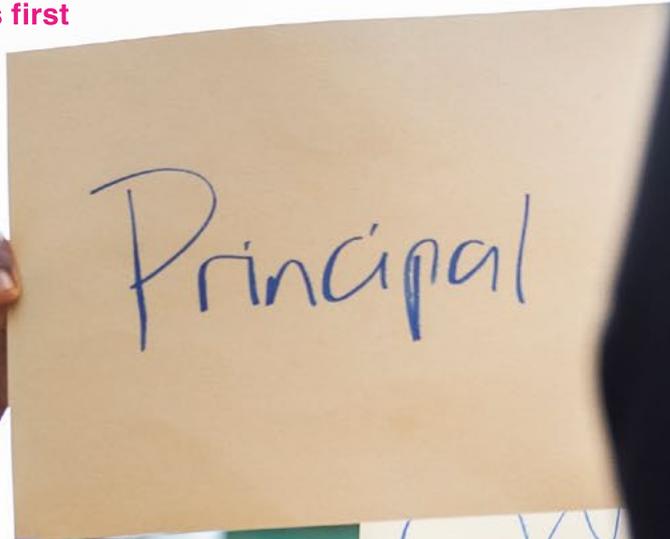




Girls first



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

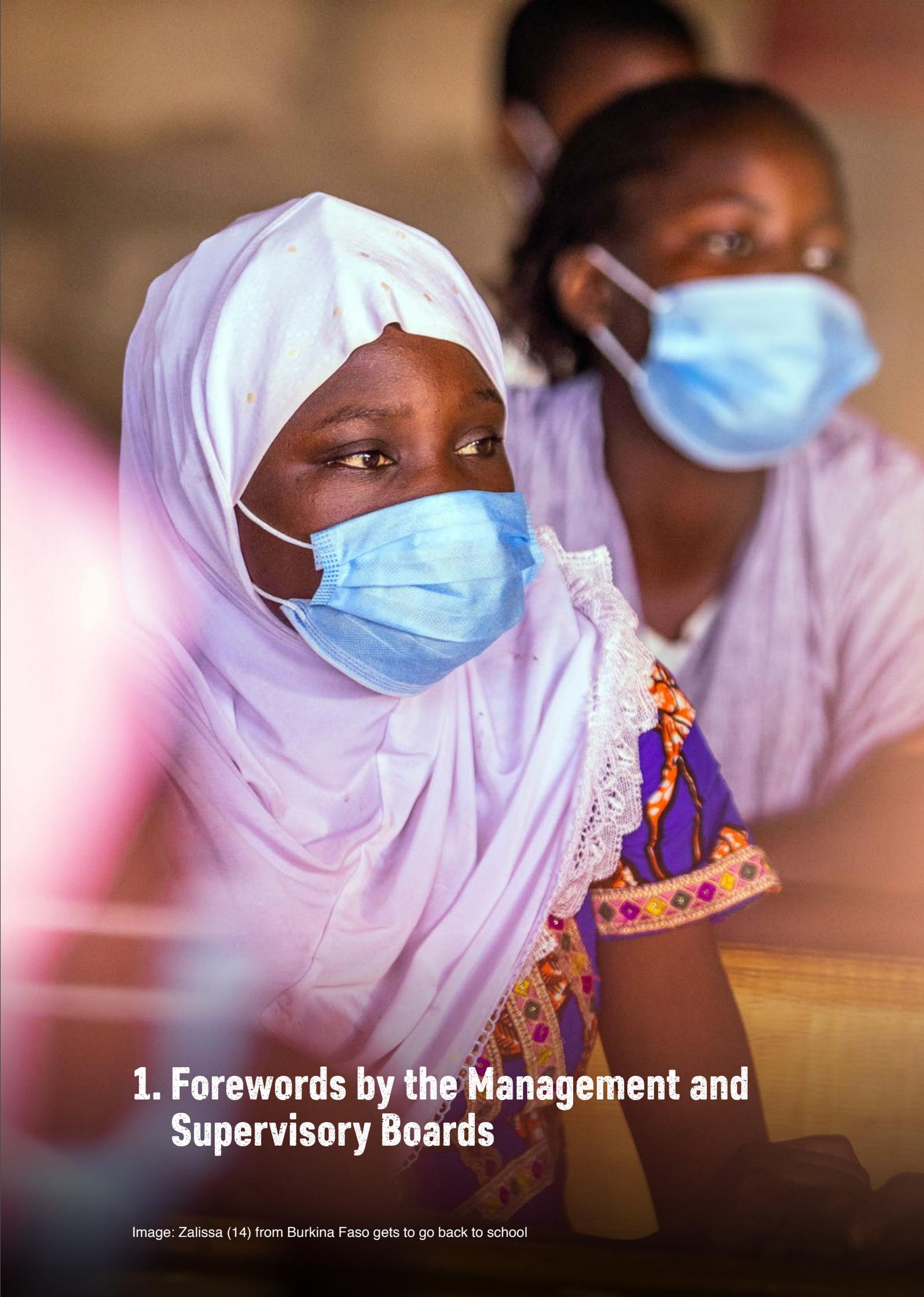
## PLAN INTERNATIONAL

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# 1. Forewords by the Management and Supervisory Boards

Image: Zalissa (14) from Burkina Faso gets to go back to school

## Forewords by the Management and Supervisory Boards

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### Foreword by Garance Reus-Deelder (Managing Director)

When I started as Managing Director, on 1 June 2020, the first wave of the corona pandemic had just passed its peak in the Netherlands. In the countries in which we work, the coronavirus had yet to make a real mark, but lockdowns were already having devastating consequences, particularly on the lives of girls and young women. They feared they'd never be able to return to school, a fear that, unfortunately, was well-founded for many of them, despite our best efforts to prevent it.

Around the same time last year, we were excited to announce the start-up of no fewer than three new alliances – She Leads, Break Free! and Leaders of Peace. In 12 countries, we are now partnering with girls and young women to create an environment in which they have equal rights and in which their voices are listened to. In online meetings with what were often dozens of alliance partners, the energy, commitment and knowledge were palpable.

More than 12 months later and corona is still hitting hard in many of the countries in which we are implementing our programmes. In addition to causing a great deal of suffering, it is also creating unprecedentedly complex working conditions. In countries in the Sahel region, as well as in Ethiopia and Mozambique, fierce internal conflicts are raging. From my very privileged position of living in a safe country where vaccinations are widely available, I'd like to extend my respect to all the people we work with and for and who find themselves in a completely different situation. And, again, I'd like to plead with the powers that be, for a fairer distribution of vaccines worldwide!

Truth be told, I was hoping to avoid using the c-word in this foreword, but the impact of corona simply makes it impossible to ignore. However, looking back over the past year, for me there's another c-word that also stands out: connection. Despite the limitations, we have connected with our stakeholders and with one another more than I ever would have thought possible.

Connection with our donors in the Netherlands, for example, where we have had growth in supporters and involvement. Contributions made by the Dutch public are not just indicative of the support we enjoy in society; they also underscore our independence and give us the space to innovate.

Connection with our institutional partners, which have increasingly acted as collaborative partners rather than donors. From the Netherlands' embassies that helped us start-up alliance programmes, to the employees at the ministry who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with us and lobbied at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris and the Commission on the Status of Women in New York.

Connection with other civil society organisations, including our new and old trusted partners, such as those in the afore-mentioned alliances. As well as the National Postcode Lottery, which continuously encourages us to make even sharper choices and to continue to dream and dare.

Connection with research partners, such as the Royal Tropical Institute and the Rozaria Memorial Trust, have helped us to develop innovative methods to both measure our impact and increase it.

Connection with business partners like Accenture, with whom we have worked together for over ten years. And with new business partners, large and small, that have played significant roles in facilitating our Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE) programmes. These are education and employment projects that increasingly focus on “green jobs” to sustainably combat climate change, as well as Girls in ICT programmes that aim to close the digital divide.

Connection with powerful (young) women that we work with and for, such as 15-year-old Stecia from Uganda. As a youth activist representing the Girls Advocacy Alliance, she entered into dialogue with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres. She was able to explain to him in no uncertain terms what is needed in her village and community, where many girls are struggling with poverty and teenage pregnancies and are being forced to leave school as a result of corona. She has bountiful energy and talent!

And, of course, there was connection with colleagues here in the Netherlands, keeping spirits high from home and staying in touch mainly online. Sometimes this was through lively social get-togethers, but more-often-than-not with stimulating learning sessions in which we shared new insights and developed our strategy for the coming years. During the past year all colleagues and stakeholders in our line of work have surpassed themselves in meeting the unprecedented challenges they faced.

Sometimes, making these connections was actually easier than before. For example, in the context of developing our new strategy, we invited (online) speakers from all over the world to discuss the decolonisation of the development sector with us. They encouraged our ambition to share more the responsibility and control of programmes from the design phase to the end with our partners in the countries we work. They also strengthened our determination to look more critically at the images and language we use in our communication. Words matter; how we raise funds and communicate about our work is an intrinsic part of our mission and what we do.

Our new strategy will involve more changes in how we operate than in what we want to actually achieve. Our mission to work towards gender equality is unchanged and this has become more important than ever in the wake of a pandemic that has seen girls and women bear the brunt of its repercussions. In the Netherlands, we want to play a leading role in shifting control to the countries in which our programmes are being implemented. Our partners are able, and willing, to assume more responsibility for the design and implementation of our programmes. For our part, we are well-placed to share our experiences and best practices from our global presence, offer our specific thematic expertise and expand strategic relationships with donors and partners. We can also help give civil society organisations from our partner countries a platform from which they will be listened to on the world stage.

Finally, a foreword to an Annual Report covering the past year would not be complete without me saying a few words in memory of our beloved CFO Mark Veen, who passed away suddenly on 31 May, 2021. Without his commitment, our organisation would not be the strong one you can read about in this Annual Report. One of Mark’s celebrated sayings was: “If you do what you did, you’ll get what you got”. It could serve as the motto for our new strategy. At the very least his words will inspire us to keep innovating and channelling our resources promoting children’s rights and a world in which girls and young women are given the opportunity to shape their own lives.

**Garance Reus-Deelder**

## Foreword by Anja Montijn (Chairperson of the Supervisory Board)

This Annual Report has been compiled at a time when the Netherlands is slowly emerging from the corona pandemic, which is now hitting hard in many of our programme countries. Healthcare in countries such as Zambia, Uganda and Bangladesh is collapsing under the influx of new corona patients, and most of these countries have little prospect of a large-scale vaccination programme. It drives home the inequality there is in the world and highlights the almost impossible conditions under which Plan International employees have to work all over the world.

Yet at the same time, we are also learning from this unprecedented situation. We are seeing how online working offers opportunities to interact more intensively and frequently with partners in the countries in which we work. That said, I don't think an online conversation will ever completely replace a physical meeting with a partner or a visit to a programme. Furthermore, provided everyone has access to good and safe internet, working online can also promote inclusiveness. During the past year we have also learned that the online world offers opportunities to recruit new private donors. I am both pleased and grateful that the loyalty of our donors and sponsors has remained so high. We have also started up several exciting new collaborations with partners from the business community; partners who have assumed their respective responsibilities in helping to realise the Sustainable Development Goals to which Plan International has committed itself up to 2030.

I am proud of the way Plan International employees in the Netherlands have been able to realise our goals during this past year. Their resilience and resourcefulness are characterised by the fact that they've made a start, largely online, in developing our new strategy for the coming years. And despite the trying circumstances, they have been successful in involving colleagues and stakeholders, both domestic and international.

At about this time last year, we welcomed our new Managing Director, Garance Reus-Deelder. As its Chairperson, and on behalf of all members of the Supervisory Board, I'd like to thank her for her efforts this past year. She started at Plan International under difficult circumstances, yet quickly settled in. She wasted no time in building strong relationships with partners and other stakeholders and she has been very vocal in the media about the need for solidarity and equal rights and opportunities for girls. I have no doubt whatsoever, that she will continue to lead our organisation with passion and conviction during the years to come.

Despite the challenging situation we still find ourselves in, I look forward to the year ahead with great confidence. The core activities of Plan International, namely, protecting and strengthening the position of girls and young women, will be even more relevant in the (post-)pandemic era. We can make a powerful contribution to ensuring that they can go back to school and are protected against child marriages and violence. Change the world of girls, and girls will change the world!

**Anja Montijn**



## 2. This is what Plan International stands for

Image: Children in Vietnam in action for gender equality

## 2. This is what Plan International stands for

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### Vision

Plan International wants a world in which girls and boys enjoy the same rights and opportunities and in which they can fully develop, a world that respects the rights and dignity of children and young people.

### Mission

Plan International strives for a fair and just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls and young women. We work in more than 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

### This is how we make a difference

The Plan International office in the Netherlands is part of the Plan International federation, an international, child-oriented development organisation that is not constrained by political, religious or commercial objectives. Plan International works on the sustainable eradication of poverty and injustice and for the realisation of better living conditions for children and young people in the countries in which we implement our programmes.

Plan International endorses the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contributes as much as possible to the realisation of these goals. We are particularly committed to SDG 5 Gender Equality, as well as SDG 3 Good health and wellbeing, SDG 4 Quality education, SDG 6 Clean water and sanitation, SDG 8 Decent work and economic growth, SDG 10 Reduced inequality and SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions.

To attain maximum impact on the lives of girls and boys worldwide, Plan International combines a unique mix of the following factors:

- we focus on strengthening the position of girls and young women;
- we work directly in communities with employees that live in the region;
- we make long-term improvements that are based on structural solutions;
- we work with civil society organisations from the respective regions and support their actions and networks.
- we are active worldwide in 75 countries, including fundraising offices, and we have four lobbying offices (in New York, Geneva, Brussels and Addis Ababa).

Plan International connects sponsors in the Netherlands with children and their families in the communities in the countries in which we implement our programmes.

### The story behind Plan International: Girls first

Girls and boys deserve equal opportunities. Unfortunately, in too many countries in the world, girls are just not getting these opportunities. They are forced to leave school sooner or don't receive the education they need to get a job that offers a future. If girls are given the opportunity to develop, they will make a big difference. If they get a good education they will be more self-confident and have a better chance of getting a worthwhile job that will earn them a decent living. This will reduce inequality and ensure that the next generation also has fairer and better opportunities. It will break the vicious circle and contribute to a stronger economy, benefiting the entire community.



### 3. Goals and results

Image: Clean water flows through a new well in a school in Zimbabwe

## 3. Goals and results

### 3.1 International programmes

Plan International's worldwide goal remains the same: to reach 100 million girls with our programmes by 2022 so that these girls can develop themselves, realise their dreams and enjoy and use the same opportunities that are open to boys. We are striving for the equal treatment of girls and boys and we are committed to the realisation of an equal world in which girls are stimulated to be educated, are allowed to make decisions about their own bodies and can develop to their full potential. Equal opportunities will help reduce poverty and underscore a better future, all of which will contribute to a more stable and balanced society.

Plan International's contribution to this is helping girls and young women get an education, improving their chances of earning a living and preventing child marriages and teenage pregnancies. We also contribute by changing prevailing views and stereotypes about girls and boys. We work closely with these girls and boys and ensure that their voices are listened to in decision-making processes. With (local) partners we lobby and advocate for legislation to be adopted and implemented (both nationally and internationally) that supports all children and young people to thrive.

#### Focus on adolescent girls

Plan International focuses on adolescent girls as the key target group in its programmes for three reasons. Firstly, they are the ones hardest hit by poverty and inequality. Secondly, the number of youth in low- and middle-income countries is higher than it has ever been. And thirdly, investing in girls is seen as instrumental in the sustainable reduction of poverty.

