

Your Plan



Until we are all equal

Our Plan, Your Impact, Her Future

Autumn Newsletter 2025

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bii bi bi
n taaji dii ni
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Thanks to you, Catherine, 11, is back in school and writing on the blackboard at her village's Accelerated Schooling Centre in southwest Burkina Faso. Once helping at home because her family couldn't afford school, she now dreams of becoming a nurse.

Photo: PALM Hervé Issam Ollé

Thank You for Standing with Girls

A Goodbye from Our Former CEO

After eight and a half years with Plan, I have reached retirement, and it's time to say goodbye to the Plan International Ireland family.

When the CEO role was advertised in 2016, I was already working in the humanitarian and development sector. I knew of Plan and was drawn to the organisation for two key reasons: its strong focus on women and girls, and its presence in over 55 developing countries.

Why the focus on girls? I believe deeply in equality. I have a son and a daughter, and I've always wanted them to have the same opportunities. But in many of the countries where I've lived and worked, girls are often discriminated against – receiving less food, fewer chances to go to school, and little say in when or whom they marry.

Plan has really tried to address this issue and sought to ensure that girls get the very same opportunities as their brothers. This is so important when it comes to education, **we see here in Ireland how well girls do when they are given the same opportunities as boys.**

The fact that Plan works in more than 55 developing countries is especially important to me, as it means we can respond quickly when emergencies strike. Take the recent earthquake in Myanmar, for example. Because Plan has been working there since 2012, we are registered with the government, have local staff on the ground, and understand the communities, language, and culture, allowing us to act swiftly and effectively.

Thank you for your continued support of Plan Ireland. Your generosity has helped us deliver quality education to countless communities and respond swiftly and effectively to humanitarian crises. It has been a privilege to witness the difference your support makes in the lives of children and families around the world.



Thank you.

Paul O'Brien

CEO, Plan International Ireland

The impact of your support in the past year alone is phenomenal...



43 million children reached



5.3 million girls have access to education



35 education in emergency programmes



93.5% of sponsored children had their births registered



29.9 million children and adults reached with early childhood development programmes

Education Saves Lives

Because of You, Girls are Safer

Because of you, girls like Shunhana and Sheemla are escaping child marriage, surviving crises, and building brighter futures through education. When girls stay in school, they are safer, healthier, and more empowered to make their own choices. Your support is helping make that a reality.



Thank you for standing with girls. Your support is helping end child marriage and giving every girl the chance to grow up safe, educated, and free.

Shunhana, 17, and Sheemla, 16, learn in class at their madrasa school in the Bhola district of south-central Bangladesh. Thanks to your support they have the power to decide their own futures. Photo: Izla Bethdavid, Plan International

Angeline, 7, meets with Country Director Evariste Sindayigaya in Macenta, Guinea.
Photo: Plan International



Angeline's Dream

Your Sponsorship Keeps Her Safe

In Guinea, many girls still grow up believing their only future is to marry young and stay at home. In rural areas like Macenta, boys are far more likely to go to school than girls, and only about one in five girls continue education beyond adolescence.

But girls like seven-year-old Angeline are changing that story. Every morning, Angeline proudly puts on her uniform knowing she has her mother and her child sponsor standing by her side.

"My biggest dream is to finish school and become a gendarme. When I see the police protect people, I want to do that too," says Angeline.

Her mother Martine makes sure homework always comes first. "We study together every night. If she does not understand something, we repeat it until she does."

Your sponsorship is helping girls like Angeline stay in school. Your support provides school kits and access to activities that teach young girls about their rights. This helps protect them from child and forced marriage and enables them to dream big for a better and safer future.

Your sponsorship makes this possible. Thank you for standing beside Angeline and helping girls like her stay in school and reach their goals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Our focus on Education sets us apart from many other INGO's. We are specialists in this area, which is why we have been so successful in helping to keep girls in school. In 2024 alone, you, our Irish supporters kept 1 million children in school and provided emergency education to over 130K children.

Teaching Girls Their Rights

How Sponsorship Changes Futures

Access to education is still out of reach for many girls in Guinea, especially in rural areas. Deeply rooted gender norms, traditions and social practices mean girls are often expected to marry young and stay at home instead of finishing school. When mothers have not had the chance to learn, it is harder for them to support their daughters' education – and the cycle continues.

Right now, about half of all school-age children in Guinea go to primary school, but boys are still more likely to stay in class than girls. **Around 57% of boys aged 7 to 12 are in school, compared to just 48% of girls.** By the time they reach secondary school, **only 18% of girls are still learning, compared to 31% of boys.**

Marthe is a teacher in Macenta who wants to change this. Thanks to the support of sponsors like you, Marthe now teaches lessons about health, rights and confidence. These classes help girls understand their choices and protect them from dropping out or marrying too soon.



"We've seen too many students dropping out of school, too many young girls getting pregnant before they finish primary school. **This project is really saving our daughters from dropping out of school and the consequences of that.**" says Marthe.

