

CRITICALLY EXPLORE ONE INTERNATIONAL
HUMANITARIAN ORGANISATION THAT SUPPORTS
PEOPLE WITHIN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
POVERTY AND INEQUALITY
HEALTH AND NUTRITION
EDUCATION
GENDER AND YOUTH

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ON RESEARCHING THE MANY INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN CARE ORGANISATIONS THAT ARE IN EXISTENCE, AND READING INTO WHAT IT IS EACH OF THEM CLAIMS TO DO, I DISCOVERED AN ORGANISATION CALLED PLAN INTERNATIONAL.

ON READING ABOUT, THE NATURE OF THEIR WORK, IT STRUCK A CORD WITH ME, A LARGE PART OF THEIR WORK IS ADVANCING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND EQUALITY FOR GIRLS WORLDWIDE.

THEREFORE IT WAS A NATURAL DECISION THAT THIS WOULD BE THE ORGANISATION THAT I WOULD DISCUSS HERE TODAY.



(Wikipedia, 2019)

PLAN INTERNATIONAL WAS FOUNDED OVER 80 YEARS AGO, ITS VISION WAS TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN.

IT WAS CREATED BY A BRITISH JOURNALIST CALLED JOHN LANGDON-DAVIES AND A REFUGEE WORKER CALLED ERIC MUGGERIDGE IN 1937.

THEY SET UP THE ORGANISATION WITH THE HOPE OF PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION, EDUCATION AND FOOD FOR THE CHILDREN WHO'S LIVES HAD BEEN AFFECTED BY THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. PLAN INTERNATIONAL WAS ORIGINALLY NAMED 'FOSTER PARENTS PLAN FOR CHILDREN IN SPAIN' (PLAN INTERNATIONAL, 2019).



(Plan International, 2019)



(Worthpoint, 2019)

During the Second World War, the organisations identity changed and became known as ‘Foster Parents Plan for War Children’.

At this time they helped children that were affected all over Europe. When the war was over, it extended its support to children in many other countries including China and Czechoslovakia.

During the 50’s the organisation slowly moved out of these countries and began new programmes in less developed countries. It was decided that the reference to war would be removed from its name, and they became known as ‘Foster Parents Plan Inc.’ it was hoped that this name would demonstrate the aim of the organisation to create change within the lives of children in need, regardless of their circumstances.

Progressing into the 60’s, they expanded their work in Asia and South America, and then in 1962 the US First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy was made Honorary Chair Woman.

By the 70’s they became known globally as ‘Plan International’ and were running programmes throughout Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. By the 2000’s the organisation’s donor countries had increased to 21.

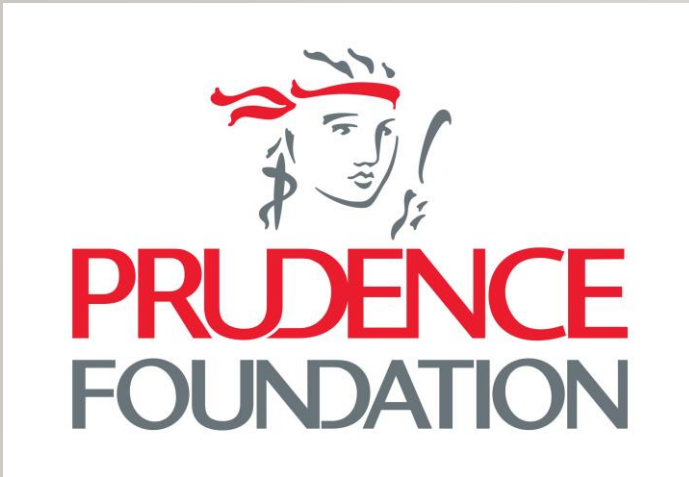
In 2017 the organisation celebrated its 80th Anniversary and was active in over 70 countries (Plan International, 2019).





(Plan International, 2019)

Plan International believes they can improve children's rights and deliver long term sustainable change when they utilise the expertise and resources from their corporate partners (Plan International, 2019).



(Avpn, 2019)



(Barclays, 2019)

Plan International has many Corporate Partnerships including Prudence Foundation, Barclays, Nickelodeon and Schwarzkopf (Plan International, 2019).



