units have included activities for the work against GBV in their operational plans, while others continue to provide monitoring and support for the community-based activities.

In Togo, the ownership of communities about inclusion is demonstrated by the fact that

community development plans now include budget lines for children with disabilities. The project operated through partnerships with local organisations working with children with disabilities, which will have strengthened capacity, and will continue to work with the rights of the children with disabilities after the project ends. Post-funding action plans were conducted in a participatory manner with the local authorities and communities to define the roles and responsibilities of each party to guarantee functioning of central activities such as CBR centres, CBCPMs and children's clubs.





4.3. Challenge and lessons learnt

The availability of information on the situation of children at municipal and district levels is often scarce and difficult to access. In the Dominican Republic, the project has created synergies with other Plan projects to conduct research and produce materials that illustrate and analyse the situation in project areas in order to conduct evidence-based programmatic and advocacy work.

The child protection project in the Dominican Republic was highly successful in implementing the training on gender equality directed at young men. These trainings are based on the Plan International methodology “champions of change” that have been successful in transforming gender attitudes in this difficult-to-reach group. The programme consists of a number of consecutive sessions in which issues related to gender norms and stereotypes are being discussed. The youth, then, will reproduce trainings amongst their peers. The good experience from the Dominican Republic with this methodology encouraged Plan Finland to expand the experience and to incorporate it into the new programme and to other countries as well.

Changing people’s attitudes and behaviour is challenging and requires time; achieving

permanent results within short project timeframes is difficult. In the Dominican Republic, it was found that when training and awareness raising are conducted among peers—with the participation of community volunteers instead of external trainers—the knowledge and capacity at the community level is enhanced and the sustainability of the activities increases. In Ethiopia, community conversations have been identified as a safe space in which people come together for thoughtful dialogue about shared values and actions. Difficult issues can be tackled in these discussions, leading to more permanent changes. In a similar manner, peer groups for girls in Ethiopia have been proven to be an effective method of changing attitudes at the community level. In addition, it can be highlighted over and over again that discussions among religious leaders and the involvement of influential persons at the community level are often crucial to achieve change. Change is a long-term process, however, and harmful traditional practices and traditions may remain hidden in the communities for a prolonged time even after general attitudes begin to change.

Prolonged and continued exposure to project activities and training tends to result in more permanent changes in individual’s attitudes and helps to widen the understanding of often complex issues of protection against violence,



gender equality and child rights. The evaluation of the child protection project in the Dominican Republic revealed that groups of children that participated in training programmes in two consecutive years had a significantly wider understanding about the concepts and issues related to child protection and GBV compared to the children that had only participated in the training once (no comparison to children who had not attended any activities was made). While the finding is rather self-evident, continuation of activities is often overlooked in project design with a pressure to demonstrate higher efficiency (money spend/beneficiary).

In Ethiopia, security problems in the Amhara and Oromia regions had an impact on planned project interventions. In addition, the Charities and Societies Law (ChSA law), which prohibits

resident charities from directly working on human rights issues, limits the speed and quality of project implementation. Close coordination with government officials is required to achieve sustainable change, but often resulted in delays in project implementation due to their busy schedules. High staff rotation at government institutions creates a challenge in achieving results and long-term change, as the same trainings and negotiations must be undertaken numerous times.

A meningitis epidemic hit the project area in Togo in early 2016. Resources were transferred to tackle the epidemic, which resulted in delays in the implementation of the project. Many activities planned for 2016 were transferred to the final year of the project. Political instability in 2017 further affected the project activities.



5. YOUTH ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

5.1. Summary

Youth Economic Empowerment work in the Dominican Republic has increased technical and entrepreneurship skills of 384 young people (239 F/145 M), 19% of the youth secured employment after completing technical training, and 17 youth entrepreneurial activities were active by the end of 2017. The project was successful in building alliances with organisations promoting youth entrepreneurship, and raising up the need to include needs of marginalised youth into existing governmental programmes and policies on entrepreneurship.

In Uganda, SmartUp Factory hubs were successful in changing the mindsets of marginalised young people from being a problem to becoming a problem-solver through training on innovation, design thinking and entrepreneurship, and engagement in the activities of SmartUp hubs. In Ethiopia, the first training for youth started in 2017 and the offer included ICT skills

and English complemented with life-skills and entrepreneurship skills. Overall, participating in the SmartUp factory equipped youth with general skills that would help them to work more systematically towards their future goals. A total of 3,300 young people (1,600 F/1,700 M) benefitted from SmartUp activities during 2015–2017.

The challenges in the Dominican Republic included difficulties in accessing funding for youth enterprise ideas, finding good corporate partners to offer traineeships and potential employment in the project intervention areas and logistical difficulties faced by youth from distant communities both related to access to training and operation of youth enterprises. Equally in Uganda, challenges included financing and geographical distance and, in addition, rapid scale-up of the number of SmartUp hubs generated a situation in which the programme had difficulties in meeting the managerial needs of the hubs for a while.



5.2. Results

The aim of Youth Economic Empowerment programming within Plan is to improve employment opportunities for youth by providing market-driven, good quality technical training, and to promote entrepreneurship supporting youth-led self-employment. The specific focus of YEE programming is improving young women's access to the labour market.

Initially, the MFA-funded programme 2015–2017 included two YEE projects: “Social and Economic Empowerment of Youth” in the Dominican Republic and the “Youth Economic Empowerment Project” in Pakistan. However, funding YEE project in Pakistan was ended as part of the savings measures established after MFA funding cuts. Fortunately, the project was continued with funds from other donors. Youth employment was also being supported in Uganda and Ethiopia, where SmartUp Factory hubs, originally part of Plan Finland's innovation work, sought to foster innovation and entrepreneurship within marginalised youth. Due to different origins, these two projects did not follow the same structure and indicators as other projects supported in this programme; instead, they allowed more room for experimentation and learning from experience.

Altogether 384 young men and women completed short and mid-term technical training courses in the Dominican Republic and 19% of them managed to secure paid employment by the end of the project. Courses were mainly provided by the National Institute for Technical Training (INFOTEP), but other course providers were utilised especially on courses for Assistant Nurses and Agriculture. Especially the trainings for assistant nurses received positive ratings from youth in terms of post-training employment opportunities and self-transforming experience for the students, many of whom have become active in their own communities.

Altogether 90 young people took part in training on entrepreneurship creating 34 business plans out of which 17 were operational at the end of the project. Due to difficulties in finding funding for youth-led initiatives, seed capital was provided to 12 initiatives with the support of other projects. The main challenge remains a lack of seed funding or other financing for youth-led enterprises, which have very limited resources and are forced to scale up slowly.

The project created functioning synergies with other initiatives that promote youth employment and entrepreneurship in the project area. Cooperation with other initiatives such as “Chispación,” a network organising youth-entrepreneurship-promoting events, resulted in increased awareness of entrepreneurship as an option for youth and has helped to motivate young entrepreneurs to become involved with the project. Youth from disadvantaged background, who have not been traditionally part of these kinds of events, have now also been able to attend entrepreneurship-promoting events. In addition, project specialists have actively promoted the addition of marginalised youth and youth-led entrepreneurship into the legal framework for entrepreneurship.

All in all, the project was a pilot project and as such contributed to the increased capacity of Plan DR to implement activities supporting youth employment. Plan DR has created curricula for training on entrepreneurship, life skills, employment skills and ecological skills with the support of the project. These trainings were already implemented in other Plan projects. The project also gained a grant from Plan Finland innovation competition (also with MFA funds) to experiment with training for girls in coding, assisting Plan DR to further test and re-think methods to promote youth skills creation and employment.

In Uganda, the SmartUp Factory was opened in Kampala in 2015 and the experience was scaled up in 2016 to new SmartUp Factory hubs in Gulu, Alebtong, Tororo and Kamuli. The SmartUp Factory team consisting of Plan staff and youth champions provided management training to the hubs in order to enable them to engage young people in an innovation process. The youth participated in several sessions on life skills development and other training programmes, including innovation training, entrepreneurship, computer applications development and design thinking. A total of 3,264 young people (49.1% female) went through the training and mentorship process. 95% of youth interviewed in the final evaluation agreed that they had gained adequate skills for them and 75% of the youth reported being satisfied with the programme and the skills it was providing. The main result was a positive mindset towards innovation and work. The youth also highly valued the flexibility the programme offers in seizing opportunities that interest them.

While the ultimate goal was that youth gain skills to become entrepreneurs or will be able to engage in other income-generating activities, so far only 15 per cent of the youth engaged in the process are estimated to have their own businesses – even if 87% of the youth responded

they felt empowered to start their own business. Improved confidence, life-skills and leadership skills were the main takeaways for the youth taking part in the training.

In Ethiopia, the SmartUp Factory initiative became fully operational in early 2017 with 75 young people enrolled. The training on offer in the first phase included training on Entrepreneurship, ICT, English, life-skills and CV building, literature, art and drama as well as gender and reproductive health. The hub was also engaged in experience sharing and learning, for example with a visit from SmartUp Kampala in Uganda. The young people themselves reported having gained more self-confidence and self-awareness after joining the programme. The community outreach component of the programme helped the youth to become more active members of their communities, identifying problems and seeking solutions.

Related to sustainability of the projects, both SmartUp factory projects will continue in the new MFA-funded programme. The aim of the YEE project in the Dominican Republic was to create functioning models to tackle youth employment within vulnerable youth in the country and this objective was met satisfactorily.

Aminah Nakawungi, 24, Kampala, Uganda

Aminah Nakanungu, 24, was raised in Kawempe Division in Kampala, Uganda. She learned about the SmartUp Factory project through one of the mentors in Kawempe, who had already gone through various youth empowerment trainings. Aminah saw how the project had changed her mentor's life and so she wanted to give it a try, since she was just at home without any form of employment, very timid and did not consider herself able to attract any employer or to create employment for herself.

The list of how SmartUp Factory training changed her life is lengthy: she learned how to be confident enough to face the challenges ahead. She learned how to present herself in public and maintain a professional image.

Aminah is excited about how far she's been able to come: "I am now CEO of Amyidiah Fashions in Kawempe, my rural home trading centre, with a dream of setting up a big fashion business empire" she says. But her path has not been easy. She had completed O-levels but what she required was to gain marketing and business management skills, and the Smart Up

Factory project has helped her in this.

Aminah says that not only her character but also her view of the world has changed: "Since I now have business and entrepreneurship skills, my business knowledge has grown in leaps and I can relate to a wide group of business people, which has increased my confidence. I now have first-hand experience of the notion that with great power comes great responsibility."

