

# COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

October 2016

This report outlines Plan International's activities in support of the United Nations Global Compact between the periods of October 2014 to October 2016.

## **Part 1: Statement of Support by Chief Executive Officer, Plan International, Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen**

Dear Ms Kingo,

I am pleased to confirm that Plan International reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption. This is our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact. We welcome feedback on its contents.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that our organisation has taken to support the Global Compact and its Principles, as suggested. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Partnerships are central to helping us not only deliver our purpose to advance children's rights and equality for girls, but also to work with others to realise the ambition of the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring no one is left behind. The Private Sector remains an important stakeholder, and we look forward to increasing our collaboration with the Global Compact to harness the value they can add to our work.

With best wishes,



Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen

Chief Executive Officer, Plan International

## **PART 2 Description of Actions**

### ▪ **Engagement with Global Compact networks:**

We actively encourage all Plan International offices to become members of the Local Networks, and currently our offices in Canada, France, Finland, Switzerland, Norway, UK, Netherlands, Paraguay and Germany are active members. Colleagues regularly attend and contribute to Local Network events, engage in dialogues with other members and in some cases have developed new partnerships as an outcome. Many of the country-led partnerships which align to one of more of the Global Compact principles are highlighted below in the partnerships section.

Some specific examples of Local Network activity include:

**In Paraguay**, where Plan International is particularly active, we have undertaken the following:

- Actively participated in meetings and activities, particularly in the area of Labour and Human Rights.
- Worked in solidarity with eight members of the Global Compact to provide humanitarian aid during the floods in Asuncion in June 2014.
- Participated in the "Business costs of violence against women" presentation.
- Collaborated in a workshop on Child Labour.
- Developed a joint awareness campaign on the rights of Children and Adolescents.
- Collaborated on the development of a workshop on Human Rights aimed at businesses, called "Protect, Respect and Remedy: We All Win.
- Provided internship opportunities for disadvantaged youth.

**In Canada**, Plan International hosted an event in May 2016 in partnership with the Global Compact for 40 Canadian corporate partners and prospects, to scope out partnership ideas in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. In September 2016, Plan International attended meetings with the Global Compact and the Canadian Government to promote the Ten Principles, where we discussed tracking of the indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals and how to highlight the work of the Global Compact and its members across the country.

**In France**, Plan International and the Global Compact have been discussing Plan International's presence at their conferences in Paris, and the utilisation and sharing of a national CSR survey with corporate partners to help share best practice, network and gain better knowledge of expectations from the Private Sector on partnering.

Plan International also have several other offices which are in the process of joining or reactivating their membership, and we look forward to seeing increasing numbers of members over the next year.

### ▪ **Partnerships joined on Corporate Sustainability (specifically on Global Compact related issues):**

Plan International has more than 500 partnerships with the Private Sector, at the global, regional and local level, across many industries and of differing partnership models. Many of these Private Sector partners are members of the Global Compact, and in several cases where they are not we use the opportunity to encourage membership. A few partnerships are highlighted below which align to the Ten Principles;

**Plan International and Nokia** have been working in partnership to empower young people in developing countries through education and advocacy. We have developed an Open Space Literacy programme, which aims to increase children's literacy skills in 300 schools across Kenya. The programme provides access to high-quality learning materials and improves teachers' capacity through enhanced teaching methods and ICT training. It also engages communities in the management of local schools and promotes high-quality education. The partnership is also improving school governance in Uganda using technology and community media. Improving

school governance ensures that children receive high-quality education and contributes to gender equality goals, lifelong learning opportunities, and adult literacy. The outcomes of this partnership aligns with Principle 1.

**Plan International and Metso** work together to promote girl's education in India. The four-year project, launched in 2015 in the Alwar region in North India, aims to make quality education available to the most marginalised children. The first phase of the project included 15 schools and benefited 3,000 students and 90 teachers. The project is expected to expand to a total of 25 schools.

The schools participating in the project receive proper teaching facilities, and teachers receive training to ensure quality teaching. To improve learning outcomes, science and math classrooms have been established. Modern information technology is used in teaching, and the schools also establish libraries.

Metso and Plan International's joint project also improves the water and sanitation services in schools and increases student awareness of hygiene. In addition to contributing to improved health, clean drinking water and proper lavatories makes the school environment more enjoyable and improves student safety, particularly for girls.

The goal of the school project is to improve the learning outcomes of the children and, as a result, increase the number of students advancing from primary school to secondary school. Over a four-year period, the project will reach about 8,000 girls and boys in 25 schools. The outcomes of this partnership aligns with Principle 1.