(Fandom, 2019)



(Plan International, 2019)

(Wikipedia, 2019)



On 24 September 2018 Plan International entered a partnership with Telenor Group, in order to jointly develop children's skills for a digital future.

This partnership will provide access to mobile and digital technology solutions alongside financial support, in order to advance children's rights, especially focusing on equality for girls (Plan International, 2019).

Plan International has formed a 3 year partnership with CBRE, the worlds largest real estate firm to help provide an education for over 135,000 children, with a focus on girls, in Sierra Leone.

This will improve the quality of education that children receive in 780 schools (Plan International, 2019).

The logo for CBRE, consisting of the letters 'CBRE' in a bold, dark green, sans-serif font, centered within a white rectangular box.

(Insider Media Ltd, 2019)

Here is Plan International's global strategy for 2017 – 2022.

“Our strategy is to work with vulnerable children and especially girls so that they can learn, lead, decide and thrive. Within the strategy we have an ambition to transform the lives of 100 million girls. Child sponsorship and grassroots community work are central to our strategy and achieving this ambition.”

During these 5 years, they plan to work in areas where inequality for girls and children's rights violations are greatest. They aim to ensure that all of their programmes concentrate on increasing gender equality by dealing with the root causes of discrimination (Plan International, 2019).

Plan international aim to reach over 100 countries to improve the lives of children. They also hope to work with others in order to achieve policy changes in order to advance children's rights and equality for girls.

This strategy is in place with the hope that Plan International can contribute towards fulfilling the promise of the 2030 Global Goals.



(Plan International, 2019)



The Global Goals, also known as Sustainable Development Goals, are targets that describe a vision for the future of our people and planet. These Global Goals replace the Millennium Development Goals that expired in 2015 that aimed to make global progress on issues such as the environment, poverty, health, hunger and education.

Plan International aims to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Global Goals by helping change local practices and policies, in order for the goals to be implemented by national governments. This could include changing a law to outlaw child marriage, or ensuring that educational settings are inclusive for girls and children with disabilities (Plan International, 2019).

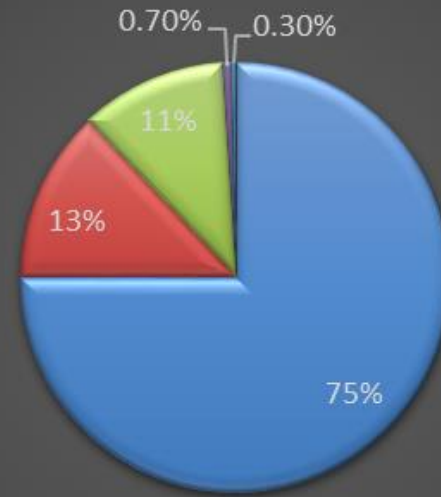
THERE ARE IN TOTAL 17 GLOBAL GOALS. GOAL 5 IS ALL AROUND GENDER EQUALITY. WITHIN THAT GOAL ARE 9 SEPARATE TARGETS, AND TARGET 5.3 IS SPECIFICALLY TO ELIMINATE FORCED MARRIAGE (GLOBAL GOALS, 2019).



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(United Nations, 2019)

2017-2018 Expenditure



■ Programme Expenditure ■ Fundraising ■ Other Operational Costs ■ Foreign Exchange Losses ■ Trading

The Financial annual review for Plan International states that expenditure on programmes accounts for 75% of their total expenditure, not including foreign exchange and losses. The review claims that the remaining 25% is spent on operating costs, trading and fundraising.

According to the Independent auditors report on the 3rd December 2018 Plan International's combined financial statements were properly prepared and that they had nothing further to report.

From the breakdown of the organisations expenditure, we can see here that they have been true to their word of 75% of the expenditure being used for the benefit of the people they are helping (Plan International, 2019).



(TRF Twitter, 2019)

According to the article '*Which aid relief charities spend the most on fundraising?*' published on 15 July 2015, a Thomson Reuters Foundation investigation discovered that many humanitarian organisations expenditure on fundraising is growing rapidly, and that in 2013-2014, that Plan International ranked second highest in percentage of expenditure on fundraising at 14.18%.