Aminah says she intends to sustain her business by diversifying products so as to attract different customers to her business. With her new business management skills, she has gained confidence that she can achieve her goals and is proud of who she is as a person and as an employer of fellow youth and community role model youth. "I believe that it can only get better when you receive the training of Kawempe SmartUp Factory." Her advice to young people like herself is to follow one's own path. "Each person is unique in a way, and we should use that to our advantage. Do something you like. I think the feeling you get from that is far greater than going to the moon or being the president of Uganda."

5.3. Challenges and lessons learnt

In 2015, the YEE project in the Dominican Republic decided to offer technical training through the National Institute for Technical Training (INFOTEP), an established governmental institution for technical training. Choosing an existing organisation guaranteed quality but subjected the project to the strict entrance requirements and criteria of that organisation, leaving some of the most vulnerable youth with no access. As an example, people of Haitian origin living in the Dominican Republic often have difficulties in proving their right to stay in the country after recent legislative reform that reduced the opportunity to gain or maintain residence permit, and youth with a low level of educational background might not be able to meet the required educational level to enter the courses. To overcome this, some of the trainings—such as the training on organic agriculture—were organised at the community level and with the support of other institutions.

Geographical distance in countries with limited public transport was a real hindering factor to youth participation. Both YEE in the Dominican Republic and the Uganda SmartUp Factory hubs in the departments faced difficulties in mobilising youth from distant communities to attend courses, training events and workshops. In Uganda, young people themselves identified distance as one of the factors limiting their access to training. In the Dominican Republic, Plan DR tried different options to facilitate transport, from providing daily allowances for transport and lunch to organising its own transport – which was expensive compared to the established budget. Some of the training was conducted in the communities, but overall, many of the courses were only on offer in the departmental capital cities. This issue should be better taken into account already in the project planning.

Both YEE in the Dominican Republic and SmartUp Factory in Uganda actively promoted youth entrepreneurship. However, not all young people prefer to start with their own businesses or feel confident in doing so. In the Dominican Republic, altogether 90 young people took part in entrepreneurship training, with 34 business plans created, and 17 initiatives become operational. The evaluation of SmartUp Uganda found that approximately 15% of the youth participating in SmartUp hubs managed to create their personal businesses. In both cases, improved confidence and life-skills were the main takeaways for the youth taking part in the training, even when the



training did not result in operational businesses. In both countries, limited funding options and lack of seed capital were factors that the youth identified as most affecting the possibility to set up their own enterprise.

A lesson learnt reported by the Dominican Republic was that private sector actors should have been engaged already at the planning phase of the project, to create better employment opportunities and funding for new businesses. Equally, the SmartUp factory could benefit from alliances with local actors and governmental institutions to secure funding options for youth business ideas and self-employment, according to evaluation.

Regarding the Uganda SmartUp Factory initiative, responding to increased demand of the Kampala hub and expanding to other departments simultaneously created a situation in which, for a while, the project management found it difficult to respond to the increasing demand. The newly established hubs would have required more support from the project personnel and youth mentors to become fully operational. The project now has more experience in what is required to successfully establish and manage a new hub.



6. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

6.1. Summary

Plan Finland's Global Citizenship Education (GCE) programme aims to increase the understanding of sustainable development, human rights and other development issues and to inspire people to take action for children's rights. Plan Finland's "Global School" initiative seeks to increase the capacities of children, young people and education professionals on the rights of the child and on development issues and encourages them to engage in local and international development discourse as active global citizens. The initiative organises visits to schools and other forums by child rights ambassadors, organises children's rights training for education professionals in different parts of the country, develops educational resources for children's rights and creates school partnerships to strengthen children's participation in schools.

During the period from 2015 to 2017, Plan's Global School Child Rights Ambassadors organised 2,214 sessions in 619 schools or organisations in the Helsinki region, Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Oulu and Rovaniemi, and conducted 23 training sessions for teachers on child rights issues. Altogether Plan's Global School reached nearly 40,000 children aged 5 to 18, and 2,400 adults.

In addition, Plan provides opportunities for people to participate in the promotion of global justice and the realisation of children's rights – especially girls' rights. Participation for people of different ages is made possible through the Children's Board (CB), the Young adult's network (YAN) and through volunteers. These action groups organised numerous advocacy and awareness-raising events and conducted social media campaigns on girls' rights and sustainable development throughout Finland.

Plan Finland conducted an external evaluation of the 2015–2017 Global Citizenship Education programme, including Global School, Children's Board and Young Adult's Network components. Based on the evaluation, overall the programme reached well the intended results and outcomes. The programme was well in line with national education and Plan Finland's strategies in implementing global education. The programme was also given credit for its professional, long-term, strategic and result-oriented work that could adapt well to societal and internal changes.

During the programme period, Plan Finland's Global School initiative, Children's Board, and Young Adults' Network all received funding from both the MFA and Ministry of Education and Culture, while the general volunteering programme was financed with funding from the MFA. This report represents the results in which the MFA has been the only donor or the contribution of the MFA has been significant, yet it is not always meaningful to differentiate the contribution of different donors to a particular result. For example, the salaries of coordinators for the above-mentioned volunteer groups have been covered with funds from both donors.

6.2. Results

The activities of the Global School, Children's Board (CB), Young Adults' Network (YAN) and local volunteer groups reached an estimated total of 85,000 adults, young people and children between 2015 and 2017.

The Child Rights Ambassadors of the Global School project visited 619 schools or related organisations and reached almost 40,000 children. Schoolteachers evaluated the visit's overall success as 4.5 on a scale of 1 to 5, and 89% of Child Rights Ambassadors received high quality marks from their sessions and on their use of materials and participatory methods. The Global School includes a 10-lesson study module on child rights designed for 5th and 6th grade pupils called "Lapsen oikeuksien kymppi", which was implemented in over 100 classes by the child rights ambassadors. The programme was highly valued amongst teachers: 95% of the respondents to a follow-up survey stated that the lessons well supported the implementation of the current national curriculum while at the same time bringing global aspects in a concrete way to the teaching. Further, 95% stated that the lessons had notably increased the children's understanding of child rights and global development issues. Moreover, the external evaluation reported that the 10-lesson study module had a long-term influence on students' knowledge, skills and motivation on child rights and global development issues.



During the three years, Plan Finland's Global School conducted 23 training sessions for teachers on child rights issues, focusing especially on media education and early childhood education. This in-service training (täydennyskoulutus) gathered altogether 386 teachers from pre-primary to secondary levels. Based on training feedback, 85% of the respondents had directly applied the methods and resources after three months of the training. Due to the adoption of the new national curricula, both in basic and pre-primary education, GCE training was seen as an important addition to the normal selection of in-service training by teachers.

Current issues, such as the escalating humanitarian crisis, refugee situation and the increase in terrorist attacks and hate speech, were raised as topics of concern among teachers and evoked discussion during the school workshops. In response, Plan Finland produced two workshop modules on hate speech in 2016 to be conducted in schools by Child Rights Ambassadors. The workshops aimed to provide students and teachers with the tools and knowledge to address hate speech and tackle the root causes of the phenomenon. These modules were further developed during 2017 with funding from Kone Foundation and Svenska Kulturfonden.

Plan Finland's Global School used strategic partnerships to strengthen its work and enhance the global reach of the projects, especially in relation to children's participation and humanitarian aid. Plan's Global School organised a week-long activity together with Finland's Scouter ry on humanitarian aid and

the rights of the child at the Finn Jamboree Roihu scout camp, where it reached around 6,000 children between the ages of 12 and 15. In addition, Global School participated in Educa fairs in 2015–2017 and the Nuori2017 event in Tampere. At the 2016 Educa fair, Plan's Global School presented the Finnish version of the 360° virtual reality documentary "My New Home," and distributed supporting teaching material for educators. Through the documentary and education material, students can explore issues related to forced migration and how it affects the realisation of child rights.

Collaboration and interaction between 11 Finnish and Ugandan schools across Finland and in three districts of Uganda reached 574 children. The project increased the knowledge and understanding of child rights and children's participation for both teachers and students in Finland and Uganda. According to the teachers involved, in-service training for the teachers and the exchange of 'Mystery boxes' between the schools were the most added-value elements. Overall, the project contributed to increasing teachers' understanding of pupil participation and providing them with practical skills to engage with pupils in a participatory way.

The Children's Board (CB, or "Lastenhallitus") is a 20-member advocacy group for children and young people aged 11 to 18. Between 2015 and 2017, it advocated for children's rights with a special emphasis on climate change and girls' rights. The most visible effort was the Children's Board participation in the Girls Takeover event in October 2017, an advocacy event of

Plan International organised in 66 countries simultaneously. Altogether 13 members of Children's Board replaced decision-makers and persons within influential positions in different sectors for a day—including Prime Minister **Juha Sipilä** and companies such as Nokia, Orion and Supercell—making girl's rights visible and gaining significant media attention.

During the three years, members of CB engaged actively in many campaigns. These included a joint campaign, "Step Forward," before the Paris climate negotiations in 2015 conducted in cooperation with YAN, Kepa and Climate Parents. At the end of the campaign, CB and YAN handed over to the Finnish Minister of the Environment **Kimmo Tiilikainen** a petition for better climate policy, requesting immediate action. Members of Children's Board also interviewed former President **Tarja Halonen** in a televised concert, as well as the Minister for Development **Kai Mykkänen** during Plan's International Day of the Girl event.

In addition, members of CB have participated in numerous advocacy events directed at youth during the period of 2015–2017, with an aim to inspire and engage youth to take action on global issues. They have also been active in their own schools and other arenas organising events and campaigns independently. Feedback from the CB members demonstrates that the training provided and active participation in different events have increased the self-esteem of the members and the capacity to actively work for child rights and sustainable development.



Young Adults' Network (YAN) is a community for 18 to 30-year-olds that aims to increase awareness of global issues, advocate for social and political change for sustainable development and encourage active citizenship among young adults. The main focus areas for the 2015–2017 period were gender equality and climate change, with a strong advocacy perspective. Before the parliamentary elections in 2015, YAN participated actively in a joint campaign, “Maailmantalouden tekijät,” organised by several Finnish NGOs, and contributed to the election application of the Finnish Youth Cooperation Allianssi. The “Prisoners of gender roles” campaign conducted in 2015 sought to raise awareness of gender roles and structural gender inequality through a series of events and a campaign blog.