**Plan International and Kesko's** partnership supports Principles 1, 2, 5 and 6. Our partnership led us to develop the SEAS of Change project which aims to improve the working conditions of Cambodian migrant workers, and the education and protection of their children in Thailand.

The partnership with Kesko aims to improve the transparency of the production chain. The project aims to examine the activities of the unofficial sector of the fishing industry, identify the means to prevent the abuse and discrimination of migrant workers and their children, and to train the operators in the supply chain on issues of transparency and fair treatment of workers. The collaboration will last until 2018.

**We are working in several partnerships that support environmental issues, and notably, align with the Principles 7, 8 and 9:**

**Plan International USA and Margaret A. Cargill Foundation** are implementing a Child-Centred Recovery and Resilience (C2R2) project in Asia. The Child-Centred Recovery and Resilience project focuses on the transition from disaster response and recovery into resiliency-building, and includes three results:

- An Emergency Response Fund for the region of \$1 million over three years, focusing on filling critical gaps in disaster response and recovery.
- Country-specific programmes in Bangladesh and the Philippines on safe schools, linking recovery to resilience and long-term development.
- A Disaster Risk Management learning component that captures lessons learned and best practice in community-level resilience. This result will be implemented in partnership with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC), a Bangkok-based research and training institute, and will be integrated with Results One and Two to assure a strong monitoring, evaluation, and learning component of the overall project activities.

**Plan International and The Prudence Foundation**, part of Prudential Asia, entered into a partnership to address the adverse effects of disasters in the Asia Region. This partnership supports Plan International's Disaster Response & Management Programme in schools in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. This project educates and prepares teachers and students to respond when disaster strikes, as well as building capacity amongst the nearby communities to strengthen local resilience and their ability to cope when disasters occurs.

**Plan International and Arup International Development** (the pro bono arm of the engineering/consultancy firm) are partnering on a regional level to develop an urban resilience framework.

**Plan International is also working in several partnerships that support and align to the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).** This is an area we see great synergies and hope to scale up our collaboration in this area in the future:

**Plan International and Bik Bok** have worked in partnership since 2012. Bik Bok is an international fashion brand for young women with stores across Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Austria. Together we work to promote the message about girls' right to education to new audiences. Through their stores they have 40 million visitors that can read about our projects. Their social media channels reach over 500,000 people with whom they share our stories. They also engage their employees and customers in fundraising activities.

**Plan International India and Ericsson** has launched community based 'Digital Learning Centres' for young women living in urban slum clusters of Delhi and the National Capital Region. The Digital Learning Centres utilises technology solutions to provide education to women between the ages of 15-25 within their own communities, thereby overcoming the challenge of limited mobility. The programme is a clear example of principle 4, which involves investing in workplace policies and programmes that open opportunities for advancement of women at all levels and across all business areas.

**Plan International UK and Credit Suisse** have developed a number of programmes which align with the Women's Empowerment Principles. One example is the joint Financial Education for Girls programme. This programme has improved the financial education and life skills of 100,000 adolescent girls, enabled over 100,000 girls to have improved access to and transition through secondary school and has advocated at the local and national levels to create a positive environment for girls' secondary education. It closely aligns with Principle 4 which seeks to promote education, training and professional development for women as well as principle 6, as the programme seeks to influence local and national change. The focus on improving the financial literacy of young girls also aligns with Principle 5 which seeks to provide gender sensitive solution to credit and lending barriers, one barrier being lack of education.

**Plan International UK and Capital Group** provide young women between the ages of 16-24 with access to vocational training as well as life and employment skills training through partnership. The partnership also works with local companies to create apprenticeship opportunities, connect girls to trade and market fairs, raise awareness of gender equality within the business sector and lobby for equal opportunities for women. This programme aligns with Principles 4 and 6 as it not only promotes education and professional development for young women, but also seeks to advocate for gender equality and collaborates with business partners and community leaders to achieve this.

- **Support to Global Compact initiatives and work streams:**

Plan International is joining with the Global Compact as a sponsoring partner to issue a 'Call to Action' for the private sector to Create Opportunities to Economically Empower Young Women. UN Women and ILO are expected to also join as sponsoring partners. A 'Call to Action' briefing paper targeting private sector companies is being developed for release in December 2016. The Global Compact will host a follow up via an online Webinar in mid-January 2017 (date to be confirmed). Delores McLaughlin, Senior Advisor for Economic Security, is contributing to the 'Call to Action' briefing paper and will represent Plan International in the follow-up Webinar. Delores is also contributing to another 'Call to Action' for the private sector to Drive Forward Decent Jobs for Young Women and Young Men. A briefing paper is being developed; release date to be confirmed

Alex Munive, Director of Gender Equality & Social Inclusion, has provided expertise to improve the WEP Gap Analysis Tool through Consultation.