"Thanks to these lessons, I've also learnt that I can say no to any request that could harm my health and, above all, my well-being. **I know that I have the right to finish my studies and I'm very happy with this programme,**" says Pauline, a student from Macenta.

Because of you, girls are staying in school longer and learning how to stand up for their rights. Thank you for everything you do.

Marthe and her students in their classroom in Macenta, Guinea.
Photo: Plan International



No Child Should Go Hungry

Your Support Brings Hope to Gaza's Children

In Gaza today, there is no safe place for children. The blockade makes it heartbreakingly hard to get help in, but thanks to you, Plan International acts fast every time a chance appears, working with local partners and using every resource to reach families in crisis.



Girl living in IDP camp in Rafah, southern Gaza
Photo: Tdh/Abed Zagout

Plan International Jordan

Food Help: 53,952 people got hot meals or food parcels in Gaza and the West Bank. In June, 264 families in urgent need got fresh food parcels. From March–June 2025, 1,054 parcels were given out.

Cash Help: 1,196 people got cash support to buy what they needed most.

Mental Health Support: 7,140 children and caregivers joined counselling, fun activities, or got help from specialists (Mar–Apr). Another 1,430 women and children got support through our partner, Nafs.

Winter Supplies: 6,200 people received 2,260 winter kits to stay warm.

Hygiene & Dignity Kits: 7,600 people received hygiene kits (Feb–Mar). 3,250 people got dignity kits (Mar–Jun).

Education Support: We're setting up 8 learning spaces in Gaza for 700 children, with clean water, toilets, and mental health activities.

Keeping the Aid Going: Even with shortages and high prices, we bought supplies locally and are working with 10 partners to keep food reaching families in Gaza.

Plan International Egypt

Long-Term Commitment:

Three-year approval to keep supporting Palestinian evacuees in Egypt.

No Aid Wasted: Hygiene and shelter kits redirected to evacuees when borders closed.

Food Help: Two trucks with 2,250 food baskets delivered to the Palestinian Red Crescent in Gaza, during the opening of the humanitarian corridors in August.

Caring for Children: Psychological First Aid for 157 children; protection support for 200+ caregivers.



Hot meals being delivered to children in displacement camp | Photo: Taawon

Every newborn fed, every bedtime story read, every family kept warm is because of your support. **Thank you for standing with Gaza's children when they need you most.**

In Loving Memory of Fatima Hassouna, 1999 – 2025

One Young Woman's Story of Courage

Fatima Hassouna was a hugely talented Palestinian photographer and a youth advocate for Plan International who endured 18 months of living through the earth-shattering conflict, destroying Gaza.

On 16 April 2025, the twenty-four-year-old was killed by an Israeli airstrike, along with ten members of her family.



Portrait of Fatima Hassouna
Photo: Motaz

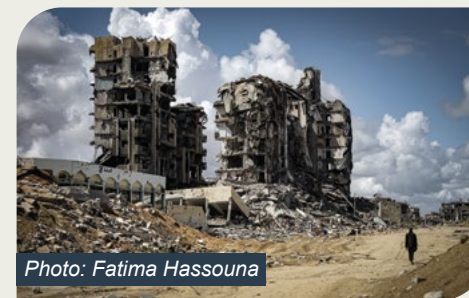


Photo: Fatima Hassouna

For the past year and a half, Fatima shared the story of Palestinians – she wanted the world to know what they were living through in Gaza, determined that people would listen and care. Her work was published in the media around the world and Fatima used her talent to campaign for an end to the conflict.



Photo: Fatima Hassouna

"This is my city, and what it looks like today after 18 months of brutal conflict: sandy streets, demolished homes, non-existent facilities. Every place we loved has turned into vast emptiness, and this city has become a city of ghosts."

- extract from Fatima's photo diary.

Fatima documented the attacks in Gaza and the impact it had on families there, bravely venturing out armed with only her camera and notebook to gather photos and stories of the people living through the same hell as she was.

In the weeks before her death she created a photo diary, allowing us an insight into her world and sharing with us her thoughts and emotions.

You can view Fatima's photo diary *A City of Ghosts* on our website by scanning the QR code.



Rest in Peace Fatima. You will not be forgotten.

Figures are accurate at the time of writing, but may change as the situation continues to develop.

Hope After Disaster

Keeping Children Learning in Myanmar

When a powerful earthquake hit Myanmar in March, children were among the first to lose everything. Homes were destroyed; schools reduced to rubble and families forced to shelter under tarpaulins in the rain. Fear and uncertainty replaced the safety of classrooms.

But thanks to your generosity, children are not alone in this crisis. Your donations to our Myanmar Earthquake Appeal have helped open 21 child-friendly spaces in the worst-hit regions of Mandalay and Sagaing. These centres welcome children every day to learn, play and recover from their trauma. Already, **nearly 4,000 children** have found safety, hope and a chance to keep learning because you chose to stand with them.