Related to Climate Action, in 2016, YAN conducted a campaign, “IlmaStop,” to raise awareness of climate change and climate policy through a game-like installation present at three big summer events (in Helsinki and Turku, as well as the Roihu scout camp in Evo) that required participants to take action to escape a metal cage. Climate change was also discussed in local events, on social media and on the network's blog and YAN took part in the “Step Forward” campaign together with Children's Board. Together with the Plan office, YAN also worked on issues of corporate social responsibility and had a representative on Plan Finland's Board of Trustees.

In 2017, YAN participated actively in Plan's “Jokatyön oikeudet” campaign on girls' rights, and organised events in Helsinki and Jyväskylä, as well as on social media. YAN also promoted opportunities for youth for advocacy, for example through organising a panel for young municipal electoral candidates in Helsinki. Members of YAN were also part of the Steering Group of the new MFA Programme. A good part of 2017 was utilised for the planning of a future campaign on sexual and reproductive rights starting in 2018.

Plan Finland's volunteers organised a wide range of activities to provide information about girls' rights and share the results of Plan's development cooperation. Volunteers organised 277 awareness raising, global education, and advocacy events during the programme period. These included documentary screenings, visibility stunts, and library activities, among others. The number of these events rose significantly, from 44 in 2015 to 157 in 2017. In addition, volunteers arranged 153 photo exhibitions. The most active areas were Oulu, Turku, Lappeenranta, Helsinki and Tampere. The number of volunteer-organised events increased after introducing new, easy-to-implement event

concepts that required less support from Plan Finland's office. A greater number of people were reached with fewer resources compared to previous years.

Celebration of the International Day of the Girl in October 2017 inspired volunteers to action across Finland. 13 public monuments, landmarks and shopping centres in Finnish cities were ‘pinkified’ with lights or accessories, accompanied by programme on girls' rights. In addition, 92 Finnish libraries celebrated the day with theme events and exhibitions.

“THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF PLAN'S VOLUNTEERS, AN ESTIMATED 26 900 PEOPLE AROUND FINLAND LEARNED ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF GIRLS AND CHILDREN.”



6.3. Challenges and lessons learnt

Two trends influenced the Global Citizenship Education work during 2015–2017: the escalating humanitarian crisis and influx of refugees, hate-speech, and climate change made GCE work even more relevant but led to revision of some of the educational contents and introducing new themes such as education about and against hate-speech. The unanticipated MFA funding cuts in 2015 resulted in turbulent times for domestic personnel, and projects were restructured. While the Global Citizenship Education project still reached most of its objectives, the level of quality assurance was lowered, and the CB, YAN and volunteers lost a significant portion of their organisational support. Data for a number of the result indicators could not be collected due to a lack of human resources and uncertainty over the activities to be maintained.

To respond to the external changes and demand, Plan's Global School established new partnerships and explored new methods of working and service delivery, especially in the field of ICT. The Global School, for example, participated in a joint global education and training project called "Koulu maailmaa muuttamaan" together with a number of other Finnish CSOs. The "My New Home" documentary, meanwhile, explores virtual reality technology in development communication, and the Global School webpage and online material bank were renewed during 2016.

The YAN and CB attempted to restructure themselves with the support of only part-time coordinators, relying mainly on self-organisation and coordination by the young people

themselves. It proved to be a challenging task, and in 2016, the numbers of people reached and events organised were lower than expected. The YAN network spent still a good part of 2017 in trying to restructure the operations. A decision was taken within Plan Finland to combine volunteering activities for young adults with regular volunteering opportunities within Plan. Voluntary work will be renewed in the future to attract more young adults with new kinds of campaign activities.

The GCE-evaluation reveals that young participants require support for conducting and implementing activities, and participants doubt the real possibilities to influence the internal processes of Plan Finland and decision-makers on a national level. In the future, Plan Finland will clarify the role of Children's Board in Plan's advocacy work to make sure that they see themselves being part of the meaningful and influential advocacy activities together with the office.

The sustainability of Plan's local volunteer groups was also weakened due to reduced supporting personnel. Well-functioning local groups require support in the form of, for example, training, material production and supporting volunteers' initiatives and some of the local groups would have needed more support for becoming more active. The new methods of cooperation, for example, the partnering with public libraries, kept the number of activities organised in line with previous years despite the funding challenges. However, the educational impact of these activities is not expected to be at the same level compared to the more labour-intensive activities of earlier years. Future priorities in voluntary work include developing new forms of participation to inspire and activate existing volunteers to enhance the impact of activities further.





7. ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS IN FINLAND

7.1. Summary

Plan Finland actively engages in advocacy work in Finland and follows dialogue on development policy and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The priority themes include promoting child rights, especially girls' rights, global gender equality and raising awareness on climate change and on development cooperation in general. Plan's advocacy work in Finland continues to be based on strong networking and evidence-based influencing through both formal channels and less formal networks.

Plan's communication functions to inform supporters and the general population about the results of the development work and also to enhance general understanding of the purpose, foundation and need for development cooperation.

Plan Finland was active in a series of advocacy campaigns and events throughout the

programme period. These included joint CSO campaigns before the elections in 2015 and the activities of the International Day of the Girl – especially the Girl's Takeover.

The communications team continued to be active in producing and publishing a wide range of high quality material on Plan's work and on child rights, on development cooperation and on its results, both through Plan's digital channels as well as in the Plan magazine.

7.2. Results – advocacy

The strategic importance of influencing and advocacy is highlighted in both Plan Finland's strategy approved in 2015 as well as within Plan International globally. The main goals for advocacy during 2015–2017 were promoting child rights, especially girls' rights, in the Finnish foreign policy, raising awareness of the effects of climate change on children and

young people, advocating for climate change mitigation and policy, as well as raising support for development cooperation in general. During the reporting period, Plan's advocacy work in Finland underwent structural changes, since cuts in funding from the MFA and consequent staff layoffs affected the coordination and implementation of advocacy work. In 2017, an internal advocacy capacity assessment was conducted, which was followed by developing a strengthened, more focused and effective advocacy plan.

One of the strengths in advocacy in Plan Finland is the participation of groups of volunteers, such as Children's Board and Young Adults' Network, in initiating and conducting advocacy activities, which has been further strengthened during the programme period. Children and youth help to create and deliver the messages that are most relevant for them.

In 2015, prior to the parliamentary elections, Plan Finland participated in a joint advocacy campaign, "Maailmantalouden tekijät", with other CSOs to promote global justice amongst electoral candidates and the wider public. The campaign did not manage to prevent the heavy cuts effected in the Finnish development budget immediately after the elections. To reverse the cuts, Plan Finland participated actively in a joint CSO campaign against budget reductions, and while the budget cuts were maintained, the campaign received broad public support and raised awareness of the importance of development co-operation. Advocacy following the elections also included Plan's Children's Board participation in organising a training session on children's rights for some of the newly elected parliament members.

In 2016 and 2017, Plan Finland participated actively in discussions on the Finnish implementation of the Agenda 2030 on different forums, and advocated for a stronger emphasis on Finnish global responsibility, gender equality and policy coherence. Plan Finland also contributed to the joint CSO recommendations and commentaries and participated in workshops to define national level SDG indicators. In 2017, Plan Finland compiled a section on global gender equality to a joint CSO follow-up report "Finland and the 2030 Agenda." In July 2017, Plan Finland formed part of the delegation of Finland to the High Level Political Forum in New York and co-organised a side-event on the Finnish maternity package and SRHR issues together with the MFA.

In order to influence and support the implementation of the priority area of women's



and girls' rights in the Finnish development policy, Plan Finland together with UN Women commissioned a study by an external consultant on the topic, which was released in 2017. The findings and recommendations of the study were shared with the MFA and other stakeholders and they have been used, for example, by the Evaluation Unit of the MFA and Development Policy Committee in planning their own evaluation and annual report, respectively.

Celebrations of International Day of the Girl have been used for advocacy purposes as well. In 2016, the need for a greater focus on the situation of child mothers in the Finnish development co-operation was raised. In 2017, the first ever Girls Takeover was a great success, which raised awareness on gender inequality in decision-making and was able to raise discussion on gender equality challenges in Finland.

As a part of cooperation with other organisations, Plan Finland was represented in different committees during 2015–2017, for example in the following capacities: board membership of



Kepa and Kehys, chairmanships of VaLa and Nenäpäivä Foundation, membership of the state's advisory Development Policy Committee, (Kehityspoliittinen toimikunta) and deputy membership of the Commission for Sustainable Development (Kestävän kehityksen toimikunta).

7.3. Results – communication

The focus of Plan Finland's communication is strongly on girls' rights in a global scale and Plan's programmes that are tackling the barriers for girls' education and protection.

In 2015, the communication team, together with the photographer **Meeri Koutaniemi**, produced a media bundle about the child protection programme supported by the MFA in Ethiopia. It included a photo exhibition, stories, case studies and video clips. The main theme was on how the communities, especially young girls and boys, are changing attitudes towards harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation. The material resulted in large media visibility, reaching even international publications, such as the Huffington Post, and attracted audiences in national events, e.g. in Maailma Kylässä and SuomiAreena.

During the same year, Plan Finland also collaborated with the TV producer **Arman Alizad** to produce a documentary on the situation of refugee girls in Ethiopia.

In 2015–2016, Plan collaborated with a group of Finnish artists on a campaign called Wings To Fly, in which the artists created various creative performances and actions to support

Plan Finland's programmes for girls' rights. The campaign ended on Women's Day 2016 with a TV concert, broadcast by YLE, for which the communications team produced TV inserts from India. The inserts introduced some of the main challenges that girls are facing—such as discrimination, poverty, sexual violence, child labour, early marriages and lack of education—and showed how Plan is tackling these problems.

In 2016, Early Childhood Education, Care and Development as a theme was highlighted in communications. The communications team created an audiovisual stand for events where people could experience ECCD work. It was present at Maailma Kylässä, SuomiAreena and some other popular events.

In 2017, communications team produced videos, stories and a photo exhibition from Jordan, where Plan Finland, funded by the MFA, is supporting a humanitarian project to assist Syrian refugees. The focus was strongly on children, especially girls, and their specific needs. The support our ECCD centres are offering to the refugee families was one of the focus themes. The communication material gained a large audience both on social media and external media and was present at a number of events, including Maailma kylässä and SuomiAreena.