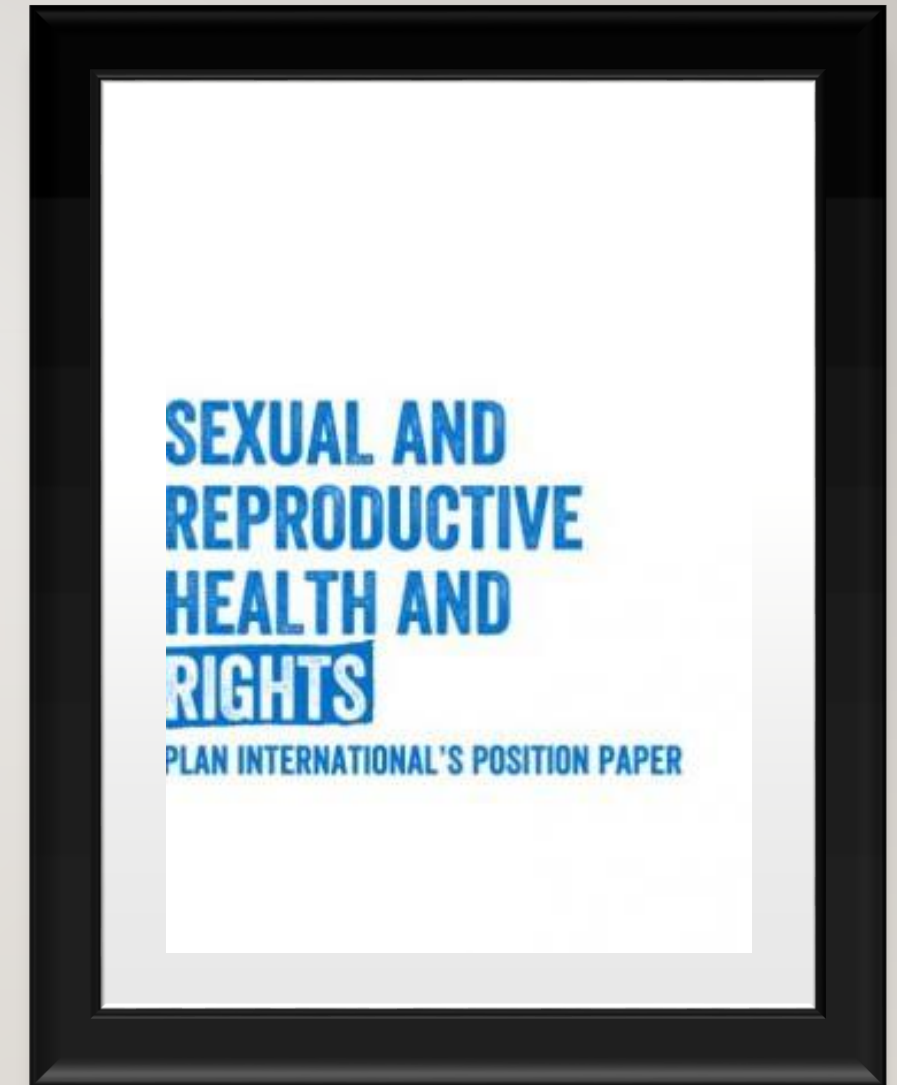
This could cause a donor to question whether when they donate to this organisation that it is good value for money, but we must also consider the quantity of return in donations from this expenditure on fundraising (Esslemont, 2015).

On 6th August 2018 Plan International published their policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights.

Here it states their belief that all children and young people have the right to make their own decisions and have control of their own sexual health and lives, without the presence of violence or discrimination. However this is currently not the case, and girls find themselves being denied access to information and services.

Plan International states that girls are denied the opportunity to exercise these rights, and that fulfilling children's rights is essential in order to achieve gender equality.

Plan International states that girls are often subjected to human rights violations, including problems such as sexual violence, female genital mutilation and child marriage (Plan International, 2019).



(Plan International, 2019)

According to the gender review published by the Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report on 8th March 2018, only 44% of countries had made full legal commitments to the issue of gender equality in education.

The review surveyed 189 States in order to establish whether girls were benefitting from their right to education. The gender review investigates the causes of the slow progress being made in the movement towards gender equality in education, and how these issues could be addressed.

