



MY BODY. MY FUTURE.

PROGRAMME OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL FINLAND 2018–2021
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND 2019

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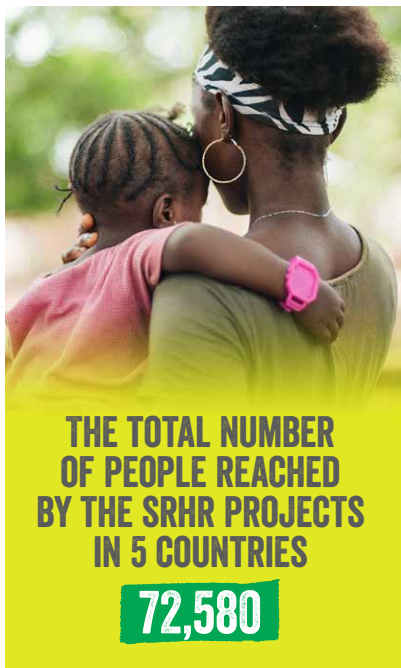
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ABBREVIATIONS

BI	Business Intelligence
CC	Community conversations
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CoC	Champions of Change training methodology
GIS	Geographical Information System
ICT4D	Information and Communications Technologies for Development
IEC	Informational Education and Communication
IGA	Income generating activities
IVR	Interactive Voice Respond
LDC	Least Developed Country
LGBTQI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Questioning/Queer Intersex
LftW	Light for the World (organisation)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MHM	Menstrual hygiene management
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAJ	Trade Union of Education
OPD	Organisation of Persons with Disabilities
PTA	Parent-teacher association
RBM	Results-Based Management
SAP	Systems, Applications, and Products in Data Processing– financial management programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association

MY BODY. MY FUTURE. 2019 IN NUMBERS

SRHR PROJECTS



THE PROPORTION OF YOUTH WHO REPORT POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES ON SRHR AND GENDER EQUALITY WENT UP FROM **24%** AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME TO **48%** BY 2019.

THE PROPORTION OF YOUTH WHO REPORT HAVING TAKEN ACTION TOGETHER WITH PEERS RELATED TO SRHR ISSUES INCREASED FROM **25%** IN 2018 TO **66%** IN 2019.

THE PROPORTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO VALUE GENDER EQUALITY INCREASED FROM **38%** AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME TO **62%** IN 2019.

THE PROGRAMME WORKED WITH **141** DIFFERENT TYPES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS, FROM COMMUNITY LEVEL AGENTS OF CHANGE TO NATIONAL LEVEL NETWORKS FOR POLITICAL INFLUENCING, TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND SRHR.

86% OF SRH SERVICE PROVIDERS REPORTED IN 2019 THEY RECOGNISE AND RESPECT THE DIVERSITY OF YOUTH AND THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS, COMPARED TO **50%** AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME.

YOUTH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



COMMUNICATIONS, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN FINLAND



**TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE
REACHED IN FINLAND**
45,700



**OUT OF WHOM CHILDREN
AND ADOLESCENTS**
15,900



OUT OF WHOM GIRLS
8,460

THE **34** CHILD RIGHTS AMBASSADORS VISITED
102 FINNISH SCHOOLS AND TRAINED **7,045**
PUPILS ON CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, GENDER
EQUALITY AND HATE SPEECH.

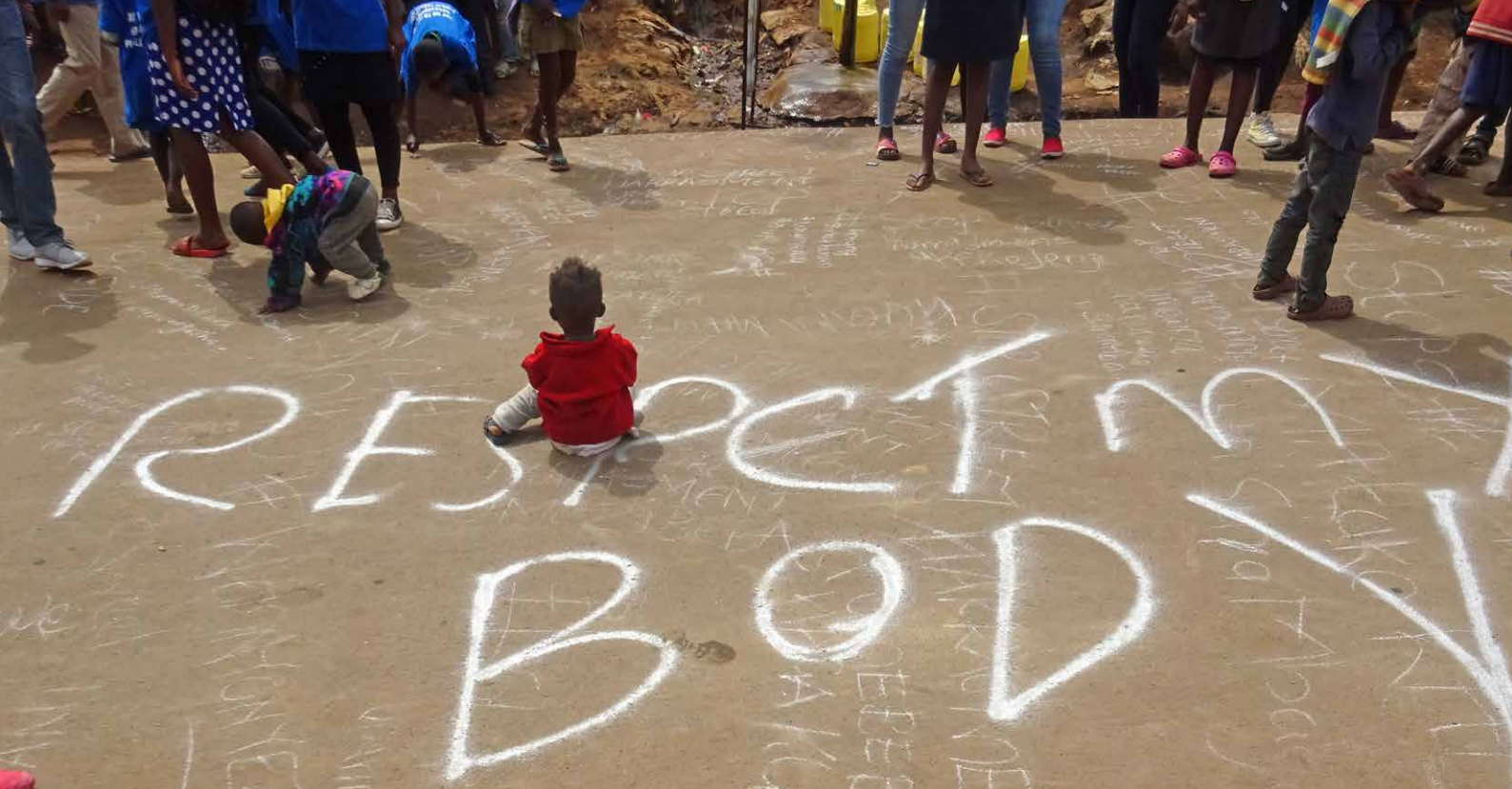
464 EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS
IMPROVED THEIR SKILLS IN CHILD RIGHTS,
DIVERSITY AND ANTI-HATE SPEECH
EDUCATION, GENDER EQUALITY AND GLOBAL
CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION.

THE CHILDREN'S BOARD REACHED **2,500**
PEOPLE WITH MESSAGES ON SDGS AND
ESPECIALLY THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE
CHANGE ON GIRLS' RIGHTS.

PLAN FINLAND'S VOLUNTEERS HOSTED ALTOGETHER **212** DIFFERENT
EVENTS AND REACHED **33,500** PEOPLE.

PLAN FINLAND'S COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES POTENTIAL
REACH WAS **102** MILLION PEOPLE.





1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 SUMMARY

My Body. My Future. is a joint programme between Plan International Finland and Plan International Country Offices in Ethiopia, Laos, Mozambique, Myanmar and Uganda, as well as numerous project partners at the local and international levels. The programme seeks to advance girls' rights and gender equality, especially through promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), with the aim of improving understanding and practices related to SRHR amongst adolescents at schools and out of school. The programme takes a gender transformative approach to development in that it seeks to address social norms and barriers that limit the participation of adolescent girls in society. In addition, the programme includes a component on global citizenship education, advocacy and communications in Finland

The programme receives funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) for the years 2018–2021.

After laying the groundwork for effective programme work in 2018, the results of the programme started to become visible in 2019. During the year, we reached, directly and indirectly, a total of 427,000 people in Ethiopia, Laos, Mozambique, Myanmar, Uganda and Finland.

Adolescents and youth increasingly present positive attitudes towards SRHR and gender equality, and they actively take action to promote SRHR themes within their communities. The percentage of youth who report having taken action together with peers related to SRHR issues has increased by 62% after two years of the programme, from 25% in 2018 to 66% in 2019. Overall, after having participated in different training events and youth clubs, youth and adolescents present more self-confidence, and youth themselves report that they feel better equipped to discuss matters relevant to them with adults. Little by little, youth have started to utilise more sexual and reproductive health services, if available in their communities.

At the community level, training events and discussion sessions have started to shape the views and opinions of parents and community members on gender equality, child marriage and topics related to SRHR in general. Parents seem to be increasingly at ease and better equipped to have conversations on various topics with adolescents, ranging from puberty and relationships to sexuality. Traditional and religious leaders have taken an active stance against child marriage, and their opinions have been effective in shaping community members' opinions against child marriage in Uganda and Ethiopia.

The effort to mobilise community-based organisations (CBOs) towards gender equality, SRHR and girls' rights has paid off in the project. CBOs have become active in advocating and working for several topics related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights; ranging from disseminating information about SRHR in local languages to creating networks and movements of CSOs to influence policy and legal reforms at the local and national levels.

Regarding health care workers and health service providers, the evidence suggests that they have an increased capacity to provide adolescent-friendly SRH services, and health care workers are increasingly able to respect the diversity and specific needs of youth. The demand for services for contraception and testing for sexually transmitted diseases have increased during the past two years in many of the programme areas.

The component on innovation and youth entrepreneurship continued to operate in Uganda and Ethiopia. After participating in workshops and training events at SmartUp Hubs, youth have become active problem solvers in their communities. Efforts have been made to increase the number of female participants, especially in technology courses. Girls and young women form more than half of the participants in general and, in 2019, 25% of the tech course participants in Uganda were female.

The specialist support provided by Plan Finland in gender, SRHR and disability all increased the capacity of project teams, country offices and Plan International more in general to implement good quality inclusive programmes. A largely digitized monitoring and data collection system is functioning in Ethiopia, Laos, Mozambique and Uganda, while in Myanmar preparations for set-up were launched in late 2019.

Plan Finland's global citizenship education, advocacy and communication in Finland yielded good results: child rights ambassadors conducted workshops to enhance knowledge on children's rights, gender equality and hate speech around Finland. Plan Finland's global school provided teacher training to 464 educational professionals. Children's Board and Plan Finland volunteers were active and organised numerous events and activities around Finland.

Plan Finland continued to raise gender equality, girls' rights and sustainability in public discussion, with a specific focus on climate change and girls' rights in 2019. The potential reach of communications activities in 2019 was 102 million, a 37% increase on the previous year.

The Girls Takeover campaign was effective in challenging Finnish policymakers, companies and institutions on how they can contribute to climate change mitigation and enhance global gender equality. In addition, Plan Finland's advocacy specialists were active in promoting gender equality and girls' rights in Finnish Development Policy as well as campaigning for an ambitious and just climate policy.

The programme budget was EUR 5.9 million for 2019. The expenditure rate was 88%, which translates into a total expenditure of EUR 5.1 million, and a carry-over of EUR 510,000 for 2020. This is a relatively good overall result. Considering that the programme consists of only a few large projects, any delay or misfortune in one country or project might have a significant impact on the programme delivery rate.



1.2 THE MY BODY. MY FUTURE. PROGRAMME

Girls represent one of the largest excluded groups in the world today, and they continuously face barriers to exercising their rights because of their gender and age. Plan International approved a new global strategy for 2017–2022, which places girls at the forefront of action. The goal is to help 100 million girls learn, lead, decide and thrive. Under the theme “decide”, Plan International places a separate emphasis on sexual and reproductive health and rights, which are recognised in international treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and partially in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), but often go unfulfilled. In this thematic area, Plan International seeks to work together with its partners to promote the elimination of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage, the reduction of unwanted pregnancy, access to quality sexual and reproductive health services, and the engagement of boys and men in developing positive masculinities and promoting gender equality in general.

The current programme with funding from Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland started at the beginning of 2018 and covers the years 2018–2021. In line with Plan International's global strategy

and congruent to Finnish development policy priorities, Plan Finland sought to focus the new programme on gender transformative programming and advancing girls' rights through promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights. The My Body. My Future. programme was granted a budget of EUR 20.5 million for four years, of which the MFA support amounts to EUR 17.9 million.