Plan International focuses mainly on the following themes:

- education and employment opportunities for young people, with a specific focus on educating girls and young women, stimulating their participation in the job market and giving them access to education in regions deemed to be unstable or in crisis;
- protection against child marriages, sexual exploitation, teenage pregnancies and female genital mutilation;
- water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), with a focus on the issues that particularly affect girls, such as having to fetch water and a lack of menstrual hygiene and inadequate sanitary facilities in schools;
- amplifying the voice of young people and ensuring that their interests are served in local, national and international decision-making processes.

#### Structural improvements for girls

We are striving to ensure that 90 per cent of our programmes contribute to the structural improvement of the opportunities and rights of girls and young women. This year, all programmes of the Netherlands' Plan International office were either gender-aware (51 per cent)\* or gender-transformative (49 per cent)\*\*.

\*Gender-aware

Resisting gender stereotyping and gender discrimination and promoting gender equality.

\*\*Gender-transformative

Focusing on the root causes of gender inequality, promoting equality, the acknowledgement of the rights of girls and women and aiming for a cultural change that also involves boys and men.

**Number of children/young people reached with the programmes of the Netherlands' office of Plan International in 2020-2021**

	Girls	Boys	Total
Under 18	227,071	222,255	449,326
18-24	124,021	105,626	229,647
<b>Total</b>	<b>351,092</b>	<b>327,881</b>	<b>678,973</b>

Last year our programmes reached a total of 678,973 girls and boys (52 per cent girls and 48 per cent boys), approximately nine per cent more than in the previous year. Most of the girls and boys were reached through our water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programmes due to additional Covid-19 interventions and the Yes I Do programme, in which it was still possible to carry out a large number of corona-delayed activities.

In the following sections (3.1.1 to 3.1.4) the results of several international programmes are discussed per theme: lobbying for protection and rights; education and employment for young people (Youth Economic Empowerment); water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and emergency aid.

### 3.1.1 Lobbying for protection and rights

Plan International is committed to amplifying the voice of young people so that their interests are better served in local, national and international decision-making processes. Protection is a key lobbying theme for young people, particularly girls and young women. This includes protection against child marriages, female genital mutilation, sexual exploitation and teenage pregnancies.

#### From Women and Girls for Change to Leaders of Peace

Since late 2016, Plan International, in conjunction with HealthNet TPO, PAX and STAD, has implemented a project in South Sudan called Women and Girls for Change (WG4C), which focused on women's rights, the promotion of gender equality and the involvement of women in peace processes. In 2020, the alliance decided to move forward with HealthNet TPO and PAX, plus two partners from South Sudan (AMA and EVE). Under the name Leaders of Peace, between 2021 and 2025 this alliance will continue to work on the theme of Women, Peace and Security in South Sudan. This is being done with the financial support of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In Women and Girls for Change the focus was on protecting victims of gender-based violence, promoting gender equality and increasing women's participation in decision-making and peace processes. In Leaders of Peace, on the other hand, the onus is on strengthening the civil society's ability to lobby for these themes. The objective of Leaders of Peace is to achieve sustainable change by for example providing training on lobby and advocacy for women's and youth organizations, as well as financial support to strengthen and increase their ability to lead.

This is what we have realised in three areas.

The improved protection of women's rights:

- 869 court judges were trained in jurisprudence in the areas of gender-based violence and gender discrimination under national and international law;

- by setting up a network of local psycho-social help, almost 1,500 girls and women received psycho-social support.

Gender-equality:

- nearly 400 leaders and over 2,500 young people now promote gender equality in their communities and combat gender-based discrimination;
- over 1,100 women leaders have been supported and a national network, in which women leaders can meet and share their experiences, has been established.

Women's participation in decision-making and peace processes:

- peace committees now acknowledge the importance of having female participation in reconciliation and peacebuilding processes and they are admitting women;
- women have been represented in various political parties and were involved in the peace talks in Khartoum in 2020 that reached a new peace agreement for South Sudan.

**Participant Gloria encouraged other girls to join her in the Champions of Change club, which is part of the Women and Girls for Change project. She is now highly respected within her school community. "Training on gender equality and youth participation in decision-making processes showed me that girls like me can also have a say," she insists. "We took over as commissioner of our village for a day and I chaired a safety meeting. I also gave a speech during the celebration of International Women's Day in 2018 and I spoke on behalf of Champions of Change during the closing ceremony of the project in 2020."**

In early 2021, building on what was already a sound foundation, we started the follow-up project, Leaders of Peace. The manner of cooperation between the partners has been established and they have been given a variety of training courses to coordinate and underscore the required level of cooperation and quality envisaged for the programme. This pertained, for example, to gender equality, as well as prerequisites with regard to financial management and the prevention of fraud, corruption and sexual abuse. Furthermore, the baseline situation was defined so that progress and results can be gauged, and a lobbying strategy for the alliance is currently being developed. Also, the learning agenda, encompassing three research questions that need to be answered during the project, has been fleshed out and a working group to focus on Planning, Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation has been set up.

## Youth Leadership for Local Public Policy Advocacy

In the Youth Leadership for Local Public Policy Advocacy project, the focus is on supporting and empowering youngsters in the Dominican Republic, particularly girls. This will allow them to make their own decisions about things that could significantly impact their lives, such as teenage pregnancies, child marriages and violence.

Violence against girls and women is a huge problem in the Dominican Republic. In 2018, the murders of 165 women were reported (according to 2019 data from the country's Office of the Attorney General). A quarter of these murders were in the provinces of Azua, Barahona, Santiago, Duarte and La Altagracia. Teenage pregnancies and child marriages are also commonplace; nearly 50 per cent of women in these provinces are married off before they reach 18. Women and young people only have limited ability to stand up for their rights. Moreover, there is hardly any interaction between local authorities and the civil society, and none at all with youth organisations.

Many women and young people in the Dominican Republic cannot make their voices heard on important issues, particularly when it comes to sexuality and reproductive health. This project is stimulating the dialogue between them and the relevant policy makers. The objective is to define and implement policy that will address the needs and realities of these women and young people.

Since early 2020, Plan International in the Netherlands and the Plan International office in the Dominican Republic have been collaborating on this project with an organisation called Profamilia. The programme is being supported by the European Commission, with 85 (youth) organisations actively participating in discussions about government policy, programmes and projects in the provinces of Azua, Barahona, Santiago, Duarte and La Altagracia. These young people are playing a supervisory role and standing up for the rights of young people with local authorities.

The start of the project, in 2020, coincided with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Dominican government declared a state of emergency and restrictive measures were put in place which delayed the implementation of the programme. However, many of the planned activities went ahead online. Meanwhile, the knowledge and capacity of 21 youth organisations (comprising approximately of 210 youth) is being strengthened in the areas of gender, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and how best to work with local governments and influence policymaking.

Thanks in part to years of pressure exerted by Plan International, a law prohibiting child marriages was passed in the Dominican Republic in early 2021. Before that, all kinds of exceptions, such as approval by a parent or permission from the court, made it possible for girls under 18 to be married off. The new law has eliminated these exceptions, which can be seen as a terrific result. This programme is an excellent opportunity for youth networks to draw attention to this new law among local policymakers, thereby ensuring that it will make a real difference to the lives of all young women in the Dominican Republic.

### **From Girls Advocacy Alliance to She Leads**

Between 2016 and 2020, the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) campaigned against gender-based violence and the economic exclusion of (young) women. The GAA was an initiative of Plan International, Defence for Children – ECPAT and Terre des Hommes, in strategic partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The programme was implemented in close collaboration with partner organisations in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Bangladesh, India, Nepal and the Philippines. Furthermore, these organisations also collaborated on a regional level in Africa and Asia in the context of international forums, such as the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), as well as with the Dutch government.

The GAA campaigned for effective legislation and policies to combat sexual and gender-based violence and the economic exclusion of girls and young women. While efforts were made, wherever possible, to adapt existing laws or policies, or draw up completely new laws, the emphasis was primarily on the better implementation of existing legislation and regulations. To this end, the organisations, together with partners in the relevant countries, entered into dialogue with governments at local, national and international level, as well as with traditional leaders, civil society organisations and companies and employers. Local civil society organisations, particularly those led by girls and young women, were supported in their efforts to hold governments and other stakeholders accountable. Furthermore, the GAA also helped girls and young women speak out on issues that concern them, both within their respective organisations, communities and families, and to governments and leaders.

Between June and December 2020, the pandemic severely impacted the implementation of the GAA programme. Many plans had to be modified, postponed or even cancelled. The closure of schools, as well as quarantine requirements and other measures, had major repercussions, particularly for girls and young women. Practically all countries in which the programme was being implemented reported increases in sexual and domestic violence, teenage pregnancies and child marriages. In Asia, in particular, there was an increase in online sexual exploitation. It is feared that many girls will now not be able to return to school.

The GAA collaborated with partners in the affected countries to protect the interests of girls and young women in the implementation of corona measures, at both national and local level. In Liberia, Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Uganda, the GAA organisations helped shape national Covid-19 programmes. They did so by providing hand-washing facilities and hygiene training, for example, and by conducting several studies and investigations into the repercussions the pandemic was having for girls and young women. GAA organisations and their partners also disseminated information among girls and young women and their families. In West Africa it was apparent that radio talk shows attracted particularly large audiences, making them an effective channel for sharing information and starting up the dialogue. Wherever possible, volunteers were supported in their efforts to continue working safely in their respective communities, with the emphasis being on preventing corona and reporting and preventing gender-based violence.

The GAA also helped girls and young women to speak out and make their influence felt during this period. And although many physical meetings had to be cancelled, virtual, online meetings offered new possibilities. A notable highlight of this was the October 2020 online meeting between Ugandan youth activist Stecia and UN Secretary-General António Guterres. During this meeting Guterres spoke in favour of strengthening the voice of young women, as tomorrow's leaders. Moreover, young people from various programme countries contributed to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and to reports compiled for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

During the last six months of the programme, GAA organisations also reaped the harvest of longer-running projects. In 2020 in Sierra Leone, for example, a new education law centred on inclusiveness came into force. It replaced an existing law that excluded pregnant girls and teenage mothers from formal education. In 2019, following a long drawn-out preparation procedure, civil society organisations in the region submitted this, what was first seen as a controversial, law for deliberation by the regional court of ECOWAS. The subsequent ruling of this court meant they were finally able to instigate the necessary changes to the law in Sierra Leone in 2020.

Amplifying the voices of girls and young women plays an even more important role in She Leads, the new programme being implemented by Plan International, Defence for Children - ECPAT, FEMNET - African Women's Development and Communications Network and Terre des Hommes. This new programme started on 1 January, 2021. This programme is also being implemented as a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She Leads builds on the achievements and lessons learned in the GAA programme in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Uganda. The programme is also being started up in Mali, Jordan and Lebanon, as well as at regional level in the Middle East.

### **From Yes I Do to Break Free!**

Between 2016 and 2020, Plan International was part of an alliance with Amref, Rutgers, KIT Royal Tropical Institute and CHOICE in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Pakistan and Indonesia. The alliance, known as Yes I Do, combatted child marriages, female genital mutilation and teenage

pregnancies and was financially supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The projects in the alliance were completed in December 2020.

The successor to the successful Yes I Do programme is Break Free! Within this alliance, Plan International is working together with African organisations SAT, FAWE and Rozaria Memorial Trust, with KIT as a research partner. In collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Break Free! started in 2021 in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia.

During the last six months of the Yes I Do programme, the emphasis was on consolidating and securing the results that had been booked to date. To this end, the alliance partners worked closely with the relevant ministries and governments at local level. Contracts were concluded in which ministries committed to the continuation of the activities and the change process. In some of the countries, budget was also set aside for continuation, while in others the alliance partners worked with education ministries to make Yes I Do activities part of the curricula. Youth groups and local leaders compiled action plans to follow up on new laws and municipal regulations pertaining to child marriages.

The last six months of 2020 saw the alliance working closely with change agents, typically people like teachers and health professionals who drive the necessary innovation and change. This now enables these change agents to continue the activities in their respective regions after the programme has ended. Teachers and health professionals were also trained to make the services that we provide more accessible and understandable for young people, while several health centres were certified for the provision of youth-friendly services. Also during the final months of the programme, young people and youth organisations were given the necessary support to enter into a dialogue with parents, teachers and other authorities, such as the police or municipal-government officials. Several youth movements were also established and existing organisations joined forces with network organisations.

Like the Yes I Do programme that preceded it, Break Free! is a programme that combats child marriages, teenage pregnancies and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Working together with young people and (youth) organisations, Break Free! aims to make young people more aware of their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and improve their education in this area. The programme also supports youth (organisations) in their lobbying efforts against child marriages and FGM. Break Free! started up in early 2021. An initial study was carried out to compare the situation before and after the established baseline situation. In all the relevant countries, Break Free! partners have organised start-up workshops and signed contracts with local and technical partners.

### 3.1.2 Education and employment for young people

Plan International implements training and employment programmes that work towards supporting unemployed young people in finding decent jobs with future prospects. These programmes bridge the gap between the needs of the labour market and the available knowledge and skills of young people, thereby increasing youngsters' chances of finding work many times over, and boosting their economic independence. In the context of these programmes, Plan International also commits itself to providing equal opportunities for girls and young women.

#### **Getting started with digital techniques – Wired4Work!**

In Asia, more than 33 million young people are struggling to find work. Gender inequality makes it even more difficult for girls and women to get an education and then a job. Since 2018, Plan International has

been working with them in countries like Indonesia on a programme called Wired4Work! (W4W), which is part of Plan International's partnership with Accenture. In the context of this innovative Youth Economic Empowerment (YEE) project, young people with vulnerabilities, particularly young women between the ages of 16 and 29, are being trained and educated in Jakarta, Semarang and Lombok. Alongside vocational training, they get to practice their communication skills so they can enter the labour market with confidence. We are working with companies and the government to promote gender equality in the workplace and highlight the importance of (creating) employment opportunities for young people.

Using scalable digital solutions, Plan International is collaborating in Indonesia with training institutes, the Ministry of Manpower and employers' organisation, APINDO. In 2020, for example, the e-learning platform Yes!Academy was developed in conjunction with Accenture, alumni networks were set up in Yes!Hub and situations vacant and business opportunities were shared through the Yes!Intel platform. By the end of 2021, the project in Indonesia is expected to have reached 12,480 young people in Jakarta, Semarang and Lombok, 50 per cent of them women. The project is also being implemented in the Philippines. By September 2021 and with a budget of €3.7 million, some 21,000 young people were supported across these two countries.

Impressive results have already been realised.

- In Indonesia, 3,560 young people (56 per cent of them women) were trained, 809 young people (51 per cent women) found jobs and 286 young people resumed their education.
- Up until May 2021, 3,330 young people registered for one of the nine vocational courses of the YES!Academy and 2,330 youngsters completed soft-skills training and vocational training.
- The #Kitakerja movement, which was initiated by Plan International to attract new young people and retain the engagement of existing participants and alumni, attracted 4,900 followers.
- Thanks to our collaboration with Accenture, we were able to improve ICT security during the pandemic in Indonesia. For example, we provided a safe digital environment for young people to use during their online activities.
- In collaboration with APINDO, Plan International conducted research into gender equality in the workplace. The results will soon be available.

## **STEM Clubs – Girls can do IT!**

In China, if you live in a rural or an urban area will make a big difference in your life. Girls and boys living in rural areas do not enjoy the same education opportunities as their peers in the cities. Also, gender stereotyping is causing girls to fall further and further behind. It's clear that tomorrow's jobs will call for digital skills. And while the technology sector in China is developing at breakneck speed, girls are seeing few benefits, especially girls in rural areas.