Each year, Plan Finland has gained large publicity around 11 October, the International Day of the Girl. In 2016, Plan gained top results in external media and social media by launching an imaginary maternity package for an 11-year-old mother. In 2017, the visibility was exceptional with Girls Takeover, when girls from our Children's Board took over positions of major leaders,



e.g. Prime Minister of Finland and the CEO of Supercell. Especially the collaboration with YLE produced major visibility in all important channels, TV news, radio and social media, resulting in a significant audience towards which to raise awareness on the importance of girls' rights.

Plan Finland published a customer magazine Plan four times each year – altogether 12 issues during the programme period 2015–2017. The focus of each issue was on the results Plan's development cooperation work is achieving through the support of donors and partners. On the other hand, Plan raised awareness on the challenges that the most vulnerable children in the world, especially girls, are facing, in order to explain the purpose of our work. At the end of 2017, a large survey on the Plan magazine was commissioned. The results showed that a majority of readers find the magazine vital for their support. Around half of the supporters read the magazine regularly, 9/10 at least once a year.

7.4. Challenges and lessons learnt

The funding cuts to development cooperation were the main challenge during the period and resulted in the loss of several staff members engaged in advocacy and communications work.

The funding cuts and changing atmosphere in Finland presented an even greater need for advocacy and awareness raising – with fewer resources available. The challenge was met by prioritising and reorganising human resources within the organisation.

The communications team struggled to find new ways to communicate efficiently about Plan Finland's programmes and development issues in general with significantly fewer staff and resources, especially during 2015–2016. Visibility in external media suffered since it was not possible to offer so many cases to the media as before. Prioritising the most significant tasks and contents was an important learning area during this period.

The simultaneous crises of traditional media houses meant that fewer journalists had time to travel, investigate and participate in seminars and events. It was challenging to find ways to raise girls' rights to the public discussion, but ultimately efficient ways were found by creating and sharing strong narratives, quality photos and other contents.

In addition, a large shift from traditional media towards social media was visible during the period. Learning to cope with the new ways of communicating in the rapidly changing social media environment and bringing varied contents to suitable platforms was important for our success.



8. FOCUS THEMES 2015–2017

Plan Finland has accumulated specialised knowledge and expertise in certain themes such as digital development, innovations, gender and inclusion. The aim with the work on these focus themes is to support country offices with expertise on these themes and to strengthen the work of Plan International in these thematic areas. Specialisation in these themes can be understood in terms of Plan Finland's added value, and this value is recognised globally within Plan International. Whilst the above-mentioned themes have been a priority for Plan Finland for several years, new themes have been introduced based on their presumed importance. Resilience work to respond to climate change was introduced into the programme in 2015 and in 2016, and a decision was taken to incorporate strategic private sector work into the programme.

The MFA funding cuts in 2015 severely affected some of Plan Finland's thematic expertise areas. The number of special advisor posts was reduced, amongst them a gender advisor. Without the gender advisor, support on gender issues to the federation and to programmes was

reduced. The resilience pilot component was also reduced in size and scope. Nevertheless, new openings were also made, and strategic work with the private sector on human rights issues was introduced into the programme from the beginning of 2016.

The results of Plan Finland's thematic focus areas from 2015 to 2017 are presented in this chapter. Most thematic areas involve a two-tier approach: (1) to provide support to the existing and ongoing policy processes at the federation level and (2) to support the mainstreaming of the approach or theme at the programme level through direct work with country offices.

8.1. Gender equality

Plan International's programmatic approach identifies a strong link between human rights, eradicating poverty and advancing gender equality; therefore, gender equality is an integral part of every programme design. Approval of the new global strategy for Plan International in 2016

further strengthens this view; complex gender and power relations should be understood and addressed in programme design in all programmes and projects. Within the MFA programme 2015–2017, gender equality is being tackled in two ways: (1) ensuring that gender issues are mainstreamed in all projects and (2) implementing projects and activities that specifically focus on gender issues.

During the programme period, all of Plan Finland's projects included gender aspects in project design and implementation. Depending on a country's context, project activities included training Plan and project staff, training local community members on gender issues and ensuring gender equality at activity level, for example encouraging equal participation of boys and girls or women and men.

Plan Finland had a goal that all of the projects should be at least on the "gender aware" level on Plan's four-scale gender equality criteria by the end of programme period. Gender aware programmes seek to improve the daily condition of women and girls by addressing practical gender issues that affect them. Indeed, all of the projects reached this goal, introducing at least some activities to tackle specific gender issues, while most of the projects managed to incorporate gender issues into the projects systematically. The long-term aim is that the programmes will move towards being "gender transformative" and thereby will begin addressing the root causes of gender inequality more strategically.

Some projects were already at the gender transformative phase, such as the "Protection of Girls from Child Marriage, FGM and Sexual Violence" project in Ethiopia, which had a primary goal of tackling gender issues and changing prevailing gender norms in society. The project in Ethiopia has been successful in changing prevailing social norms and improving the status of girls in the project implementation area. More information is available in chapter 2.2.

Other projects have successfully tackled specific issues related to gender equality and girls' rights.



For example, the Child Protection project in the Dominican Republic successfully advocated changing the age of marriage to 18 years without exceptions and campaigned for reducing the adolescent pregnancy rate. The project provided intensive gender training for young men who will work as change agents in their respective communities, successfully changing attitudes within this often difficult to reach target group.

ECCD projects have actively promoted fathers' participation in parenting and early childhood education with the goals of achieving more equal parental relations and guaranteeing equal rights for girls and boys, and the ECCD evaluation reveals that signs of real change in more equal parental relations exist amongst project participants.

On a more global level, at the beginning of the programme Plan Finland actively supported gender mainstreaming in the projects: for example, Plan Finland organised a workshop for gender advisors from Plan Country Offices in June 2015 to support gender mainstreaming in the projects. Between 2015 and 2016, Plan Finland supported a process at Plan International to better include gender in ECCD, creating global guidelines and a toolkit that guide country offices in addressing gender relations in Plan's early education programmes globally.

Unfortunately, the funding cuts in 2015 affected Plan Finland's gender work significantly. From 2016 onwards, Plan Finland no longer had a full-time Gender Advisor; instead, Plan Finland had to rely on a part-time gender focal point who participates in Plan International's gender work. Project-level gender advice was provided with the country-level gender advisors together with Programme Managers in Plan Finland.





8.2. Inclusion and disability

An increased global recognition for inclusion could be observed during the programme period. The launch of SDGs, with the overarching theme 'Leave No One Behind' provided an overall framework for inclusion. At the organisational level, Plan International expanded its Gender Policy into a Gender and Inclusion policy to support the realisation of the SDGs. Plan's definition of inclusion is about bringing people into a process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society and to fully enjoy their rights. It requires addressing the root causes of exclusion and understanding how intertwined the roots of different forms of exclusion are. Inclusion involves improving the opportunities available to girls, boys, and youth, including children with disabilities, who are excluded on the basis of the social groups they identify with or are associated with, as well as respecting their dignity.

Plan Finland has been at the forefront of the Plan Federation with the theme of inclusion, having it as one of the priority themes in the MFA Programme 2015–2017. While the programme in general emphasised the importance on ensuring girls' rights, individual projects within the programme addressed further intersecting identities. Most projects were geographically located in areas where vulnerable indigenous group were situated and addressed their rights. Plan Finland further invested in disability inclusion to ensure the inclusion of girls and boys with disabilities. The reported period has been a steep learning curve on disability inclusion, both for Plan Finland and for the supported countries. While some country offices were resistant at the beginning, due to the efforts conducted with the support of the MFA programme, these countries have become advocates for disability rights beyond the MFA project and ensure incorporating children with disabilities in their new programmes. The results on the project level can mainly be presented through the changes of the lives of individuals, and changing attitudes at community level.

Figure 3: Intersecting identities



Plan Finland followed the Twin-Track approach in disability and inclusion themes:

1. Inclusion-focused projects: Projects that work primarily for the benefit of one or more of Plan Finland's priority excluded groups, especially children with disabilities and minority groups
2. Inclusion mainstreaming: Ensuring that projects, regardless of theme, seek to include children with disabilities or those from an ethnic or indigenous background in project activities.

The first approach is reflected in the education project in Cameroon that focused on the education of Baka children, an excluded ethnic group that for the first time has had the opportunity to receive education in their own language. The child protection project in Togo particularly addressed the situation of children with disabilities through the Community-Based Rehabilitation approach. More information about the results is found in the programme results chapter and annexed project summaries.

The second approach, (disability) inclusion mainstreaming, has been gradually visible in most of Plan's projects in the MFA-funded programme. Plan Finland employed a part-time disability advisor in 2015, who led the design of various resources to encourage and support the countries. The key resources developed and disseminated were:

1. [Guidelines for Consulting with Children and Young People with Disabilities.](#)
2. [Plan's Disability Awareness Toolkit.](#)
3. Plan2Inclusivize – Sport for Inclusion training programme.

As a result, most projects had components at the end of the project cycle to include children with disabilities in project activities and to improve their status at the community level. For example, in 2017, Mozambique, with the support of partners Light for the World and UHAMBO, built the capacity of caregivers in the ECCD centres, which led to increased numbers of children with disabilities who receive quality support. The findings have been documented in the learning document 'Including Children with Disabilities in Preschool Education: Experiences



of Plan International Mozambique', which will be disseminated within and outside of Plan.

At a global level, Plan Finland, in partnership with Enablement—a Netherlands-based organisation for development and disability inclusion—initiated the development of the RehApp, a mobile rehabilitation app to enhance the capacity of fieldworkers by providing information on a range of common disabilities. An impression of the RehApp can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

Zaida's story: How inclusive ECCD changed her life...



Zaida is a young lady of 18 years. She was born with a congenital condition, which affected the development of her lower limbs; as a result she was born with a deformity of both her lower limbs. Due to her impairment, her

family did not believe that she could attend school. They saw her impairment not only as a barrier in accessing school but also as a limitation to her ability to learn.

Part of the inclusive ECCD pilot in Mozambique involved community dialogues, which were held with the community and centred around a discussion about disability and the rights of people with disabilities. Zaida and her family were present at the community dialogue run in their area.

As a result, the family also learnt about the ECCD Centres, which were being supported in order to become inclusive centres for all

children, including those with disabilities.

Since then, Zaida has been attending the ECCD Centre on a regular basis. As the centre is close to her home she is able to access it fairly easily without the aid of a mobility device. While Zaida is much older than the rest of the children at the ECCD Centre, the centre has provided her with the opportunity to attend an institution of learning. She explained that she finally has a sense of purpose and no longer has to spend all her time at home. She has only been at the centre for a short period of time, but has already learnt how to write her name – something that she is incredibly proud of. She often assists the carers with the younger children and enjoys the additional responsibility that this role holds for her. Zaida's plan for the next year is to attend Primary School, so that she can continue her learning. Zaida has been a role model in her family and plans to make sure that her brother, recently born with a disability, will have access to education early on in his life, so that he does not experience the same barriers that she did.

