

# COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

October 2018

This report outlines Plan International's activities across all offices engaging with the United Nations Global Compact between the periods of October 2016 and October 2018.

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

Dear Ms Kingo,

I would like to take this opportunity to renew Plan International's commitment to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. It is my pleasure to submit our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact for the time period of October 2016 to October 2018. We appreciate any feedback.

This Communication on Engagement is a joint submission outlining all actions that different offices of our organisation have taken to support the Global Compact and its Principles. We will be sharing this information with all our stakeholders.

Plan International's global strategy calls on partnerships to support in delivering our purpose to advance children's rights and equality for girls. We work with partners across sectors and recognise the importance the private sector plays to revitalise the global partnership for the Sustainable Development Goals. Our collaboration with the Global Compact has supported both those missions, and we are dedicated to expanding on the work that is currently being done.

With best wishes,



Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen  
Chief Executive Officer, Plan International

## **PART 2: Description of Actions**

### **- Engagement in local Global Compact networks, workstreams, and events**

All Plan International offices are encouraged to become active members of their local Global Compact Networks, and currently offices in France, Spain, Germany, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Ecuador, Guatemala and Paraguay are engaging locally with the Global Compact. Our office in Spain has only just signed an agreement with the Global Compact in August 2018 and thus we will not be able to report on activities yet, however, this shows that the Global Compact continues to be an area of interest and opportunity for Plan International that is continuously explored and broadened. All other offices listed above have collaborated with the Global Compact in different activities and capacities, which are outlined below.

**Plan International Paraguay** has continued to be our most active office engaging with the Global Compact. Since 2011 they have participated in both the Human Rights and Labour Rights groups. These are some examples of their activities during the last two years:

- Advocacy and influencing, mainly through events in public spaces and open workshops on topics such as accessibility, gender equality, Corporate Social Responsibility, nursing, and youth access to jobs.
- We have developed questionnaires and carried out consultations with national businesses on issues related to inclusion, gender equality, non-discrimination and good practices.
- We participate in seminars and courses on many different topics related to HRR and labour rights.
- Through implementing the SAPE'A project (youth economic empowerment, life skills, work opportunities, training) we have used our experiences and shared them with companies adhered to the Global Compact.
- Many opportunities have arisen from collaboration with the Global Compact including a project proposal with a University, a member of the UNGC, after talks on sexual and reproductive health and rights within the Global Compact. We have identified a common interest and developed the relationship thereon. We are currently awaiting approval of funds and have developed a compelling research project.
- The Sustainable Development Goals underpin all our resource mobilisation proposals. Plan International is an important actor and influencer with regards to the local annual Global Compact meeting agenda and activities.
- The Global Compact partnership plays an important role when engaging in partnerships as we use the links and the discourse of our local network to help us reach new partners that are already involved with the Global Compact.

**Plan International Ecuador** is delighted to have been awarded the Recognition of Good Practices of Sustainable Development award in 2017, acknowledging the special contribution Plan International's 'Pregnancy Free Zone Project' has made to the advancement of SDG5, gender equality.

Plan International's purpose states that "We strive for a just world that advances Children's rights and equality of girls". Among our key results in the period between July 2017 and June 2018, we have influenced the approval of 17 ordinances on children's rights; 14 Community Based Protection Mechanisms created in Loja; Ecuador's National Assembly approved the Law to prevent and eradicate Gender Violence against women that includes girls as subject of rights. In Addition, Ecuador ratified the OP3 CRC of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, thanks to Plan International's advocacy at the Sovereignty, Integration, International Affairs and Safety Commission of the National Assembly.