In terms of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the programme makes a strong contribution towards Goal 3, ensuring good health and well-being, and Goal 5, gender equality and empowering all women and girls. In addition, the programme contributes to Goal 4, ensuring inclusive and quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities, and Goal 8, decent work and economic growth.

The programme takes a holistic approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, with the aim of improving understanding and practices related to SRHR issues amongst adolescents, both at schools and out of school, promoting gender equality and SRHR within communities, supporting civil society action for improved SRH rights and services, as well as working with service providers to improve adolescent SRH services. The programme aspires to be gender transformative in that it seeks to address norms and barriers that limit the participation of adolescent girls in society. In addition to gender equality, the programme promotes the innovation and entrepreneurial skills of youth and contributes towards improving resilience towards the effects of climate change within participating communities.

The number of projects and countries of intervention is limited. Programme intervention countries include Ethiopia, Uganda and Mozambique in Africa, and Laos and Myanmar in South-East Asia, all of which are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The total number of international projects is eight, three of which are implemented in Ethiopia, two in Uganda and one in each of the remaining countries. Overall, our view is that maintaining the focus on a few countries and broader programmes make a major impact possible at the country level, and the focus has allowed Plan Finland to offer better thematic and technical support to programme countries in our thematic focus areas.

In addition to the international projects, the programme includes communications, advocacy and global education in Finland.





1.3 PLAN'S THEORY OF CHANGE

The programme is strictly based on Plan International's global approach and theory of change. The theory of change explains Plan's approach to achieving its purpose of "creating a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls", and is divided into three main dimensions of change:

- Helping to change harmful social norms, attitudes and behaviours
- Building social and economic resources and establishing the safety nets needed in times of crisis
- Influencing international and national laws, policies and investments

Plan International's programme and influence strategies further guide all programme implementation. According to these, Plan's programmes and projects seek to:

1. Promote positive attitudes, behaviours and practices
2. Strengthen and mobilise civil society
3. Develop stakeholder capacities
4. Influence power holders
5. Provide direct support in emergencies and fragile settings.

In line with the theory of change and Plan International's global commitments to be rights-based and gender transformative, the My Body. My Future. programme aims to renegotiate power to obtain more equitable opportunities for girls and boys to realise their sexual and reproductive health and rights. In so doing, Plan and its partners will be able to improve gender equality at the societal level and advance the interests of girls in particular. These specific interests of girls include, for instance, girls' freedom from violence and freedom to make their own sexual and reproductive choices.

Plan International's position paper on SRHR, approved in 2017, lays further groundwork on SRHR work within Plan International and the projects it supports. Plan International believes that "all children, adolescents and young people should have the right to make their own free and informed choices and to have control over their sexual and reproductive health and lives, free from coercion, violence, discrimination and abuse". While cultural traditions, religious beliefs and social norms should be respected, they should not constitute reasons for countries to disregard international treaties and conventions in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights.



2. COUNTRY CONTEXT AND CONTEXT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The year 2019 has brought about positive and negative changes in the context for civil society within the programme countries. Restrictions continue to be in place for civil society organisations in most of the countries, yet positive changes include the new proclamation for CSOs in Ethiopia. Many SRHR topics continue to be difficult to work with in particular countries, especially topics such as comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) or safe abortion due to legal restrictions or cultural and social norms that restrict discussion.

2.1 ETHIOPIA

A new Organisations of Civil Societies Proclamation was approved in Ethiopia during 2019, and it removed many restrictions that limited the participation of CSOs and NGOs in advocacy or human rights work. The new proclamation explicitly allows the CSO organisations to engage in any lawful activity to fulfil their objectives and to receive funding from any lawful source. However, a rule concerning maximum administration costs, set at 20%, still remains with a revised and more clear criteria for what accounts as administrative costs.

Overall, the new CSO proclamation is a very important step towards a more enabling environment for civil society in Ethiopia, and the changes have been immediately visible in the work of NGOs. NGOs have been able to engage in advocacy, speak about human rights and utilise the mass media for communicating their messages, all of which was not possible before. Less government supervision is required for programmatic work, and more flexibility exists for the models and channels of funding.

The overall opening up of Ethiopia's political regime has had not only positive consequences. Political instability and increasing (ethnic) conflict have limited CSO operations in general and the project activities in particular in some of the project areas.

Related to a more conducive environment for SRHR related topics, the project has been able to advance with many of the central topics, including access to services, the right to make decisions about the timing and number of children, contraception, harmful traditional practices, gender-based violence, menstrual hygiene management and comprehensive sexuality education, among other issues. However, working with topics related to sexual diversity is more difficult as same-sex sexual acts are prohibited by law and homosexuality in general is a cultural taboo. Abortion is another culturally sensitive topic, even if it is permitted legally for girls under eighteen, or in limited cases for medical reasons. It has been difficult to introduce the topic in any way other than highlighting the importance of safe abortion services. Official CSE materials promote abstinence before marriage but the opening up of the civil society space has allowed Plan to introduce information about contraception at its project training events.



2.2 LAOS

In general, the operational space for civil society in Laos is restricted and closely monitored by the government. No major changes occurred during 2019 in this respect; existing CSOs are strictly regulated and new CSOs are not registered.

The restrictions have had direct implications for the operations of the project: the project implementing partners, PFHA and GDA were able to obtain Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the provincial and district health departments as well as the district education office only in June and October 2019, respectively. On a more positive note, close cooperation with the health and educational authorities at all levels increases the cooperation with the state as an important stakeholder and increases the sustainability of the activities implemented.

In general, advocacy and influencing work focuses on how to strengthen the implementation of existing policies rather than advocating for policy change. The project works to promote an enabling environment for CSOs to act in and engage with national and local level authorities through resourcing and technical expertise.

Some enabling development related to possibilities for conducting SRHR work took place during 2019. The Revision of Reproductive Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Strategy and Action Plan (2015–2020) will provide opportunities for advocacy on adolescent reproductive health and rights. Equally, the release of the National Decree on the Rights of People with a Disability will help create an enabling environment for the project to build the profile of Persons with Disabilities and advocate with duty-bearers, service providers and communities to support Persons with Disabilities.

The project has supported the formulation of comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) curricula and will support the implementation of the curricula in schools in the project area. As a consequence, Laos is one of the programme countries where progress with CSE has been possible.

Abortion remains illegal and is a taboo topic in Laos. While at the macro level some developments have been seen, such as the introduction of data of induced abortion to the Lao Social Indicator Report 2017, these small advances do not trickle down to the district level. The project is assessing how it could help bridge the gap.



2.3 MOZAMBIQUE

The relationship between civil society and the government is mainly fruitful, as in the majority of cases the CSOs support the government in implementing the national development plan. The government demands accountability and transparency from CSOs, i.e. to share plans and reports and to be open to government monitoring of activities.

Although there have been concerns over freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and association, for example, as expressed by organisations such as Amnesty International, Plan Mozambique or the project have not faced restrictions in the work. SRHR is a government concern and is linked to government strategies on gender equality. There is a positive environment in which to work freely with all related topics and without legal restrictions. In 2019, Mozambique introduced a law against early unions, which provides a good tool for the project to disseminate information about the risks related to child and early marriage and unions.

However, there are still social challenges related to behaviour and practices among rural communities, where the majority of the population are guided by harmful social and gender norms. For example, there are policies in place allowing legal abortion, non-discrimination and violence towards children, adolescents and youth who identify as LGBTQI, but the mind-set of many health workers is still influenced by taboos and norms that hinder youth and adults from exercising their rights. The majority of people in the society are still somehow not used to exercising or approving of others exercising their rights in terms of abortion and sexual orientation.

On the other hand, despite the fact that the government has put in place policies and laws favourable to promoting gender equality and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence, when it comes to the implementation of these, the government has been somewhat apathetic. To address both the social restrictions and advocate for full implementation of laws, it has been instrumental to map the duty bearers and involve boys and men, girls and women as beneficiaries, rights holders and agents of change. Plan is a member of multiple CSO forums for influencing and advocacy that foster the government in the fulfilment of its role.

2.4 MYANMAR

In Myanmar, civil society organisations have traditionally engaged in service provision, including humanitarian aid. Political and economic reforms at the beginning of the decade provided more room for CSOs to operate and led to an influx of donors into the country. However, restrictions on CSOs' operations still exist: registering new organisations is difficult, and those that do exist have reporting requirements in place. Advocacy and influencing can be easily interpreted as criticism towards the government, limiting the possibilities for CSO advocacy work.

Overall, the culture promoting civil society in the country is still young, and SRHR topics are not prioritised amongst CSOs, who often compete with multiple priorities and responsibilities. This is evident in areas outside the capital and, for example, Nyaung U district, where our project operates and only a limited number of actors are working with the topic.

In principle, there are no legal or cultural limitations for SRHR work, yet some forces of resistance contracting forces exist. For example, a comprehensive national sexual and reproductive health and rights policy was developed in 2018, but it continued without approval throughout 2019, indicating that the topic is a sensitive one. On the other hand, comprehensive sexuality education has been partially included in school curricula under the name of life skills. Issues related to sexual minorities can be discussed, and the country has some active movements working with the theme. However, cultural factors may limit the possibility to work with these topics in more rural settings. For example, safe abortion is a contested topic and, at the community level, the fear exists that discussion of premarital sex will lead to promiscuous behaviour.



2.5 UGANDA

The general operating space for non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations in Uganda is good and influencing work and community mobilisation is allowed. Large gatherings require permission in advance, but there have not been restrictions in granting a permit.

However, the possibility to work with certain topics related to SRHR is limited or not permitted, both culturally and legally. Sexuality education is not permitted in schools in Uganda. A Sexuality Education Framework was developed, but current tensions between the opinions of different religious institutions regarding the theme limited the approval of the framework. As a consequence, the project is working through a participatory school governance approach in schools and introducing life skills topics, such as puberty and menstruation, that are permitted.

Abortion is only possible to save an expectant mother's life, and existing social norms are strongly opposed to it. This limits the possibility to introduce safe abortion as one of the topics within the programme. Moreover, the distribution of contraceptives to young people is restricted and can only be done through medical facilities.

The rights of the LGBTQI community are restricted and the topic is considered a social taboo. Homosexual relations are forbidden under the penal code, and members of the LGBTQI community are frequently harassed by the police. So far, it has not been possible to work with the topic within the project, other than increasing the awareness and understanding of project staff about the theme.



3. PROGRAMME RESULTS

My Body. My Future. programmatic work is divided into four main components: SRHR projects, youth innovation and entrepreneurship projects, global citizen education work, and advocacy and communications in Finland. The results of these components are presented in this chapter under their respective sub-headings. First, the results of the SRHR projects, the largest component by the number of projects and by budget are presented. This is followed by youth innovation projects, before moving to the results of Plan Finland's work in Finland.

3.1 SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS PROJECTS

Sexual and reproductive health and rights projects include a total of five projects in Ethiopia, Laos, Mozambique, Myanmar and Uganda, and form the largest component of the My Body. My Future. programme. They share an actor-based results framework, against which results are presented in this chapter. The programmes have four outcomes, of which the first is focused on improving knowledge and changing attitudes among adolescents in relation to SRHR and gender equality. The second outcome targets parents, community members, community leaders and other community-based actors to achieve a supportive environment for girls through increased awareness of adolescent SRHR, gender-based violence and action against child marriage. The third outcome seeks to mobilise civil society actors to work towards gender equality and girls' rights. The fourth outcome concentrates on advocacy for adolescent-friendly SRH services and for laws and policies that support the realisation of girls' rights.

The SRHR projects reached directly 39,000 children and adolescents (24,600 F / 14,400 M) under the age of 19, and 33,000 adults (19,500 F / 13,500 M) were reached through different programme activities throughout the year. Of these, 715 were people with a disability. In addition, approximately 300,000 people were reached indirectly.

3.1.1 Outcome 1: Adolescent girls and boys increasingly realise their SRH rights

Outcome 1 aims to challenge and change existing social norms to promote gender equality and to remove barriers to girls' participation within society. The aim is to enhance knowledge among youth on gender equality, SRHR and other subjects, both within schools and out-of-school youth. The strategies to reach adolescents vary according to the local context, but include supporting youth clubs at schools, peer-to-peer clubs and champion of change clubs (CoC), as well as work on menstrual hygiene management (especially in Ethiopia and Uganda), or more formal cooperation with schools, such as participatory school governance (in Uganda) or support for comprehensive sexuality education (in Laos).

The second year of the programme marks a significant increase in the number of adolescents with positive attitudes towards SRHR and gender equality and who actively take action to promote SRHR themes within their communities. In total, 48% of participating youth demonstrated knowledge, attitudes and adopted practices conducive to positive SRHR and gender equality in the monitoring surveys, which is a significant increase from the 24% of the baseline. The percentage of youth involved in various programme activities who report having taken action together with peers related to SRHR issues increased by 62% from the baseline, from 25% in 2018 to 66% in 2019.