In the context of the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) – Girls can do IT! programme, we have encouraged girls between the ages of 10 and 14 from Chunhua, Pucheng and Jia Counties in Shaanxi Province to continue their development and consider a career in the STEM sector (or a different one). The aim is to increase their chances of landing a job with real future perspective. Plan International worked with education authorities and technical partners, RoboTerra and ThoughtWorks, as well as with international companies ASML, AkzoNobel and Accenture, which also have offices in China. The project, which ran from September 2018 to November 2021, will be extended for a further two years.

What has already been achieved?

- In the STEM Clubs 2,070 children, 1,298 of them girls, furthered their development in the areas of ICT, robotics and creative thinking. These students also received training in gender equality and life skills, such as increasing their self-confidence, working together and developing an open learning attitude. In other words, they were given a growth mindset.
- Female Chinese role models from the relevant international companies visited these STEM clubs. However, because of Covid-19, these visits were mostly online.
- 114 teachers from 33 schools were shown how to give tech lessons in a stimulating manner and how to provide the necessary support to the STEM Clubs. Furthermore, the schools were given teaching materials on robotics and gender equality.
- Thanks to an online support platform, teachers were able to support one another and ask questions, of the technical partners, for example.
- In the areas of STEM and gender equality, this programme strengthened the capacity of local government education authorities. Moreover, with the support of Plan International, these authorities were able to make a tentative start in adopting the STEM-Club approach in other schools.

#### **“We’d never been given this chance before”**

Xiao Xi (12) is a member of a STEM Club in Pucheng County. Her mother is a housewife and her father works outside the home. Xiao Xi used to have an ingrained idea about the division of roles between men and women. Like many of her peers, Xiao Xi loves dancing and singing, things she believes are a good fit with being a girl. But that all changed when she started a STEM project at school six months ago. “Now, I’m interested in things that people assume only appeal to boys.” Since September 2018, Xiao Xi and her classmates have developed several products in a robotics programme, such as a smart wastebin, a lighthouse and a cleaning robot. “Thanks to STEM training, we can now also learn how to program. That wasn’t possible before, but luckily I now know how cool it is!”

## **Education and employment in Jordan**

In Jordan, girls and young women are particularly disadvantaged. They are expected to do most of the household chores and they are less likely to be able to complete their education and find jobs. Without qualifications and an income, their talents are going largely untapped. Since 2019, Plan International has been implementing two projects in Jordan: Talents Unlimited and Mubaderoon. Children, teenagers and young adults are being given the opportunity to obtain a qualification, receive vocational training or start up a social enterprise. Plan International is working together here with several partners, including JOHUD, RUWWAD, Alfanaar and Euricse.

### **Talents Unlimited**

Together with their families, many Syrian children and young people have fled their home country and come to Jordan, where they often don’t go to school and girls, in particular, are at risk of being confined to the home, forced into marriages or child labour. Talents Unlimited is working with 3,000 girls and boys with severe vulnerabilities from Syria and Jordan between the ages of 7 and 24, so they can go back to school. Over a period of two years, they are being given the opportunity to obtain a qualification, continue their studies, find a job or start their own business. This is giving them the chance of a future and a way to get their lives back on track. Talents Unlimited is financed by the National Postcode Lottery.

### **Mubaderoon**

The focus of Mubaderoon is on social entrepreneurship. Sixty budding entrepreneurs, with an emphasis on young women, are being given the opportunity and the finances to start up their own business.

Furthermore, we are working on strengthening the business climate, improving legislation and stimulating the involvement of the Jordanian government. Successes have already been chalked up. For example, the Jordanian ministry responsible for digital development and entrepreneurship has signed an agreement with Plan International to improve legislation and the social-entrepreneurial environment. The ministry also assisted in the selection of social enterprises that are eligible for financing. Mubaderoon is being financed by the European Commission.

## What did we achieve last year?

### Talents Unlimited

- We helped 580 children and teenagers (282 girls and 298 boys) continue their education, which was being put at risk by the economic crisis. Many Syrian refugees have come to Jordan during these past few years and the tensions that this has caused have been exacerbated by the corona pandemic. This has made it all-the-more important that children can continue going to school. They also receive life-skills training and psycho-social support.
- 122 young people (59 girls and 63 boys) were selected for vocational training and given extracurricular training, such as learning how to deal with finances, life-skills training and psycho-social support. As a result of the corona crisis, much less work is available. However, there are job opportunities in the agricultural and ICT sectors, so we are now training young people accordingly. We are also supporting them to set up their own businesses.

### Sarah (23)

“I saw how enthusiastic my friend Yasmeeen (23) was about the extracurricular training and that’s why I also wanted to participate. We really appreciated being given all the space we needed to express our ideas and opinions during this training. I think it’s the best way to learn. The variation in the themes made it even more interesting and useful. Now, not only can I use what I learned in the workplace, I can use it everywhere.”

### Mubaderoon

- Up until June 2021, 47 social entrepreneurs (27 women and 20 men) received funding, which they used as start-up capital or to develop their own business.
- 1,324 people (731 men and 593 women) in the community benefited from the services or goods provided by the social enterprise.
- 556 (313 men and 243 women) found jobs.

## Successes

A Mubaderoon participant started Carers, a matching site that uses an app to connect nurses, people who need care, parents and babysitters. Another excellent example is ViaVii, which enables travellers to book their own journeys and make their own travel itineraries. Google voted Carers and ViaVii the most innovative problem solvers in the region.

## Education and employment – Reach Mindanao

In January 2021, Plan International successfully completed the Reach Mindanao education and youth employment project in the Philippines. Mindanao is a region plagued by conflict and natural disasters and many of the people there live in poverty. Young people have little outlook on life and they are therefore easy prey for rebel groups to recruit, which puts additional pressure on the peace process in the region. The Reach Mindanao project gives disadvantaged youngsters the opportunity to finish their secondary education or follow vocational training. They then receive help in finding a job or starting their own business, thus introducing some stability into their lives.

What have we achieved?

- 1,493 teenagers were able to finish secondary school by studying at their own pace and in their own time. Teenagers who were prevented from going to training centres by social unrest or the pandemic were reached by a mobile truck. This was given to the local authorities at the end of the project so that it could still be used to provide the same service to teenagers in hard-to-reach areas.
- 1,949 youngsters were given the opportunity to follow vocational training or start their own business. Plan International also has a partnership with the Hyundai Dream Center, in which young people are trained and given work-experience places. A total of 1,764 trained youngsters now have an income through paid employment or their own business.
- During the pandemic, young people participating in the project helped families with vulnerabilities, by bringing them facemasks for example. The facemasks were made by youngsters who had been trained in the textile sector. Additionally, young people and project supervisors took it upon themselves to keep communities informed about Covid-19 and the corona measures.

**Ivy trained at the Hyundai Dream Center through the Reach Mindanao project and she now works in a Hyundai branch.** “It doesn’t matter what training course you follow or whether you are a boy or a girl. It’s something that you can do, and girls and boys are given the same opportunities. If someone gives you a fantastic opportunity like this you grab it with both hands. Even if you have your doubts as to whether you will be able to, you just do it, you’ll learn.”

### 3.1.3 Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

In many low- and middle-income countries, the responsibility for the so-called WASH household tasks, such as cooking and washing, rests mainly on the shoulders of girls and women. The lack of good WASH facilities therefore affects them the most. Girls often have to miss school because they have to walk for several hours to fetch water, or because the schools have inadequate access to sanitary towels or facilities. Plan International has therefore adopted a gender-transformative WASH approach so that we can offer everyone access to good WASH facilities and services and promote the rights and opportunities of girls and women. In the struggle against corona, Plan International has also made additional investments in hygiene facilities.

#### Preventing the spread of Covid-19 – WASH First

Thanks to the allocation of €6 million to the current WASH SDG Consortium, of which Plan International is a member, an additional programme was set up in 2020: WASH First. The aim of this programme is to combat the spread of Covid-19 by improving hygiene awareness and access to WASH services. During

the 15 months-programme, and with active cooperation from local authorities and health authorities, the programme reached 5.5 million people in Ethiopia, Indonesia, Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique and Rwanda. Plan International is implementing WASH First in Kenya, Mozambique, Indonesia and Uganda. The programme started on 1 September, 2020 and runs till November 2021.

Covid-19 is having a huge impact on the countries in which this programme is being implemented, affecting all residents, healthcare infrastructures, economies, businesses, as well as employment and social life. This past year, WASH First activities had to be continuously adapted to the changing measures and lockdowns during several waves of the pandemic.

### **WASH First activities**

WASH First kicked off by improving awareness. Messages about prevention and the corona measures were disseminated by community, radio and TV channels and media campaigns were organised. Direct awareness activities targeted schools and communities with the severest vulnerabilities, while health professionals, water-committee members and government officials were trained in prevention. In Uganda, special attention was paid to the predicament of girls who were at risk of being married off or becoming pregnant while the schools were closed. In Kenya, the campaigns targeted schools, healthcare centres (first-line health professionals) and households with vulnerabilities. The campaigns were publicised in places where they would reach the most people, which included bus stops and boarding and disembarking platforms for ferries.

The following activities were carried out.

- We distributed protective equipment and hygiene kits. These included washable/reusable facemasks, hand sanitisers, soap, disinfectants and bleaches, protective overalls, boots, safety glasses and gloves, posters that stressed the importance of washing your hands, reusable sanitary towels and educational comic strips on menstrual health and hygiene (MHH).
- We set up hand-washing facilities and trained local entrepreneurs how to produce hand-washing facilities and liquid soap, which was then sold through them.
- Old WASH facilities, including latrines and water points, were repaired and new ones were installed.
- People working to provide immediate assistance were trained to identify the risks and take the necessary risk-mitigation measures.
- In collaboration with local authorities (municipalities and health and education bodies), sanitary facilities were improved or replaced. Furthermore, in conjunction with local authorities, communities, schools and healthcare institutions, the most-suitable locations for building hand-washing points were selected.

### **Behavioural change**

Regarding washing your hands, these activities brought about a change in behaviour. In terms of WASH, they increased people's general knowledge about prevention and the measures that would limit the risk of spreading the coronavirus among individuals, communities, health professionals, schools and service providers. At the same time, it also became clear that behavioural change takes time, that the appropriate strategies must be used and that leaders play a key role in all this because they are expected to set an example. These strategies differ per country. In Mozambique, for example, it appeared that a door-to-door campaign is only effective if the healthcare callers are known in the community. In Indonesia, it proved helpful to cooperate with organisations that serve the needs of people with impairments. People with disabilities were actively involved, both as participants and in monitoring activities and providing feedback and suggestions on specific needs.

**Vania Sobrinho from Mozambique, participant in the WASH First project**

“The WASH First project has brought about many changes to our community and has taught us more about Covid-19 and its preventive measures. In our community, for example, when they start menstruating girls typically used a few pieces of cloth as a sanitary towel. But thanks to the WASH First programme, we were given hygiene kits with reusable sanitary towels that are very comfortable. Talks on personal hygiene for women and girls were also held.”

**Challenges and lessons-learned**

- In Uganda, the January 2021 general elections caused a slight delay in the implementation of the activities, but everything returned to normal in February.
- Heavy rainfall in Uganda overloaded the existing water infrastructure and this had consequences for hand-washing facilities. These were immediately solved by the programme.
- Some communities suffered from what could best be described as Covid-19 fatigue. People lost patience with the stringent restrictive measures, which were causing food- and income-insecurity. Some politicians eased the restrictions for economic reasons. To ensure that attention to corona prevention remains a priority, the WASH First countries will continue to work as closely as possible with their local governments.

**Exchange of knowledge**

This year, the countries participating in WASH First started exchanging best practices in the area of cooperating with local leaders and organisations on corona prevention through webinars. A study into the effects that behavioural-change interventions have on knowledge and behaviour in Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Mozambique and Rwanda was also launched.

Read also 5.4, A bloody serious matter, a menstrual health & hygiene programme in Uganda.

**3.1.4 Emergency aid**

Plan International provides humanitarian aid when natural disasters, famines, epidemics or armed conflicts threaten the lives and the future of large groups of people. We offer emergency aid, work together towards reconstruction and we make sure that people are better prepared for disasters, paying particular attention to the gender-specific consequences of disasters. Plan International also takes the repercussions of climate change into account, wherever possible underscoring readiness and the taking of timely (anticipatory) action. Because Plan International is well acquainted with the relevant communities and local and national structures, we can act quickly.

**Over €15 million for a devastated Beirut – Giro555**

In the wake of the huge explosion in the port of the Lebanese capital Beirut on 4 August, 2020 that had devastating consequences for the city's inhabitants, the Netherlands immediately sprang into action. Over €15 million was raised during a National Action for Beirut initiative, chaired by Plan International and organised by the SHO (Samenwerkende Hulporganisaties, Cooperating Aid Organisations). With the proceeds of this Giro555 campaign, Plan International, working together with Himaya, a Lebanese NGO that specialises in child protection, provided aid in the area of child protection and education. Plan International and Himaya provided psycho-social support (PSS) to children with vulnerabilities. One of the ways they did so was by discussing ways in which these children can deal with difficult situations.

These following actions were carried out.

- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Plan International worked to re-equip damaged schools. Among other things, 735 laptops were distributed across the hardest-hit schools so that children could continue their education online.
- 286 educational packages were distributed. These included whiteboards, pencils, exercise books and facemasks.
- 142 children were given individual psycho-social support. Where necessary, and based on their respective needs, children were also referred to other institutions.
- 62 girls and 80 boys were given (remote) support. In this group, 89 per cent of the cases involved psychological abuse.
- 174 children (100 girls and 74 boys) were given psycho-social support through workshops. Among other things, these workshops were themed on children's rights, different forms of abuse, stress management and internet safety.
- 192 parents/carers (122 women and 70 men) were given support through workshops. Among other things, these workshops were themed on identifying and dealing with psychological complaints, in both parents and children, as well as dealing with Covid-19.
- Psycho-Social Support (PSS) packages were distributed door-to-door. These packages included a skipping rope, puzzles and colouring books.

### **The impact of Covid-19**

The restrictions accompanying the strict lockdown from January 2021 meant that individual psycho-social support had to be mainly provided via telephone interviews and video calls. Home visits were only possible in cases of extreme urgency. In carrying out its online activities, the Himaya team faced challenges, such as the poor internet coverage in Lebanon. Moreover, two or three sessions were necessary to reach the same number of people as was previously possible with just one session.

### **Joined forces – Sudan Joint Response**

For many years now, millions of people in Sudan have had to contend with conflict, food insecurity, diseases and the effects of climate change. Unfortunately, 2020 was an exceptionally bad year, due to Covid-19, widespread flooding caused by the Nile reaching its highest level in 100 years, and thousands of refugees from Tigray in neighbouring Ethiopia seeking sanctuary in the country's eastern provinces. In 2020, some 9.3 million people needed humanitarian aid. Approximately 1.8 million people are still displaced and face security risks and threats.

In response to the humanitarian crisis in Sudan, the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) set up the Sudan Joint Response (SDNJR), comprising Plan International (lead organisation), World Vision and ICCO. The DRA itself is a cooperative initiative of 16 Dutch aid organisations and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Between 2019 and 2021, these partners joined forces to provide an effective and efficient humanitarian response and working together with the people that are most vulnerable and affected by conflicts.

SDNJR partners mainly work in the same regions. The focus of their aid lies on the effective coordination and harmonisation of an integrated approach to providing services to the affected population. An important consideration here is that the people involved, as well as public institutions like schools and hospitals, are actively involved in the decision-making process. Furthermore, the partners also provide rapid responses to sudden events, such as floods or increases in refugee numbers. The total budget for the Sudan Joint Response for 2019-2021 was €10.9 million.