Plan International's actions are oriented to face human rights abuses, especially those that affect women and girls. We aim at implementing gender transformative initiatives that actively face abuse or discriminations. Examples of our actions include:

- During the National Assembly, a group of 25 girls presented a resolution calling for the eradication of violence against girls to the President of Ecuador and the First Lady.
- The National Assembly approved the Resolution 'For girls and their rights. No more violence, no more impunity', as a result of the advocacy led by 24 girls who took over 12 Parliamentary Committees.
- On 'International Day of the Girl', Ecuador launched a landing page to promote the 'Because I Am a Girl Movement', to increase individual donors and to invite visitors to join a National Crusade and sign a manifesto to combat violence against girls.
- On 'International Women's Day', Plan International organized 43 events throughout Ecuador including the participation of a girl representative in the 'Changing the Guard' Ceremony with President Lenin Moreno. A mural was launched with more than 50 self-portraits of girls at The National Assembly of Ecuador under the slogan 'The National Assembly is the house of the Girls', as a recognition of the participation of girls on issues related to girls' rights and equality during the last 5 years.
- Signing an agreement with the Global Compact on ending various forms of discrimination against women and girls. As part of this commitment, Plan International Ecuador led the SDG 5 working group on gender equality for a 1-year period. 23 organisations participate in the working group, and in the second meeting all members agreed on individually developing a gender policy self-evaluation, to be reviewed and turned into an action plan for each member.

Plan International follows strict risk assessment procedures to determine potential partners' infrastructure and commitment to Child Protection Standards. Training of partners' personnel on our Child Protection Policy ensures collaborators prevent any kind of child labour, aligning with Principle 5.

Plan International's strategy in Ecuador includes indicators that contribute to the reduction of risks as a response to climate change as well as initiatives to use natural resources in a sustainable manner and develop initiatives that promote the use and optimisation of technology friendly to the environment and cleaner production processes.

**In Indonesia**, Plan International has participated in various activities conducted by the local Global Compact Network. They include, but are not limited to:

- A series of multi stakeholder dialogues on business and human rights, promoting business accountability through implementation of the Principles. The dialogue sessions are conducted on a quarterly basis, covering a range of topics, such as the local human rights context, children's rights and business principles, sustainability within supply chains, and responsible investment.
- Plan International participated in the Indonesia Global Compact Network forum which took place on 12 October 2017 in Jakarta. Plan International Indonesia was active both in the exhibition space and at the panel event. We showcased our successful WASH programme located in East and West Nusa Tenggara province. The project, which enables communities to have access to improved sanitation through a sanitation loan scheme, is a collaborative project between sanitation entrepreneurs and micro finance institutions at the local village level.

Furthermore, Plan International Indonesia has incorporated Global Compact principles through its work. We have projects that support various SDG implementations, such as economic empowerment, protection of women and children, gender equality, empowerment of women and girls, water and sanitation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, early childhood education and disaster risk management.

Plan International Indonesia is pursuing plans to further engage with their local Global Compact network by participating in and contributing to local Global Compact working groups.

**In France**, Plan International has co-organised a conference with the local Global Compact network, UN Women France and Kedge Business School tackling Sustainable Development Goal no. 5 – gender equality. Up to 50 local companies were invited to the event and shared testimonies on measurements implemented to support and further gender equality. The conference included workshops tackling gender stereotypes and breaking the glass ceiling. Speakers at the conference included Fella Imalhayene, general delegate of the Global Compact France, and Jean-Christophe Carteron, CSR Director of Kedge Business School. Plan International was present during round table discussions alongside representatives of the UN Women France Committee.

**In Switzerland** Plan International organised a workshop which was embedded in the Global Compact Event 'Partnering for Success: Private sector & Ngo collaborate to promote young women's economic empowerment' in Bern in February 2017. The workshop outcome demonstrated best industry practices and included Credit Suisse and XL Catlin as partners.