The education and training provided to adolescents on SRHR, gender equality and related topics has contributed to the improved understanding of youth and adolescents of these topics. In total, over 800 different youth clubs or peer-to-peer groups were established across the projects, some fully functional and some at the set-up stage for training facilitators and group leaders. A total of 12,500 adolescent girls and boys took part in these group activities in 2019.

THE SHARE OF PARTICIPATING YOUTH WHO REPORT POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES ON SRHR AND GENDER EQUALITY INCREASED FROM 24% AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME TO 48% BY 2019.

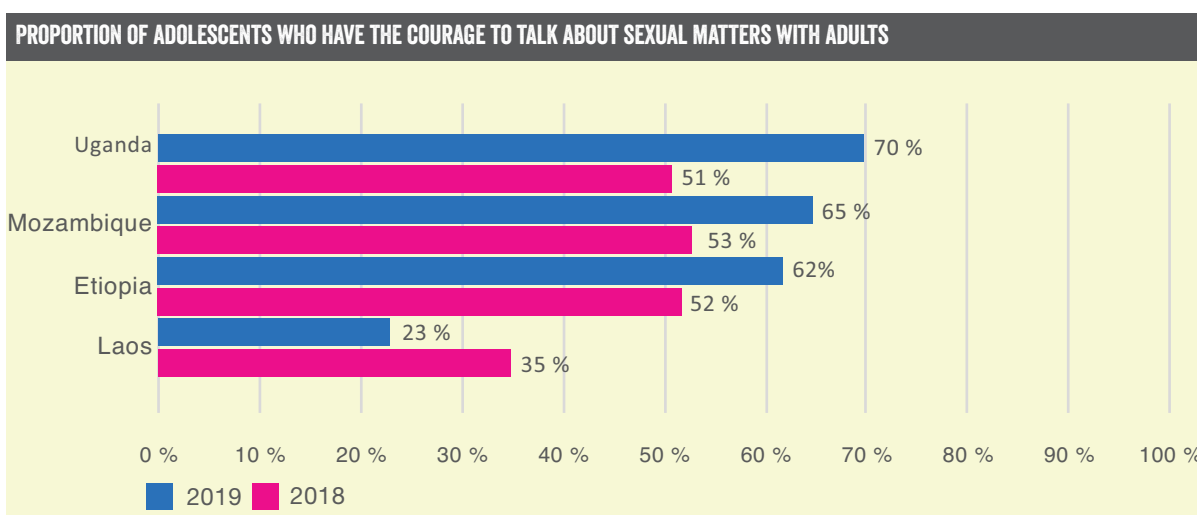


Several training approaches and methodologies were utilised, which all contributed to the increase in the knowledge of adolescents on SRHR-related issues.

- Champions of Change (CoC) is a training methodology developed by Plan International to engage youth in an intensive learning process and to encourage them to reflect on and challenge their own views and beliefs concerning gender equality and existing social norms. Participants are also expected to engage by sharing their knowledge with their peers. In general, the Champions of Change programme is regarded as a strong programme that yields results in the areas where it is implemented and, indeed, the results seem promising. The CoC methodology has been utilised in Uganda, Mozambique and Myanmar, with 135 groups and approximately 3,900 participants. In Ethiopia, the contextualisation of CoC materials was ongoing and the training of facilitators started in late 2019.

- In Laos, completely new training material was developed in cooperation with the design company Butterfly Works, which specialises in applying design thinking to social change and international development. Youth were active participants in the design process. The result, Merlin Pha Hoo or Ask Merlin methodology, has been in use since the latter half of 2019. The Ministry of Education and Sports has expressed interest in integrating parts of the curriculum into the official comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) curriculum.
- Other forms of training include peer-to-peer groups, school clubs for different topics, including gender equality, menstrual hygiene management or general life skills training. In Uganda alone, 91 school clubs were operating. In Ethiopia, 304 different peer-to-peer groups were formed.

Youth taking part in training events report significant changes in their knowledge of their rights, attitudes towards gender equality and their ability to discuss difficult issues such as sexuality with their peers or with their parents. The monitoring survey data suggests that respondents' understanding of gender equality is far greater and has increased more than understanding of topics related to SRHR. This makes sense because in some countries, especially Laos, the youth groups started in late 2019, and only progressed in topics related to life skills and gender equality.¹ In some countries, especially Uganda, it has not been possible to introduce many SRHR-related topics to school club curricula due to current restrictions on sexuality education within schools. Moreover, the questionnaire utilised to assess SRHR knowledge might have been quite technical and difficult to answer, especially for younger respondents within the age group of 10–14 years, which partially explains the slow progress in SRHR related knowledge.



ADOLESCENTS HAVE STARTED TO INCREASINGLY PROMOTE SRHR AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

On the other hand, even if the youth SRHR knowledge was perceived as limited, the evidence indicates that confidence among adolescents to discuss topics such as contraceptive use, sex or marriage with friends and adults has increased. This change is especially visible in countries that were able to establish youth or school clubs already in 2018 or early 2019, including Ethiopia, Uganda and Mozambique. In Laos and Myanmar, youth clubs have started to operate at a later stage, and a similar trend is yet visible. However, the project staff and group facilitators in all

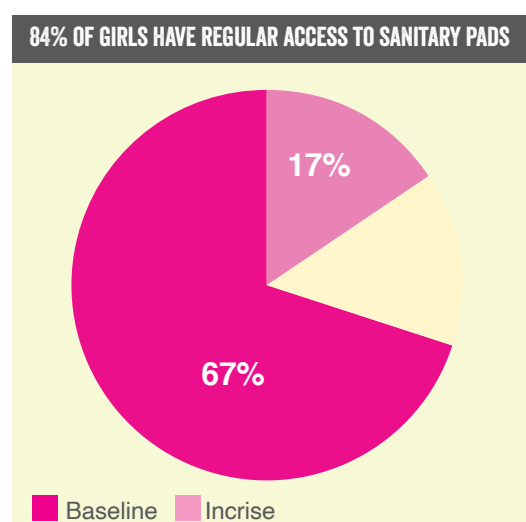
countries have identified a significant increase in the confidence and self-esteem of adolescents, and youth themselves report that they feel better equipped to discuss matters relevant to them with adults.

Improved confidence and knowledge among youth and adolescents concerning gender equality and sexual and reproductive health has also turned into action: peer-to-peer group members utilise the knowledge and skills gained to raise awareness among other young people in their communities, and adolescents and youth have increasingly reported intended cases of child marriage and child labour to school principals and local authorities. The action has taken many forms: youth in Ethiopia and Uganda have taken action to report cases of school drop-out or early or forced marriage. As a result, 278 adolescents in Amhara region in Ethiopia returned to school. In Uganda, 400 girls under the age of 18 who were to be married were supported in refusing these planned marriages.

¹ It needs to be noted that the difference in samples may explain some of the variations in survey results from Laos. The number of surveyed adolescents increased in 2019 by over 60% from 2018. Moreover, the schools and communities surveyed in 2018 were all from urban and semi-urban areas, while in the 2019 survey 6 schools and 9 communities from more rural, remote locations were included in the survey.

The use of adolescent sexual and reproductive health services in the project areas seems uneven. In Uganda, 85% of the adolescents interviewed reported having utilised SRHR services in 2019 compared to 54% a year before. In other countries, according to the survey, the demand for services has remained at the same level or even fallen slightly. However, the SRH service providers and project staff members report observing at least a moderate increase in demand for adolescent SRH services (see more in Chapter 3.1.4).

In addition to having SRH services in place, the perceived quality of the services is important, eventually influencing the use of the services. Adolescents give an uneven rating to the adolescent-friendliness of the SRH services available to them. Overall, there is a moderate increase at the programme level when compared to the baseline; however, this is mostly explained by the increasingly positive perceptions of youth in Mozambique where the project has supported and worked closely with an SRHR service point for adolescents among other health centres. In the other countries, the opinions of respondents have become more critical or remained the same. For example, in Uganda, the proportion of adolescents who perceive SRH services as adolescent-friendly fell from 70% in 2018 to 66% in 2019. This is likely to be a sign of improved knowledge of youth about their rights and increased understanding about what adequate SRHR services include. Contrary to the opinions of youth, the health authorities report an increased understanding and means to provide adolescent-friendly sexual and reproductive health services. This mismatch requires further analysis in order to improve the provision of adolescent SRH services in the project intervention areas. SRH services are further discussed in Chapter 3.1.4.



During 2019, menstrual hygiene and the access of young women to sanitary pads has improved. Of the girls responding to the monitoring surveys, 84% reported they had access to sanitary pads, compared to 67% at baseline. Moreover, the knowledge of boys and girls about menstruation and menstrual hygiene management has increased, with 74% of youth surveyed self-reporting good skills.

Multiple actions were taken to improve the access of adolescent girls and young women to adequate sanitary conditions and clarify myths related to menstruation. In Ethiopia, taboos concerning menstruation have started to break due to awareness raising at schools and among parents, and the promotion of sanitary pads by using different mechanisms at schools and in communities. At least 30 schools have established designated facilities for girls to wash, change sanitary pads or rest if experiencing menstrual pain,

for example. In Laos, several toilets were constructed at schools in close consultation with the students themselves. In Uganda, health workers engaged in informing adolescents about menstrual hygiene management (MHM), and a group of 52 youths were trained on sanitary pad production to start small-scale production of re-usable sanitary pads.

In Ethiopia, the presence of a number of initiatives in the same region has been a positive contributing factor to the overall improved MHM. In comparison to other project areas in the country, the overall better and more rapid increase in access to sanitary pads has been reported from the Woredas (municipalities), and both Plan's main SRHR project Yene Raey and the Ethipad initiative, which supports young women's economic activity through the production of reusable sanitary pads and raising general awareness about the importance of MHM both at schools and for wider public, are implemented.

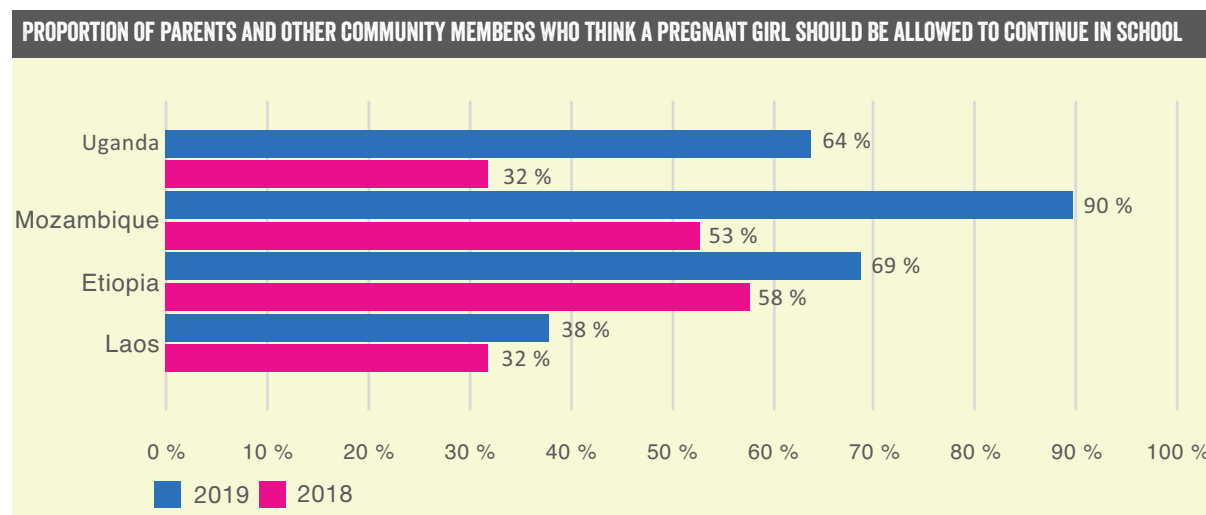
3.1.2 Outcome 2: Parents, community leaders and community members increasingly value equality for girls

Outcome 2 targets community leaders, parents and community members with the aim of increasing their awareness of sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and specific topics such as action against child marriage or female genital mutilation.

During 2019, the understanding of parents and community members about gender equality and SRHR has improved and parents seem to be increasingly at ease and better equipped to have conversations with adolescents on topics such as puberty, relationships and sexuality. The proportion of community members who value gender equality increased from 38% at the beginning of the programme to 62% in 2019, and the proportion of surveyed parents who reported feeling comfortable discussing with adolescents issues related to sex increased from 61% to 67% in one year.

THE PROPORTION OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO VALUE GENDER EQUALITY INCREASED FROM 38% AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME TO 61% IN 2019.