So far, more than 730,000 people have been helped with:

- essential water- and sanitary-provisions;
- protection and health services (with a special focus on preventing and tackling gender-based violence);
- food and subsistence support (including in the form of cash and vouchers).

## Prepared for disaster – ECHO

June 2020 saw the launch of a 22-month project in Santo Domingo Este, the Dominican Republic. The project focuses on supporting disaster preparedness and is being led by Plan International Dominican Republic, in partnership with Oxfam Intermón and Habitat for Humanity. It is funded by ECHO (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations).

This province of the Dominican Republic is struggling with the repercussions of flooding, landslides and tsunamis. The purpose of the project is to make the population more resilient to extreme weather conditions and earthquakes, with a focus on communication and information about disaster preparedness. A total of 12,269 people, mainly women, children, migrants and people with disabilities, are being made more resilient to the effects of extreme weather. It is also targeting 17 local and national institutions so that they too can be made better prepared. They include schools, healthcare facilities and building contractors.

A lot of attention is being paid to the protection of migrants, a group that is seen as particularly vulnerable, while local institutions are being helped to more adequately process crucial information pertaining to disaster relief. Other components are the drawing up of contingency plans, with a special focus on schools and foster families, and practicing disaster simulations with children.

Buildings in this region have very limited resistance to weather-induced disasters and earthquakes. Plan International is therefore collaborating with regional and national housing institutions in the Dominican Republic to support them in their efforts to build and renovate houses that are more resilient to disasters.

The project started in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic. For this reason, 500 families deemed to be particularly vulnerable are receiving additional support in the form of a financial contribution, which they can spend at their own discretion in meeting their basic needs.

## Life-saving aid – DRA Burkina Faso Acute Joint Response

The first six months of 2020 were particularly turbulent in Burkina Faso. Attacks that specifically targeted civilians continued to rise, leading to an unprecedented increase in humanitarian needs, with 2.9 million people in dire need of humanitarian aid. By the end of July 2020, over a million people had been displaced and more than 1.2 million were without direct access to healthcare and education.

Between December 2019 and September 2020, the DRA implemented an Acute Joint Response, which was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The consortium, led by Plan International and working together with partners Save the Children, Cordaid, Terre des Hommes and the Refugee Foundation, provided life-saving humanitarian aid to population groups that were seen as very vulnerable and victims of violence and terrorist threats in the Sahel, Centre-Nord and Nord regions of the country.

### Offering protection

This Joint Response focused on several areas: health; food supply and sustenance; (child) protection; WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene); and education. Plan International was involved in (child) protection and education and reached 23,399 people. Together with the other partners, the consortium reached a

total of 175,869 people. Through a local partner, children aged between 3 and 17 were able to engage in mobile, child-friendly spaces in age-appropriate activities, such as dancing, football, drawing and singing. Activities like these are deemed to stimulate and nurture children's cognitive, emotional and social development, thereby improving their psycho-social well-being. There were also psycho-social activities for adults and some of them also received psychological support. Children who needed mental or physical care were referred to mobile health clinics. Information sessions on topics such as children's rights, risks of abuse, exploitation and gender-based violence were held for adults and young people. Furthermore, child- and youth-friendly areas and schools were provided and built and teachers were trained in the basic principles of child protection, psycho-social support and corona-prevention strategies. Children affected by the crisis were given school kits, consisting of a satchel and textbooks.

### **Hygiene measures**

Covid-19 restrictions, such as social distancing and hygiene regulations, resulted in the adaptation of many activities so that they could continue safely. Some activities went ahead virtually or via local radio or TV. While the project was being implemented, recurring incidents took place in the intervention areas (particularly in Nord and the Sahel). These incidents included attacks by armed opposition groups, military operations and the mere presence of self-defence groups. And while they impacted the implementation of the project, the concerted nature of the intervention was considered crucial.

### **Prepared for natural disasters – B-Ready**

Natural disasters are often unavoidable, but where is the sense in not offering help until it's too late? With warning systems and timely measures in place, the negative consequences of natural disasters can be drastically reduced. A project known as Building Resilient, Adaptive and Disaster-Ready Communities (B-READY) is protecting households in the Philippines and Sudan against natural disasters. The approach is innovative, to say the least. With the aid of digital models fed by satellite data, a warning system that can predict cyclones and droughts has been developed. As soon as the system issues a warning, a financial allowance is automatically transferred to selected households in the relevant risk area. This money can be spent as its recipients see fit, on food, for example, or water or building materials with which to rebuild their homes.

Plan International is also working to protect the rights and improve the well-being of groups with vulnerabilities (the elderly, children, people with disabilities) during humanitarian emergencies. Oxfam Novib and Global Parametrics are partners in this project, in which nine communities participated. All these communities have developed and practiced contingency plans. A total of nearly 2,000 households were given access to financial services, 1,821 of which received a financial allowance because they live in an area where a cyclone made landfall.

## 3.2 Community programmes, courtesy of child sponsors

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Child sponsorship has played a key role in Plan International's work since the very beginning. Thanks to child sponsorship, Plan International has been able to implement programmes and projects in many countries. Plan International channels contributions made by child sponsors into programmes implemented in the communities of the sponsored children. This not only improves the living conditions and future prospects of the sponsored child, it also provides a better life for all the children and their families in the community.

We work in communities that are among the most vulnerable and marginalised in the world. Plan International works together in community programmes with all the children, families, teachers, governments and partner organisations that are involved. This enables us to jointly determine the kind of support that the community will benefit from most. Our community programmes enable children to grow up safely into independent adults who can shape and give direction to their own lives. Plan International's work contributes towards providing protection, safe drinking water, and good hygiene, healthcare and education. Additionally, all our projects focus on awareness and equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women.

Through child sponsoring and the annual update, complete with photo, child sponsors are kept up-to-speed on what their contributions are spent on and the impact that they are having on the lives of the sponsored children. Furthermore, some sponsors take the opportunity to correspond with their sponsor child or even visit the child in his or her own country. However, since February 2020 Covid-19 has brought the latter to a complete halt.

Last year, 41,925 child sponsors in the Netherlands supported Plan International's work to the total amount of €14,094,870. Their contributions were used to implement projects in the communities of 48,568 sponsored children in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Worldwide, Plan International was supported by 1,077,340 child sponsors, sponsoring a total of 1,185,742 children.

Sponsorship funds are spent on projects in the immediate vicinity of the sponsored children. These projects provide things such as:

- a safe learning environment and sufficient teaching materials;
- the medical support of pregnant women, babies and young children;
- the psycho-social counselling of young girls who have escaped child marriages and are being given the opportunity to receive an education or learn a trade;
- awareness campaigns about equal rights for girls and boys;
- better birth-registration systems, so that more children are officially registered and given birth certificates;
- protection against gender-based violence, teenage pregnancies and female genital mutilation.

### The impact of Covid-19

Corona has had far-reaching consequences for the countries in which Plan International works. The healthcare systems in many of these countries have been unable to cope with the effects of the virus. It is much more difficult, for example, to combat the spread of the virus if soap and clean water are not freely available. Moreover, lockdowns have severely impacted the safety and rights of children, particularly girls. Children have been unable to go to school, so they have had to stay home. Poor to non-existent access

to the internet and an obligation to help with household chores have meant that many children ran up a learning deficit. At home, adults have been put under great financial pressure by the various (stringent) measures imposed in most countries. Many have lost their incomes and poverty has increased as a result of illness or the death of loved ones. Domestic violence, sexual exploitation, child marriages and teenage pregnancies have also increased.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Plan International has been committed to protecting children and their families from Covid-19 and its effects. We have provided information via radio broadcasts and social media about how best to avoid infections, as well as the risks that children are exposed to when schools are closed. We have also set up helplines and trained young people and parents to raise their awareness of the risks and tell them where to go for support. Furthermore, Plan International has also offered financial support. To avoid learning deficits, we have distributed home education kits, developed teaching programmes that can be followed via TV and radio and, wherever possible, we have made home visits.

### 3.3 Lobbying in the Netherlands

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During the 2021 reporting year, Plan International's advocacy agenda focused predominantly on the effects of the pandemic. Furthermore, following the general election, a "changing of the guard" in the Dutch government in March also necessitated certain lobbying activities. For example, to facilitate a smooth transfer to the new spokesperson, a handover dossier was prepared for the outgoing Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (FTDC) spokesperson of the D66 parliamentary party. In this dossier, Plan International stressed that commitment to development cooperation, policy coherence and the civil society midfield is as urgent now as it has ever been.

Outgoing Members of Parliament (MPs) that had committed themselves to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) were sent a letter of thanks on behalf of the platform of organisations that work together in the area of SRHR and HIV/AIDS. This platform, in which Plan International is an active participant, also organised a (partially) online event for new MPs in which they were presented with a "goody box". This contained gadgets and a magazine with articles and SRHR- and HIV/AIDS-related stories from various countries in Africa.

#### **Pandemic**

The pandemic reversed economic growth in the Netherlands into economic contraction, with the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) falling for the first time in several years. This economic contraction had an immediate effect on the development budget, which is linked to GDP. Through Partos, Plan International argued strongly against reducing the development-cooperation budget and for additional one-time resources to be made available to combat the crisis worldwide. However, the lower GDP resulted in yet-to-be-determined economies and a so-called cash shift in the FTDC budget for 2021. Plan International's Managing Director spoke out publicly against imminent cuts in an opinion article published in Dutch daily newspaper "de Volkskrant". Entitled "Armen kunnen geen broekriem aanhalen" (Arms cannot tighten belts) and endorsed by 26 other organisations, the article was published on 28 October, 2020, the day the budget was debated in the Dutch House of Representatives.

## Petition

In the run-up to World Girl's Day on 11 October, Plan International submitted a petition to the members of the permanent House of Representatives Committee for FTDC. It concerned the report Under Siege, Impact of Covid-19 on girls in Africa, which Plan International co-wrote with the Africa Child Policy Forum. Members of the PvdA, GroenLinks, D66, CDA and 50Plus political parties were given personal copies. The report painted a no-punches-pulled picture of the far-reaching negative effects that the Covid-19 crisis is having on the lives of girls in Africa.

## Girls Rights Watch

During the year under review, activities centred around Girls Rights Watch (GRW) were concluded with an online event entitled "Ten years of youth activism". The latest GRW staffers, former GRW staffers, the former GRW coordinator, external speakers and, of course, many Plan International employees all looked back at the highlights of recent years in terms of influencing policy, campaigns and lobbying moments. There was also time for reflection and discussion about the role that youth participation plays in Plan International policies and activities.

# 3.4 Measuring results

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Measuring results is an indispensable part of Plan International's work. Carefully planning, monitoring and evaluating our projects and programmes allows us to make timely adjustments and shows us which strategies and interventions work best in a particular context. To this end, we use a combination of quantitative and qualitative measurement methods. In the She Leads strategic partnership, for example, we measure the number of campaigns, how many youth groups were started up and how often they interact with the government. Using the "outcome harvesting" method, we also measure the progress being made in long-term change processes.

This past year was an intensive one in terms of measuring our results, because three five-year strategic partnerships were evaluated. The evaluations showed us that a great deal was achieved and that, at the end of the day, our project activities help to instigate concrete changes in standards and practices in the programme countries, as well as in legislation and regulations.

## Transparency

At Plan International, transparency is very important. For example, every three months we publish our results in IATI (International Aid Transparency Initiative), the benchmark for transparency in finance and results in the development sector. On the Plan International website you'll find a link to our project database, which provides insight into our various projects, all in accordance with IATI guidelines. See: [www.planinternational.nl/hier-werken-we](http://www.planinternational.nl/hier-werken-we).

## 3.5 Innovation

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Innovation plays a key role in the work of Plan International. For example, we always try to apply innovative solutions in the programmes that we develop and implement with our partners. What's more, to stimulate collaboration, knowledge-sharing and efficiency, we also apply innovation in our own working methods. In 2020 we started developing our new long-term strategy. And thanks to new, online applications, it was possible to take into account the ideas of all our employees in this process. An innovation working group was part of the strategy-defining process. To get as many new ideas as possible, this working group interviewed experts and stakeholders inside and outside the organisation.

During the year in question, we took huge strides in the area of working remotely. Employees were trained in its online facilitation, as well as in the use of tools like online whiteboards, ideation workshops and design sprints. With the aid of these online tools, we were able to develop many programmes with our colleagues and partners in the countries in which we work.

We also innovated with the content of our programmes, partly through the deployment of digital resources. Not only was this very effective during the various lockdowns, but the delivery of digital services often also proved to be a blessing in unsafe areas. In emergency-response programmes, we started receiving satellite-facilitated, early-warning information that's shared digitally with people in potential disaster areas. This system can also be used to effectively ascertain who needs help, so that we can immediately provide targeted support.

## 3.6 Results of private fundraising: the acquisition and retention of sponsors

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Last year, the number of private project sponsors grew by 13.2 per cent and we really welcome this increase in public support. Despite having to twice shut down our door-to-door recruitment activities, we still managed to recruit twice as many project sponsors this way. Our project sponsors contribute to the success of our projects underpinning equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women in areas that include education and employment and protection. Online recruitment was also very successful this year, when, for the first time, we were able to recruit online sponsors. It means that more than twice as many child sponsors were recruited than in the previous year. One-time donations almost doubled and the number of project sponsors rose sharply. Furthermore, for the first time we've experimented with the recruitment of year members; sponsors who support Plan International with €10 per year.

The decline in the number of structural child sponsors was less this year than in previous years, partly thanks to new online registrations. Covid-19 prevented us from organising international editions of Cycle for Plan this year. We focused on facilitating editions of Run for Plan in the Netherlands on an individual basis and without a large-scale event. Fortunately, our Team La League event was able to continue in the form of regional editions.

This year we received more income than expected from legacies, namely €2.2 million.

	Actual FY21	Actual FY20	Difference with FY20 in %
Total number of sponsored children	48,568	49,223	-1.33
Number of child sponsors	41,925	42,551	-1.47
Number of project sponsors	45,592	40,262	13.24
Total structural sponsors	87,517	82,813	5.68
Total one-time sponsors	19,649	9,192	113.76
Total number of sponsors	107,166	92,005	16.48

## Personal contact

To ensure we stay well informed about the wishes, ideas and expectations of our sponsors, Plan International finds it crucial to maintain personal contact with them. Unfortunately, Covid-19 made face-to-face contact impossible last year, but this was partially compensated for by telephone calls and cards. The situation also made it often impossible for project staff in the countries in which we work to visit their target groups and report directly. For this reason, we added supplemental information to regular communication with sponsors about the impact the pandemic was having. On two separate occasions we asked our base for additional donations to support our Covid-19 programmes. One of these was in April, in response to the worsening situation in India, and the other was in May, for the national Giro555 action to combat corona in countries where many people are vulnerable and live in poverty.

### 3.6.1 Public fundraising activities

During the past year, among others, the public campaigns described below were carried out.

#### Giro555

In August 2020, Giro555 acted on behalf of victims of the disaster in Beirut. Plan International was lead SHO (Samenwerkende Hulporganisaties, Cooperating Aid Organisations) organisation in this campaign, for which over €15 million was raised.

In May 2021, Giro555 was back in action, combatting Covid-19 in countries in which people have vulnerabilities. The proceeds of this action are earmarked for supporting vaccination campaigns and providing medical help for corona patients. The action is still ongoing and at the end of the financial year the counter stands at €6.7 million.

#### Stop de Klok (Stop the clock)

In the context of the "Stop de klok" campaign, Plan International highlighted the serious repercussions the pandemic was having for girls. Lockdowns resulted in families' loss of income and the closure of schools. This increased the associated risks for girls to be married off, exploited or abused and then being unable to go back to school. The campaign was derived from the global Plan International campaign, Stop the Setback, in which several other Plan International offices participated. "Stop de klok" was an awareness-raising and fundraising campaign. It was implemented online and through TV and radio and it ran from 25 April to 30 June, 2021. The campaign generated nearly 250 new child- and project-sponsors and over 400 one-time donations.

