



2016 – 2020

ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY



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PLAN INTERNATIONAL IRELAND HAS A VISION

We strive for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls.

To achieve this our strategy to 2020 has one purpose

To drive the vital changes needed to end discrimination and exclusion in all its forms, ensuring all children, particularly girls, can secure their rights and thrive. In order to meet our vision and purpose we have set out four strategic priorities.

These priorities will guide our decisions to 2020. But we accept that a strategy is only as good as its implementation. It will necessitate making choices, being open to change, adapting how we operate, and ensuring we are fit-for-purpose.

We have also revised our values and they will lead and guide our behaviours as part of the strategy. These values are core to who we are, how we work to achieve our vision, what's important to us, and what defines us as an organisation.

Our four strategic priorities



**INVEST IN
PROGRAMME
QUALITY**



**STRENGTHEN
OUR VOICE**



**GROW OUR
RESOURCES**



**BUILD
STRATEGIC
ALLIANCES**

RESPONDING TO A CHANGING WORLD

The environment in which Plan International is operating in is changing like never before. Macro trends like rising inequality, the youth bulge and associated employment challenges, technological change, urbanisation, and climate change are shaping the contexts we are working in, and underline the complexity of development. The foundation of this strategy lies within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were signed in 2015, and will come to define both the challenges and opportunities to tackle poverty over the next 15 years.

We will therefore focus our programmatic work on areas where we feel we can add most value for children and their communities by ensuring programme quality and long-term impact. While we will maintain a focus on West Africa, our work will be increasingly driven by thematic imperatives rather than geographic boundaries. The strategy calls on us to leverage our global experience and expertise to influence others to act.

We will strengthen our voice to influence the policies and practices of local and national governments, partners and other organisations, and encourage more supporters to join our campaigns.

Greater public engagement will be central to the achievement of this strategy and our increased focus on girls and marginalised children will serve to distinguish Plan International Ireland in a crowded not-for-profit sector.

A third critical influence that is likely to shape our future is resources and the funding environment. In order to grow our resources we will need to develop and grow repeatable, sustainable unrestricted funding and leverage this valuable resource to raise higher levels of institutional funding. This will have to be done in a difficult and changing environment, with public trust at an all-time low and many European governments slashing their aid budgets.

Finally, it is important to recognise that many of the current external trends have a bearing on the role and relevance of international NGOs. Growing instability and fragility within our working environment, and the increasingly complex causes of poverty require organisations to collaborate even more, providing complementary skills and resources. We will, as a result, continue to develop strategic partnerships with other organisations, civil society, and the private sector.



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THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS WE WILL FOCUS ON



GENDER EQUALITY



Goal 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

QUALITY EDUCATION



Goal 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

NO POVERTY



Goal 1

End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

REDUCE INEQUALITIES



Goal 10

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

SUSTAINABLE CITIES & COMMUNITIES



Goal 11

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

WORKING WITHIN THE PLAN INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION

It is important to understand this strategy within the broader context of our work as a National Organisation within the Plan International federation. This strategy has been developed in parallel with Plan International's global strategy which is expected to be approved in late 2016.

We are fully committed to contributing to the vision and purpose of Plan International, hence our own strategy will put childrens' rights and equality for girls at the core of the change we want to see.

We were awarded the Dóchas Innovation Award in 2015 for our child protection work in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

OUR STARTING POINT

Plan International Ireland has been operating since 2003 and so remains a relatively young organisation within the Irish development sector. During our last strategy 2012–16, in recessionary years private income remained stable but we successfully increased total income by 50% to over €15m. Much of that increase came as a result of our growth in emergency response activity and a slower, but steady, increase in development programme income. In the last four years we have worked in 27 countries, and focused on thematic areas such as education, economic security, child participation, protection, water and sanitation, and emergency response.

We have also committed time and resources to gender and disability. We have invested in research and learning and have built strong links with key universities in Ireland. And we have strengthened our profile and brand awareness, in particular with our 'Because I am a Girl' campaign. We have innovated in the areas of corporate engagement, and built successful partnerships with a number of key donors.