While several factors have contributed to the increased value placed on girls' rights, examples of successful country-specific strategies include the renewal of the concept of Massungukates and Massungudotas, community-based counsellors, to share knowledge about SRHR issues and to transform harmful social norms in Mozambique and community dialogue sessions, which are producing lively discussions on gender equality and the role of men and women in the community. Participants, men and women alike, are showing positive attitudes towards the need to bring change to these norms. In Ethiopia, Commu-



nity Conversations (CC), which take place twice a month, provide a platform for regular and open discussion on values and behaviours related to SRHR among community members. These facilitated conversations give everyone equal and free space to explore values, attitudes and norms together, identify harmful ones, reach consensus, make appropriate decisions and act accordingly. Based on the feedback from the facilitators, CCs have played a crucial role in communities in addressing adolescents' sexual and reproductive health issues, harmful practices and gender equality. As an example of a small shift in related attitudes and norms, the proportion of parents and community members who think a girl who has become pregnant should be allowed to continue in school increased in one year from 43% to 62% across the projects.

The engagement of traditional and religious leaders in the project activities has been effective in shaping community members' opinions about child marriage or harmful practices since they have a high influence on people's opinions and behaviour within their communities. In Uganda, 70 out of the 80 religious leaders trained have come up with initiatives to create awareness concerning child marriage and teenage pregnancy. Traditional leaders were active as well: Lango Kingdoms came up with an ordinance to prohibit child marriage, and 130 out of 149 clan leaders are creating awareness to put this into practice. Equally, evidence from Ethiopia suggests that village elders are increasingly requesting proof of age from relevant institutions before permitting a marriage.

While at the programme level significant results can be demonstrated, the differences in progress and pace among the projects needs to be noted. The results-related priority given to girls' education are uneven: while in Mozambique and Uganda, parents increasingly report that their school-aged girls are attending classes, in Ethiopia and Laos, the trend is decreasing. In Ethiopia, the observations of project staff, however, do not support this result and it may come from differences in the sampled populations, and meanwhile an increasing proportion of community members self-reported they believed in equal rights for girls and boys.² In Laos, the project partners responsible for training events at the community level only got permission from regional governments to operate in late 2019 and, as a result, the training events will commence and results be more visible in 2020. In Myanmar, the project is in its initial phase and no community-level training on SRHR was conducted during 2019. However, the project did engage with parents to address the importance of the SRHR topic to adolescents, and to gain approval from the parents for their children to participate in the programme.

Support for Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) intends to provide alternative income sources for the community members to promote small business activities and to increase the resilience of families. In 2019, VSLAs were supported and active in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

² 85% in 2018 and 89% in 2019.

In total, 137 small business initiatives were established during 2019. Typical small businesses include keeping small livestock and engaging in small-scale agro-processing, such as the production and sale of coconut oil. The re-usable sanitary pad production groups in Ethiopia are included in this number (see more info below). According to a survey of VSLA group participants in Mozambique, female participants confirmed that income generated from the small businesses established with the help of VSLA groups has helped them sustain their families and provide food, school materials and clothing. In Ethiopia, all 54 supported VSLAs had already managed to engage members in continuous saving. The members of the VSLA groups and women's self-help groups have also benefitted from training on gender equality, SRHR and disability inclusion, and many group members have started to take action towards promoting understanding and knowledge of SRHR within their communities.

Ethipad is a social business initiative in Ethiopia that seeks to improve the access of rural women and girls to re-usable sanitary pads and to employ local youth in producing sanitary pads through seven producer associations. During 2019, the groups were able to test and improve the product, and also widen the range of products on offer from sanitary pads to, for example, underwear and other garments. The financial management and marketing skills of the producer associations have been improved and, for example, income and expenses were recorded accordingly. The economic gains per group were still small but encouraging. Local VSLA groups are also beginning to operate as outlets for sanitary pads, increasing sales gradually and providing small additional income for group participants.

3.1.3 Outcome 3: Civil society actors engage and mobilise others for girls' rights

The aim of Outcome 3 is to mobilise civil society actors to work towards gender equality and girls' rights. Three outputs or strategies are expected to contribute to this change. They include the capacity building of project implementing partners and other partner organisations on relevant topics, mobilisation and joint action between existing civil society networks, CSOs and CBOs, and the involvement of youth in planning and implementation of civil society action towards gender equality and the promotion of SRHR.

All projects work with CSOs and other partner organisations in different ways to leverage the impact of their work. Only the project in Myanmar does not have a specific outcome and specific targets set for civil society engagement. This is because the project is very new, the CSO actors working in the area with similar topics are few or none at all, and Plan is only establishing itself as an actor working with SRHR issues within the country. Progress seems evident after the second year of the programme.

First, the capacity of implementing partners to promote gender equality and SRHR as well as to implement other programme activities has increased. As an example, in Uganda, the project has built the management and SRHR capacity of the 30 civil society partners implementing the project activities as well as created a movement of CSOs to actively influence cultural practices, policy and legal reforms. According to the assessment, 67% of partners met the targets set in the capacity building plans. In Ethiopia, three project implementing partners together with relevant government authorities have been trained on a range of topics, including gender equality, SRHR, child protection and climate resilience, which have all increased their ability to implement planned activities. In Laos, both project partner organisations have increased significantly their advocacy skills, addressing communities as well as authorities at district, provincial and national levels.

THE PROGRAMME WORKED WITH 141 DIFFERENT TYPES OF CIVIL SOCIETY ACTORS, FROM COMMUNITY LEVEL AGENTS OF CHANGE TO NATIONAL LEVEL NETWORKS FOR POLITICAL INFLUENCING, TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND SRHR.

Second, different civil society actors are increasingly working together to take action to promote and advocate for gender equality, SRHR and related themes.

In Mozambique, the project set up a network of local and international CSOs within Jangamo district to discuss and promote SRHR work within the area. The network has engaged in joint campaigning on sexual and reproductive health and rights, including training for youth, theatre presentations on the topic, dissemination of information about contraceptives or work against early and child marriages. A recently approved law against premature unions, a law for which Plan Mozambique was campaigning actively together with other CSOs, has been an effective tool to leverage the work on reducing child and early marriages in the district. In addition, a community radio station was established in Jangamo district and it

broadcasts SRHR programmes and debates (also in the local language), actively involving adolescents in its operation.

In Ethiopia, the commitment and capacity of 82 CSOs (Parent-teacher associations (PTAs), CBOs and faith-based organisations) to address the issue of adolescent SRHR was enhanced. Traditional community groups, such as Iddirs, religious institutions, Community Care Coalitions, peer groups, school clubs and other social



structures, have enhanced their capacities and are serving as change agents promoting SRHR information and service provision in their respective communities. For example, PTAs have advocated for space for girls to change sanitary pads at schools, and in 30 schools such rooms were established. Community Care Coalitions were able to integrate SRHR issues into their regular activities and work on them. Some CSOs have initiated SRHR information provision in local languages, and many CBOs are engaged in resource mobilisation interventions and have started supporting children in vulnerable situations.

In Laos, both project implementing partners, GDA and PFHA, have engaged in different advocacy activities. At the national level, PFHA has supported the production of a national adolescent-friendly health services manual and SRHR strategy, and Plan and CSOs contributed to the new national CSE curriculum approved by the government. GDA submitted a statement to the Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights, and was the only Lao CSO to submit one. At the district level, numerous awareness events were conducted promoting especially girls' rights and gender equality. The project works to promote enabling environment for CSOs to act and engage with national and local level authorities through resourcing and technical expertise. This is crucial in the Laos context, where the space for civil society is very limited.

Evidence based on project staff observations in Uganda suggests that adolescents are being increasingly involved in the planning and implementation of civil society initiatives. In Laos, adolescents were engaged in identifying and selecting relevant topics for research to be conducted by project partners. The topics selected were child marriage and access to SRHR services for adolescents. Moreover, evidence from Ethiopia and Mozambique indicates that youth are increasingly taking action to promote SRHR questions within their communities, even if the degree of participation in the civil society action has not been assessed. Despite these examples, collecting systematic data on the involvement of adolescents in CSO and CBO action for improved SRH information, rights and services across the project has been somewhat challenging, but it seems that results are being achieved to different degrees.

A result related to civil society collaboration is partnership with national and local Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), which provides an important channel and opportunities for mutual learning and capacity development. For example, in Myanmar and Ethiopia, national OPDs have supported programme teams in disability inclusive data collection. In Uganda and Mozambique, OPD representatives have been participating in ASRHR and Disability Inclusion training arranged by Plan teams.

IN 2019, 86% OF SRH SERVICE PROVIDERS REPORTED THEY RECOGNISE AND RESPECT THE DIVERSITY OF YOUTH AND THEIR SPECIFIC NEEDS, COMPARED TO 50% AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PROGRAMME.

es for adolescents. Of the respondents to a self-evaluation of 91 SRH service providers, 86% self-reported as being able to recognise and respect the diversity of youth and their specific needs – an increase of 34% from the year before. This change is also supported by the service providers' own observation that youth are using more SRH services in the project intervention areas and by the increase of people with disabilities seeking SRH services. According to health workers, services for contraceptives and testing for STIs have especially seen increasing demand. Health workers have also engaged in, for example, awareness raising about menstrual hygiene management.

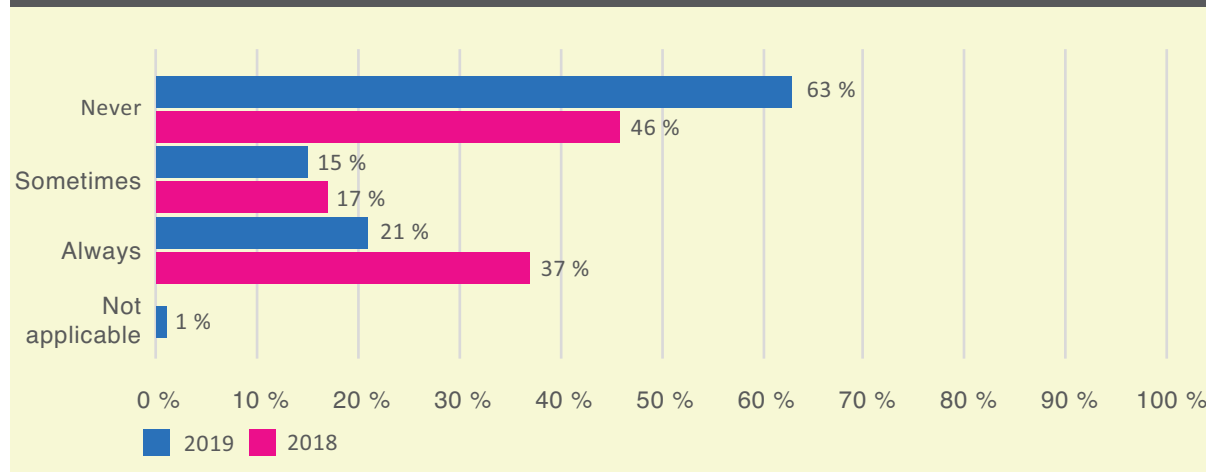
Factors that have contributed to this change include training for health care staff on SRHR, adolescent SRH services, disability inclusion, and, on some occasions, support and equipment to provide adequate facilities for serving adolescents.

3.1.4 Outcome 4: Government and local authorities place a higher priority on adolescent SRHR

Outcome 4 supports the capacity of local authorities and service providers to put adolescent-friendly inclusive public SRH services in place and promotes advocacy work towards laws and policies that support the realisation of gender equality and SRHR at the local and national levels.

One of the most notable results under this outcome is that health care providers have a better understanding of adolescent-friendly and inclusive SRHR services, and they increasingly provide SRHR services

THE PROPORTION OF SERVICE PROVIDERS REPORTING THE POSSIBILITY FOR PEOPLE TO OVERHEAR COUNSELLING SESSIONS WITH ADOLESCENTS HAS DECREASED



These results are supported to some extent by the surveys carried out with adolescents or monitoring visits and observations of local project staff. For example, 69% of adolescents participating in monitoring surveys perceived SRH services in their area as adolescent friendly. This is a modest increase when compared to the baseline and there were differences between countries (as discussed in Chapter 3.1.1). Other evidence from monitoring points to the improved availability of services, but the need to improve services for people with disabilities in terms of adequate materials and communication mechanisms, for example, is recognised. In addition, adolescent-friendly SRH services are still not available in all project areas and, in some cases, demand seems to exceed the services available.

Important developments and results from influencing work are seen in Laos: the Ministry of Education and Sports adopted a new national Comprehensive Sexual Education curriculum. Plan and project partner organisation PFHA contributed to the design of the curriculum, under strategic partnership with UNFPA, and the project will pilot this in Huon District in the future. The Ministry of Health adopted a national manual on

IMPORTANT RESULTS FROM INFLUENCING INCLUDE THE ADOPTION OF A NEW NATIONAL COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION CURRICULUM, NATIONAL MANUAL ON ADOLESCENT-FRIENDLY HEALTH SERVICES AND A NEW SRHR STRATEGY IN LAOS.