While focusing on implementation, Plan Finland also contributed towards the data gap on the situation of children with disabilities. It supported the Plan International-led research project “Protect Us!”, carried out by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in 2015 and 2016. One of the main findings was that children with disabilities living in Malawi and Uganda are experiencing extremely high levels of violence compared to children without disabilities. Another research project supported by Plan Finland, “Identifying barriers for inclusion specific to girls with disabilities in Togo,” was developed through a partnership between Plan Togo, Plan Ireland and Plan Finland offices and researchers from Trinity College Dublin. This project sought to understand the possible root causes of gender disparity and to inform a process for designing possible policy and programme responses. Towards the end of the programme report, research was conducted to provide baseline information for the new MFA-supported programme. The study explored Child Marriage and Disability in Ethiopia and revealed a high risk of Gender-Based Violence. The below quotes are examples of the issues that need to be addressed in the new programme:

‘Disability is not a reason for early marriage but it could be a primary cause for a girl to experience rape.’

‘He is a disabled boy, how can I expect him to get married? It is hopeless. Both his life and mine are wasted.’

Lastly, Plan Finland has supported the inclusion work of Plan International at the policy level. It contributed to the development of Plan's Tackling Exclusion Framework. In 2016, Plan Finland actively participated in Plan's second Global Disability Inclusion Conference 2016 in Kathmandu, Nepal, where 20 key disability and inclusion organisations from around the globe engaged in dialogue around inclusive education. The attendees included over 30 Plan offices, including the majority of countries Plan Finland supported during the programme. All the support has led to an increased awareness of the supported Plan and partner offices, resulting in more inclusive programming and ultimately in fulfilling the rights of children with disabilities.

8.3. Corporate partnerships

Plan Finland strives to engage corporations in promoting human and child rights, and has the view that expertise and networks of the business world can help us to deliver our programmes more efficiently. Private sector collaboration has been an effective part of Plan Finland's working model for over 10 years. Plan Finland sees value in strategic partnerships with the private sector to promote child rights and saw it as meaningful to incorporate the theme into the ongoing MFA-funded programme in 2016.

In 2016, the focus was on preparatory work and on understanding how Plan Finland could better partner with companies to support Human Rights Due Diligence. Plan Finland commissioned a research project titled "Leveraging Plan's experience to promote children's rights in human rights due diligence for businesses" from Enact Sustainable Strategies Ab. with useful recommendations on how to take the work further.

The activities in 2017 were closely related to the planning process of the new MFA programme for 2018–2021. Plan Finland organised a week-long global planning workshop in Helsinki in February. Corporate partnerships in promoting child rights and gender equality were a specific track in the programme with participants from Plan Country Offices in China, India and Pakistan. The week included capacity building of Plan country office staff on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and what Plan can gain from partnering with businesses. The group visited Finnish businesses to learn about their approach to human rights.

As part of the MFA framework planning process, Plan organised a workshop "How to respect child rights in business operations in risk country communities – From good intentions to concrete actions." Around 10 Finnish companies participated in the workshop and discussion around concrete measures to protect child rights in business operations. The programme included a keynote speech from Kent Wilska from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs on the Finnish State's role in promoting the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. As a follow-up of this workshop, Plan continued the dialogue with several Finnish companies on how companies conduct human rights due diligence and how this process could better include the child rights perspective.

In November 2017, Plan Finland participated in the Business and Human Rights Forum in Geneva. The forum gave many new perspectives into NGOs' role in promoting business human

rights due diligence and built Plan Finland's capacity on the topic.

Throughout the year, child rights organisations Save the Children, UNICEF, Plan International and World Vision Finland met regularly to discuss business and human rights topics, and coordinate advocacy work on the topic. Plan International Finland also continued to actively seek corporate partners to raise match funding for Plan's projects.

Participation in the Girls Takeover event in October 2017 increased visibility and understanding of girls' rights and the importance of engaging girls in decision making not only for CB members and for the wider public, but also within the participating companies.

8.4. Resilience Building

Plan International approaches climate change adaptation through resilience building. Plan International defines resilience as "the ability of children and their communities to deal positively



with disturbances that undermine the fulfilment of their rights".

Resilience building was introduced in the MFA programme for the first time in 2015 as a response to the increasing need to respond to the effects of climate change. The aim was to first pilot Plan International's resilience building toolkit in Ethiopia and Mozambique and then integrate the resilience approach into all projects.

The sudden reduction of MFA funding affected this component and plans were reduced for the pilot projects in Ethiopia and Mozambique. Further, in early 2017, an application for change of purpose was submitted to the MFA to utilise the funds designated for Mozambique to respond to the damage caused by the cyclone Dineo to the ECCD centres in the Inhambane region. Hence, finally, a pilot project was conducted only in Ethiopia – with good results and important lessons learned for both Plan Ethiopia and Plan Finland.

In Ethiopia, resilience building was integrated into community work through training, risk and capacity mapping, and economic intervention to selected households. Resilience building training was held in 74 Kebeles, for Plan staff and government officials. Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Mapping (HVCA) and risk mapping assessments were undertaken in 51 Kebeles in four districts. Following these, resilience building activities focusing on income generation were introduced to vulnerable households. Concretely, the activities have supported 700 selected households through training and loans, which covers well the most vulnerable households in the project area, as observed by the project evaluation.

One regional-level disaster risk management (DRM) and resilience building consultative workshop was organised together with a number of government bureaus. The workshop familiarised participants with National DRM and resilience building policy, and after the workshop, the government offices have revised their plans of action to better incorporate child protection issues in DRM. The government has also assumed responsibility for coordinating a multisector approach to reduce disaster risk vulnerability and to hold monthly regional level cluster meetings on the issue.

Some projects have included resilience and DRM activities by their own initiative and with Plan Finland's support, demonstrating the perceived importance of the theme. In Bolivia, the ECCD project operates in disaster prone areas that are affected by climate change. Thus, a training component of DRM was identified as an integral part of early childhood development to guarantee that families have means to secure their livelihoods and to continue to invest in their children. The project in the Dominican Republic, meanwhile, added a component on "green skills" to the youth employment programme. In East Timor, climate change and its effects were tackled in the parenting sessions of the ECCD project.

Overall, while the resilience component was implemented on a far smaller scale than originally planned, the pilot programme and independent project initiatives have generated important learning and insight that Plan Finland can build upon in coming programmes.

8.5. Digital development

Strategic, innovative and sustainable use of technology to enhance programme impact and results has been one of Plan Finland's strengths during the past 10 years. Digital development was identified as a strategic focus area during 2015, when Plan Finland was developing the 2020 strategy; thus, digital development has an essential part also in the 2015–2017 MFA programme.

In 2016, with the initiative of Plan Finland and support from Plan Australia and Plan UK, a new Global Coordinator for Digital Development position based in Plan Finland was created. This post was established for strengthening and better coordinating Plan International's work with digital tools and technology, to provide more support to COs who want to use technology as part of their programme work, and to make the work with digital development more visible internally and externally. The position has proven to be very important for strengthening and developing Plan International's work with technology and in helping to adopt effective technologies to enhance projects' outcomes and impact. The position was also directly aligned with Plan's new global strategy, which emphasises digital solutions in international development work.

Moreover, over the three years Plan Finland continued to provide support for digital data collection to programme countries by providing them with the Poimapper service under a global license. A pair of independent consultants prepared a report on digital data collection for Plan published in October 2015, and their evaluation was clearly positive, making the recommendation that Plan use digital data collection tools such as Poimapper wherever possible. While many attempts to incorporate digital data collection tools into programme work have been introduced, the experiences have been mixed. Some country offices and projects have adopted Poimapper with enthusiasm. For example, the ECCD projects in East Timor and Pakistan utilised the tool for project monitoring and parental engagement surveys throughout the projects. Some other attempts were less successful: the Dominican Republic made an effort to digitalise the process to collect information about cases of child abuse and

GBV in communities, but a digital tool proved to be difficult to use in communities with limited mobile internet coverage and process-wise it generated confusion with existing child protection mechanisms, and the tool was abandoned after the pilot phase.

During the reporting period, Plan Finland encouraged discussion on the use of technology in international development and organised four Technology Salon events in Helsinki in collaboration with Slush, InnoFrugal and corporate partners.

The predicted scale-up in the use of Solar Media Backpack, the rugged and portable media station for low resource settings, was delayed due to the limited manufacturing capacity of Plan Finland's partner company Aleutia and Plan started to scan for other partners better able to deliver the intended products.

The key lessons learned have been:

- Making digital development solutions available and introducing them to programme country staff is not yet enough and sustainable. More systematic, long-term and intensive support is needed to support the internalisation of the tools, reaching high enough capacity for continuous use and changing the culture for adoption of digital tools. In the end, this is not very different between Plan offices in the Global North or South.
- Off-the-shelf solutions (devices, software, services) are cost efficient in most cases. Only in rare selected cases does it make sense to start developing solutions from scratch and become the producer of the solution.
- New technologies are often met with enthusiasm and inspiration among Plan and partner staff. This can be seen as an unintentional positive side effect that can enhance motivation and commitment of the stakeholders in the tech supported projects. On the other hand, the opposite is also possible, technology needs to deliver its promises or otherwise it can turn into a source of frustration.
- Although there is general evidence of the benefits of using new technologies in programme work, it is quite challenging to specify the exact cost-benefit analysis in any single project. In most cases, the technology component is among a variety of activities and support functions. Thus, isolating and inspecting its contribution and effectiveness needs separate research.

8.6. Innovations

During the reporting period of 2015–2017, Plan Finland has strived to develop methods, skills and a working culture that foster innovation in order to find better and more efficient ways to reach our programme objectives. Plan Finland's work on innovation in development started in 2014, and was incorporated into the 2015–2017 MFA programme.

Major outcomes of the innovation work have been the establishment of the youth innovation project called SmartUp Factory in Uganda and Ethiopia. Using the human-centred design thinking as a social empowerment tool, the project has been able to positively change mindsets of marginalised youth and support their identities as problem solvers rather than the source of problems. Based on the numerous most significant change stories, Plan Finland can confidently conclude that innovation, design thinking, experimentation and prototyping also belong to the youth from disadvantaged backgrounds and not only to the so-called elite of 'the creative class'. More information about the results is available in Chapter 2.