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WHAT DO WE WANT?

The Vision

We strive for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls.

WHY DO WE EXIST?

The Purpose

We exist to drive the vital changes needed to end discrimination and exclusion in all its forms, ensuring all children, particularly girls, can secure their rights and thrive.

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

The Goal

We will leverage our experience, knowledge and scale so we can successfully fund, influence and support transformative change that advances and protects the rights of marginalised children, and strengthens their ability to better cope with, adapt to and overcome crisis and adversity.

OUR VALUES

- We strive for lasting impact
- We are open and accountable
- We work well together
- We are inclusive and empowering

PLAN FOR ACHIEVING

Strategic Priorities

- Investing in programme quality
- Strengthening our voice
- Growing our resources
- Building strategic alliances



INVESTING IN PROGRAMME QUALITY

Why it is important and what we will do

To ensure the delivery of high quality programmes, and to be able to demonstrate impact we need to focus our work on areas where we can add most value to the wider federation.

A key part of the strategy will be strengthening our knowledge and expertise in four core areas

- Education
- Child Protection
- Participation as Citizens
- Responding to core humanitarian needs

We will leverage our capabilities to

- Support Country Offices to improve programme quality.
- Influence and engage with Plan International on our core areas.
- Ensure our public engagement activity is contributing to learning in Ireland.
- Support Plan International to respond to increasing fragility and instability.

Key Activities include

Building resilience within our beneficiary communities in the face of climate change, and through all our areas of work by better aligning our development and emergency activities, and to ensure sustainability of interventions in education, protection and citizen's engagement.

Transitioning our emergency responses to longer-term development programmes in fragile countries. Ensuring that our programmes are gender aware and inclusive and are targeted towards vulnerable and marginalised groups. Increasing investment in improving and realigning internal capabilities to ensure we have the required skills to support our core thematic areas.

Increased use of partnerships and collaboration

- Within Plan International to ensure we are maximising synergies within the federation.
- In Ireland to influence the child rights agenda.

KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS BY 2020

We will have demonstrated impact in addressing equality for girls in our programmes.

We will endeavour to have a primary outcome for girls in a minimum 75% of programmes.

- 100% of programmes are 'Gender Aware.
- 50% of programmes are 'Gender Transformative'.
- We will be a leading partner within Plan International for education and emergency response. We will respond to 100% of Red Alert Emergencies and 50% of Orange 2 Emergencies.

- We will have at least one new large scale sustainable education funding partnership.
- We will represent Plan on at least two international or global fora.
- We will invest in technical expertise to support a growing programme base.
- We will see growth in awareness within Ireland of our work on child rights.
- We will be the leading INGO on child rights education with resources in place in 100 primary schools and 20 secondary schools.
- We will influence content and be acknowledged on at least five written submissions annually by 2020 to national and international forums.

150,000



Children participating in our education programmes annually by 2020.

5,000



Girls at risk of GBV and protection violations have access to protection mechanisms.

WHAT IS PLAN'S GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMME CRITERIA?

Gender-Transformative

Programmes that improve both practical and strategic gender issues. There is an explicit intention to transform unequal gender relations.

Gender-Neutral

Programmes that recognise gender issues in the analysis but not in the response.

Gender-Aware

Programmes that address practical gender issues (daily conditions). They do not tackle the root causes of gender inequality.

Gender-Unaware

Programmes that recognise gender issues at all.



STRENGTHENING OUR VOICE

Why it is important and what we will do

In an ever-competitive and complex public engagement landscape, it is essential that Plan International Ireland addresses our challenges in the public engagement space to date, namely inconsistency of message and low brand awareness and recognition.

As such, a clearly defined, structured, adequately resourced and measureable Public Engagement Strategy is central in attracting a wide range of individuals and organisations to support our vision and to engage with our cause, by acting upon consistent, compelling and focussed messages that reflect our vision, brand and values.

As the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the primary framework for our new organisational strategy, and Irish Aid, have both imposed new emphasis on public engagement, requiring quality education on global citizenship, human rights and sustainable development.