Adolescent-Friendly Health Services and a new SRHR strategy, to which PFHA contributed. All of this is expected to contribute towards improved knowledge and the provision of SRH services to adolescents.

In Uganda, the project has influenced several policies and legal frameworks related to the topic, including the National Strategy to End Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy, National Adolescent Health Policy, Adolescent Sexual Reproduction Health Services Standards and guidelines, sexuality education framework for schools (halted by the parliament). The project is also a member of several multi-stakeholder platforms and committees to address SRHR issues, especially related to ending child marriage and adolescent sexual and reproductive health services standards.

In Ethiopia, Plan has established and been active in regional platforms to address child marriage and gender-based violence.

The project in Myanmar, which only started in late 2018, was established by the Ministry of Health and Sports as a specialist organisation working with SRHR topics, which allows Plan Myanmar to engage in different technical working groups in the future.

3.1.5 SRHR projects: challenges and lessons learned

While the results are encouraging, the programme has also faced challenges and learned many lessons. A mid-term review was conducted in late 2019 and brought into light both the strengths of the programme and the challenges it faces. Learning has also occurred by doing, and each year we start to have a better understanding of the strategies and approaches that work in each project context.

Sexual and reproductive rights is a sensitive topic, surrounded by taboos, restrictive social norms and patriarchal attitudes that are deeply rooted in communities. Changing these social norms and practices takes time and can only be done gradually. We will need to implement new topics gradually, starting with the easiest ones, such as gender equality, menstrual hygiene management or child marriage, and progressively introducing newer and more sensitive topics, including adolescent sexuality and contraceptive use, before assessing whether or how to address such taboo topics as abortion or the rights of sexual minorities. Moreover, each project needs to find a balance between challenging existing social norms to change them and not introducing topics that might, for example, put our project personnel or youth activists in a difficult position legally. The topics introduced will vary according to the local context and can be observed, for example, in the contextualisation of existing training materials, especially the Champions of Change methodology, which has been slow in some countries. In Ethiopia, for example, the Champions of Change groups did not start during 2019 as was originally planned.

Creating an environment for innovation, including developing strategies to break taboos, change social and gender norms and navigate between the more traditional child protection approach and a rights-based approach to sexual and reproductive health, requires a different type of mind-set, capabilities, resources, timeframes and measurement approaches than scaling up tried and tested programme models that are known to yield results and are cost effective. Finding new entry points, ways of working, insights and approaches requires, as the mid-term review recommended, a clearer distinction between the activities that are more about scaling and those that are more about innovation and especially require time, space and investment for piloting, iterating and, at times, even for failing.

Support from local authorities and local leaders is important to achieve social change. They are important opinion leaders in communities, and their opinions may be more influential than changes in legal or policy frameworks; and some projects have good experiences in engaging traditional and/or religious leaders in their work, leading to positive results which otherwise might not have been achieved. However, this approach has its own challenges. First, engaging traditional leaders requires time to discuss and build confidential relationships, and careful analysis of suitable approaches. Gaining their support for some of the SRHR topics may be challenging and, most often, this kind of engagement has been carried out with more socially acceptable topics such as the work against child marriage, female genital mutilation or gender-based violence. In addition, when engaging with third party actors and encouraging them to become active change-makers, some control over the content of the messaging is always lost, increasing the risk that the messages will lack the rights-based approach Plan International endeavours to have in all of its communication. Thus, communication of the topics we work with needs to be made very clear.

One of the challenges relates to reaching out-of-school youth, engaging with them and keeping them in the programme. The vast majority of adolescents we are working with are reached through schools, and we might have been overambitious about the extent to which the projects are able to include out-of-school youth in activities. When efforts have been made to engage out-of-school youth in project clubs and training events, the challenge is the high drop-out rate of youth. This is the case, for example, in Mozambique, where main-



taining out-of-school youth in the Champions of Change groups has been a challenge due to the different life situations and dynamics of youth. Since the reasons behind school drop-out are often economic, out-of-school youth have been included in the income generating activities in Mozambique. Some projects have deliberately taken the decision not to focus on out-of-school youth during this programme period. Overall, there is ongoing self-reflection within the programme, whether our strategies are the most adequate and meaningful for the out-of-school youth and how to develop them further, as well as planning for research on strategies to support girls most at risk, which started in 2019.

The aim of the programme is to improve inclusive SRH services available for people with disabilities and to promote their participation in all activities. In project contexts, people with disabilities are often highly marginalised and their need for support is diverse and vast. At the same time, service providers are working with limited resources and capacities. Many of the demands for support and services addressed to project teams go beyond the scope of the project. The project team has limited opportunities to support people with disabilities beyond the mandate of the programme. To address the challenge, the programme is increasingly collaborating with local OPDs, providing training on disability inclusion to service providers in the project working sector, such as health and education, and collaborating closely with governmental authorities who are responsible for social sector services and disability.

Creating an unmet demand for services does not relate only to services for people with disability. A common dilemma for a rights-based approach to development is that the increased understanding of people about their rights and the ability to take action to hold duty bearers accountable often increases the demand for services that duty bearers and service providers may not be able to respond to. While Plan's theory of change inherently seeks to address the issue from both sides, namely by working equally with duty bearers to improve existing services, situations arise where there is a mismatch between services and demand. Thus, for example, while adolescent-friendly SRH services are increasingly available in our programme areas, there is still work to do in response to the increasing demand.

Some of the interesting lessons from the mid-term review include the notion of how to increase and nourish the collaboration and learning between the projects in different countries within our programme. All projects have had their specific success stories and lessons learnt, and collaborating and sharing those experiences support learning across the project teams and enhance implementation. While the programme has promoted joint learning through training and webinars, this is an area that should be explored, supported and developed continuously.

3.2 YOUTH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The programme includes two projects designed to increase the capacity for innovation, entrepreneurship and life skills of vulnerable urban youth in Uganda and Ethiopia. SmartUp Factory Hubs are a space where young people learn crucial life and employment skills and have access to mentoring, peer support and a much-needed self-esteem boost that helps them find their place in the job market. SmartUp Factories offer four-month courses during which youth can take classes on life skills, human-centred design, computer skills, public speaking, sexual and reproductive health and entrepreneurship. Youth graduating from the programme have established their own businesses or other income-generating activities, or they have become active problem solvers within their communities. Currently, there are 10 hubs in Uganda, and two hubs in Ethiopia.

YOUTH AT THE SMARTUP HUBS HAVE BECOME ACTIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

During 2019, 1,111 young people (643F / 468M) were trained in Uganda, and 239 (162 F/ 77M) received training in SmartUp Hubs in Ethiopia.

The most significant results relate to motivating girls to participate in technology courses and business ideation. For example, in Ethiopia, the share of girls participating in the business idea competition for SmartUp Factory students rose significantly from 2018. This year, 23 out of 33 idea winners were young women, and seven of these women were young people with a disability. Moreover, it was observed that girls have become more confident and skilled at speaking about their rights.

In Uganda the efforts to increase the interest of girls in available technology courses achieved results, and at least 25% of the participants in technology courses were female. In 2019, the model of Girls Leadership Academy with bi-monthly sessions with inspirational speakers, continued its operations. Despite all the efforts, the number of female winners in the business idea competition decreased significantly from the previous year, signalling the need to continue to enhance the participation and confidence of girls even after they sign up for the SmartUp centres.

**IN ETHIOPIA, 23 OUT OF 33
WINNERS OF THE BUSINESS
IDEA COMPETITION WERE
YOUNG WOMEN.**

Another important result observed in 2019 was the increased capacity of youth mentors to manage the factories in Uganda and Ethiopia. In general, the mentors have an increased sense of responsibility and ownership, and their skills for running the courses have improved. This is manifested by better communication and facilitation skills, taking a bigger role in managing, monitoring and assisting new youth champions, and managing the daily project implementation in the factories. In Uganda, specific focus was paid on financial and organisational management during the year.

The year 2019 has been a period of expansion of the model in Uganda. The number of SmartUp Hubs increased from seven in 2018 to 10 in 2019. Four new hubs opened in provincial cities, while the hub in Gulu was closed after the lease for the space could not be renegotiated and no new space was found.





Challenges and lessons learned

The SmartUp Factories in both Uganda and Ethiopia have reached a stage where everyday operations are running smoothly, leaving more room for internal reflection. Mentors were identified as the most important element of a successful SmartUp Factory Hub. They keep the daily operations running, participate in teaching, share the lessons they have learned, and give peer-to-peer support to youth. Mentors were actively involved in the 2020 annual planning, and mentors' further training was added to the plans for the coming year. In Uganda, mentors' skill building will also encompass the organisational management and financial training.

Administrative challenges were present in Uganda. Payment of wages to mentors was often delayed, and the winners of the innovation competition received their prizes months later. These delays lead to the demotivation of mentors and youth in the programme. Discussions to solve these delays in administrative issues are ongoing.

While young people gain many skills during their stay at the hubs, support – both financial and know-how – in starting their own business ideas is limited. For example, the winners of the innovation challenges or business idea competition often do not have the resources or skills to actually set up their businesses. In 2019, both countries were building new partnerships with innovation and StartUp Hubs to close the gap between having a great idea and building a thriving business.

3.3 COMMUNICATIONS, YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN FINLAND

In addition to international programmes, the My Body. My Future. programme engages in advocacy, global citizenship education and communications in Finland, with the aim of advancing girls' rights and global gender equality, as well as raising awareness of the effects of climate change in the global south, especially from the perspective of girls. As in international work, children and youth are also engaged as active participants in advocacy and awareness raising.

The results of the programmatic work in Finland are presented in this chapter. The chapters are divided on the basis of the target groups we are working with: the first covering the work done with children and youth, the second concentrating on educational authorities, the third focusing on the general public and the fourth covering advocacy towards decision makers in Finland.

In 2019, the programme reached 45,700 people in Finland, of whom approximately 15,900 were children under 18 and 29,800 were adults.

The Global School initiative and youth engagement programme receive core funding from both the MFA and the Ministry of Education and Culture. While this report represents the results in which the MFA is the only donor or the contribution of the MFA is significant, it is not always meaningful to separate the contribution of these two donors. For example, the salaries related to these initiatives are covered with funds from both donors.



3.3.1 Children and young people promote children's rights, gender equality and sustainable development goals

Children's Board (Planin lastenhallitus) offered 21 11–18-year-old children a forum in which to learn about children's rights and practise influencing in an encouraging environment. Of the board members, 82% reported having significantly enhanced their knowledge and skills in promoting children's rights, gender equality and sustainable development goals. Children's Board participated actively in various events, which reached a total of 2,500 people. They also organised their own events, such as a climate-themed and youth-friendly election panel for parliamentary candidates. During Children's Rights Week in November 2019, Children's Board ran a social media campaign highlighting the threat of climate change on the realisation of the rights of the child. Opinion pieces on the topic written by board members were published in three of Finland's biggest newspapers: Helsingin Sanomat, Turun Sanomat and Kaleva.

Plan also had a positive impact on children in the formal education system through its Global School activities. The 34 child rights ambassadors reached 7,054 pupils in total through school visits to 102 educational institutions in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area and in and around Jyväskylä, Oulu, Rovaniemi, Tampere and Turku. They conducted participatory lessons and workshops on children's rights, gender equality and hate speech. Of the teachers in the classes visited, 81% evaluated the visit as meeting its targets well.

MEMBERS OF CHILDREN'S BOARD AND PUPILS PARTICIPATING IN THE LAPSEN OIKEUKSIEN KYMPPI LEARNING MODULE HAVE REMARKABLY IMPROVED THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE DECISION MAKING.

The Lapsen oikeuksien kymppi learning module brought together 11–12-year-old pupils at primary schools for a 10-lesson study module to learn about child rights. The module aims to strengthen global citizenship and the understanding of everyone's role in global development. Altogether, 32 classes signed up for the module during 2019. According to the feedback survey, there was remarkable improvement in participants' understanding of their ability to influence decision making and their understanding of global issues.

The compensation model of the child rights ambassadors was renewed in the latter half of 2019. During the renewal process, the activities were on hold for most of the autumn, resulting in a temporary decline in the number of visits. The new operating model was finalised at the end of 2019.

Global School participated in training events with Plan's immigrant work in the training module Asennetta va-

paaheitoisuuteen, which gives upper secondary students and immigrant youth possibilities to solve global and local problems through volunteering to work with NGOs. The module was mainly funded by the regional state administrative agencies and Global School participated in the training events with MFA funding. The module started in the autumn 2019 and was organised at two secondary schools in the cities of Espoo and Vantaa. The module gained good feedback from students, schools and the NGOs involved. After learning about volunteerism, advocacy and some local and global themes, 25 students planned and implemented volunteer projects. Themes in the projects were working with the elderly (two projects), global warming and ethical consumption. Of the students, 75% reported gaining a lot or quite a lot of new knowledge on the issues presented on the course.