**In Guatemala**, the Global Compact Advisor Committee have integrated different strategic groups, of which Plan International has joined two: The Strategic Committee, whose objective is to define the communications strategy, key messages, mission, vision, values, and strategic plan; and the Strategic Alliances Committee, whose function is to identify potential alliances across the different sectors of media, international organisations, embassies, as well as new corporate partners. Our office in Guatemala is planning to engage with Global Compact events on a more frequent basis in the future, similar to our participation at the SEGEPLAN (Secretariat of Planning and Programming of the Presidency of the Republic of Guatemala) workshop in November 2016, which had the objective to identify those Social Development Goals to be prioritised at a national level. Plan International Guatemala was also well represented at the Latam Global Compact Meeting in Mexico City in December 2016.

**In Germany**, Plan International has actively promoted the Global Compact's Principles with its corporate partners, and furthermore suggested the Global Compact to new and existing corporate partners. Plan International was also represented at the Participant Conference of DGCN (German Global Compact Network) and continues to deliver education and information on topics related to the Global Compact and its Principles.

In the **United Kingdom**, Plan International UK's Private Sector Partnerships lead is one of the two NGO members of the UNGC UK Network Advisory Group, which meet periodically to review strategy and outline new developments. Through this membership, Plan International UK actively promotes the Global Compact principles, as well as sharing news, events and consultations on which the UNGC UK Network are leading.

### **PART 3: Measurement of Outcomes**

#### **Human Rights, Principles 1-2**

At Plan International, all partnerships must abide by our strict child protection policies. We undergo a formal and thorough due diligence process that ensures that we don't engage with businesses and organisations who are complicit with human rights abuses.

**Plan International's Girls Rights Platform**, a database of all existing gender policies, highlights the status of international, national, and local laws by focussing specifically on girls' rights. The database is open to the public, and we encourage partners to engage.

**Plan International and Gebr. Wollenhaupt**, a tea company based in Reinbek near Hamburg, work together to protect children from child labour in areas dominated by the mining industry, and to enable them to return to complete their school education and / or start an apprenticeship program. Gebr. Wollenhaupt has been supporting the Project 'Protecting Girls and Boys from Child Labour'.

In order to contribute to their families' incomes, many children in Tanzania start working at a young age instead of completing their education. Of approximately 130,000 children who

live in the region of Geita an estimated 90,000 children work in the nearby gold mines, sometimes for up to 14 hours per day.

Plan International and Gebr. Wollenhaupts partnership support a project with the following programmatic content:

- Creation of a sustainable child protection system
- Supporting children to continue their education, and for young children to attend pre-school
- Creation of economic perspectives and possibilities for youth and young adults
- Building awareness on a community level around children's and women's rights through programming
- Working with mining companies and owners to educate on child safeguarding issues.

### **Labour, Principles 3-6**

Plan International engages in different partnerships that strive to advance labour rights, and secure and strengthen employment opportunities especially within the area of youth employment.

Plan International has conducted a project and research into **eliminating modern slavery** in our own supply chains, and the following outcomes have been achieved:

- 1) A review of relevant policies to assess whether there is a gap in coverage as regards to protecting against the risk of modern slavery. This led to the following:
  - a. Creation of a Plan International Non-Staff Code of Conduct, which is aimed at suppliers and explicitly refers to unfair labour practices.
  - b. Update of the Plan International Code of Conduct with the aim of further preventing sexual exploitation.
  - c. Creation of a new Global Policy on Whistleblowing, Values and Behaviour – this is broad brush but does address risks related to modern slavery re lack of transparency in supply chains.
  - d. Update of Plan International Whistleblowing Policy in line with international best practice.
  - e. IN PROGRESS:
    - i. Plan International is updating its Talent and Acquisition Policy to ensure that it doesn't recruit from agencies which attach onerous or unfair conditions to work placements.
    - ii. Our Logistics & Procurement Team are updating the relevant section of our Operations Manual to more specifically focus on unfair labour practices and supply chain transparency. There are already sections on procurement ethics, safeguarding, anti-fraud, bribery and corruption, and transparency in general terms. This updated Manual is expected by the end of October.
- 2) Plan International has put in place enhanced due diligence procedures within our procurement processes. For example, we've updated our standard supplier questionnaire with specific questions regarding supply chain transparency, and we're doing additional due diligence on high-risk tenders (which are identified based on location, source, nature of contract etc).
- 3) Our Logistics and Procurement Team has undertaken training on risks posed by modern slavery and need to ensure transparency in supply chains.
- 4) We've revised our standard contractual terms and conditions to include a new clause addressing modern slavery. This is pending management sign off.
- 5) We've updated our risk register to account for risk of modern slavery.