The Director of the GEM report, Manos Antoninis said that although these countries have signed treaties, this does not guarantee that there will be a strong presence of gender equality in education. However, the treaties do provide a pathway in which governments could be held accountable, and that these treaties should represent the commitment they have made to the rights of girls (UNESCO, 2018).



(UNESCO, 2016)

THE GEM REPORT HAS BEGUN A CAMPAIGN #WHOSACCOUNTABLE THAT URGES GOVERNMENTS TO ENDORSE LAWS AND POLICIES TO BREAK DOWN BARRIERS THAT ARE PREVENTING GIRLS ACCESSING EDUCATION (UNESCO, 2018).



(UN Education Report Twitter, 2019)

In some countries, there are laws that permit child marriage and allow the exclusion of pregnant girls from education.

In 2016 a Human Rights Watch study found in Tanzania girls are routinely pregnancy tested, and that they expel over 8000 pregnant girls from school every year.

Some twenty countries that have agreed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, have voiced concerns on the article regarding child marriage, and do in fact overlook forced marriage and girls being denied the right to education.

The Gender Review tells us that 34% of countries have yet to achieve gender equality at primary school, 55% have not at lower secondary school, and 75% have not at upper secondary school.

The review has highlighted ways in which these barriers to education for girls could be removed, including reviewing teacher training programmes, increasing the representation of women within education leadership positions, and enforcing stronger policies with regards to school-related gender based violence (UNESCO, 2018).



(Yamout, 2018)

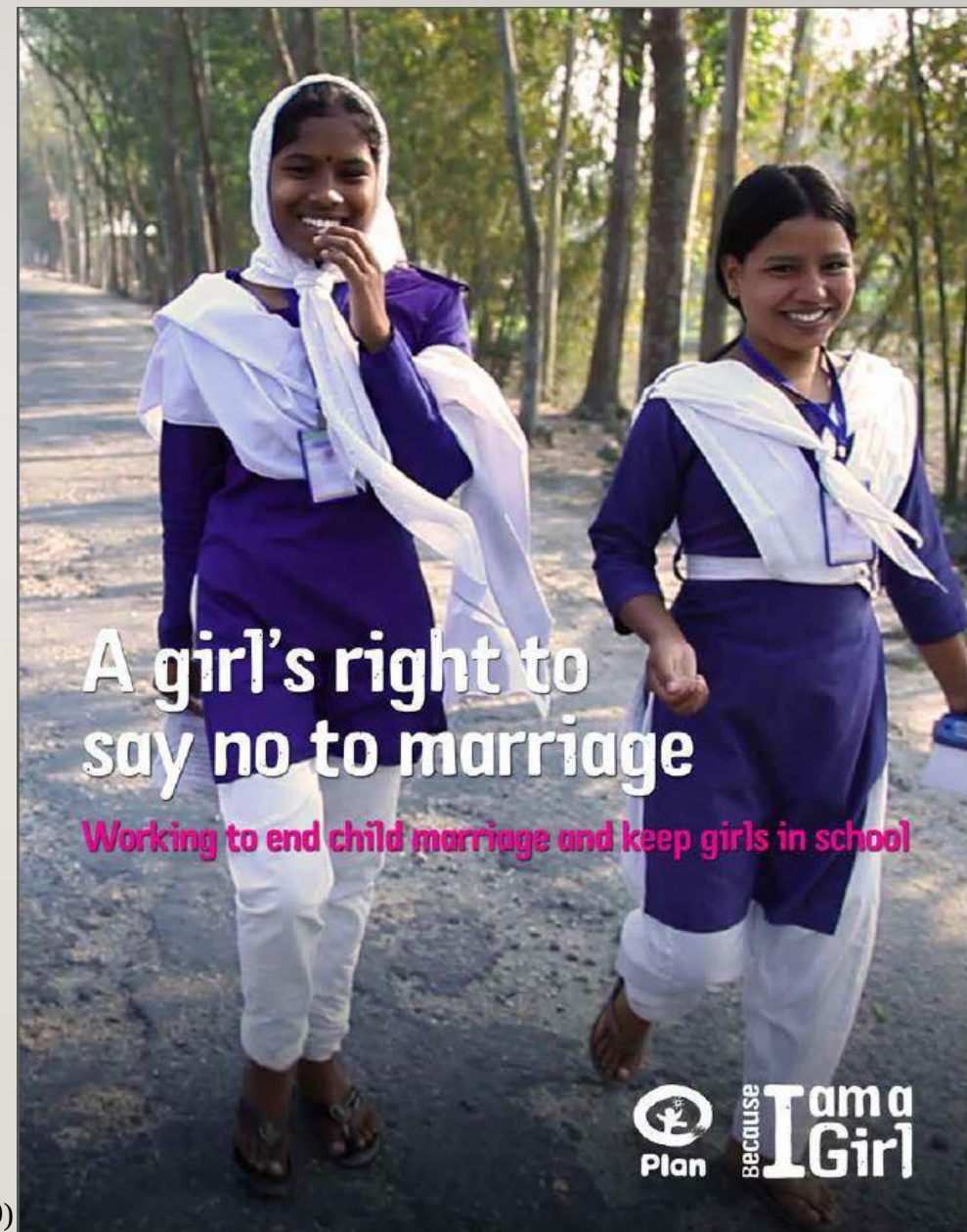
On 30th May 2013, Plan International published a report titled “*A GIRL'S RIGHT TO SAY NO TO MARRIAGE*”.