Nan, a young volunteer, sees this hope every day. "So many children lost everything. Some even saw their homes burn down. **Here, they can read poems, play games, build toys and make new friends. I see them smile and feel safe again.**"



Girls reads through safety and protection leaflet distributed by Plan in Mandalay
Photo: Aung Moe Hein, Plan International

Thanks to you, children are continuing their education, even when disaster strikes. Your kindness is keeping classrooms open, even in the face of the most devastating disasters. Your donations are not only saving lives but building futures for children beyond the rubble.



Finding Hope in War

Helga's Safe Place To Learn

Helga, 9, draws picture at the child-friendly space she attends every day
Photo: Anna Lukianenko, Plan International

When the war reached Helga's town in Ukraine, life changed overnight. Schools closed, families fled and children like Helga lost the safety and routine they rely on to learn and grow.

Because of you, children like Helga are not living through war alone. In Cherkasy province, the child-friendly centre she visits is one of several **helping more than 33,800 children and families across Ukraine**. These safe spaces give children a place to keep learning, play with friends and find calm in the middle of conflict.

Helga goes every day. She paints, makes crafts and spends time with other children who understand what she is going through. "When the centre opened, it was like a miracle. I go every day. My friends are there and there is so much we can do together," she says.

Her mother sees the change too. "This centre is like an island for us. Helga is calmer, she is developing, and she feels supported."

The war still brings fear and uncertainty for families like Helga's. But your support helps keep education and hope alive when they are needed most. Thank you for standing with children through it all.



Children look at risk map of their village at child friendly space
Photo: Nay Lin Tun, Plan International

Saying NO to child marriage

Because I am a Girl, I deserve an education



“When girls gain education and skills, they become forces of change. Empower a girl and she’ll transform the world.”

Aysha, 18, with her four-year-old son Sakib.
Photo: Izla Bethdavid, Plan International

Aysha’s Story

Aysha’s childhood ended too soon. At just 13, Aysha got her first period. By 14, she was married. And at 15, she became a mother.

Her story paints a heartbreaking picture of how being born a girl can dictate a future of abuse and denial of basic human rights like an education.

“I’ve gone through so much,” Aysha says. “I don’t want any girl to go through this.” Many girls in her community face the same fate, married off too young.

But thanks to your support, the future is changing for girls like Aysha. Now Aysha has access to the knowledge she needs to take control of her future and she dreams of a better life for herself and the next generation.

Akula da Kyau – Take Good Care

In a village in Maradi, a region of Niger where 89% of women are married before their 18th birthday, a group of women have had enough and are saying NO to child marriage.

With your support, a group of 26 mothers are now actively fighting against child early and forced marriage and creating lasting change in their communities by keeping girls in school.

It all started with a savings group, supported by Plan International. The group buys grain at low prices, stores it, and sells it to fund what matters most: keeping girls in school.

“We use the profits to buy school supplies and uniforms, pay registration fees and even buy snacks” says Zainabout, the groups President.

The women seize every opportunity to raise awareness among other families.



Women from the Akula da Kyau savings group meet once a week
Photo: Plan staff, Plan International

They talk about the importance of keeping girls in education, fighting early marriage and encouraging pregnant women to attend health care classes.

So far this group alone has kept 260 girls in school and helped 195 young mothers return to education.

Your Plan Ireland Community In Action

Every Step, Every Gift, Every Child

Thank you to everyone who ran the Vhi Women’s Mini Marathon!

In June, we were joined by over 100 women and young girls from across Ireland for our first ever Women’s Mini Marathon. Together we raised an astounding €25,000, which will go directly to keeping girls safe and in school in our Irish projects in West and Central Africa.



Thank you to everyone who ran and donated. If you’d like to join us next year, please let reach out to info@plan.ie

International Women’s Day



We were delighted to see so many smiling faces fill the Grand Social at our fundraising gig, proving the power of music and community in standing up for girls rights.

Teasers

We’re excited to announce we have secured a limited number of places for the **2026 Dublin and Paris Marathons**. If you’re up for a challenge next year send us an email to info@plan.ie

International Day of the Girl (IDG) 2025

This IDG we are a hosting an exclusive, red-carpet screening of Nawi: Dear Future Me. The screening will be held in the Lighthouse Cinema, Dublin on the 9th, October 2025. If you work for a company and would like to know more about being included on our list of VIP’s, contact Anna Keane at anna.keane@plan-international.org



Be Part of the Change

We urgently need your help to **save a girl's life** through education

Aysha, 18, with her four-year-old son Sakib.
Photo: Izla Bethdavid,
Plan International

It's happening right now. As you read this, another girl under the age of 18 is becoming a child bride.

12 million girls become child brides every year

– a grim reality that robs them of their rights, forcing them to drop out of school and thrusting them into experiences that their young bodies and minds are not ready for, like motherhood.

A child bride's greatest danger is complications during forced pregnancy, **the world's leading cause of death for girls aged 15–19.**

You're already doing so much for children, but if you can, today you can make a huge difference to a girl's life by donating to save a girl's life through education.

€25



will provide school kits for 2 girls to give them the best start in life.

€50



will provide a girl with school meals.

€200



will send a girl to school for a year.

Donate now at plan.ie

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