Secondly, the two SmartUp Innovation Challenges organised during the programme period were able to incubate altogether seven awarded concepts. The first round was rolled out in Ethiopia, Laos, Pakistan and Uganda to encourage Plan Finland's partners in project countries to find innovative local solutions to development challenges. The project involved a two-day workshop based around the concept of human-centred design-thinking, which led to an 8-week innovation challenge, during which teams developed and proposed their ideas. Out of the 15+ proposed ideas, three project concepts were selected to receive seed funding between 10,000€–40,000€. The concepts selected were "Pink Rickshaw – establishing safe public transportation in rural Pakistan," "Continuous learning for Girls – providing locally designed and produced sanitary pads for school girls by establishing social startups in Ethiopia," and "Our school! – engaging parents as resource persons for life skill training at primary schools in Uganda." Overall, the first Innovation Challenge proved successful in developing new solutions to development challenges and helped to support South-South and South-North peer learning and partnerships.

Overall, country teams from Uganda, Pakistan and Ethiopia provided the following feedback on the SmartUp Innovation Challenge:

- The ability to adapt and experiment during the pilot was helpful
- Possible failure of the experimental concept was accepted from the very beginning
- There was a minimum amount of compliance-driven reporting
- In two of the three concepts, the concept models resembled social enterprises despite being donor-funded development projects.
- Business model planning, analysing market opportunities and comparing plans with existing solutions were emphasised

The latter Innovation Challenge focused on the Girls and Technology topic. The winners included the first SRHR app for youth in East Timor, inspiring girls to aim for STEM studies in China, using digital storytelling to curb teenage pregnancies in the Dominican Republic and creating youth-friendly digital material on work readiness, retail, green skills entrepreneurship for the existing 'GenerasiBisa!' website in Indonesia.

Plan Finland's technological innovation during the reporting period mainly centred around the Solar Media Backpack, which is featured in the ICT4D section.

During Plan International's global strategy planning process, Plan Finland was heavily involved in sharing aspects of innovation. The approved version of Plan International's new

strategy is very open to innovation, stating: "We will embrace a learning culture that encourages innovation, allows for experimentation and accepts that failure is part of making progress" and "We will incentivise and support global and local innovation through collaboration and knowledge sharing and investment to accelerate new ideas..."

During 2015–2017, Plan International was one of the few NGOs active in Slush, Europe's leading startup event. In 2015–2016, Plan Finland was part of the Slush Impact jury, tasked with selecting the best impact-driven startups. In 2017, Plan with support from Samsung Nordics launched Sheboard at Slush. Read more about it in the example box.



Sheboard – challenging existing gender stereotypes



Sheboard, created by Plan International Finland with support from Samsung Nordics, is a mobile keyboard that helps people to reflect on how we talk to and about girls. Using predictive text input, it suggests using more diverse language and words when talking about girls or women. Sheboard can also be the voice that reminds girls of their full potential; it reminds about their versatile

skills and equal possibilities. Sheboard was created in order to challenge harmful gender stereotypes that affect all of us.

All this starts very early. Already during the first years of a child's life, children learn the gendered norms, attitudes and expectations of their society, meaning that by the time they reach primary school, girls and boys may already have a clear idea of how they are expected to behave, how they are valued and what their future role will be.

This is why Sheboard is not only meant for young people themselves but for all, to change the way we talk and think. Sheboard is very similar to other mobile keyboards. People can install it on their phones and use it like a normal keyboard; the only major difference is the predictive text input with its suggestions.



9. PROGRAMME DESIGN, MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

9.1. Partnerships

Plan Finland implements its programmes in cooperation with a wide range of local and international partners; these partners include implementation partners at the country office level and strategic partnerships with companies, NGOs, education institutes and other Plan offices.

At the country level, projects were either implemented directly by Plan International's country offices or with the cooperation of implementing partners, depending on the country's context, Plan's thematic expertise, and the availability of potential partners at the country level. Both Child Protection and ECCD projects in Ethiopia utilised local partner organisations in project implementation. The Education project in Laos was implemented closely with the local education authorities.

Projects implemented primarily by Plan also included strategic partnerships for themes in which specific expertise is required. For example, the ECCD project in Mozambique has an agreement with Light for the World and Uhambo in order to improve their work on inclusion. The Child Protection project in the Dominican Republic, meanwhile, strengthened the capacity and advocacy skills of the local NGO Coalition for the Infancy to influence national laws and policies regarding the realisation of children's rights. For Plan Bolivia, municipalities were strategic implementation partners of the ECCD project.

The advantages and disadvantages of working with implementing partners were recognised by the mid-term review and CSO2 evaluation. On one hand, local partners often have valuable expertise and knowledge concerning the local context or may have specific thematic expertise. On the other hand, self-implementing a project

is generally more cost effective and avoids the risks related to working with a partner. Plan International has been criticised about the nature of its relationships with implementing partners, which have sometimes resembled “outsourcing” or service delivery. It is evident that more attention will need to be paid to the selection and nature of partnerships, as well as to building the capacities of local partners.

On a few occasions, programmatic risks related to partnerships materialised, and the partnership was ended. The ECCD project in Pakistan went through a restructuring process and ended partnerships with local CSOs in order to more strongly concentrate on advocacy and supporting policy implementation rather than being a mere service producer. In East Timor, due to delays in implementation and suspected misuse of funds, an alliance with a local partner organisation MASEU in Maubisse was terminated in 2015, and Plan East Timor took responsibility for the whole project.

Plan Finland paid increasing attention to collaboration within the Plan International federation in programme implementation. For example, the Child Protection project in Ethiopia was jointly supported by Plan Finland and Plan Sweden, and the collaboration utilises harmonised templates, continuous exchange of information and joint audits, which improved monitoring efficiency and lessened the burden of reporting at the country office. The ECCD project in Bolivia was also jointly financed with Plan Belgium and utilises similar collaboration in terms of joint audits and joint reporting formats. While this collaboration partially elevates the burden to country offices that struggle with project-based funding to implement their country programmes—a problem recognised by mid-term and CSO2 evaluations—more flexibility in reporting requirements from the donors would facilitate taking full advantage of joint programming between different Plan offices.

Strategic partnerships are developed and implemented with different institutions at different levels. Partnerships with educational institutions provide opportunities for research and bring insight into programming and policy work that would be otherwise difficult to obtain. For example, the research project “Identifying barriers for inclusion specific to girls with disabilities in Togo,” conducted with Trinity College Dublin, brought insight into gender disparities within disability from a local perspective and has been a useful resource for Plan Finland’s programming. Plan also partnered with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for a research study called “Protect Us!,” which is related to

community-based protection mechanisms for children with disabilities.

Plan International Finland strives to engage corporations in promoting human and child rights. The expertise and networks of the business world can help us deliver our programming more efficiently. Private sector collaboration has been an effective part of Plan Finland’s working model for over 10 years. Plan Finland currently engages with private sector actors on different levels while aiming to reach mutual strategic goals. For example, Plan Finland cooperated with a company, Aleutia, to develop a solar media backpack to be utilised in remote areas. Outside the MFA programme, Plan Finland was working with Finnish retailer Kesko to enhance the social responsibility of the fishing industry in Thailand, and similar new partnerships were being developed as part of the MFA programme based on the recommendations of the 2016 report by Enact Sustainable Strategies, which recommended bringing human rights into the core of Plan’s corporate partnerships.

Examples of operative partnerships in Finland include Plan’s deepening cooperation with the Finnish Scouts marked by the presence of Plan Finland in the Finn Jamboree Roihu Scout Camp, and Plan’s cooperation with public libraries while campaigning for girls’ rights during 2016. Plan Finland was active in joint NGO campaigns in Finland, for example in the electoral campaign “Maailmantalouden tekijät” in 2015. Moreover, Plan Finland advocacy and campaigning cooperated with Plan Sweden and Plan Norway by creating the My Law campaign, which raised support for ending school violence against girls around the world.

The MFA’s funding cuts negatively affected many partnerships in 2016. Most importantly, Plan has no longer been able to participate in Plan International’s working group for developing partnerships. However, new types of cooperation and partnership have been established outside the MFA programme; for example, in increased Nordic cooperation for Humanitarian Assistance.

9.2. Sustainability

Sustainability is a priority in all of Plan’s projects. Plan’s CCCD approach involves children and youth playing an active role in finding solutions to local challenges and in realising their full potential. Involving communities in planning, implementation and evaluation enhances local ownership, and thus enforces sustainability. Furthermore, the projects seek to increase the skills and capacities within the communities to

enable them to continue implementing child-rights related activities even after project funding ends.

The MFA 2015–2017 programme marked a particular moment at the programme implementation cycle: most of the projects had matured after being supported for several consecutive programme periods, many of them since 2009 or even earlier through evolving project approaches. This, combined with strategic changes that coincided with the new global strategy, led to the termination of a significant number of projects simultaneously by the end of the programme period. Thus, achieving sustainability became vital at this point.

In terms of programme management, sustainability had been incorporated into programming from the beginning. Projects formulated plans to guarantee sustainability and to create realistic exit strategies. Exit activities included workshops for local authorities and for local communities, creation of local-level action plans for the post-project period, producing models and training and other supporting materials, and plans for resource mobilisation, among other things. Even though all the projects had created their sustainability and exit plans, mid-term and project evaluations identified sustainability as a theme that requires further work within Plan Finland and in Plan Country Offices. Evaluations revealed that sustainability and exit plans were not always updated when circumstances change, and timeframes were sometimes unrealistic. Indeed, some of the projects were terminated before full institutional and financial sustainability was achieved. This is notable, for example, in some of the ECCD projects, in which communities themselves remain responsible for managing the centres. Projects have identified communities that require technical support in the future to become fully able to continue the work themselves and sought ways how to continue to provide this support. Doubts exist whether local contribution mechanisms, mainly VSLA groups, were functioning well enough in all of the project areas to improve and guarantee financial sustainability and the possibility of local families to contribute towards provision of services.

Additional sustainability measures included working together with various levels of government; indeed, many of the projects have successfully involved governments in project implementation. In Bolivia, local governments have committed to providing matching funds to early childhood education activities. In East Timor, 11 of the 29 ECCD centres have attained government accreditation. In Pakistan, the ECCD

project formed a public–private partnership with Departmental education authorities, which made the transfer of ECCD centres to local authorities an easier process. In Ethiopia, training, collaboration and networking efforts ensured that District Education Offices took over the management of the 24 ECCD centres previously supported by the project.