Key Activities include

Developing an integrated Public Engagement strategy, with the objective of strengthening our profile among the Irish public; engaging young people in our vision; influencing the development sector and advocating for lasting change here and in key countries.

Establishing an advocacy function that links our Public Engagement strategy with our core thematic areas of focus, and mobilises support for our work and particularly the 'Because I am a Girl' movement.

Continuing to invest in, develop and integrate our Development Education strategy, Youth Advisory Panel and Ambassador groups to support, advise and help expand the message of Plan International Ireland. Influencing the Irish Government and international fora on critical issues related to child rights and aid effectiveness, by engaging in high-level forums within the development sector. Continuing to focus on achieving a greater understanding of gender-specific issues in relation to our core thematic areas.



KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS BY 2020

We have increased leadership and influencing capacity through the development of a public engagement strategy.

- We have established an advocacy function, and have integrated Development Education into public engagement.
- We have built partnerships to expand our impact, capacity, quality, and sustainability.
- We have established an annual thematic campaign with Plan international Ireland partners.
- Built at least two partnerships with relevant domestic agencies.
- Built at least four cause-related marketing

- relationships with relevant corporate partners.
- We have successfully engaged the Irish public on the rights of the child and equality for girls. 100% increase in both local and national broadcast media coverage, with 75% of all broadcast media being national.
- We have successfully positioned ourselves as the 'go-to' organisation in Ireland on child rights and equality for girls.
- 50% increase in Plan international Ireland's child rights events, 100% increase in speaking engagements, 100% increase in participation in child rights fora.
- 200% increase in reactive media queries, with 50,000 website visitors per quarter and 100% increase in brand-related searches.

20% 

Increase in social media engagement.

150% 

Increase in BIAAG membership.



GROWING OUR RESOURCES BY 2020

Why it is important and what we will do

To prosper and develop we need to grow our resources. We need to invest in our staff and also bring new talent into the organisation. Growing repeatable, sustainable core funding is also essential to support the delivery of our vision and purpose as is investment in our systems and structures. In line with our ambition to increase our impact and influence, our aim is to grow our income to €18m by 2020.

We will grow fundraising and regular giving and maximise their potential. We will secure new corporate partnerships, leverage the potential of the Because I am a Girl campaign, and invest in innovative means of mobilising more support from the public.

We will prioritise Irish Aid as a central donor through which our expertise and programming focus can evolve. We will nurture our core, predictable funding streams whilst using these as a basis to engage other donors. With additional funding we will invest in our people and aim to have the best human resources

to enable us to deliver on our ambitions. Our systems and structures will be in line with this ambition and we will measure our progress against objective standards such as IATI and Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS).

The success of this priority relies heavily on increasing unrestricted income to facilitate wider investment in our people, systems and structures so we can ultimately deliver better support for children.

Key activities include

- Entering new fundraising markets, including social enterprises and for-profit tender contracts, and building partnerships with key donors who align with our values and purpose.
- Testing new regular giving products at multiple price points. Aligning our regular giving and fundraising products to our core programmatic themes. Collaborating with Plan National Organisations (NOs) to optimise resources and expertise, in order to grow and diversify our income portfolio.



KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS BY 2020

We will have established 20 corporate partnerships.

We will have strengthened our reputation for transparency and accountability with donors, and will be ATI (Accounting Technicians Ireland) and CHS (Core Humanitarian Standard).

We will invest in HR (Human Resources) resources and develop a HR strategy making people central to our future.

We will have annual income of €18m, with at least...

10% 

Raised from new income streams.

20% 

Of our income will come from fundraising, child sponsorship and regular giving.



BUILDING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Why it is important and what we will do

Plan International has a powerful mandate to defend and promote child rights and equality for girls, but we recognise that we can't do it alone. We need strategic partners. We must be outward focused and link closely with others in the Plan federation and key influencers within Ireland.

This final strategic priority is critical to creating the links and synergies between the other strategic choices – only then will we be able to maximise our impact. A key part of this priority will be building our capacity to engage in and add value to networks and consortia to achieve specific shared objectives in line with our Purpose and Values.