## La League Champions of Change

On a worldwide scale, over 700 million girls and young women have been married before they were 18 and approximately 16 million girls gave birth to their first child before they reached 19. In Latin America, the girls living in disadvantaged areas, or their parents, often think that their only escape from poverty is by marrying young and becoming mothers. Many girls see it as the only way out of a violent home situation. However, the opposite is true. Teenage pregnancies often lead to girls having to leave school early and they increase the risk of these girls being exposed to exploitation, sexual and domestic violence, and sometimes even death through childbirth.

In 2017, Plan International, in collaboration with Women Win and the Johan Cruyff Foundation, started La League football projects in Brazil and Nicaragua. The intention was to break the vicious circle by using football projects to give girls and young women the same opportunities that are open to boys. In the context of La League, girls receive, among other things, life-skills training and sex education, so that they can make their own decisions about their bodies and determine their own future. The project entered its final year in Nicaragua and started its second phase in January 2020. In Brazil, the project is in the second phase of its lead-time.

The following has already been achieved.

- In Nicaragua, 20 new girls' football teams were set up in the second phase. Over 300 girls and 200 boys received a combination of life-skills and football training. Girls from teams of the first phase were stimulated to keep playing football and given the support to do so.
- In Brazil, where over 500 young people and 60 fathers had already been trained, more than 190 new girls and 170 new boys were able to start training.

Because of the pandemic, we faced major challenges in both projects. Unfortunately, activities such as football tournaments had to be postponed. Wherever possible, other activities were adapted as necessary. The young participants, who now more than ever needed the distraction and support of the project, were kept engaged in the project as much as possible online and by phone. Life-skills training was offered online and football tournaments in a family context were organised.

## La League in the Netherlands

On 1 January, 2021, Plan International became the official societal partner of "Pure Energie Eredivisie Vrouwen" (Pure Energie Premiere League Women). This move enabled us to recruit for Team La League, in conjunction with the Dutch football association, KNVB. In June 2021, a Team La League two-day fundraising event took place and, for the first time, the final tournament was organised regionally at six Pure Energie Premier League Women clubs. In this way, 112 football-loving girls and boys between the ages of 7 and 16 were able to raise funds for La League's girls' soccer football projects in Brazil and Nicaragua. A total of €16,554 was raised.

## Cycle for Plan

Since 2015, Plan International has organised fundraising cycling tours through several of the countries in which we work. On 1 March, 2020, all Plan International offices globally imposed a travel ban, effective until 1 January, 2022 at the earliest. The six Cycle for Plan tours planned in 2020 to Guatemala, Malawi and Thailand have been put on hold until it is once again safe to travel.

## Run for Plan

Physical Run for Plan events were also cancelled. But there was a digital edition on 3 and 4 July in which participants could walk or run for Plan International in their own neighbourhoods. A total of €8,839 was raised.

## 3.7 Communication results

Plan International's external communication activities are directed at informing the public about what we do and involving them in our work so that people appreciate its importance. We believe that transparency is a key factor in the way we account for our income and expenditure. To this end, we use a mix of online and offline channels. Plan International carries out periodic reader surveys among the people that sponsor children. We also glean information by monitoring online clicking behaviour, through responses to polls in online newsletters and through written questionnaires. Plan International's brand awareness is not high. This year we have decided not to research it but to increase brand awareness by continuing to develop the brand and communication strategy on the basis of existing research.

### 3.7.1 Communication campaigns and activities

#### Communication about Covid-19

From the very beginning of the pandemic, we have paid close attention to the impact that Covid-19 has had and is having on children in the countries where we work, particularly girls and young women. In the Netherlands, we have done so on our website and on social media, as well as in newsletters and the Girls first magazine. We have shown the devastating effects that the virus has had in regions where there is a lot of poverty and where healthcare facilities are poor.

#### International Day of the Girl

Several activities took place around International Day of the Girl on 11 October, 2020. During that week, hundreds of girls around the world temporarily assumed symbolically important positions in politics, business, the media, or sports. In the Netherlands this was done by the Girls Right Watch, a group of young people, supported by Plan International, that is committed to equal rights and opportunities for girls worldwide. Among other positions, girls temporarily filled the shoes of the Mayor of Amsterdam Femke Halsema, Dutch Minister Sigrid Kaag and Senior Army Commander Martin Wijnen.

Especially for International Day of the Girl, Plan International entered into a collaboration with creative platform MOAM in which we developed a temporary tattoo that our ambassadors and other Dutch celebrities were photographed wearing. To draw attention to the importance of equal rights and opportunities for girls, they then shared these photos on their respective social-media channels. The total number of followers of the participating ambassadors and celebrities is 3.4 million.

Free publicity surrounding the annual State of the World Girls survey, advertisements in national newspapers and an overarching social-media campaign helped us reach over nine million people.

#### Girls' list and FGM

In December, we compiled our annual "Meisjeslijstje" (Girls' List), which shows the progress we have made during the past year in the area of girls' rights. This enables Plan International to profile itself as an expert by, among other ways, sharing the message on our website and social media channels and in a full-page advertisement commissioned in conjunction with the National Postcode Lottery. The featured topics range from small to major victories and they all link to themes that Plan International actively works on. These include combatting Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and providing education during the Covid-19 crisis.

In early 2021, Plan International drew attention to FGM with an online campaign.

### 3.7.2 In the media

Plan International continuously draws attention to its work by exploiting editorial attention in the media (free publicity). In this way, we ensure that topics such as gender inequality, child marriages, FGM, menstrual poverty (when women and girls cannot afford sanitary towels) and emergency-aid activities are placed on the agenda.

A few highlights of the past year:

- in the Dutch TV News, our managing director Garance Reus-Deelder presented the organisation's vision on inequality in the struggle against the pandemic;
- in the context of International Day of the Girl, research into the online intimidation of girls received a lot of press coverage, as did the collaboration with MOAM on International Day of the Girl;
- a great deal of attention was received for the Giro555 action for Beirut, which was chaired by Plan International;
- the pick-up, particularly by regional media, of the sponsorship actions of girls' football soccer, Team La League, and Cycle for Plan was excellent.

#### Own media channels

Social media, especially Facebook, Instagram and our website [www.planinternational.nl](http://www.planinternational.nl), remain the most important media channels.

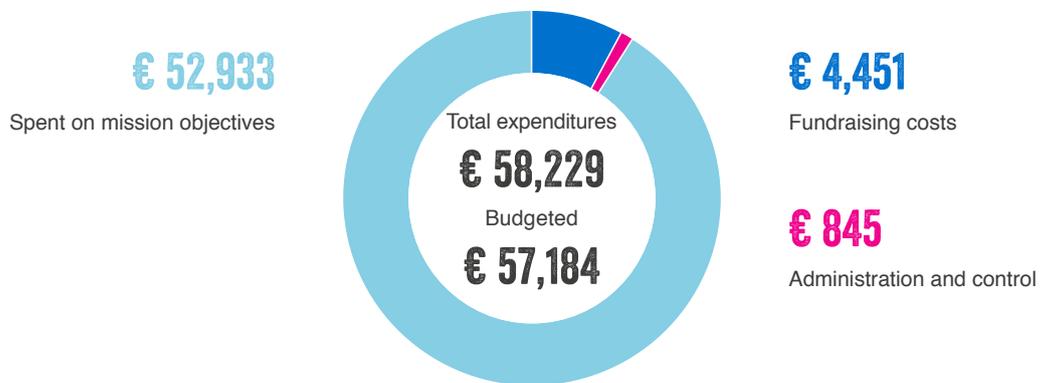
	Total FY21 Actual	Total FY20 Actual
<b>Website</b>		
Number of unique visitors	572,028	631,093
<b>Social media</b>		
Facebook (Likes)	97,610	99,554
Twitter (Followers)	19,667	20,231
LinkedIn (Followers)	11,800	9,149
Instagram (Followers)	5,930	5,150
<b>Girls First magazine</b>		
Annual circulation print (total 3 editions)	123,992	127,278
Total sent online (total 3 editions)	99,313	110,609
<b>Online newsletter (annual circulation)</b>		
Child- and project-sponsors (total 7 editions)	293,911	685,471
Interested parties /leads (total 14 editions)	514,349	
One-time sponsors (total 9 editions)	307,087	823,071
Ex-donors (total 4 editions)	142,478	184,314

## 3.8 Financial results

### 3.8.1 Expenditures

In the Netherlands, Plan International makes the funds received available for the mission related goals as soon as possible. In the year under review, 90.9 per cent of the total expenditure was spent on the mission related goals, 7.6 per cent was spent on fundraising costs and 1.5 per cent on administration and control costs.

Amounts \* €1000



### 3.8.2 Income

Amounts \* €1000



### **Total benefits from government subsidies**

The total income from government grants in 2020-2021 was €1.9 million higher than budgeted (6.4 per cent). The main reason for this was an increase in approved emergency-aid applications and grants for strategic partnerships from the Dutch government.

### **Income from private donors**

This relates to one-time and structural gifts and donations from sponsors or third parties to our community programmes through child sponsorship or to our projects that promote equal opportunities and rights for girls and young women, such as in the area of protection and education and employment, for example. During the year under review, we actively recruited child sponsors through online channels. Several direct mails were also tested, and these brought in more new child sponsors than in recent years. Compared with the previous reporting year, income from child sponsorship increased slightly (by one per cent). Income from child sponsorship pertains to periodic contributions made by private sponsors that support the communities of the sponsored children. Worldwide, 1,185,742 children are being sponsored. Almost 50,000 children (as well as their communities) are supported from the Netherlands. Last year, a total of €14.1 million was raised by child sponsors. The total income from private individuals rose by seven per cent over the previous reporting year, mainly thanks to the receipt of several large legacies.

### **Cooperating Aid Organisations/Giro555**

This includes contributions made by the SHO (Samenwerkende Hulp Organisaties, Cooperating Aid Organisations)/Giro555, that Plan International has been a member of since 2015. These were higher than was budgeted for because there were two new Giro555 campaigns in the 2020-2021 reporting year (Beirut and Covid-19). Given their nature (emergency aid for disasters), this income is difficult to estimate.

### **Income from lottery organisations**

Plan International has been a beneficiary of the National Postcode Lottery since 1998 and has received an annual contribution of €3.2 million since 2014/2015. In 2019/2020, as part of an additional lottery draw, the National Postcode Lottery approved our project application for Talents Unlimited – a future for Syrian youth in Jordan, which is valued at €2.2 million. During the year under review, €236,000 of this amount was spent on the programme.

### **Income from companies (business partners)**

Business partners contributed some €600,000 less to our programmes than we budgeted for, meaning our budget-growth ambition was not realised. Partly as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, fundraising activities targeting SMEs were not carried out. Covid-19 also impacted existing business partners that are active in the travel sector. During the year under review, in addition to project contributions and donations, Plan International received donations in kind from DLA Piper, TomTom and Accenture.

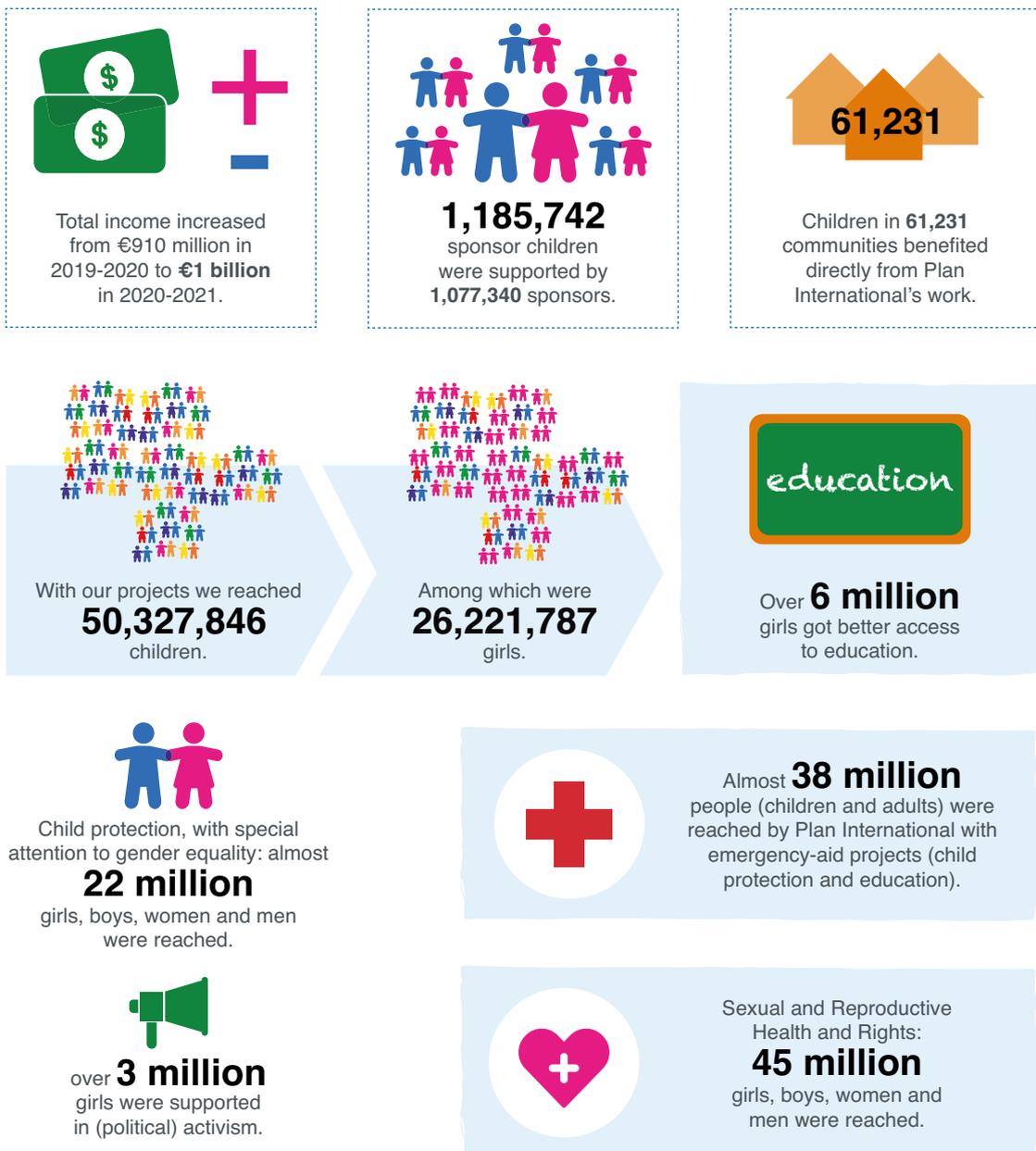


#### 4. An impression of the results of the Plan International federation

Image: Children in Vietnam in action for gender equality and girls' rights

## 4. An impression of the results of the Plan International federation

The Plan International office in the Netherlands is part of the Plan International federation. With projects in over 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East, Plan International champions the rights of children and young people all over the world. We are also committed to improve compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with a special focus on the opportunities and rights of girls. A summary of the 2020-2021 results of the Plan International federation is given below.