Youth Climate Group (Ilmastotsempparit) was established in the spring 2019 to encourage the new government to draw up an ambitious climate policy. The group has offered the 15 young participants a means to learn about climate issues and how to have an impact in policy making. Youth Climate Group has sent encouraging messages via e-mail, Twitter and letters to ministers and Members of Parliament who have been speaking up for the climate in committees and plenary sessions. They also met personally with over 20 Members of Parliament to present youth climate policy concerns and suggestions.



3.3.2 Education professionals provide quality global citizenship education

Plan Global School enhanced the capacity of educational professionals through organising training and producing teaching resources. Teachers participating in the training viewed them as useful and empowering, and recognised they had learned skills and methods to be utilised in their everyday work. Three months after the training, 81% of participants stated they have used the skills and practices learned in the training in their own teaching.

THE MAJORITY OF PARTICIPATING TEACHERS HAD USED THEIR NEW SKILLS AND PRACTICES IN THEIR OWN TEACHING.

The teacher training focused on four topics: 1) child rights and global education in early childhood education, 2) diversity and anti-hate speech education, 3) gender roles and equality and 4) global citizenship education. Fifteen face-to-face training sessions reached 464 education professionals in six different regions (Turku, Tampere, Jyväskylä, Joensuu, Lappeenranta and Helsinki). As an attempt to provide training for those who cannot attend face-to-face workshops,

we organised a webinar on a participatory approach to learning and sustainable development goals.

The Child Rights Ambassador network's capacity was strengthened through organising one national training weekend and online training events on gender and climate issues.

Global School experts participated in several networks and advocacy processes relevant to maintaining the quality of global citizenship education among education professionals (e.g. Fingo, the Ministry of Education, UNESCO, Lastensuojelun Keskusliitto). Plan partnered with the Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ) to organise events and lessons on International Day of the Girl Child, producing pedagogical resources and organising a contest on schools' climate actions. Forty schools signed up for the contest.

Global School maintained, updated and distributed pedagogical resources in both digital and printed format. The materials were promoted in relevant networks and events, such as Varhaiskasvatusmessut. As many as 9,000 educators uploaded or ordered materials by mail.



3.3.3 General public value empowerment of girls and women and act for enhancing global gender equality

The inequality and discrimination experienced by marginalised girls and young women are amplified by climate change. Still, fewer than 2% of national climate strategies mention girls. In 2019, the focus of communications was strongly on raising awareness and public discussion about the link between climate change and girls' rights.

Plan Finland produced a series of materials from Cambodia and Uganda, where climate change already has a strong impact on girls' rights, and produced several articles, opinion piece editorials, a photo exhibition with photojournalist Karoliina Paatos, a video and campaign material on the effects of climate change on girls' rights. The stories that we shared in Plan magazine, newsletters and through our social media channels raised a high degree of interest, reaction and discussion among our readers and audience. The largest weekly women's magazine of Finland with 188,000 readers, Anna, published a long article about climate change and Plan's work in SRHR rights and education. Readers thought it was the best article in the magazine.

The climate theme was present in all our messaging at the public events in Maailma Kylässä and SuomiAreena. The photo exhibition on how climate change affects girls' rights raised a lot of interest and good discussion. According to our estimate, nearly 2,500 people visited our stand in SuomiAreena. Similarly, the video, photo and story material from Uganda was crucial in our campaign for International Day of the Girl Child, helping the general public understand the link between climate change and girls' rights.

STORIES SHARED IN PLAN MAGAZINE, NEWSLETTERS AND THROUGH OUR SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS RAISED A HIGH DEGREE OF INTEREST, REACTION AND DISCUSSION AMONG OUR READERS AND AUDIENCE.

According to our survey (Dagmar, November 2019), 12% of Finnish people, who were acquainted with Plan (16–65 years), acknowledged the link between girls' rights, climate change and Plan's work. Of those who were not acquainted with Plan before, 7% acknowledged it. This was a good example of our reach in only one year among the general public.

It demonstrated we had managed to deliver the message to the wider public beyond supporters and donors, and it also demonstrated that our message is interesting.

All of our communications throughout the year focused on girls' rights, gender equality and global development. International Day of the Girl Child on October 11th was the high point of Plan's communications; however, the audience found our communications interesting also at other times. The potential reach of our communications in 2019 was 102 million people, a 37% increase on the previous year, which means we managed to reach a considerable number of new people while also keeping our existing audience interested.

THE POTENTIAL REACH OF OUR COMMUNICATIONS IN 2019 WAS 102 MILLION PEOPLE, A 37% INCREASE ON THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

The role of social media channels has grown rapidly. In response, Plan Finland developed new ways during the year to reach new audiences. Live streaming, podcasts and innovative story content proved to be effective methods of getting our messages across. Attention was paid to focussing communications in social media on the quality messages and dialogue and not on the quantity. And it paid off. Our content on social media channels reached hundreds of thousands of people each month. During the year, social media discussions concerning Plan reached 2.6 million people. The potential reach of the hashtag #tyttöjenpuolella was two million people.

Plan Finland produced four issues of Plan magazine, which is a high-quality formatted print magazine available online in Lehtiluukku. It focuses on girls' rights and the results of our work, providing longreads, photo stories, news and cultural content, such as book and music reviews linked to Plan's key themes. The magazine still has a strong role in strengthening supporters' commitment to our work. Each issue received motivating feedback.

Plan Finland's volunteers actively promoted girls' rights by organising awareness-raising events throughout the country. The focus in 2019 was advocating for girls' rights and climate change. Events organised by volunteers, such as movie screenings, advocacy workshops, panel discussions and participatory stands at festivals, universities and shopping malls, reached a total of 33,500 people, which is 3,000 more than in 2018. Volunteers focused more on the influence and reach of the events, so the number of events decreased slightly from last year.

EVENTS ORGANISED BY VOLUNTEERS REACHED A TOTAL OF 33,500 PEOPLE, WHICH IS 3,000 MORE THAN IN 2018.

Plan's volunteers were also active during International Day of the Girl Child. Volunteers organised events, exhibitions and activities in 85 municipalities (75 in 2018) around Finland, including exhibitions and book stands at over 100 libraries. One factor contributing to the increased activity may have been the increased training offered to volunteers. Plan Finland organised two training events and nine online webinars boosting the motivation of volunteers. Training for volunteers included

topics on gender equality, sustainable development and climate change. A warm and safe environment as well as acquiring a close-knit network of like-minded activists throughout Finland was appreciated in the feedback.

Plan's volunteers continued to raise awareness with high-quality photo exhibitions, produced with professional photographers and journalists. Altogether, six photo exhibitions toured 43 municipalities, reaching an estimated 16,000 people, spreading information and knowledge about children's rights and global issues.

In the Girls Takeover campaign, eleven 14–18-year old girls took over the positions of high-profile leaders in the public and private sectors for one day during International Day of the Girl Child (e.g. the Mayor of the City of Helsinki, the Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Ilta-Sanomat, Marimekko, the Trade Union of Education in Finland). In 2019, the campaign focused on the effects of climate change on girls' rights and how Finnish policymakers, companies and institutions can contribute to climate change mitigation and enhance global gender equality.

The girls taking part in the campaign achieved high-level results, such as a commitment from the Finnish energy sector (Energiatollisuus ry) to cut emissions in energy production by half from the current level by 2030, a pledge from Nordea bank to step up its promotion of sustainable investment to its clients, and a commitment from the Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Ville Skinnari, that Finland would strive to become a forerunner in climate policy that advances gender equality. All the girls who took part in the takeover felt that they were able to make a difference during the day, and the day was an important experience for them as active citizens. Girls Takeover and Plan's International Day of the Girl Child initiatives gained a high level of media hits and raised interest in the general public. Media results included 66 print media hits, 47 online media hits and 1,250 earned social media hits. The hashtags #tyttöjenpuolella and #tyttöjenpäivä reached 1.5 million and 3.7 million people, respectively, and the #GirlsTakeover hashtag reached 18.6 million people globally.

GIRLS WHO TOOK PART IN THE TAKEOVER MADE A DIFFERENCE.



3.3.4 Finnish development policy supports the realisation of global gender equality, children's rights and SDGs.

In 2019, the main goals of Plan Finland's advocacy work were: better visibility of gender equality and girls' rights in Finnish development policy, climate change, increased funding for international development and increased budget for climate funding for developing countries.

During the first half of 2019, Plan Finland's advocacy work focused on the electoral campaign and around the formation of a new government and a government programme. A CSO coalition focused on gender equality, led by Plan Finland, continued the work begun in 2018 to advocate for global gender equality as well as girls' and women's rights in Finnish development policy. In line with the advocacy goals, the new government maintains girls and women as a priority focus area in its development policy, with a commitment of 85% of all new development programmes contributing to gender equality.

A CSO COALITION LED BY PLAN FINLAND CONTINUED THE WORK TO ADVOCATE FOR GLOBAL GENDER EQUALITY AND GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN FINNISH DEVELOPMENT POLICY.

In addition to proactive advocacy on girls' and women's rights in the context of parliamentary elections, Plan Finland's advocacy specialists also participated together with other NGOs during the first half of the year in advocacy campaigns on climate change, development funding and legislation regarding corporate responsibility.

A NEW ADVOCACY GROUP ON CLIMATE JUSTICE ILMASTOTSEMPPARIT WAS ESTABLISHED TO OPEN UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO HAVE THEIR VOICES HEARD IN DECISION MAKING.

During the latter half of the year, Plan Finland's advocacy themes included an increase in funding for development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, quality implementation of gender equality in development policy, as well as effective mainstreaming of gender equality in foreign policy. Another key priority was climate change, with a specific focus on an ambitious and just climate policy and increase in the amount of climate funding for developing countries. Plan Finland also raised the relationship between climate change and girls' rights.

Promoting children's and young people's participation is one of our core principles. In advocacy, we want to create opportunities for young people to get their voices heard in decision making. Therefore, a new advocacy

group of young adults interested in climate justice, Ilmastotsempparit, was set up to monitor decision making related to climate change.

Plan Finland's messages and materials on the impact of climate change on girls' rights in developing countries were used by parliamentarians and ministry officials on several occasions, and we managed to bring global perspectives to the sometimes heated national climate debates.

Plan Finland also served as the secretariat for the Finnish Parliament's working group on girls' rights and development with whom we organised, for example, a public discussion event on climate change and girls' rights in February. During 2019, we had around 80 advocacy-related meetings with decision makers on different levels, either as individuals or in groups. Young Plan volunteers were involved in 34 of those meetings.



4. THEMATIC AND CROSS-CUTTING WORK

To guarantee effective implementation of the My Body. My Future. programme across different countries, Plan Finland provides thematic support to project implementation and to Plan International in general. Plan Finland's areas of technical expertise include gender and SRHR, disability inclusion, digital development and innovation. In addition, resilience is defined as a cross-cutting theme and the programme has a small component of corporate partnerships.

During the second year of the programme, Plan Finland's thematic specialists supported the programme implementation with a number of thematic training events and general advice. Plan Finland has also supported Plan International's global networks in these areas of expertise with thematic advice and has taken part in global organisational development processes. The areas in which Plan Finland engages are strategically selected so that they benefit both the programme implementation and the organisation from a wider perspective.

4.1 GENDER AND SRHR

Gender equality is at the heart of the My Body. My Future. programme since the aim of the whole programme is to promote girls' rights and to remove barriers to equal and meaningful participation of girls in society. Programmatic results related to gender equality can be found in Chapter 3.1. In addition, Plan Finland provides specific specialist support in SRHR and gender equality topics. This work is conducted on two levels:

1. Supporting country offices in implementing high-quality gender transformative SRHR programmes.
2. Actively engaging with the gender and SRHR development work within Plan International globally to support the creation of harmonised global practices that benefit both the programme and the organisation in general.

During 2019, significant steps were taken to improve Plan International's position as an expert organisation in SRHR, to continue developing instruments for unified and quality programming across the organisation, as well as to strengthen the gender transformative approach to programme and influencing work. The pro-

programme contributed especially towards the development of global technical SRHR guidance on comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), the M&E indicators menu and staff capacity development modules, all of which also benefit directly the projects in our programme.

The global guidance on comprehensive sexuality education includes CSE standards, age appropriate topic tables, and policy and curriculum review tools, and they are currently being piloted and finalised. They provide guidance on what is good CSE and guide staff in developing CSE programmes and curricula.

The programme also supported the development of unified M&E indicators for SRHR, which will serve programme development and help with tracking progress and aggregating results at the global level. The menu consists of mandatory indicators all SRHR programmes must utilize, and a long list of optional indicators. The menu will assist in standardising M&E in the SRHR field within the global organisation. The document also provides guidance on data collection on indicators that are not yet widely utilised. The programme provided technical support on a range of disability inclusive indicators.

The development of the SRHR capacity development modules package was initiated on the basis of the experiences of the My Body. My Future. programme SRHR training in Helsinki in 2018. It combines both technical skills and exercises to explore one's own values. The package is being finalised in 2020.