Evaluations also raise up an important question related to sustainability: in many of the projects, Plan is working with social services, the producing of which should be the responsibility of the government or local authorities at an ideal stage. It is important to analyse how much the local communities can be held responsible for producing these services themselves and what changes are required in the approach.

The MFA funding cuts in 2015 led to a situation in which Plan Finland sought to find substitute donors for select projects rather than terminating them early. Thus, the youth employment project in Pakistan was taken over by Plan Netherlands and the ECCD project in Kenya was continued with the funding of Plan US. On the other hand, the closing of regional projects in Asia and Southern and Eastern Africa, designed to collect information about best practices and to share information and knowledge between the county offices within the regions, have negatively impacted the sustainability of country-level projects, since the support for South to South learning and sharing is no longer available.

9.3. Quality assurance

The quality assurance component of the programme includes support for programme management and facilitation of learning at the programme level. It encompasses the results-based management system and related activities, including monitoring and evaluation.

During the programme period, Plan Finland monitored project performance through quarterly or biannual project and financial reports, as well as through regular communication with the country offices (including Skype meetings). In-person monitoring missions were an integral part of Plan Finland's programme monitoring and compliance assessment, which provided valuable information on project progress while facilitating face-to-face contact with project personnel and local partners. The progress and relevance of projects were also assessed through discussions with project beneficiaries and duty-bearers at various levels. All programme countries were visited during the programme period either by Plan Finland staff or co-financing partners (Plan

Belgium in the case of Bolivia). In 2017, Plan Finland's programme managers and advisors made monitoring trips to the following countries: Pakistan, Laos, Uganda, Mozambique, Ethiopia and the Dominican Republic.

The evaluations conducted during the programme period included the programme-level Mid-Term Evaluation in 2016 and the final evaluations of each project in the last year of the programme. An exception to this was the Participatory School Governance project in Uganda, which was evaluated at the mid term in 2016. It was agreed that an ex post project evaluation would be conducted after 1 or 2 years of the project closure. As Early Childhood Care and Development formed the largest thematic priority of the programme in terms of funding and number of projects, the ECCD working models were also holistically evaluated from the gender transformative perspective (e.g. parenting education, men's engagement) and in different implementation contexts, in order to provide recommendations and lessons learned on scaling-up the successful ECCD working models in Plan International.

The use of digital data collection tools was supported in the projects within the programme period. Poimapper, a digital data collection tool developed by Plan Finland in partnership with Pajat Solutions, was adapted to varying degrees according to the capacity and needs of each country. In 2017, Plan International made a decision to cover the licence cost of Poimapper for all Plan countries. In some projects, other digital data collection methods and online reporting systems were also used.

Plan Finland is committed to the International Aid Transparency Initiative and publishes information according to the IATI standard, which promotes the openness of data to all. During the programme period, Plan Finland developed the publication of data and reporting options together with Akvo.org, a not-for profit foundation offering open source mobile and internet reporting services for international development and piloted reporting the project results for the MFA funded projects through Akvo's Really Simple Reporting (RSR) service.

Finally, the quality assurance component of the programme covered the preparation of the new MFA-funded programme for the years 2018–2021. The “My Body, My Future” programme was designed through a participatory process together with the relevant Country Offices and other stakeholders.

9.4. Risk Management

Risk management and assessment is incorporated into the programme at various levels. Plan International has a Global Assurance team to provide independent and objective assurance and support services and to assess and improve the effectiveness of Plan's risk management, internal controls and governance processes. Plan Finland has access to the Global Assurance reports and exchanges information about eventual audit and financial compliance concerns globally and regionally.

Plan Finland follows up on external audit results and on the findings and recommendations from Global Assurance audits, combines the results with the programme and finance teams' findings and experiences from reporting and field visits, assesses the risk status in each programme country and plans appropriate mitigation actions.

Plan's Nordic Grant Controllers in Plan Norway, Plan Sweden, Plan Denmark and Plan Finland have a network that shares information between offices. Moreover, Plan Finland is engaged in information sharing and cooperation with other NOs, especially those implementing projects in the same countries. Plan International has zero tolerance for corruption and all acquisitions and actions must adhere to principles of good governance and anti-corruption.

Plan Finland is a part of the SafeCall whistleblowing service, which allows personnel to inform about any dishonest and unethical behaviour and other serious misconduct. The service is also in use in all programme countries. Additionally, Plan Finland cooperates with Plan International's Counter Fraud Unit on fraud prevention and detection. Programmatic risks are monitored as part of regular project monitoring and quality assurance.

9.5. Financial Management

In terms of financial management, the programme period 2015–2017 was more turbulent than anticipated. Transition from an old programme to a new one between 2014–2015 resulted in a funding gap due to relatively late approval of the new programme in December 2014, during which some staff in project countries were lost even when many projects continued to have a second or third phase in the 2015–2017 programme period. The recruitments delayed the start-up, but by end of the first quarter the projects got well underway and at the end of 2015, the expenditure rate was at 85%, demonstrating an overall good result for the first year.

The information about the upcoming funding cuts shadowed programme implementation from mid-2015 onwards and created uncertainty and delays in the projects that started hesitating to launch major initiatives. In October 2015, the cuts were made at 40% for the remaining two years of the Programme. To minimise the impact of the cuts in the lives of children, Plan Finland initiated employee co-operation negotiations, which resulted in the reduction of 15-person-years of the workforce of 54 permanent staff. In addition, Plan Finland took the decision to end three large projects in Pakistan, Kenya and the Asia region, downsize its global education work significantly and cut 15% of MFA funding to all projects to be temporarily compensated with other self-funding.

As a result, fewer resources were spent on programme technical support including gender work, communications, disaster risk reduction and mainstreaming of climate change in our programming. The budgets allocated to these areas were not fully spent with the reduced workforce, forming a large part (EUR 220,000) of the carry-over from 2015 to 2016. The overall 2015 carry-over of EUR 1,056,446 was carried over to 2016 to fill the funding gaps caused by the 15% cuts to all programmes. A carry-over of EUR 425,267 from 2014 was put aside when early information about the cuts came. This amount was allocated in 2016 across the Frame budget to compensate for exchange rate losses, higher match funding need for 2016 and to fill critical gaps in projects. Moreover, minor investments were made in Poimapper and supporting technology use in programming.

The second year of the MFA programme was intensive for financial management. The influence of MFA funding cuts continued to impact programme implementation at the beginning of 2016. Staff turnover and a shuffling of positions in Finland and at country offices led to delays in budget implementation. Initially, Plan Finland decided to increase the amount of match funding for a number of projects to minimise the negative effects of funding cuts. However, due to an unexpectedly low delivery rate in early 2016, the self-funding share was deducted back to its original level in September, from 23 per cent to 15 per cent. The decrease in self-funding and the effective budget follow-up led to good results towards the end of the year, with the largest expenditure items being paid out in the last four months of the calendar year. The amount of MFA carryover funds from 2016 to 2017 turned out to be EUR 345,154 – a good result, considering that the overall carryover from 2015 to 2016, EUR 1,056,446, was also utilised in 2016.

However, the MFA cuts were still impeding the achievement of overall project targets. Since there was only a small carry-over from 2016 to 2017, as is usual in the second year of a programme, it was decided that Plan Finland would compensate funding gaps by increasing match funding again in 2017. Eventually the self-funding percentage was 26 instead of the required 15. For the very first time, Plan Finland utilised the whole MFA funding leaving no carry-overs to the following funding period. Of course, the additional self-funding share led to a financing gap situation in which we had to very carefully think whether to apply for other grants that require self-funding.

During the 2015–2017 Programme period, direct cost salaries of Plan Finland programme staff were included in programme expenditure rather than administrative overheads. They comprise approx. 6% of overall programme costs. The salaries have been recorded in Plan's working hour tracking system and have been targeted to specific projects accordingly. Administrative overheads consist of those costs that are directly attributable to the MFA, such as financial management costs and recruitment costs of staff covered by the Programme. In addition, the overhead covers a proportional share of other indirect costs of the programme team (e.g. management, meetings, trainings) and indirect costs of the administration and finance functions (e.g. premises, HR, IT services). The formula for calculation has been shared and discussed with the MFA in 2014.

Transition to a new SAP system within the whole Federation took place during the programme period and was concluded at end of the first year, 2015, after which the old Grants Tracking System (GTS) system was phased out completely. In the following years, migration efforts have been made to transfer the existing financial data from GTS to SAP and this exercise continued into 2017. After continuous training and staff becoming more familiar with the system and its various features, SAP started working to its full potential, and the system has proved to be well suited to dealing with complex grant requirements.

In 2016, Plan Finland started using a Netvisor accounting system, which generates data needed for account management and audited financial statements. In addition, Plan Finland utilised its new CRM system, "PlanLink," in grants management in 2017.