For the full Annual Report of the Plan International federation go to: <https://plan-international.org/publications/plan-international-worldwide-annual-review-2021>



## **5. Support and cooperation**

Image: Girls being trained in the Dominican Republic (in partnership with the TUI Care Foundation)

## 5. Support and cooperation

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The relationship we enjoy with our supporters, be they private sponsors or institutional or business partners, serves as the foundation for everything we do at Plan International. They constitute an important societal basis for our work. We are grateful for their contributions, either of a financial nature, or in the form of time, expertise, networking or even just a signature on a petition. Without our supporters, Plan International would never be able to realise its designated objectives. For this reason, we as an organisation find it important to thank these supporters for their respective contributions and involve them in our work. The way we do this is by telling them and showing them what is being done in the projects, and the difference that their contributions make. This also implies that we have to be open with them if results are disappointing, or if a particular method fails to deliver the hoped-for results. We try to inspire these supporters, both online and offline, with stories about the resilient girls and young women whose lives, with support of Plan International, they are helping to change for the better.

### 5.1 Private sponsors

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Plan International attaches great importance to the opinions of its sponsors, who are, after all, its most loyal supporters. This is why Plan International regularly invites sponsors to think along with the organisation, and in a variety of ways. These include contact via social media or by telephone and through the participation in a two-yearly loyalty survey. All this has led to some very instructive interactions. Last year, due to Covid-19, we were once again unable to organise the usual events with and for our sponsors. Furthermore, Plan International can be contacted by email, or by telephone during office hours and we respond to questions and comments via our social media channels. During office hours, our employees respond to enquiries within four hours. Our social media channels are also visited several times a day during the weekend and urgent questions posted on them are processed immediately. Furthermore, we also get in touch with sponsors by telephone on a variety of matters related to their sponsorship, or just to make sure everything is still as they think it should be.

If it implies that we are not living up to a sponsor's expectations, Plan International will register a sponsor's comment as a complaint. It might even be the case that the sponsor in question hasn't necessarily experienced it as a complaint, but we will have registered it as such. Based on this premise, we registered a total of 966 complaints during the year under review, 132 less than the previous year. The three most common complaints were about recruitment agencies, the cancellation procedure and the working method of Plan International, both in the Netherlands and internationally. Needless to say, we take these complaints very seriously because they help us get better.

## 5.2 The government, the EU and other institutional donors

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In 2020, the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs selected Plan International as a strategic partner in three programmes. These are important long-term (2021-2025), Ministry-financed programmes that are being implemented in collaboration with partner organisations, including partners from the applicable programme countries. In the Netherlands, Plan International is the Ministry's contracting part in all three partnerships, which are listed below.

- She Leads (€38.8 million) is a strategic partnership under the so-called Power of Voices, an instrument of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- Break Free! (€25 million) is a strategic partnership in the context of SRHR.
- Leaders of Peace (€4.8 million) is a strategic partnership in the context of Women, Peace and Security.

You can read more about these alliances in section 3.1.1.

In addition to the above-mentioned strategic partnerships, Plan International also has a partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the area of WASH. In the context of the WASH SDG consortium, which runs from 2017 to 2022 and involves funding of €60 million, Simavi is the Ministry's contracting party .

You can read more about this alliance in section 3.1.3.

In collaboration with the national offices in the applicable programme countries, Plan International maintains good relations with the Netherlands' embassies. The Plan International offices in Egypt, Benin and China implement programmes financed by the Netherlands' embassies in these countries. In 2021, together with the Plan International offices in Niger and Burkina Faso, we started discussions with the Dutch embassies in these countries about collaboration in the area of youth employment.

The European Commission has been funding Plan International programmes in several countries for some time now. During the past year, for example, we received funding from the EU Trustfund for Tackling the Root Causes of Instability, as well as for the Regional Development and Protection programme in Ethiopia.

In Jordan, Plan International is implementing an EU-funded project that supports social enterprises (see section 3.1.2).

In the Dominican Republic, Plan International, in collaboration with an organisation called Profamilia, is implementing a project that helps girls claim their rights, particularly in the area of sexual health (see section 3.1.1). In Lebanon, Plan International has started up a new programme that will improve security and economic opportunities for young people. The EU is financing this project from the Madad Regional Trust Fund.

## 5.3 Cooperation with companies

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During the past year, we worked closely with many companies, both large multinationals as well as small and medium-sized enterprises.

### **Akzo Nobel and ASML Foundation**

With the support of Akzo Nobel and the ASML Foundation, Plan International organized weekly STEM Clubs (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) for girls and boys in rural China. The objective is to stimulate these youngsters, particularly girls, to further their development and consider a career in STEM (or, indeed, any other sector). You can read more about this in section 3.1.2.

Given the direct link between employment and improving the economic position of young people, our collaboration with partners in the private sector adds substantial value in programmes like these. Our partners know exactly what the needs of the labour market are. Employees of ASML and Akzo Nobel in China are involved in the programme and they visit schools or – as has been the case during the pandemic – participate in online sessions. This kind of interaction gives students additional insights and experiences they would otherwise not acquire in school. The girls find it very inspiring to meet the female role models who give them that extra motivation to pursue a career in STEM. The programmes ran from September 2018 to November 2021, after which new programmes will be started up.

In addition to the STEM programme, AkzoNobel made an additional donation of €13,750 to support a programme that we are implementing in Indonesia. This programme aims to combat Covid-19 and provide the necessary support during the economic crisis that the pandemic has caused. Thanks to this donation, general-hygiene and menstrual-hygiene kits have been distributed among 1,000 families.

### **Accenture**

Plan International is collaborating with Accenture towards the completion of the Wired4Work (W4W) project in Indonesia and the Philippines. So far, this project has disseminated valuable information among 13,014 young people and improved the lives of 10,908 young people by ensuring they receive better education. It has also transformed the lives of 3,109 young people by giving them the technical training they need, or supporting them in starting their own business. You can read more about W4W in section 3.1.2.

In addition, Plan International and Accenture have just started two new projects together. One of these is a strategic follow-up to W4W called W4W 2.0, while the other is a pilot in Colombia focused on green skills and green jobs/entrepreneurship. The aim is to help young people find jobs or start up their own business, while positively impacting the environment at the same time. In both these projects, we will use the findings and results of the pilot to reach even more young people.

Accenture has also contributed financially, as well as in a pro bono context, to a research project themed on a growth mindset. This is an open learning approach that benefits the STEM projects in China, asking how it can be stimulated and how can you then measure whether children have indeed further developed along these lines.

## ACT Commodities

We also entered into a new partnership with ACT Commodities. With their financial support, we started an Eco-Entrepreneurship project in Ecuador to train and support 300 youth from indigenous communities to earn a living from sustainable businesses. We also drew up a year planner, listing activities to which ACT Commodities and its employees can contribute. Activities such as facilitating workshops on the Girls in ICT Day, for example, and starting a fundraising campaign among employees for Scholarships in Ecuador.

### Project highlight: TUI Academy Dominican Republic

Plan International has collaborated with the TUI Care Foundation since 2016. Together, we set up the TUI Academy in the Dominican Republic, where 124 underprivileged youth have, during the past four years, been trained to work in the tourism sector. For many of these young people, education is not a given. Youth unemployment in the Dominican Republic is high and sexual exploitation is a major problem there. Moreover, many girls get pregnant when they are very young, which significantly reduces their prospects on the jobs market.

Focusing specially on young women, the TUI Academy was set up to offer underprivileged young people an alternative. The programme goes further than just offering vocational training to youth; the Academy also helps them develop themselves into strong, self-confident individuals. This is achieved by means of a life-skills programme in which they are trained in areas that include leadership, sustainability, and gender and sexual and reproductive health and rights. They also learn practical skills, such as how to present themselves in job interviews, making a resumé and managing their personal finances. Increasing their self-confidence and making a life plan helps these young people substantially. After completing their training and tuition, the students follow an internship at a hotel. Following the successful completion of the programme, they are awarded a TUI Academy diploma, which helps them kick-start their careers and gives them the chance of a better future.

Despite being hard hit by the pandemic, fortunately, the tourism sector in the Dominican Republic is again picking up. Hotels and resorts are reopening and young people are still motivated to work in the industry. Following what was seen as a successful and educational first edition of this programme, a second edition of the TUI Academy has been started up with the TUI Care Foundation and this will run until June 2022. The TUI Academy is an excellent example of successful collaboration with a business partner. TUI brings its knowledge and network in the tourism sector, while Plan International brings expertise in gender equality, the protection of girls with vulnerabilities, and the training and employment of young people.

## Smaller companies' support for Plan International

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) support Plan International in several different ways. Monthly donations of a structural nature to specific themes such as employment, protection, emergency aid or education are alternated with targeted marketing campaigns. In these campaigns, a fixed amount or a percentage of the proceeds of a product or service is typically donated to Plan International. To celebrate its 30th anniversary, for example, Dutch jeweller Jéh Jewels designed three unique pieces of jewellery: the I-will-not ring, the Equality earrings and the Fireworks of Dreams earrings. Part of the proceeds of this special collection went towards helping Plan International combat child marriages. Similarly, on International Women's Day, on 8 March, Rosefield Watches and jewellery brand Vedder and Vedder donated part of their sales proceeds. Greeting cards company, Belarto, supported Plan International

through the sale of Christmas cards, while Girls First Business Supporters, including HRNinjas, Nova Connect and MYoMY, supported Plan International with a fixed monthly donation.

### **Return to Sender**

Return to Sender — a partner since 2017— is a social enterprise that collaborates with female entrepreneurs in several countries, including Indonesia. In the light of the emergency situation in Indonesia during the Covid-19 pandemic, Return to Sender donated to our gender-transformative WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) programme in East Nusa Tenggara, which is Indonesia’s southernmost province. In workshops given by Plan International, residents learned how to construct toilets themselves. Afterwards, one of the female participants of a workshop, Mama Fina, set up her own company. In doing so, she involved other women from her village and these women now cater for all toilet production in the village and in surrounding villages. This approach is in perfect harmony with the entrepreneurial spirit of Return to Sender.

### **Donations in kind**

For the past few years, our partner DLA Piper, which is one of the world’s biggest law firms, has donated free-of-charge hours to the Plan International federation. Given that we are a member of the federation, Plan International can also request legal advice from DLA Piper in the Netherlands. The costs savings enable us to channel more money into our actual projects. Between July 2020 and May 2021, DLA Piper supported us to the tune of over 100 hours of legal advice.

We also received a donation in kind from satnav company, TomTom, which gave 6,000 USB flash drives to our offices in Indonesia and the Philippines. The flash drives were used during ICT training courses for young women.

## **5.4 National Postcode Lottery – A bloody serious matter**

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In many countries, menstruation is a taboo. Girls and young women receive little information about it and it’s a subject that is rarely broached in the home. Girls and young women often have no money for sanitary towels and all-too-often they cannot go to school when they are menstruating because the schools lack female-friendly toilets and separate washrooms. This is a serious matter, which is why Plan International is making menstruation a topic for discussion in the areas in which we work. Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) is an integral part of our water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) programmes.

Thanks to a contribution made by the National Postcode Lottery, Plan International has achieved some very promising results with the “Bloedserieuze Zaak” (bloody serious matter) programme, which ran from 2012 to 2020 in the rural regions of Tororo, Kamuli and Lira in Uganda.

- After the project, 90 per cent of girls no longer see menstruation as a taboo, 25 per cent more than before the project.
- Afterwards, nearly all the girls and boys agreed that menstruation is a perfectly normal thing.
- More girls now go to school while they are menstruating: 94.6 per cent compared with 56 per cent at the start of the project.
- 66 female-friendly toilets have been constructed and 24 wells have been repaired in schools.

- 4,000 girls and boys have learned how to make reusable sanitary towels.
- Over 197,000 girls and women, as well as boys and men, were informed about menstruation.
- Information on menstruation has been incorporated into the curriculum.
- Facilities, such as wastebins and a separate washroom for girls, were installed in all school toilets. The need for such facilities has also been incorporated in national guidelines for schools.
- The project improved gender equality. Involving boys and men led them to support their sisters, mothers and wives. For the first time fathers dared to discuss the topic with their daughters and they bought them sanitary towels, while the boys made sanitary towels for their sisters. Fewer girls had to miss school while they were menstruating.

In June 2020, a follow-up programme was started in three other districts in the Kamuli region of Uganda.

## 5.5 Ambassadors

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Unfortunately, because of the pandemic there were fewer opportunities in the Netherlands for activities and collaboration with Plan International's ambassadors: Sarina Wiegman, Simone Kleinsma, Moïse Trustfull and Giovanca. However, during International Day of the Girl, these ambassadors enthusiastically drew attention to the importance of equality for girls. For example, they allowed themselves to be photographed sporting temporary tattoos and then shared the photos on their social media channels, as well as on various other media channels. On 9 October, Giovanca and Sarina Wiegman guested as ambassadors of Plan International on the RTL television programme, *Koffietijd* (coffee break). Simone Kleinsma recorded a radio commercial and participated in a Charity Special of women's magazines *Libelle* and *Margriet*, for which she wrote a letter to her sponsor child. Thanks to our ambassadors, Plan International is able to reach more people in the Netherlands.

## 5.6 Other partnerships

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### **Giro555/ Cooperating Aid Organisations**

Plan International has been a member of Giro555 ("Samenwerkende Hulp Organisaties" (SHO), Cooperating Aid Organisations) since 2015. On 1 July, 2019, Plan International became action chair of Giro555 and we proactively contributed to a new working structure with a permanent action team that comprises representatives from the participating organisations. In August 2020, SHO, under our leadership, acted on behalf of the victims of the explosion in Beirut. Together with a local partner, Plan International, provided assistance that included the distribution of food, electronic tablets and educational packs, and the protection of children, with the option of psycho-social support (PSS). You can read more about this in section 3.1.4.

A second Giro555 campaign, 'Samen in actie tegen corona' (Together in action against corona), was launched on 6 May, 2020 and Plan International used the proceeds of this campaign to provide aid in three districts in Nepal, a country that had been hit hard by corona. The overloading of its healthcare system meant that hundreds of people were dying there every day. Hospitals were unable to handle the number of sick people, hospital beds were full and there was a serious shortage of medical supplies.

### **Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA)**

Plan International is a member of the Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA), a consortium of 14 Dutch aid organisations working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the context of the DRA, Plan International focuses mainly on the protection of children, education, Cash Voucher Assistance and combatting sexual- and gender-based violence. Gender plays a key role in all the programmes. The structure of the DRA enables NGOs to respond in a timely and effective manner to major international crises. During the year under review, Plan International implemented DRA-funded emergency aid programmes in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Sudan (as lead organisation). We also provided acute emergency aid in Burkina Faso (lead organisation), Vietnam (lead organisation) and Mozambique (lead organisation). Plan International was also actively involved in the DRA through our participation in several working groups (Collaboration, Early Warning, Innovation, Strategy 2022-2025 and Finance).



## 6. The organisation

Image: Youngsters supporting the Girls Get Equal campaign in Egypt



**GIRLS  
GET EQUAL**

# زيها\_زيك

## 6. The organisation

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### 6.1 Organisational structure

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At Plan International, statutory distinctions are made between management and supervision, in accordance with the Supervisory Board model (two tier). The Managing Director steers the organisation, in close cooperation with the Management Team.

The relationship between the Management Board and the Supervisory Board has been laid down in the statutes, in internal regulations of the Supervisory Board and in a separate Management Charter. The internal regulations comply with the guidelines of the Good Governance Code. The Management Board and all members of the Supervisory Board are signatories of the declaration, as it pertains to independence and the prevention of conflicts of interest. For more information about the responsibilities of the Management Board and the Supervisory Board go to: [www.planinternational.nl/over-plan](http://www.planinternational.nl/over-plan).

### 6.2 The employees

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During the year under review, Plan International had an average of 113.95 FTEs, which corresponds with an average (over the whole year under review) of 120 employees (an average of 63 per cent full-time and 37 per cent part-time). Of these employees, 75 per cent identified as women and 25 per cent as men. The average age of the women was 41, and for men it was 48.