As a follow up to the SRHR training in Helsinki in 2018, all programme countries organised SRHR training with the support of Plan Finland. Furthermore, Plan Finland's Gender and SRHR advisor facilitated training on advocacy for SRHR in Mozambique. The training strengthened the project's efforts to advocate for youth-friendly SRH services, including adolescent access to safe abortions. The Gender and SRHR advisor also supported the Myanmar project design extensively. In addition, the programme supported gender transformative programming training in Ethiopia by an expert from Plan International's global Gender and Inclusion Team.

The programme supported the development and testing of a global Gender Transformative Marker, which is a tool designed to facilitate discussion, reflection and learning in project teams on various aspects of gender transformative programming and influencing. The gender marker exercises conducted with the project teams produced fruitful discussions and some of the ideas were included in annual plans for 2020.

In December, the programme supported the Gender and Inclusion Group global meeting in Bangkok, where 46 people from various parts of the global organisation became familiar with the Gender Transformative Marker, provided feedback on its finalisation and acquired skills to act as resources in their respective offices on the use of the marker. The meeting also laid out strategic priorities for the global organisation for the next two years on gender and inclusion.

Besides the technical guidance and tools outputs, the most effort was put on providing technical support and training to SRHR coordinators and gender advisors in the country offices through regular interaction and assisting them with processes they were supporting. In addition, webinars and joint discussion and learning sessions were held online on SRHR topics with the project managers and core implementing staff within the programme countries to encourage joint learning and sharing.

4.2 DISABILITY INCLUSION

The rights and participation of persons with disabilities is implemented through a twin-track approach that applies mainstreaming and specific actions. As girls are at the heart of our work, the inclusion approach takes into consideration the impact of intersectionality, with a focus on girls with disabilities. The programme has a partnership with Light for the World (LftW), an international organisation working with disability and development, covering regional advisers for each project. Inclusion work is also supported by a Plan Finland inclusion specialist. This chapter draws together the main results of the disability inclusion work done in the programme.

During 2019, there has been a significant increase in capacity to recognise, analyse and promote the participation of persons with disability among Plan and partner teams on disability rights achieved through training, materials and consultations. In Ethiopia, the inclusion partner ECCD supported the implementation of disability work through consultations in the project areas. In Mozambique, training in inclusive SRHR reached 14 representatives of local disability organisations in addition to the 10 project team members. In Myanmar, a disability-specific baseline survey was carried out, supporting Plan Myanmar's knowledge of inclusive tools and the situation of adolescence with disability. The inclusion guidance produced by the team in Laos also supports the wider Plan Laos country programme.

The programme has promoted the rights and active participation of young people with disabilities. In Uganda, 149 Champions of Change (CoC) facilitators were trained on the participation of adolescents and youth



with disability. In 104 CoC groups there were a minimum of three members with disability reaching the target. Students with disabilities are also now members in school councils. The Mozambique team sensitised eight saving groups on inclusion, leading five groups with members with disability at the end of the year. In Ethiopia, 111 (69 female, 42 male) adolescents with disabilities were active in income-generating activities (IGAs) gaining income, which helped them cover school fees. The Ethipad project developed a mechanism for supporting the participation of young people with disabilities through per diem and psychosocial counselling. In Laos, the sanitary facilities built in the project schools were designed to be accessible. In Uganda and Laos, IEC material used in projects were developed to be more inclusive.

Communities' awareness of the rights of people with disabilities was promoted at a number of events related to equality and sexual health. Parents and community members, including religious and community leaders, were trained on the rights of persons with disabilities in Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique. In Ethiopia and Mozambique, 373 and 175 community members, respectively, participated in these training events.

The program collaborated in a variety of ways with organisations of people with disability (OPDs). In Uganda, 25 people with disabilities and OPD members were trained on ASRHR and good parenting. In Ethiopia, a national organisation for people with disability (ECCD) partners with LftW and supports the MFA project on inclusion. In Laos, Myanmar and Mozambique, teams mapped and created networks with national and local OPDs, including a group of women with disabilities in Laos.

The project works in collaboration with social and health authorities to increase their awareness and knowledge of the rights of people with disabilities. In Uganda, an accessibility assessment was carried out and on the basis of which an accessible entrance was built for 16 health stations, increasing visits of youth with disabilities. In Mozambique, in cooperation with regional authorities, the project carried out a survey of young people with disabilities and an accessibility assessment at four health centres in the project area. At the same time, training on legally based disability work was provided to the authorities. In Ethiopia, authorities were supported in collecting disability-specific data, such as providing tools for data collection and data analysis. The survey reached 1,216 children and adolescents with disabilities. The programme disaggregates monitoring data by disability.

Challenges: Although the programme teams are motivated to promote inclusion and there has been an increase in capacity, a long-term plan and support is needed for systematic and efficient inclusion. There have been challenges at different levels. In most programme countries, there is no official disability specific data available and collecting data is challenging. In Ethiopia and Mozambique, the projects have worked to overcome the challenges through collaboration with local authorities. In Myanmar, gaps in the initial baseline were addressed with an additional disability specific survey, which also supported the capacity of the team. Teams have mapped collaboration possibilities with OPDs; however, especially in many remote areas, there are no active local OPDs. Furthermore, many OPDs also need support in their capacities, including SRHR. There have been some challenges to build in-house capacity and in communications under the external partner for inclusion. However, it should be noted that there was no Inclusion Specialist at work for the first part of the year due to a change of staff at Plan Finland.

People with disabilities are the most marginalised in multiple sectors and at levels in the target societies, facing barriers in education, economic and social status, social participation, physical access and communication. In Laos and Mozambique, youth clubs are connected to secondary schools. However, many children with disabilities, especially girls, do not continue education to secondary level. Therefore, more outreach for out-of-school youth is needed. Among service providers and youth activities, increased inclusive practices and materials are needed to ensure equal access to services and meaningful participation. There is widespread stigma concerning disability in communities and many myths and norms related to SRHR and persons with disabilities. Consequently, a long-term and multi-level approach is needed for work with families, communities, authorities, OPDs, adolescents with disabilities and their peers to address the multiple barriers and support increased opportunities and the realisation of the rights of people, especially girls and adolescents, with disabilities.

4.3 INNOVATION

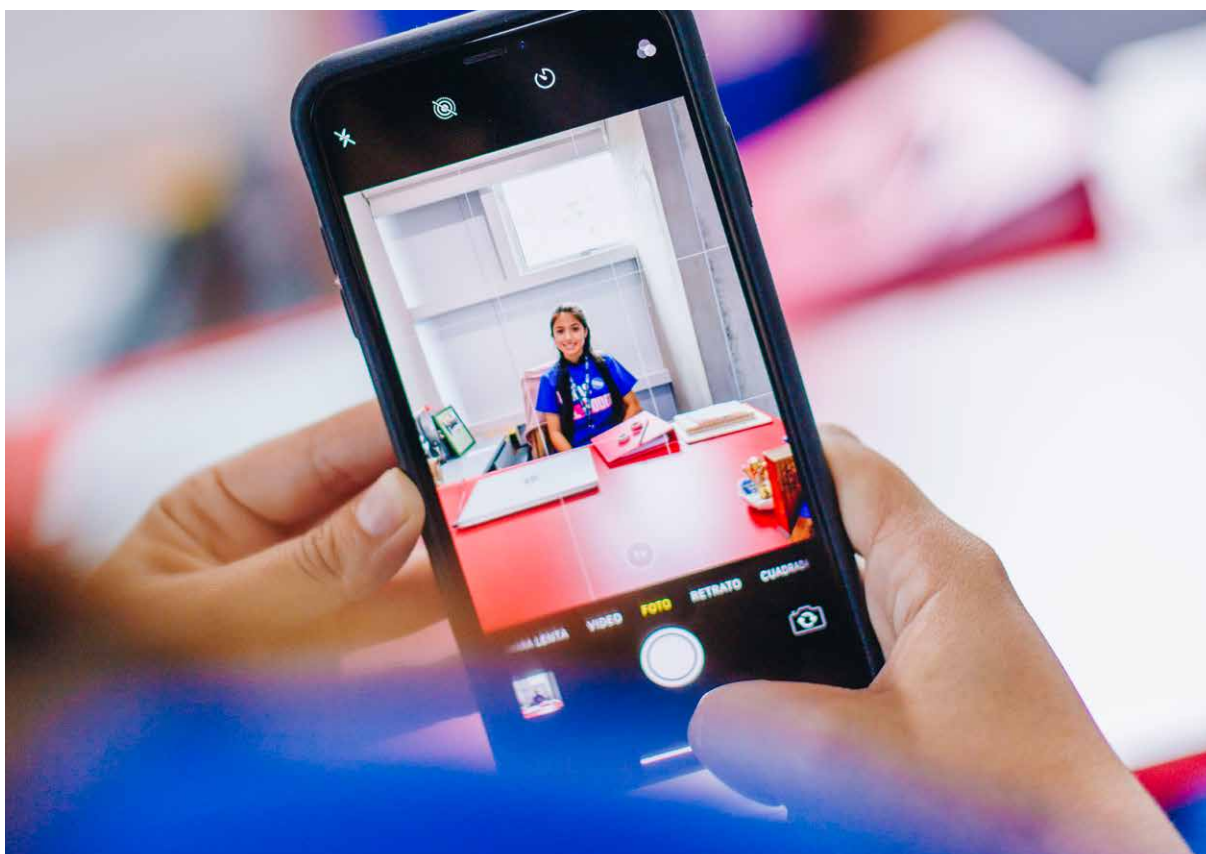
The aim of innovation work is to promote a culture of innovation, agile practices and methodologies, such as human-centred design thinking, within Plan International, and within the programme in particular, and explore how a culture of innovation can enhance our work. The approach to innovation work is twofold. First, part of the innovation programming is the SmartUp Factory projects in Uganda and Ethiopia, which have grown from small innovative pilot programmes into well-established projects (for more see Chapter 3.2). Second, specific activities are implemented to support innovation in the programme more widely.

In 2019, Plan Finland and Plan Laos continued the collaboration with the Netherlands-based social design company Butterfly Works. In 2018, Butterfly Works was contracted to conduct design research work as part of the My Body. My Future. programme to develop teacher training materials and a peer educator curriculum for SRHR education in Laos. In the second phase, a concept development workshop was organised to co-create a youth-friendly approach to learning about SRHR.

The final concept, Merlin Pha Hoo (Merlin helps to Learn) is a set of learning tools, materials and a digital platform to support teachers and peer educators in facilitating discussions about SRHR topics. The final concept was developed in close collaboration with a local creative community organisation to ensure that the end result is fully contextualised, relevant, useful, engaging, uses the right use of language and enhances ownership of solutions.

While the digital platform has not been built yet, the Merlin Pha Hoo teaching materials package is ready and in use in the Laos SRHR project's school clubs. The Merlin Pha Hoo tools have been also introduced to the Ministry of Education and Sports and have received a positive response, with the possibility of incorporating it in the future into the new national in-class CSE curriculum.

Both Plan staff and SmartUp youth champions from Uganda and Ethiopia participated in two international conferences as part of the innovation learning programme. The annual ICT4D conference held in Kampala, Uganda, gathered nearly 1,000 participants from 81 countries, including 415 organisations, among them Plan International. The SmartUp Factory model and youth-driven innovations such as the Safe Ride mobile application were showcased at the conference. In October, SmartUp Factory took part in Social Enterprise World Forum, which was held conveniently in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event gathered together over 1,300 participants from 71 countries. Both events provided inspiring learning opportunities and expanded the network for both Plan staff and participating youth.



4.4 DIGITAL DEVELOPMENT

During 2019, Plan Finland furthered the digital development initiatives started during the first year of the My Body. My Future. programme. To enhance the capacity for monitoring and data collection, the country office teams received support and training in using the digital field data collection tools, specifically SurveyCTO and Ombea. The product development of the new Solar Media Backpack model – a portable media station with a projector and loudspeakers for low resource settings – continued with Tespack Ltd. The final iterations for the hardware and software were finalised in 2019, and the company will start mass production in 2020.

Plan Finland, in collaboration with Kopernik, updated an online Impact Tracker Catalog that includes the latest information on common digital goods that can benefit the wider international development community. The first version of Kopernik's Impact Tracker Technology Catalog formed the basis of Plan International's Digital Solutions Portfolio, which was strongly driven by Plan Finland. This catalogue was updated with Geographical Information System (GIS) tools and Mobile data tools, including SMS and Interactive Voice Respond (IVR) tools. The catalogue helps organisations, whether they work in health, agriculture or education, find the right tool by using different filters, such as open source, free option, case management ability, geo functionalities, and sort them by usability, affordability and accessibility ratings.

Plan Finland has been a forerunner within Plan International as an organisation in the realm of digital development. With the updated catalogue, Plan Finland continues to support Plan International's country offices and other development organisations in adopting digital solutions by scaling already existing and proven technologies.