In this report it says that despite child marriage being a human rights violation that is prohibited by law, that child marriage still affects the lives of millions of girls globally, forcing them out of education and into a life of violence, ill health and even early death.

The report states that although child marriage does also affect boys lives, that the number of girls affected far outweighs the number of boys.

The report states that one in 3 girls in the developing world will be married before their 18th birthday, and that if barriers are not put in place to prevent this from happening, over 140 million girls will be married as a child by the year 2020, when broken down that is an average of 14 million girls a year, or almost 39,000 girls every day (Plan International, 2019).

(Plan International, 2019)



It is becoming recognised internationally the serious effect that child marriage has on children's rights, and that it creates a barrier to girls receiving an education, and education is key as it is linked to delaying child marriage, giving girls more opportunities and allowing them to achieve their full potential.

Plan International aims to highlight the obstacles preventing girls from realising their right to an education. Without this education, the risk of child marriage increases. Boys education is often prioritised due to the assumption that a girl will marry young regardless, there is also commonly fear for girls safety at school (Plan International, 2019).

Girls reaching puberty makes them more vulnerable to sexual abuse by teachers, staff and other pupils. Also the poor teaching standards makes passing critical examinations to achieve higher levels of education less likely. Plan International runs a campaign called 'Because I am a girl' that works towards securing a good standard education for girls.



(Northern Frontier Agency Development, 2019)



(Mirror Now Digital, 2017)

A girl who has no education is three times more likely to marry by the age of 18 than those girls who received Secondary or higher education.

In the 25 countries with the greatest levels of child marriage, a staggering 70% of girls with no education were married by the age of 18.

Education is the way in which these girls are able to acquire the skills, knowledge and confidence to claim their gender equality and human rights.

It allows them the freedom to decide whether they wish to marry, and if they do, to who and when (Plan International, 2019).