Plan International has had discussions with Michelle Lau around the Global Compact and Oxfam's Poverty Footprint tool, and has agreed to pilot it once a relevant partnership is found.

Plan International promoted Local Network SDG Action Plan and Pioneers Programme to our networks in April 2016.

In April 2016 a meeting took place between Lise Kingo and Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen in New York where they discussed shared areas of interest between the two organisations. In particular, Plan International is interested in looking deeper at the opportunities within the Women's Empowerment Principles to see how our increased focus in strengthening the voice of girls and young women and enabling them to learn, lead, decide and thrive aligns here.

Historically we have contributed expertise to the Children's Rights in Business Principles discussions, and more recently we continue to discuss them in an informal manner with our partners. As we look to take a stronger hold on 'influencing' within our work we will consider how we use the principles in our future strategy.

- **Commentary provided to companies on communication on progress:**

At this stage we have not taken an active role in commenting on a company's communication on progress, however we have engaged in open and informal conversations at the partnership development stage around the reports, and in some cases will have used them as part of the due diligence process.

- **Participation in Global Compact Global and Local events:**

The UN Global Compact Leaders' Meeting was attended in June 2016 by Tessie San Martin, CEO & President of Plan International USA. Ms San Martin had a speaking contribution role in the session on 'Ending Poverty, Creating New Markets', and used the event for important networking.

(See above for local events).

### **PART 3: Measurement of outcomes**

We actively encourage both our own network of offices (we have nine official LN members at present) as well as our partners to join the Global Compact, although this takes an informal approach and we are not able to quantify numbers at this stage.

We have our own robust monitoring and evaluation tools to measure the impact of our partnerships with the Private Sector and outcomes for children. For example, we can demonstrate that:

- After six years, Banking on Change, the partnership between Plan International UK, Barclays and CARE UK, extended financial services to over 758,000 people, two-thirds of them women, who together saved an astonishing US\$34 million. From 2013-2015, the partnership focused on young people, helping to set up almost 12,000 youth savings groups, reaching over 120,000 young people and helping youth group members set up almost 60,000 small businesses.
- The partnership between Plan International UK, Credit Suisse, and Aflatoun has reached more than 44,000 girls in Brazil, China, India and Rwanda with financial and life skills education. In April, the project won a CSR award from the British and American Chambers of Commerce in China.
- In five countries across Asia and Africa, we're working with our partner Prudential to help more girls and boys go to school. This year, 200 students in Ghana received scholarships

so they could complete their education, and five schools in rural Vietnam were renovated, giving over 300 children a more inspiring place to learn.

- In Southern India, we are partnering with a sports media firm called Perform Group. Our partnership uses sport to tackle gender inequality, poor literacy and a rigid caste system. Sport also acts as a 'hook' to get school dropouts to return to school; so far, more than 200 children are back in school.
- Through our Girls' Education Challenge project, CBRE's EMEA offices are helping more than 20,000 girls in Sierra Leone to get an education. The project also helped to support the Ebola recovery. Since 2014, CBRE, the world's leading commercial property business, has committed nearly £683,000 to this project, which received a Third Sector Business Charity Award as Project of the Year 2016. The partnership also supports our global disaster work, raising over £800,000 to date.
- Between 2010 and 2015, the Young Health Programme, our partnership with AstraZeneca and Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, reached more than 315,000 young people in Brazil, India and Zambia. Plan International UK and AstraZeneca have renewed their partnership till 2020 to work in Delhi, India and Kibera, Nairobi. The partnership hosted a side event during the United Nations General Assembly called "Accountability in global health: What works, what doesn't and what we need to do about it".
- Our partnership with Ericsson in India has achieved the following outcomes:
  - 422 young girls are actively attending scheduled classes.
  - 12 learning centres and resource hubs have been established in Dwarka, Holambi Kalan and Rangpuri Pahadi
  - 470 more girls have enrolled for classes for the upcoming semester.
  - 23 awareness camps, 113 home visits, 88 orientation sessions, 11 workshops have been conducted.
  - Total outreach through these activities is more than 10,000.

We have had discussions with the Global Compact team around the Poverty Footprint tool, as mentioned above and are open to piloting in one of our partnerships in the near future.

The expertise we are providing as described above, for example to the 'Call to Actions' and Women's Empowerment principles, in particular bringing the civil society voice, will strengthen the relevance, impact and outreach of the initiatives.