4.5 RESILIENCE

Resilience building was introduced to the programme to help communities and other stakeholders cope with disturbances, whether they are social, political, economic or ecological in nature, and which may affect the realisation of their rights. While the main driving force behind introducing resilience building in the programme has been the effects caused by climate change, the concept utilised by Plan International considers both short-term shocks and long-term stresses.

Due to the slow start of the projects and a heavy learning curve related to SRHR work at the inception phase, resilience as a topic was deprioritised at the beginning, and activities have started to take place gradually during 2019.

In Ethiopia, training was held for project and partner staff and government counterparts on resilience and hazard and vulnerability assessments, with the aim of conducting the assessments in selected communities during the coming year to inform more focused resilience work as well as to support local authorities in preparedness, especially through introducing the views and voices of adolescents – and especially girls and youth with disability - into the planning.

Alternative sources for income generation and increased savings skills contribute to increased resilience at the family level, and the ability of the families to respond to unexpected disturbances. In Ethiopia and Mozambique, new VSLA groups have been established and existing ones supported with training on financial management, savings, gender equality and SRHR reaching over 140 VSLA groups. In addition, in Ethiopia, women's self-help groups and community-based social safety net initiatives have been supported.



4.6 CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND ADVOCACY

In 2019, Plan Finland engaged with advocacy work to promote corporate responsibility and to demand companies respect child rights and gender equality in several ways.

Plan participated in campaigning for mandatory human rights due diligence legislation as part of the Ykkösketjuun campaign in the spring. Ykkösketjuun was a joint campaign by citizens, civil society organisations, companies and trade unions, coordinated by Finnwatch. Plan's youth volunteers promoted the campaign through Plan's own media and channels. Followed by the campaign, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment conducted a judicial analysis of the Corporate Social Responsibility Act.

In the autumn, we engaged Finnish businesses in Girls Takeover 2019. Youth delegates took over the positions of business leaders for one day to raise the voice of young girls in leadership positions. Advocacy conducted during the Girl's Takeover campaign aimed to raise awareness of girls' rights and climate change. The campaign led to a public commitment by Marimekko to increase the percentage of responsibly sourced cotton and to continue collaborations for more sustainable materials together with science institutions and start-ups. Nordea committed to assist customers in more sustainable savings and investment options. SRV committed to engage more with youth and hear their voice on future construction projects by establishing a Youth Board. The chair of the board for the first year is the Girls Takeover delegate. More information about Girl's Takeover is available in Chapter 3.3.3.

Plan also continued collaboration with Finnish Business and Society (FIBS) and Fairtrade Foundation in Finland to review companies' CSR reports from a human rights perspective. The collaboration was presented in a FIBS webinar in the autumn 2019. The report analysis and communications on the results will be prepared in the summer 2020.

Throughout the year, Plan Finland engaged in dialogue with Finnish companies to offer viewpoints on how to respect child rights and gender equality in their human rights due diligence processes. Plan Finland also participated in the Finnish delegation to the UN Forum for Business and Human rights in Geneva in November 2019.



5. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

5.1 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

Between 2018 and 2019, a monitoring system based on digital data collection tools was set up and rolled out to project teams with the aim of informing planning and tracking progress against selected outcome and output level indicators common across the programme. The monitoring system is designed to provide evidence on changes in the attitudes, perceptions and practices of adolescents, parents, caregivers and community members, and health care providers on gender equality, SRHR and adolescent-friendly and inclusive service provision. The data collection processes and the digital tools developed to capture both quantitative and qualitative information have now been tried and tested in all five countries, and four of them now have a comparable set of information for two consecutive years. So far, the data collection exercises have engaged over 6 000 respondents, and the processes are managed independently by the project staff in country offices with on-site or remote support from Plan Finland.

The digital monitoring process was developed in collaboration with Accenture in 2018, and digital monitoring tools have now been deployed to all programme countries. The digital data collection tools, BI software, cloud-based and secure storage space and an almost entirely automated process to transfer, transform and visualize data has made monitoring data more timely and easily available, less prone to human error, and less time-consuming to process, freeing up time for staff for more value-adding work.

Plan International Finland supported a results-oriented culture within the organisation with a development of three-day results-based management (RBM) training package covering planning, monitoring and reporting, piloted in collaboration with Plan International Laos programme staff. Feedback from the training suggest good results with the share of respondents reporting the ability to apply RBM in their work increasing from 26% to 84%, and 100% of respondents planning to utilise the lessons learned in their work. The training has been further developed on the basis of the feedback, and the material has been adopted for global upscaling by Plan International Global Hub.

In 2019, a programme-level mid-term review process covering the five SRHR-themed projects was carried out utilising an innovation and human-centred design approach. This internal reflection process raised the human perspectives and lessons learned at the different levels of the programme. The approach enabled a strong sense of ownership among the project teams who invested a significant amount of time in collecting insights and in joint reflection within and across country teams. The reflection resulted in a clearer and shared understanding of the programme reality and a vision forward. A discussion around prioritisation was launched and key focus areas were identified. These were then translated into some adjustments and action in the 2020 work plans, and also plans for the next phase of the programme. The management response will be finalised in 2020.

The aim in 2019 was to slowly shift the emphasis from planning and data collection to strengthening capacities and a culture of using data for project planning, implementation and advocacy at the country offices. This work has been slightly delayed due to time and capacity consuming the roll-out of processes, tools and solutions developed the previous year. Preparations were, however, made in late 2019 to launch a data storytelling project in collaboration with Accenture and their service design entity Fjord to explore how monitoring data could be valuable beyond programme staff and more meaningfully used across Plan International Finland to communicate results to various audiences and to create more impact.

The programme reporting process was updated after consultations and a co-creation process with the participation of key project personnel and Plan Finland staff. The reporting process and templates were revised to meet the updated requirements of the MFA and made more outcome-focused and user-friendly to better enable learning and joint reflection on progress and challenges.

Two years of experimenting with unified quantitative data collection methods have been an opportunity to learn about measuring norm and behaviour change and aggregating results from project to programme level. While making monitoring for results and evidence-based planning and reporting easier across projects, challenges remain with systematic target setting and data collection that would allow easy aggregation and comparison across years and projects. Large-scale, multi-country data collection using quantitative methods has also raised lessons, such as the imbalanced sample sizes among countries was ultimately corrected by weighing the results by the size of each project. Some of the limitations quantitative methods have in tracking and capturing social change in a reliable manner have also become evident, as well as in the non-linear and at times quite unpredictable nature of norm and behaviour change. Measuring changes in social norms and results related to civil society strengthening and influencing have proven challenging. Therefore, work remains to be done on developing methods for collecting, analysing and utilising qualitative data for planning and reporting purposes.

Other areas of improvement include investing in building stronger skillsets and confidence among programme personnel to apply and upscale the digital tools beyond joint data collection to all on-going monitoring. Strengthening the culture of data-driven management throughout the programme will be done by supporting the utilisation of data in proper planning, analysing and utilising evidence and insights collected in decision making, reporting and advocacy.



5.2 COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Adherence to Plan International's rules and regulations as well as compliance with the MFA regulations is constantly monitored as part of programme management. Plan International's rules and regulations on financial management, child protection policy and safeguarding guidelines, risk management strategy, amongst other relevant policies and processes, are applicable to all of Plan's offices and, for their part, guarantee effective grant compliance.

Plan International's Global Assurance team provides independent and objective assurance and support services to assess and improve on the effectiveness of risk management, internal control and governance processes. Plan Finland has access to the Global Assurance reports, and it exchanges information about audit and financial compliance concerns globally and regionally. Plan has zero tolerance for corruption and fraud and the Counter Fraud Unit under Plan International Global Hub carries out investigations, if necessary.

During 2019, Plan International renewed the Safeguarding in Programming and Influencing Work Guidelines, which are applicable to programme work across the organisation. The new guidelines start from the "do no harm" principle and take an integrated and intersectional approach to safeguarding understanding that inequalities may affect the safety of different groups differently. The intention is to identify and mitigate risk arising from Plan International's work to all the groups we are working with, paying special attention to those programmes and influencing interventions which are specifically designed to be gender transformative and challenge social norms. This policy is especially relevant to the My Body. My Future. programme and helps to respond to some of the challenges and risks we have identified when working with socially and culturally sensitive topics. All staff at Plan International Finland working directly or indirectly with children and youth were trained on the renewed guidelines in 2019.

Globally, Plan International has a risk management system and Global Policy on Risk Management encourages all project implementing staff, including implementing partners, to engage in risk identification, assessment, and control over risks. The policy sets out common requirements and definitions and specifies staff and management responsibilities. On a programme level, each project of My Body. My Future. analyses risk and updates their risk matrices at least annually. In addition, a programme-level risk matrix, analysing contextual, programmatic and institutional risks, is drawn up together and updated annually. See Annex 3 for the updated risk matrix.

New risks to programme and identified for period starting from 2020 include an increased likelihood of political unrest, especially in Ethiopia, increasing conservative attitudes towards human rights globally, and limited SRHR capacity within some of the projects and partner organisations, especially influenced by staff turnover. Difficulty in reaching and preventing high drop-out-rates for out-of-school adolescents from the training programmes as well as adapting key SRHR messages to conservative contexts while maintaining a rights-based and do-no-harm approach were identified as a risk. Moreover, a previously unidentified risk of a global pandemic, COVID-19 in this case, was added at a later stage since the pandemic started to affect programming from March 2020 onwards. This topic will be analysed further in the annual report for 2020.

The most important programme-level risks that materialised during 2019 include the following:

- Political unrest affected project implementation in Ethiopia during 2019, and some project activities in Oromia and in Sidama Zone in SNNPR had to be postponed.
- Staff turnover at government offices, project partners and within Plan has affected the programme implementation. Changes in either key project personnel or personnel in key positions within Plan's country offices have had an impact on the project implementation, despite efforts made to guarantee the continuation of the work. Finding qualified persons with SRHR expertise has proven to be difficult in some countries and thus the recruitment processes have lasted longer than anticipated.
- One of the SmartUp factories faced security issues, and computers were stolen from the hub. This affected the youth who did not feel safe to return to the hub for a while. For Plan, the safety of our project members is crucial, and measures were taken to avoid such occurrences in the future.
- Managing to complete mandatory memorandums of understanding with the government for project partners in Laos took far longer than expected – until the third quarter of 2019. The project has not been able to fully implement all the activities without the involvement of the partner organisations who were unable to engage in implementing activities before the MoUs had been signed.
- The retention rate of adolescents in SRHR training directed to adolescents out of school has been low and reaching adolescents out of school has been more difficult than expected. We will need to revise some of the approaches and think about how to make them more attractive for out-of-school youth to reach and retain them within the programme.

5.3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

After the first-year initiation phase, the projects have achieved a stable level of implementation. The expenditure rate was 88% at the end of the year. Deviations to project budgets have been explained in the budget table (Annex 5).

The programme expenditure in 2019 was EUR 5.9 million, of which the MFA funding consisted of EUR 4.14 million. The carry-over of MFA funds from 2019 to 2020 was EUR 510,000. Part of the carry-over will be utilised to fund the SRHR project in Myanmar, which was added to the programme in late 2018, and the rest will be distributed to the projects.

A grants controller in the financial department is responsible for financial management of the project funds together with the programme managers. They also maintain communication with the finance staff in the programme countries and monitor the programme-level finances and report to the MFA. During 2019, Plan Finland opened a new position for an additional grants controller within the finance team (with non-MFA funding), which has enhanced the capacity of the financial team to engage in the development of financial management within the organisation, ultimately supporting the MFA programme as well.

For the financial monitoring of grants, the country offices currently use SAP, a system designed to deal with complex grant requirements. In 2019, significant progress was made with a large, multi-year global project to improve and harmonise financial management and streamline and digitalise programme monitoring, management and procurement processes at Plan International (Y.O.D.A. Your Organisation's Data and Analytics). As a result, SAP will be replaced in 2020 and 2021 by a new ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) solution that merges financial management with grants, programmes, projects, logistics and procurement in an interlinked solution.

Several communications, project management and data storage and sharing platforms were introduced globally in 2019 to enable better communications across countries and within the organisation. Communications switched from Skype to Microsoft Teams, and documents are accessed through Teams or Sharepoint, which allow for improved sharing and joint development of documents. Throughout the year, communications and sharing between Plan Finland and all the programme countries improved with Plan Finland experimenting with webinars and joint information sessions for programme staff to exchange information and share experiences.



About Plan International

We strive to advance children's rights and equality for girls all over the world. We recognise the power and potential of every single child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination. And it's girls who are most affected. As an independent development and humanitarian organisation, we work alongside children, young people, our supporters and partners to tackle the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and enable children to prepare for and respond to crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. For over 75 years we have been building powerful partnerships for children, and we are active in over 70 countries.

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