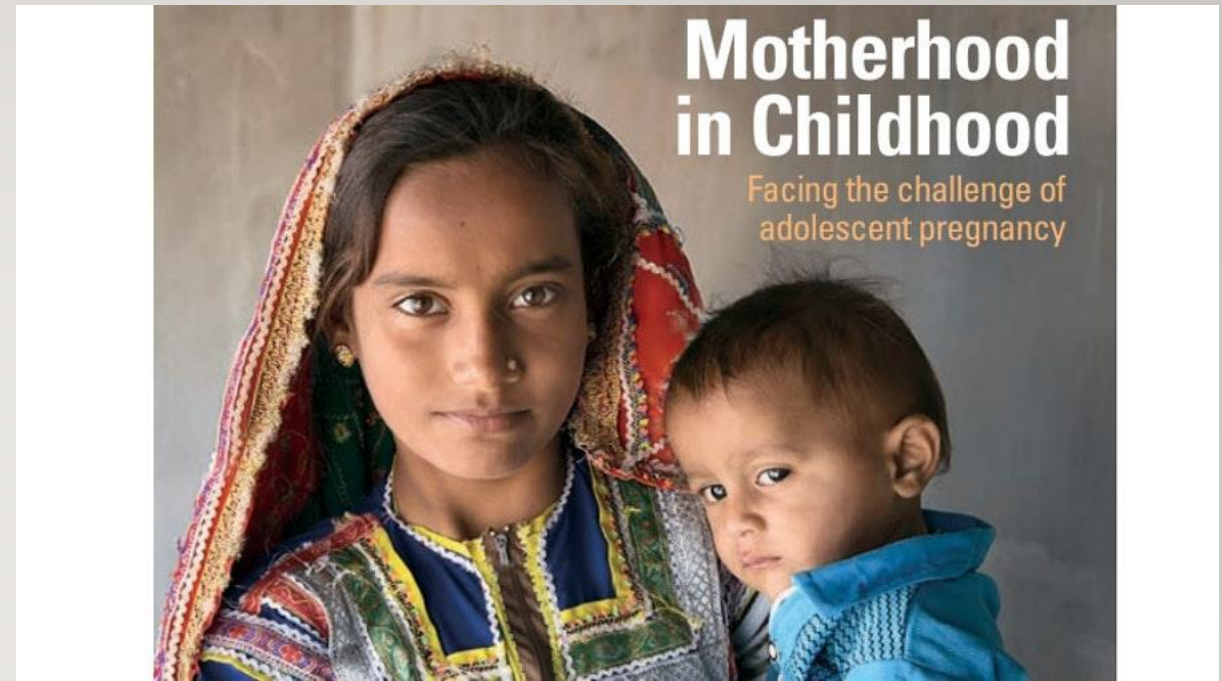


Pregnancy is a main contributor to reasons for child marriage.

Becoming pregnant at a young age increases the risks of maternal mortality, also the rate of infant deaths is 50% higher than mums over 20 years of age.

According to Plan International each year over 13 million girls in the developing world age 15-19 give birth while married.

Child marriage also has an impact on the girls emotional well-being in the sense that these girls are often isolated from friends and family, and therefore have no support with regards to parenthood and family duties (Plan International, 2019).



(Girls not Brides, 2013)



Girls leaving school tend to lack basic numeracy and literacy skills. It is believed that every year of marriage before adulthood decreases a girl's literacy skills by over 5%.

The recommendations for action in this report recognise that in order to alter the behaviours and mindset which enables child marriage, Plan International must work alongside partners in order to reinforce governments to eliminate child marriage through the delivery of national action plans.

(DW.com, 2017)

Plan international and its' supporting partners are calling for national governments to ensure that their current legislation prohibits marriage under the age of 18 for girls and boys, ensuring that this legislation is enforced.

They are asking that all girls be given access to quality education, in a safe environment.

Finally, they are calling for the governments to provide support for children who find themselves already married (Plan International, 2019).





(Deccan Chronicle, 2017)

In this report, Plan International were calling for the international community to work in partnership to embrace a UN General Assembly resolution to recognise child marriage being a violation of children's rights by 2015, and ensure that child marriage is frequently considered as a human rights issue.

Plan International also called for the post-2015 development framework to ensure it focused on quality education being available for all children and bringing an end to child marriage within its objectives (Plan International, 2019).

According to Global Citizen, financial reasons play a large part in why child marriage takes place.

In some cultures, girls are considered a financial burden, as they are not seen as potential wage earners.

Families living in poverty may find themselves offering a daughter for marriage as it is one less person to be financially responsible for, and occasionally girls can find themselves being offered for marriage to settle debts.



(Wikipedia, 2019)

In other cultures, a price is paid to the girls family and the younger the girl, the higher the price the family may receive.

UNICEF's child protection officer has said that some families are using child marriage as a means to provide food for their family in order to survive (Selby & Singer, 2018).

On 10th January 2019 Plan International published a research study titled “*TIME TO ACT! ACCELERATING EFFORTS TO END CHILD, EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE IN ASIA*” .

This research is a huge factor in the work of Plan International to increase equality for girls.