The partnership between **Plan International Finland and Kesko** is another example of tackling inequality within the area of employment and development in Thailand. The local fishing industry is fully dependent on migrant labour, with some 70% of all workers coming from poorer neighbouring countries. Migrant children often fail to get into local Thai schools, and are thus excluded from education and breaking the poverty cycle. Kesko has been supporting Plan International's SEAS of Change project for the last three years, which is targeting the education gap by enrolling migrant children in learning centres which prepare them for entering local schools and will enable them to continue with their education. 944 children were registered at the learning centres between 2015 and 2017, and 212 moved on to public schools. Two of these centres in the Trat and Ryong provinces in Eastern Thailand have been funded by Kesko's board, who is looking to improve sustainability within their supply chain. Furthermore, suppliers in Thailand have participated in social responsibility trainings to improve supply chain transparency and work against abuse of labour and human rights.

In Asia, Plan International has partnered with **Accenture** to advance development in the programmatic area of Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE). The partnership aims to eliminate job discrimination against the most vulnerable and marginalised youth by providing training for, and preparing and supporting young people for a professional career. Since 2004 Plan International and Accenture completed more than 60 projects, investing more than \$13MM in youth employment. More than 30,000 youth have been trained to get a job or start their own business with a high conversion rate of 50 to 80% entering jobs.

## **Environment, Principles 7-9**

Although Plan International does not primarily focus its programming on environmental issues, Plan International's programmatic approach recognises that climate change and environmental sustainability are key factors in achieving gender equality.

Plan International began significantly working on climate change in 2011. In Asia, since then there have been many climate change projects funded by various donors (DFID, DFAT, BMU, BMZ, ADB, NCF, etc.) in different countries. Climate change projects have worked with multiple stakeholders such as governments, CSOs/NGOs, research institutes and UN agencies at regional, national and local level. The main approaches are community-based adaptation and child-centred adaptation. The child-centred climate change adaptation (4CA) programme starting in 2011 has expanded to 10 countries in Asia and still continues to date. Through this work Plan International has partnered with the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre to develop the Y-Adapt games for children and youth to learn about climate change, which has since been further refined and implemented in countries in Latin America and Africa. Plan International is currently working or has previously worked in at least 24 countries (based on recent CC mapping) in specific climate change adaptation projects, plus those related such as green skills.

Key achievements in this area of work include, but are not limited to, a review of Plan International's Disaster Risk Management approach, participating at international conferences, and conducting research into the effects of climate change on the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

A key element of sustainability is partnering with the private sector, e.g. green jobs, and turning our bankable projects into viable investments for communities and the private sector to take to the next level. Although environmental sustainability is not one of Plan International's primary concerns, some of our projects and programs include environmental sustainability aspects:

DRM/CCA projects within Plan have addressed various environmental sustainability issues at both ground implementation and advocacy levels. Examples include Community-Based Adaptation projects, Child-Centred Climate Change Adaptation projects and Safe School projects. In all participatory Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (at the

beginning of the projects), environmental issues including natural resource management issues were always mentioned by local schools and communities as their first priorities, such as waste, water and forest.

### **Anti-Corruption, Principle 10**

Whilst neither partnerships nor programmes have an explicit focus on anti-corruption, Plan International's internal policies, and thorough due diligence and ethical checks of potential partners are in place to prevent working with individuals and companies who do not align with the Global Compact's principle on anti-corruption and bribery.