More coherence and structure has been introduced into the organisation's training services. Clear agreements have been made about mandatory training for all employees (including the areas of safeguarding, gender, feminist leadership, diversity and inclusion). Furthermore, discipline-specific training courses are also given per department (such as in International Humanitarian Law). Going forward, we also want to focus more on personal development, leadership and team development.

#### **The impact of Covid-19**

In accordance with guidelines laid down by the RIVM (Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment), since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic Plan International employees have worked from home as much as possible. To this end, Plan International has ensured that these employees have had a healthy and safe home workplace and has also paid attention to the psychological and social aspects of the pandemic. A survey was carried out, training courses were given and employees could fall back on the services of a coach. In the not-too-distant, a hybrid working situation will apply, in which employees will both work from home and in the office. The details are currently being worked out in close consultation with the works council.

## 6.3 Diversity

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At Plan International we strive for the greatest possible diversity among our employees. The organisation respects all employees and opposes inequality, both in our workplace and in our programmes. For more information about this, see section 7.2. During the employee-recruitment process, Plan International goes to great pains to invite all candidates who want to use their talents to benefit the organisation, regardless of their cultural background, gender, age, or religious or sexual preferences. Plan International stimulates all its employees to get the best out of themselves. In terms of the management, 73 per cent identify as women and 27 per cent as men. The Supervisory Board is chaired by a woman and in the year under review 57 per cent of the members were women and 43 per cent men.

## 6.4 Volunteers

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During the year under review, Covid-19 prevented live events from taking place, so most of our voluntary activities came to a standstill. However, some online activities were launched on [www.voorplan.nl](http://www.voorplan.nl). There was digital bingo, for example, birthday campaigns to raise money to combat child marriages and an art-related campaign in which donors could receive a signed work of art. Several volunteers participated in the corona-proof sports weekend held on 4 and 5 September 2020, in which 60 participants did sponsored walks or cycle tours near their own homes. In the Team Sponsorship Services department, 45 volunteers translated extensive documents that we send to our child sponsors during important updates. These included the programme area overview (PAO) and the programme area update (PAU). We also had 15 translators who helped us translate correspondence between sponsored children and sponsors and we were grateful for their help this past year!

## 6.5 The Plan International Works Council

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The Plan International Works Council (WC) comprises five members, three who identify as women and two as men. They represent a cross-section of long-serving and more-recently recruited Plan International employees. During the year under review, the composition of the WC remained unchanged.

The WC is a consultative and representative advisory body that plays a dual role: standing up for the rights of Plan International employees, while also representing the interests of the organisation as a whole. The WC convened its own meetings every two weeks and met with the Managing Director and a representative of the HR department every six weeks. Depending on what was on the agenda, a member of the Management Team also joined when necessary. In April 2021, during a consultation between the WC and members of the Supervisory Board, it was agreed that from the new reporting year there would be two meetings of the WC and members of the Supervisory Board every year.

During the year under review, the WC positively completed its deliberations on the redesign of the CMS cluster, making several preconditions and recommendations to the management, which were adopted. The WC also extended its approval regarding the formation of the new Project Finance department and its approval of the new pension scheme. Furthermore, the WC was proactively involved in matters relating to the organisation's occupational health and safety policy, the impact of Covid-19 and "the office of the future".



## 7. Managing risks and uncertainties

Image: Deolinda (19) from Mozambique opened her own food stall

## 7. Managing risks and uncertainties

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Plan International's risk policy and risk-management system complies in full with the risk policy of the international headquarters (as derived from the ISO 31000:2018 standard). This policy enables the organisation to minimise the likelihood of mistakes, to be alert to and proactive about potential risks, and to identify, monitor and mitigate possible weaknesses. In this way, the chances of damage and detrimental effects are minimised. If you go to: [www.planinternational.nl/over-plan/keurmerken](http://www.planinternational.nl/over-plan/keurmerken) you can read how Plan International deals with financial risks and avoids potential calamities in its business operations. You can also read more there about contractual obligations.

### 7.1 The repercussions of Covid-19 for our organisation

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The corona pandemic is still having major repercussions for our (international) organisation, particularly for the people with, and for, whom we work. The main risks that this situation leads to are described below.

#### **Programme implementation**

In many countries in which Plan International implements its programmes, the pandemic is still wreaking havoc and even getting worse. Most of our programme countries have little prospect of a sufficiently comprehensive vaccination programme to adequately combat the pandemic. This is having a major impact on populations with vulnerabilities and, in some regions, is obstructing the implementation of our programmes. Wherever possible, and necessary, we adapt our programmes to the prevailing situation. For example, more attention is being diverted to WASH projects and to girls who face increased risks of child marriages because of the economic crisis and school closures. Furthermore, new digital tools are being developed to reach groups with vulnerabilities. In a post-Covid-19 situation, we will place even more emphasis on access to education and YEE programmes. This will give girls and young women, in particular, the opportunity to get an education and make a decent living.

#### **Income and reserves**

Despite what was a very uncertain year, income from private fundraising was more-or-less in line with expectations, despite the cancellation of all fundraising events. Face-to-face and door-to-door fundraising activities could largely continue, albeit occasionally with interruptions due to government measures. The delayed implementation of programmes caused by lockdowns in the programme countries was compensated for by additional subsidies (including for WASH) to combat Covid-19 in these countries. This made it possible to also realise the budgeted programmatic benefits.

#### **Supply chain**

Despite what was a complex economic situation, the continuity of strategic suppliers, such as face-to-face and door-to-door services, was not put at risk.

#### **Institutional fundraising**

As this Annual Report is being prepared, the Netherlands still had a caretaker government. Together with our partners and colleagues in the sector, we are therefore lobbying for sufficient resources for

development cooperation to be made available, particularly given that it is the poorest people who are being hardest hit by the pandemic. If the policy choices of the new government were to result in additional cuts during the next few years in the available subsidies for development cooperation and emergency aid, it would be a veritable disaster.

### **Internal control measures**

As a result of Covid-19 and the aimed-for shift of responsibilities and activities to the countries in which our programmes are being implemented, travel to programme countries is expected to be less in future. Among other things, this means that there will be a shift from internal control measures to digital control measures, which will also bring additional requirements in the area of ICT security. Working from home more frequently and the use of new digital applications will also impose extra demands. It is for these reasons that we have, during the past year, invested in digital security and internal awareness about the importance of data security and GDPR legislation.

### **Continuity**

While the above-mentioned uncertainties still apply, at the moment we do not expect the impact of Covid-19 to have a materially detrimental effect on our financial condition or liquidity.

## **7.2 Combatting unacceptable behaviour**

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### **Protecting children and young people**

Children, particularly girls, are very vulnerable when it comes to sexual- and gender-based violence. Violence against girls is not only a crime, it is completely at odds with the objectives of our work. At Plan International we do everything in our power to identify, prevent and punish such transgressions, with the well-being of the victims always our number one priority. In the Global Policy on Safeguarding Children and Young People, Plan International has documented a comprehensive policy for the protection of children and young people. Moreover, in combatting violations of children's rights, we work in accordance with the guidelines of the Sphere Project (Minimum Standards in Disaster Response) and Do No Harm (avoiding the negative consequences that conflict situations can have on children).

### **Reports**

#### **Sexually unacceptable behaviour**

During the 2020-2021 reporting year there were no reports of (sexually) unacceptable behaviour at Plan International in the Netherlands. In the previous reporting year (1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020), Plan International's international headquarters reported 22 incidents, worldwide, of sexually unacceptable behaviour involving children or young people.

All victims and their families were offered support and they were put in touch with organisations that provide specialist care in areas that include medical and psycho-social support. Details of all incidents in which the law was broken were handed over to the appropriate authorities.

Eight incidents involved a Plan International employee and 14 incidents involved external parties (employees of partner organisations, volunteers or local partners). In all incidents, the contract or collaborative relationship with the employee or external party was immediately terminated.

Ten incidents involved sexual abuse and/or sexual exploitation. Six of these involved a Plan International employee and four involved an external party (employees of partner organisations, volunteers or local partners).

Twelve incidents involved some degree of sexual assault. Two of these involved Plan International employees and in 10 incidents it involved external parties (employees of partner organisations, volunteers or local partners). In all incidents, the contract or collaborative relationship with the employee or external party was immediately terminated. Furthermore, the collaborative relationship was also terminated with employees and external parties who were aware of what happened but did nothing about it.

#### **Other forms of unacceptable behaviour**

Worldwide, there were 40 incidents that involved unacceptable behaviour with children or young people.

Sixteen incidents involved physical, verbal or emotional abuse. Six of these involved a Plan International employee, while 10 involved an external party (employees of partner organisations, volunteers or local partners). Five of these incidents involved serious or criminal offences that were reported to and then pursued by local authorities. In all five incidents, the contract or collaborative relationship with the respective employee or external party was terminated. In the other incidents, cautions were given, contracts with employees were terminated or the collaboration with external parties was terminated.

Twenty-four incidents involved violations of the safeguarding policy, such as unaccompanied/inappropriate contact, visits or communication with children or young people, or the improper implementation of procedures that might put children and young people at risk. These involved three employees and 21 external parties. In six instances the collaborative relationship with the person in question was terminated. In all other instances warnings were issued and the enforcement of compliance with the regulations was tightened. No children or young people suffered negative consequences as a result.

#### **Reports of harassment, bullying and discrimination**

Plan International follows a zero-tolerance policy with regard to harassment, bullying and discrimination (Harassment, Bullying & Discrimination Policy). Last year, Plan International received one such report in the Netherlands from an (external) confidential adviser, the person that employees can approach on this topic.

#### **Anti-Racism taskforce**

Plan International is committed to the promotion of equal opportunities and rights and we oppose any and all forms of racism and discrimination. The global Black Lives Matter movement, along with renewed calls to decolonise the sector, has led to the creation of an internal task force and an action plan. The objective is to become a more woke and anti-racist organisation. And the way we want to achieve this objective is by critically examining the role our organisation could play in perpetuating prejudice and power imbalance in our professional sector and society as a whole, as well as developing strategies that will address these issues. Among other activities, we give internal training to all employees about prejudice and inequality in power relationships. We also initiate discussions about anti-racism, decolonisation and our use of language within the organisation. Moreover, we are taking a critical look at our working processes, as well as all other relevant aspects of our work. This will enable us to maintain more equal relationships with everyone involved: from programme countries to donors, to partners. We have already taken the first steps and we will continue to tread this path during the coming year.

## Fraud reports

Plan International takes combatting fraud very seriously, which is why we adhere to a zero-tolerance fraud policy, as is described in our Anti-fraud, Anti-corruption and Anti-bribery Policy. Furthermore, in our international headquarters we have a separate Counter Fraud Unit that investigates cases and suspected cases of fraud.

During the year under review, there were no cases of fraud in the Netherlands. However, three cases of fraud were identified in projects that are financed by the Plan International office in the Netherlands. The first of these concerned a project in Zambia in which financial irregularities were flagged up with a local partner of Plan International Zambia. Following an extensive investigation, it was decided to discontinue cooperation with this partner. The irregularity related to the sum of €24,270 that could not be satisfactorily accounted for. The sum is being recovered by Plan International.

The second case involved a project in Uganda. The appropriate agreements were not made and the correct procedures were not followed when commissioning local researchers to conduct interviews. The financial damage for the project came to €387, which has not been charged to the project. The third case of fraud related to a project in Kenya and involved three improper payments in a cash-transfer project with a value of €3,300. The amount will be recovered.

## 7.3 Operational and security risks

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Plan International's global Safety & Security policy limits the unavoidable safety risks faced by employees and visitors whose work takes them to Plan International's programme countries. During the year under review — and in line with the Covid-19 policy of the international organisation — employees did not travel to the programme countries, and visitors from these countries did not come to the Netherlands. However, with a view to future travel, we have updated our travel and training policy. All employees who are asked to travel will now follow a Safety and Security training course. The aim is to make them aware of the risks that travel exposes them to and the options that are open to them for limiting those risks as much as possible.



## 8. Sustainability

Image: Vanissa (12) from Laos helps her mother in their garden allotment

## 8. Sustainability

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### Girls and climate change

Every year for the past 20 years, an average of 218 million people have been affected by natural disasters. Extreme weather seems to be becoming more commonplace, related as it is to climate change and its consequences, such as prolonged drought and rising sea levels. Reduced biodiversity and more pressure on natural resources are exacerbating gender and power inequalities in communities and households. Because girls and young women often start from a disadvantaged position in society, they are the ones who are suffering the most from the consequences of climate change. Gender inequality negatively influences their access to, and control over, natural resources. Prolonged drought and deforestation, for example, mean that they have to walk even further to fetch water or firewood, respectively. This not only puts them at increased risk, it also prevents them from going to school.

Plan International offices all over the world are having an increased focus in the area of sustainability. We have jointly drawn up a Global Position Paper on Climate Change. Based on this Paper, we have developed a variety of instruments and frameworks that can further shape our climate policy and facilitate its implementation.

### 8.1 Business operations in the Netherlands

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Plan International has researched the footprint that our offices have in the various countries, including the Netherlands. The emissions we are responsible for are largely due to air travel. Based on the research that was carried out, we developed a manual with which Plan International offices can reduce their ecological footprint, starting from 2022. It prescribes, among other things, environmentally friendly measures that can be taken by the offices. These range from coffee-, electricity- and paper-selection, vegetarian catering and waste separation to encouraging the use of public transport by fully reimbursing travelling expenses.

At Plan International we use “green” gas and electricity. We use as little paper as possible and only the FSC-certified variety. For going to local business appointments, we put bicycles at the disposal of our employees and we also make it possible for them to exploit special tax breaks if they want to purchase a bike. Our operations in the Netherlands also include the choice of pension scheme, as well as the parties we work with. We have set up guidelines for working with external parties, including our business partners.

To avoid air travel as much as possible, Plan International stimulates the use of online conferencing. We do not fly to destinations that can be reached in eight hours by train. Eventually, the aim is to replace all air travel within Europe with train travel. Plan International is committed to fully offsetting our remaining CO2 emissions. This will be realised through the Climate Neutral Group (sustainable procurement) and GreenSeat, whereby we will compensate for CO2 emissions from travel by investing in climate-related projects. Since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, all air travel has been cancelled and our Amsterdam office is only used by a limited group of employees. The long-term objective is to give this ecological advantage a permanent character, among other ways, by flying much less.

## 8.2 Sustainability in our programmes

For its new programmes, Plan International has developed methodology that can verify whether they meet the minimum climate requirements. The objective is to:

- identify the current underlying contextual environmental risks, including climate risks;
- identify the potential environmental impact of project activities;
- provide support when taking measures that will limit global warming;
- identify potential beneficial outcomes of a programme.

In addition to this, Plan International has set up a global framework called Pathways to Resilience. The aim is to make communities, particularly those with children and young people, more resilient to natural disasters. This will make them better equipped to deal with acute disasters and more prepared for the threats that can eventually lead to a (natural) disaster, such as drought.

### Green jobs

The transition to a greener economy offers opportunities for young people, particularly young women. The circular economy, for example, could create up to six million new jobs in recycling and waste management. Young people, and young women in particular, must be equipped with the right skills for this, which is why Plan International is making an inventory of the opportunities these green jobs could present.

- Together with other Plan International offices, we are defining the framework for green jobs.
- With the support of our partner Accenture, we are developing a new green jobs programme in which best practices across various regions are being identified.
- In collaboration with Accenture, in Indonesia Plan International is developing a new e-learning module about green skills for entrepreneurs.
- In Colombia, a pilot has been launched to strengthen the position of young people in green jobs.