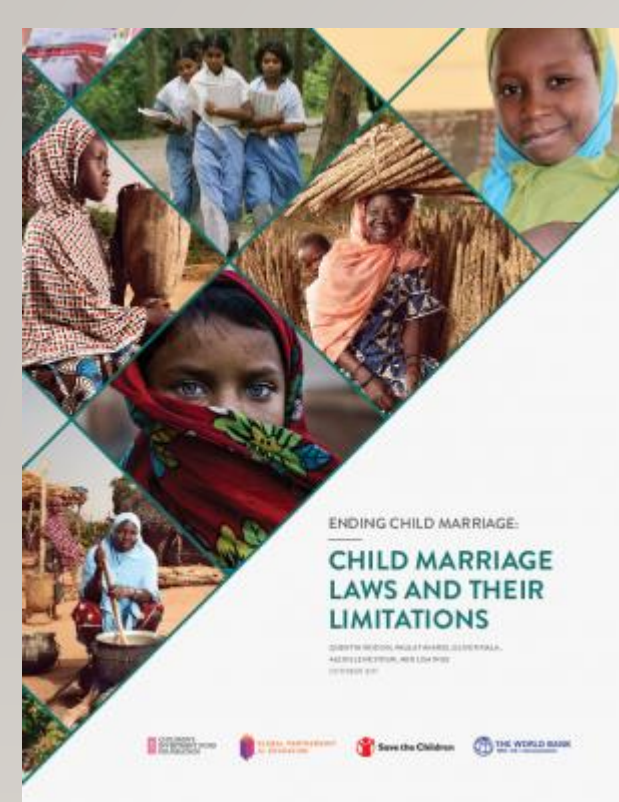
The first phase of the research was to explore the root causes and impact of child, early and forced marriage and the interventions to delay or put an end to it.

The second phase of research investigates which of the interventions put in place to delay or end child, early or forced marriage were most likely to be successful if implemented by governments.

The third phase of the research which is to follow will look at the cost of implementing these interventions (Plan International, 2019).



(Plan International, 2019)



While the report ‘Ending child marriage: Child marriage laws and their limitations’ by the World Bank and Save the Children, acknowledges that child marriage is considered a human rights violation and that it is a target in the 2030 global goals, it states that investments to stop it are limited.

The report states that the rates of child marriage have declined too slowly to be able to successfully achieve the goal in time. In many countries, it is still legal practice to marry a girl under the age of 18, and furthermore in countries where it is now illegal to do so, many girls still find themselves married under 18 years of age.

The report states that 100 million girls worldwide are not legally protected against child marriage, additionally legal reforms are insufficient to end child marriage as 7.5 million girls are marrying illegally every year, where there are meant to be legal protections in place.

The World Bank and Save the Children feel that creating laws that prohibit child marriage is a vital first step, however additional interventions to prevent child marriage taking place are still needed (Reliefweb, 2017).

(Global partnership for education, 2017)

12% of the United Nations States have agreed the Convention on the Rights of the Child have no minimum legal age for marriage.

Also of those countries who do hold 18 as the legal minimum age for marriage, there are often loopholes that allow early marriage to take place with parental consent.

Plan international have recently helped to close loopholes regarding parental consent in Malawi, Honduras and the Dominican Republic, but many other countries still allow parents to have the final say (Plan International, 2019).



(Zolfaghari, 2018)