ANNEX I: FINANCIAL REPORTS

MFA Financial report 2015–2017

		Expenditure	MFA costs	Self-funding	Self-funding %
Cameroon	229PL128 (CMR100187), Baka Rights and Dignity	901 039	743 622	157 418	17 %
Togo	283PL146 (TGO100230), Promotion of the Rights of Children with Disabilities through Community Based Rehabilitation approach	938 915	868 497	70 419	8 %
Western Africa Total		1 839 955	1 612 118	227 836	12 %
Ethiopia	238PL113 (ETH102106), Early Childhood Care and Development	947 890	829 307	118 584	13 %
Ethiopia	238PL114 (ETH102105), Protection of children from gender based violence	919 806	781 835	137 971	15 %
Kenya	248PL143 (KEN100277), Securing a strong foundation for young children	561 482	561 482	-	0 %
Mozambique	259PL145 (MOZ100046), Early Childhood Care and Development	796 003	519 664	276 339	35 %
	238PL115 (ETH102149), Smartup Factory Youth Innovation Project	119 482	86 950	32 532	27 %
Uganda	285PL129 (UGA100309), Scaling up Community-Led Action for Children (CLAC) in Uganda	982 384	835 026	147 358	15 %
Uganda	285PL146 (UGA100310), Participatory School Governance for Children (PSGC)	693 844	646 853	46 991	7 %
Uganda	285PL147 (UGA100314), Development SmartUps Community Project	382 960	325 516	57 444	15 %
Regional	289PL149 (RES100088), Early Childhood Care and Development	163 017	146 731	16 286	10 %
East and Southern Africa Total		5 566 867	4 733 363	833 504	15 %
East Timor	765PL217 (TLS100086), Early Childhood Care and Development	1 054 098	609 496	444 602	42 %
Laos	745PL218 (LAO100047), Quality Basic Education and Protection Programme	924 415	775 490	148 925	16 %
Pakistan	665PL222 (PAK100273), Smooth Transition of Children to School through ECCD and Protective Environment	765 661	580 072	185 589	24 %
Pakistan	665PL223 (PAK100267), Creating access of poor rural youth to quality market driven Technical, Vocational & Education Training (TVET)	231 660	231 660	-	0 %
Regional	679PL149 (ARO100089), Early Childhood Care and Development	71 119	71 119	-	0 %
Regional	679PL408 (ARO100087), Strengthening civil society in Asia for increased child protection	96 346	96 346	-	0 %
Asia Total		3 143 299	2 364 183	779 116	25 %
Bolivia	428PL305 (BOL100227), Early Childhood Care and Development	1 044 199	888 323	155 876	15 %
Dominican Republic	340PL409 (DOM100135), YEE	513 233	406 379	106 854	21 %
Dominican Republic	340PL307 (DOM100136), Prevention of Child Abuse and Gender based Violence against Women + masculinities	578 710	455 676	123 034	21 %
Latin America Total		2 136 142	1 750 378	385 764	18 %
Global	998PL511, Digital development, global coordination (ICT4D) and Innovation Fund	264 131	200 885	63 246	24 %
Global	998PL517, Building capacity on working with children with disabilities 332	114 323	82 596	31 727	28 %
Global	998PL514, Public Private Partnership development	60 862	49 861	11 001	18 %
Global	998PL515, Gender investments	46 688	39 685	7 003	15 %
GLOBAL THEMATIC TOTAL		486 004	373 026	112 978	23 %

Financial Summary 2015–2017

Programme activities	13 172 266	10 833 069	2 339 198	18 %
Plan Finland				
Quality Assurance	500 884	400 243	100 641	20 %
Communications in Finland	672 811	530 490	142 321	21 %
Administration	1 678 073	1 320 087	357 986	21 %
Global Education	1 157 291	921 378	235 913	20 %
Total Plan Finland	4 009 059	3 172 198	836 861	21 %
TOTAL 2015–2017	17 181 325	14 005 267	3 176 059	18 %

		Budget	Expenditure	"Expenditure vs. budget %"	MFA costs	Self-funding	Self-funding %
Cameroon	229PL128 (CMR100187), Baka Rights and Dignity	311 460	346 635	111	228 119	118 517	34 %
Togo	283PL146 (TGO100230), Promotion of the Rights of Children with Disabilities through Community Based Rehabilitation approach	299 802	314 663	105	291 064	23 600	7,5 %
Western Africa Total		611 262	661 299	108	519 183	142 116	21 %
Ethiopia	238PL113 (ETH102106), Early Childhood Care and Development	206 181	253 527	123	239 098	14 429	6 %
Ethiopia	238PL114 (ETH102105), Protection of children from gender based violence	298 981	351 614	118	298 872	52 742	15 %
Ethiopia	238PL115 (ETH102149), Smartup Factory Youth Innovation Project	90 000	76 129	85	50 100	26 029	34 %
Mozambique	259PL145 (MOZ100046), Early Childhood Care and Development	325 434	452 421	139	297 736	154 685	34 %
Uganda	285PL129 (UGA100309), Scaling up Community-Led Action for Children (CLAC) in Uganda	294 449	384 003	130	326 403	57 601	15 %
Uganda	285PL146 (UGA100310), Participatory School Governance for Children (PSGC)	224 275	257 584	115	218 947	38 638	15 %
Uganda	285PL147 (UGA100314), Development SmartUps Community Project	90 000	141 770	158	120 505	21 266	15 %
East and Southern Africa Total		1 529 320	1 917 051	125	1 551 661	365 389	19 %
East Timor	765PL217 (TLS100086), Early Childhood Care and Development	334 190	333 612	100	232 019	101 593	30 %
Laos	745PL218 (LAO100047), Quality Basic Education and Protection Programme	273 312	308 338	113	206 745	101 593	33 %
Pakistan	665PL222 (PAK100273), Smooth Transition of Children to School through ECCD and Protective Environment	249 467	274 684	110	180 768	93 916	34 %
Asia Total		856 969	916 634	107	619 532	297 102	32 %
Bolivia	428PL305 (BOL100227), Early Childhood Care and Development	353 076	262 448	74	223 080	39 368	15 %
Dominican Republic	340PL409 (DOM100135), YEE	145 120	155 644	107	102 429	53 216	34 %
Dominican Republic	340PL307 (DOM100136), Prevention of Child Abuse and Gender based Violence against Women + masculinities	167 843	188 776	112	124 233	64 544	34 %
Latin America Total		666 039	606 869	91	449 741	157 127	26 %
Global	998PL511, Innovation challenge Fund	97 500	108 855	112	71 637	37 218	34 %
Global	998PL511, Digital development & global coordination (ICT4D)	42 000	14 261	34	9 385	4 876	34 %
Global	998PL517, Building capacity on working with children with disabilities 332	50 000	75 969	152	49 995	25 974	34 %
Global	998PL514, Public Private Partnership development	60 000	9 755	16	6 420	3 335	34 %
Global thematic Total		249 500	208 840	84	137 436	71 404	34 %
GRAND TOTAL		3 913 090	4 310 693	110	3 277 554	1 033 138	23,97 %

Financial Summary 2017

	Total budget		Expenditure vs. budget %			
Programme activities	3 913 090	4 310 693	102	3 277 554	1 033 138	23,97 %
Plan Finland						
Quality Assurance	198 954	132 922	67	87 475	45 447	34,2 %
Communications in Finland	192 000	215 729	112	141 970	73 759	34,2 %
Administration	516 449	553 787	107	364 444	189 343	34,2 %
Global Education	344 000	324 740	94	213 710	111 030	34,2 %
Total Plan Finland	1 251 403	1 227 178	98	807 599	419 579	34,2 %
TOTAL 2017	5 164 493	5 537 871	107	4 085 154	1 452 717	26,23 %

MFA Financing

€

Transferred from 2016	345 154
Funds 2017	3 740 000
MFA funds available	4 085 154
Expenditure 2017	-4 085 154

Carry over to 2018	0
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MFA Financial report 2017

Summary of Plan Finland costs

Quality Assurance

Planning, monitoring, technical support and programme development	132 922,00	132 922,00
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Global Citizenship Education

Global Citizenship Education	324 740,00	324 740,00
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Communications in Finland

Programme communications	215 729,00	215 729,00
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Administration

Programme related costs of administrative staff	69 388,00	
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Share of administration cost of programme teams	122 998,29	
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Fundraising activities	207 952,00	
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Share of

Premises	72 491,06	
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IT	37 807,41	
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Administration cost of management, premises and HR	10 482,77	
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Misc.: Organization communication, donor education public, audits	98 955,94	
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219 737,18

Administration costs total	620 075,47	
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MFA approved administration costs 10%	553 787,06	553 787,06
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Non-eligible administration costs	66 288,41	
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PLAN FINLAND COSTS TOTAL		1 227 178,06
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Self-funding 2017

1. Project specific self-funding	Donations
259PL145 (MOZ100046), Early Childhood Care and Development	154 685,31
745PL218 (LAO100047), Quality Basic Education and Protection Programme	101 593,00
229PL128 (CMR100187), Baka Rights and Dignity	118 516,51
765PL217 (TLS100086), Early Childhood Care and Development	101 593,00
238PL113 (ETH102106), Early Childhood Care and Development	14 429,11
665PL222 (PAK100273), Smooth Transition of Children to School through ECCD and Protective Environment	93 916,08
238PL115 (ETH102149), Smartup Factory Youth Innovation Project	26 028,91
998PL511, Innovation challenge Fund	37 218,11
998PL511, Digital development & global coordination (ICT4D)	4 875,91
998PL517, Building capacity on working with children with disabilities 332	25 974,21
998PL514, Public Private Partnership development	3 335,29
PROJECT SPECIFIC SELF-FUNDING TOTAL	682 165,44
 2. Project specific sponsorship funding	
283PL146 (TGO100230), Promotion of the Rights of Children with Disabilities through Community Based Rehabilitation approach	23 599,76
238PL114 (ETH102105), Protection of children from gender based violence	52 742,16
285PL129 (UGA100309), Scaling up Community-Led Action for Children (CLAC) in Uganda	57 600,51
285PL146 (UGA100310), Participatory School Governance for Children (PSGC)	38 637,66
285PL147 (UGA100314), Development SmartUps Community Project	21 265,56
428PL305 (BOL100227), Early Childhood Care and Development	39 367,90
340PL409 (DOM100135), YEE	53 215,66
340PL307 (DOM100136), Prevention of Child Abuse and Gender based Violence against Women + masculinities	64 543,67
PROJECT SPECIFIC SPONSORSHIP FUNDING TOTAL	350 972,90
 PROJECT SPECIFIC TOTAL	1 033 138,34
 2. Plan Finland	
998PL406 Quality Assurance	45 446,74
999PL516 Communications in Finland	73 758,90
998PL01 Plan Finland administration	189 342,76
998PL501 Global Education	111 030,35
PLAN FINLAND TOTAL	419 578,75
 SELF-FUNDING TOTAL	1 452 717,09

ANNEX II: AUDITOR'S REPORT



Auditor's Report

To Plan International Suomi sr

We have audited the Financial Report included in the Annual Report prepared by Plan International Suomi sr for the period 1.1.-31.12.2017 relating to the development cooperation programme "Realizing Full Potential - from Childhood to Empowered Youth" under the Partnership Agreement for 2015-2017. The reported total expenditure is 5 537 871 euros. The Annual Report and the Financial Report have been prepared by the responsible persons for the programme coordination.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the audit directions concerning development cooperation support granted to civil society organizations issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and, as appropriate, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. Those Standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the Financial Report is free from material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts in the Financial Report. An audit also includes evaluating the accounting principles used and the overall presentation.

In our opinion, the bookkeeping in Finland for the programme and the Financial Report comply, in all material respect, the conditions of development cooperation of the Partnership Agreement set by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the regulations governing state grants (law 688/2001). In our opinion the Financial Report can be approved.

Helsinki 19 June 2018

PricewaterhouseCoopers Oy
Authorised Public Accountants

Merja Prihti
Authorised Public Accountant