We will leverage this capacity to

- Collaborate with other Plan National Organisations in relation to our programming and income generation and try to bring it to scale.

- Engage and contribute to Irish-based networks and fora to influence and advocate for child rights and our core thematic areas.
- Seek out new partnerships and grow existing relationships, optimising new technologies in order to maximise our impact and resources.

Key Activities include

- We will identify and develop a number of key strategic alliances and invest resources into maximising them.
- We will continue to engage with global governance fora within the Plan International federation.
- We will continue to provide strategic support to our priority countries to build local partnerships with CSOs (Civil Society Organisations), consortia, and funding partners.
- We will work with academic institutions to build and share our knowledge and establish evidence based learning for our work.

KEY INDICATORS OF SUCCESS BY 2020

We will have further improved our reputation for collaborative action in Ireland and across the federation.

We will have clear evidence that our strategic alliances are assisting with the achievement of our other three strategic priorities.



We need strategic partners.
We must be outward focused
and link closely with others in
the Plan International federation
and key influencers within Ireland.



BEING 'FIT-FOR-PURPOSE'

In committing to these strategic priorities we will need to ensure our organisation is 'fit for purpose'.

In order to be fit for purpose we need to focus on four organisational pillars

**LEADERSHIP
& GOVERNANCE**



**DECISION-MAKING
& STRUCTURE**



**PEOPLE
& CULTURE**



**WORK PROCESSES
& SYSTEMS**



LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE

As a not-for-profit organisation, we deeply value the trust that has been placed in us. To safeguard this critical trust, we are committed to best practice in governance, accountability and transparency. This commitment exists at all levels of the organisation.

In order to improve in this area we will

- Continue to strengthen our governance, particularly with regard to our membership structure, to ensure strong and transparent oversight is in place.
- Increase the involvement and engagement of youth within our governance, public engagement, and programme work.
- Seek out leadership positions within Plan for a.

DECISION-MAKING & STRUCTURE

The successful organisations of the future will be agile, be able to test and roll out new ways of working, and be able to respond to emerging trends, opportunities and threats.

In order to improve in this area we will

- Streamline resource allocation and strategic decision-making.
- Invest in and develop new markets and ways of working.
- Continually review our organisational structure to ensure it supports our strategic objectives, promotes accountable decision making, and has clear roles and responsibilities for all staff.
- Ensure access to information for staff and participation in decision making.



We will Strengthen our cross-organisational planning and embed stronger internal collaboration and communication.



PEOPLE & CULTURE

We may have a successful strategy, but if it is not supported by a strong, positive, inclusive organisational culture it will fail. We need to ensure that we have a strong culture of learning and adapting to change.

In order to improve this area we will

- Invest in staff development so that staff and organisational capacity is continually growing.
- Continue to invest in performance management to ensure we are identifying and recruiting the capabilities and talents necessary for success.
- Ensure appropriate Human Resources Management capacity.
- Build an organisational culture that embraces change, supports innovation, allows for mistakes, and acknowledges that failure can be an important means of learning.



Invest in staff and grow a culture that supports change and innovation.

WORK PROCESSES & SYSTEMS

For change to succeed we need to become adept at regularly testing and evaluating new models outside of our mainstream business processes, and free from the assumptions associated with our core operations.

In order to improve this area we will

- Build flexibility and responsiveness into our organisation.
- Put systems in place to consolidate, evaluate, learn, adapt, assimilate, and disseminate improvements based on the outputs of our research and innovation activities.
- Review our support processes and systems on a regular basis to ensure they are effective and efficient, and facilitate better quality work.
- Commit to reporting annually on our environmental footprint to ensure our activities are sustainable.



Continually seek out data and insights on trends that are likely to affect our organisation and the wider sector in the years to come.

Within the framework of the sustainable development goals we have set ourselves a bold vision for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls. In this strategy we have set out an ambitious plan for achieving that vision. It is a four year initiative that will require investment, growth, collaboration and commitment. Plan International Ireland has achieved a lot in our thirteen year history. Let us continue to strive for lasting impact so that children everywhere, can learn, lead, decide and thrive.





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