Count

Every Child



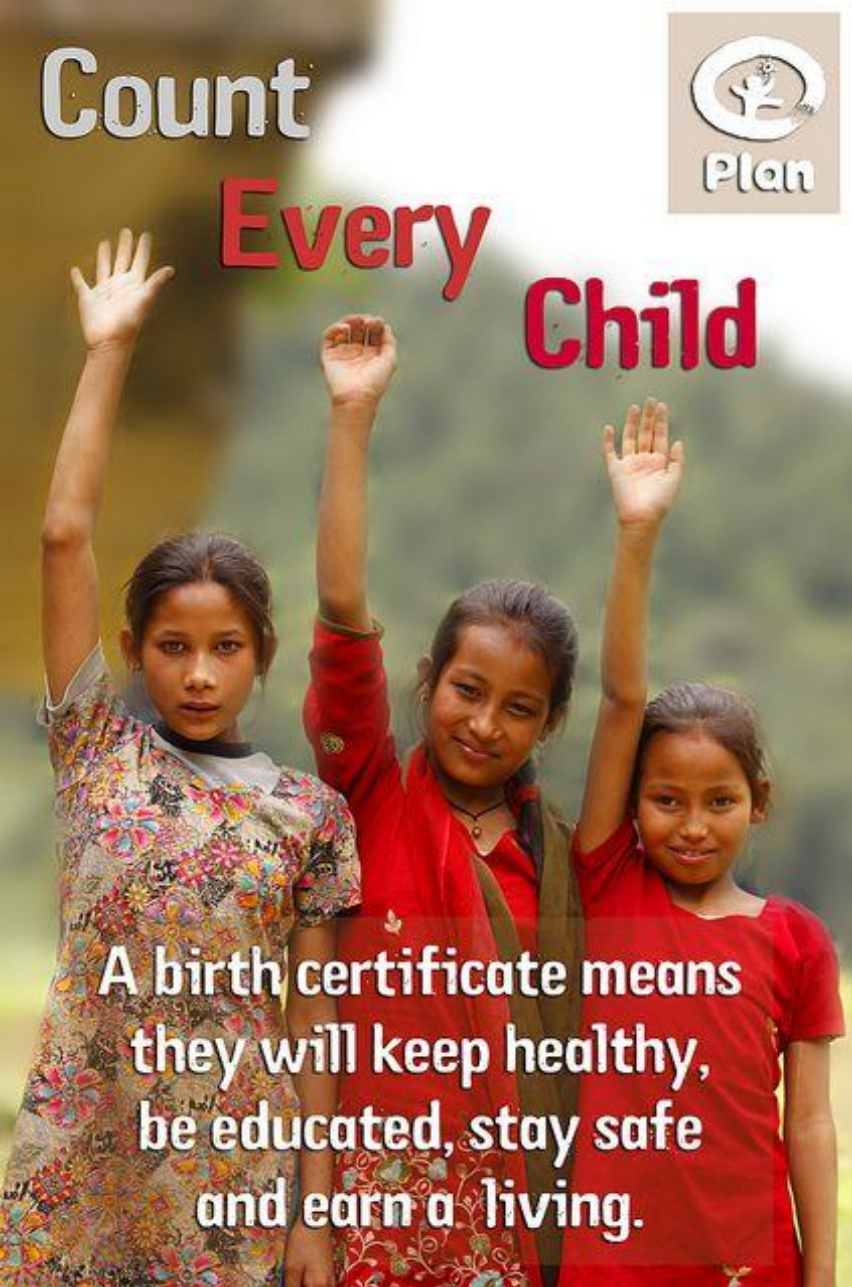
Worldwide, there are around 230 million children under 5, that do not hold a birth certificate as their birth was never registered.

Over 100 countries do not have a satisfactory birth registration system (Plan International, 2019).

When considering this from a perspective of how can this be linked to child marriage, we must ask ourselves, if a child does not hold a birth certificate, then who is to say she is marrying under the minimum legal age?

(Plan Asia, 2019)

A birth certificate means
they will keep healthy,
be educated, stay safe
and earn a living.





(Onyeachonam, 2019)

While Plan International professes to support and empower the worlds most vulnerable children, on the 24th February 2018 the media reported that Plan International had confirmed that their staff had been involved in six cases of child exploitation and sexual abuse and 9 incidents of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct towards other adults.

Plan International publicly apologised, and vowed to take urgent measures to eradicate this kind of behaviour (BBC News, 2018).

Among those measures included a review of referencing systems, in order to ensure that people who have demonstrated this abuse of power, were not able to be re-employed within the sector.

When looking at current projects and research that Plan International are undertaking alongside the history of the organisation, it appears that their vision to protect and promote children's rights, is still at the core of what they do.

Although there are barriers that occasionally prevent or delay a successful outcome of their objectives. There is evidence that shows Plan International are successfully working in partnership with other agencies in order to better achieve their goals.

While some evidence questions the value for money the organisation may be supplying, Plan International is open and upfront with their financial information.

Despite being in receipt of some negative media attention, Plan International have endeavoured to make the necessary changes in order to prevent such incidents from re-occurring.

From the research and reports that Plan International have produced, it is clear to see that they recognise that an issue such as child marriage is not a singular issue that they can attempt to prevent, the issue of child marriage goes hand in hand with other issues these girls face, such as gender inequality, poor quality education and poverty. While some reports shown here suggest that reaching the Global Goal by 2030 is not possible, Plan International are still working hard to make the biggest impact that they can. Especially where they are implementing interventions in order to support the changes in legislation that they have worked to achieve.



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