### Healthy Village methodology in Ethiopia

This five-year programme, which was launched in 2020, typifies a project in which a climate-vulnerability-and-resilience study forms an integral part of the whole project and in which the measures taken to mitigate climate risks are based on the results and recommendations.

Healthy Village is a successful method that was developed by the Max Foundation. It aims to reduce stunting, a growth anomaly caused by, among other things, malnutrition, infections and water-borne diseases in children under five. Because of Plan International's extensive experience in the areas of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and nutrition the organisations collaborate in Ethiopia. In addition to integrating the themes of nutrition, food security and WASH, the influence of climate change has also been included in the programme.

The programme also focuses on evidence-based learning and the impact that the various activities are having is continuously measured. Alongside a general baseline and a Gender- and Social-Inclusion baseline, a Climate-Vulnerability-and-Resilience baseline was also defined so that the situation in the programme areas, particularly with regard to water, could be mapped out. Based on the findings and recommendations, activities are being developed to minimise the impact that climate change will have on WASH services and sustainable food production.

## **UN Global Compact**

Plan International has been a member of the UN Global Compact Netherlands since 2015, and is committed to the initiative's 10 principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. Plan International's global strategy appeals in all its partnerships to promote children's rights and equality for girls. We work with partners from a variety of sectors and we acknowledge the importance of the role played by the private sector.



## 9. Supervisory Board report

Image: Children participating in the STEM project in the Chinese province of Shaanxi (China) proudly show off their robots

## 9. Supervisory Board report

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The Supervisory Board of Plan International comprises seven members. The criteria pertaining to the composition and respective expertise of the Supervisory Board members are documented in profile sketches. Supervisory Board members are appointed for a period of four years and are eligible for re-election once.

The Supervisory Board has two committees. The first of these, the Audit Committee, advises the Board on the annual financial statements and (long-term) budgets. The second, the Remuneration Committee, advises on decisions regarding the remuneration of the Management Board and general labour-law-governed salary ratios for the foundation.

### Supervisory board activities

During the year under review, the Supervisory Board convened, as usual, five times. Furthermore, the Audit Committee convened twice and the Remuneration Committee convened once. In addition to these regular meetings, frequent meetings and informal consultations also took place between the Supervisory Board and the Management Board and the management. Furthermore, on behalf of the Netherlands' office, two members of the Supervisory Board command places in the most-senior body of the international federation of Plan International, the Members Assembly. In that capacity they represented the Netherlands' office in meetings and consultations organised by the Plan International federation.

During the past financial year, among other things, the meetings focused on:

- introducing and getting to know the new managing director and sharing initial experiences;
- developing Plan International's new international strategy;
- the new programmatic alliances;
- Plan International's international governance and a few changes to the governance rule in the Netherlands;
- Plan International's fundraising policy;
- The organisation's new pension scheme
- The repercussions of the pandemic on the organisation.

Just like every other year, Plan International's financial statements and Annual Plan were discussed and approved by both the Audit Committee and the full Supervisory Board. With thanks to the Managing Director and the entire organisation, the Managing Director was discharged from liability for the policy pursued during the past year.

On behalf of the members of the Supervisory Board:

Anja Montijn, chairperson

Mrs S.T. (Susan) Blankhart, Mr J.J. (Hanco) Gerritse, Mrs K. (Katja) Kok, Mr H.J. (Herberth) Samsom, Mrs G (Geneviève) Lieuw, Mr A. (Alfred) Levi

<p><b>Mrs. A. H. (Anja) Montijn</b> Chairperson since 12-6-2018</p> <p>Commissioner Fugro Non-Executive Director OCI Commissioner of Koninklijke Volker Wessels</p>	<p>Member since 12-06-2018, eligible for re-election</p> <p><b>Other positions at the end of the financial year:</b> Board member VEUO Chairperson Supervisory Board of Jinc Board member Nederlands Violonconcours (Dutch Violin Competition)</p>
<p><b>Mrs. S.T. (Susan) Blankhart</b></p> <p>Mrs Blankhart worked for the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs for over 34 years, the last 15 years of which as ambassador in Sri Lanka, Costa Rica, Egypt and Sudan.</p>	<p>Member since 06-11-2017, eligible for re-election</p> <p><b>Other positions at the end of the financial year:</b> Member of the Supervisory Board of RNW Media Treasurer of the Achmea Foundation Director of FemDiplo</p>
<p><b>Mr. J.J. (Hanco) Gerritse</b> Chairperson Audit Committee</p> <p>Director of Finance at the Vrije Universiteit (Free University) of Amsterdam (VU). Within the framework of this position he is also director of the VU Holding B.V., under which participations of the Free University are incorporated, as well as a member of the Supervisory Board of parking company VU-VUmc B.V.</p>	<p>Member since 13-4-2017, re-elected April 2021</p> <p><b>Other positions at the end of the financial year:</b> Secretary Stichting Continuïteit AVNM (Algemene Vereniging Nederlandse Militairen) (Secretary AVNM Continuity Foundation (General Dutch Military Association)</p>
<p><b>Mrs. K. (Katja) Kok</b></p> <p>CEO of Van Lanschot Switzerland</p>	<p>Member since 06-11-2017, eligible for re-election</p> <p><b>Other positions at the end of the financial year:</b> Member of the Supervisory Board of the Netherlands' Philharmonic Orchestra</p>
<p><b>Mr. H.J. (Herberth) Samsom</b> Vice chairperson CEO of TB Auctions</p>	<p>Member since 08-09-2014, not eligible for re-election</p> <p><b>Other positions at the end of the financial year:</b> Supervisor The Data Company Supervisor Equipe Zorgbedrijven Supervisor Medsen-Ceban</p>

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**Mrs. G.M. (Genevieve) Lieuw**

Member since 15-02-2021, eligible for re-election

Member of the Institute for Human Rights

**Other positions at the end of the financial year:**

Member of the Supervisory Board of the Foundation for the Reclassification of Caribbean Netherlands  
Member of the Appeals and Advisory Committee CAF 11 and comparable matters, the Netherlands' Tax Office  
Board member of the Amsterdam Gay Pride Foundation  
Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of the Mondriaan Fund  
Member of the Supervisory Board of the Rosa Manus Women's Shelter Foundation  
Member of the Netherlands' Judiciaries Committee for Human Rights (NJCM)

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**Mr. A.E (Alfred) Levi**

Member since 19-04-2021, eligible for re-election

CEO Heelal BV (Board & Management Advice)

**Other positions at the end of the financial year:**

Chairperson of the Supervisory Board of VGZ  
Member of the Supervisory Board of RvC Griffon Holding  
Member of the Supervisory Board of Netherlands' Ether Advertising Foundation (STER)  
Member of the board of the Netherlands' Golf Federation (NGF)  
Member of the Board of the Hethuis Foundation  
Member of the Supervisory Board of TIG sports

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## 10. Looking ahead to 2022, and beyond

Image: Naimelin (11) from the Dominican Republic is committed to a world that offers equal rights and opportunities

## 10. Looking ahead to 2022, and beyond

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### 10.1 Ambitions for the coming years

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Plan International is committed to improving the lives of girls and boys everywhere, with a strong focus on adolescent girls. In the year ahead, as the effects that the Covid-19 pandemic is having on the lives of girls and young women become fully apparent, this ambition will be more challenging than ever. For this reason, we have been working hard these past few months on our strategy for 2022-2025.

This next financial year will be a transitional one between Plan International's previous and new strategies. In our Annual Plan, wherever possible, we have taken the liberty of incorporating our new strategic ambitions. However, we very much want to keep open the option that later, towards the end of the year after the strategy has been approved by the Supervisory Board, we can incorporate elements from the new strategy and ongoing insights from the Covid-19 situation into an amended Annual Plan. The spearheads for the coming year are outlined in section 10.4.

In terms of most thematic objectives, our new strategy focuses on continuity. In a thematic context, climate change will play a key role as an intersecting theme in our work. We expect the biggest changes to be in the ways in which we work, not in the themes of our work. In the ways we collaborate with our partners in the countries where we implement our programmes and with youth advocates, for example, and the relationship between the fundraising offices and the offices in the programme countries. We are convinced that this kind of localisation will enable us to play a pioneering role within the worldwide Plan International federation. This is partly because we already participate in several significant cooperative initiatives with independent partners in our programme countries.

We would like to put it all into practice by entering into discussions with many offices in our programme countries about how they see our new strategy and how we could work together. And by actively transferring control and responsibilities in our new alliances to the relevant country offices and to our independent local partners.

Going forward, amplifying the voices of young activists will become even more important. We will do this through the many programmes that we implement (in our new alliances She Leads, Break Free! and Leaders of Peace, for example) and by researching and increasing the potential of our lobbying and advocacy activities with Dutch stakeholders.

Our aim is to ensure that 95 per cent of our programmes can be categorised as gender-transformative, thereby contributing to more equality between girls and boys. This gender-transformation objective pertains to both the implementation of our programmes and our ambitions for feminist leadership in the ways that we work within our own organisation, with our partners and with Plan International offices in the various programme countries.

To underpin our independent position, it is very important for us to maintain and consolidate our relationship with the Dutch public and our donors and further expand our private fundraising activities. These ambitions form the cornerstones of our Annual Plan for the coming year and of our new strategy until 2025, which marks the year in which the Dutch Plan International office will have been active for 50 years.

## 10.2 The influence of Covid-19 on the long-term budget

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### In the context of the FY22 Annual Plan

As was described in the previous section, while the FY22 Annual Plan outlines a number of clear choices and spearheads, it also leaves room to make adjustments in some areas later in the year, in conjunction with developments pertaining to the new strategy.

### Risks associated with the FY22 Annual Plan

During the next few years, Plan International will take the lead in three alliances funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. And while this will have a strong, positive effect on the impact of our work, it will also call for more effort and manpower from the organisation. We are working in these new alliances with several new African partners, with whom we have limited experience so far in the areas of project- and financial-management, reporting and accountability. We already noticed during the first half year that reporting obligations were placing a considerable burden on these, typically much smaller, organisations. Furthermore, all partners are still struggling with the consequences of the pandemic and the freedom of movement restrictions imposed on them. For this reason, a lot of attention is being paid to agreements made with, and support provided to, new partners in the areas of project administration, reporting and accountability.

In many of the programme countries in which Plan International is active, the Covid-19 pandemic is still raging. This is having major implications for the populations, many of which have vulnerable groups, and in some regions it is hampering the implementation of our programmes. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that some countries, such as Mozambique and Ethiopia, also have to contend with internal conflicts and violence. In complex regions that are unstable or crisis-stricken, it is all-the-more important to painstakingly apply Plan International's monitoring and safeguarding protocols.

Plan International monitors the situation in the various regions and countries on a weekly basis, via situation reports. Wherever possible, or necessary, programmes are adapted to suit the relevant situation. This enables us, for example, to pay more attention to WASH projects and girls who are at increased risk of child marriages as a result of the economic crisis and school closures. Digital tools are being developed to reach groups with vulnerabilities.

Private fundraising is key to our future and requires great effort and creativity of the organisation. Fundraising efforts are always accompanied by a test plan, complete with KPIs. Budgets are phased and deployed on the basis of evaluations and we will continue to closely monitor the nation's willingness to donate. We are also strengthening the bond with our donors and keeping our organisational costs as flexible as possible. Furthermore, we are also deploying a new, powerful and overarching brand umbrella so that we can communicate cost-efficiently and effectively.

## 10.3 Long-term budget FY22-FY26

Combined statement of income and expenditure	Actual 2020/2021	Budgeted 2020/2021	Budgeted 2021/2022	Budgeted 2022/2023	Budgeted 2023/2024	Budgeted 2024/2025	Budgeted 2025/2026
	€ *	€ *	€ *	€ *	€ *	€ *	€ *
<b>Income</b>	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Income from private donors	20,831	19,808	19,668	19,740	19,797	19,737	19,605
Income from companies	1,027	1,612	1,741	1,970	2,070	2,170	2,270
Income from lottery organisations	3,386	4,150	3,915	3,500	3,500	3,483	3,150
Income from government grants	32,052	30,116	31,570	30,866	30,781	31,281	29,631
Income from connected non-profit organisations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Income from other non-profit organisations	2,209	1,616	1,100	1,300	1,300	1,300	1,300
<b>Sum of raised income</b>	<b>59,505</b>	<b>57,302</b>	<b>57,994</b>	<b>57,376</b>	<b>57,448</b>	<b>57,971</b>	<b>55,956</b>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>59,505</b>	<b>57,302</b>	<b>57,994</b>	<b>57,376</b>	<b>57,448</b>	<b>57,971</b>	<b>55,956</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>							
<b>Mission objectives</b>							
Objective A Dutch Programmes, Partners and Alliances	19,661	13,929	16,917	16,821	16,883	17,106	16,250
Objective B Information and Awareness	2,548	3,453	3,131	3,122	3,208	3,270	3,286
Objective C Made available to Plan International	30,724	34,053	32,140	31,641	31,390	31,531	30,298
	52,933	51,435	52,188	51,584	51,481	51,907	49,834
Fundraising costs	4,451	4,757	4,819	4,805	4,952	5,038	5,083
Management and control costs	845	992	952	953	980	991	1,004
<b>Sum of expenditures</b>	<b>58,229</b>	<b>57,184</b>	<b>57,959</b>	<b>57,342</b>	<b>57,413</b>	<b>57,936</b>	<b>55,921</b>
Result before financial income & expenditure	1,276	118	35	34	35	35	35
Financial income & expenditure	-41	-	-35	-35	-35	-35	-35
<b>Surplus/deficit of income and expenditure</b>	<b>1,235</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Key ratios</b>							
Mission objectives (as % of the total income)	89.0%	89.8%	90.0%	89.9%	89.6%	89.5%	89.1%
Mission objectives (as % of the total expenditures)	90.9%	89.9%	90.0%	90.0%	89.7%	89.6%	89.1%
Fundraising costs as % of total expenditures	7.6%	8.3%	8.3%	8.4%	8.6%	8.7%	9.1%
Management and control costs as % of total expenditures	1.5%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Average number of employees, in FTEs	113.9	113.0	104.1	103.1	102.4	102.3	102.3
Average number of employees excl. charged FTEs	111.9	110.4	102.2	101.2	100.5	100.4	100.4

## 10.4 FY22 Annual Plan spearheads

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Relating to our programmatic work and primary objectives:

1. The development and start of the implementation of our new FY22-FY25 strategy
2. Strengthening the collaboration with partners and Plan International offices in the programme countries
3. Expanding lobbying and advocacy in programmes, and as a theme within the organisation
4. Promoting gender-transformative work and feminist leadership in our programmes, as well as in the way we work together

Relating to our target audience:

5. Strengthening our brand positioning in line with our new strategy
6. Investing in private fundraising, supported by the right data and analytics
7. Developing the online platform, MyPlan, which is aimed at improving service to sponsors

Relating to our organisation and business operations:

8. Special focus on internal collaboration during and after Covid-19 and implementing the “Office of the future”
9. Strengthening processes for managing and accounting for our programmes
10. Extra focus on data security and GDPR compliance because of more frequent working from home

## 10.5 Explanation of expected income and expenditure

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### Income from private donors

At the end of June 2020, Plan International launched pilots aimed at reversing the declining trend in child-sponsorship income. One of these was a targeted version of a successful international online campaign to recruit child sponsors. Going forward, efforts will also be made to develop new forms of fundraising from private donors so that we can reduce our dependence on door-to-door fundraising. So far, the corona crisis has not resulted in a decline in the number of private donors. However, as we mentioned earlier, this situation will be closely monitored. With regard to the long-term budget, for the time being we are assuming a stabilisation in income raised from private donors.

### Income from companies

Compared with the previous long-term budget, in the new long-term budget, expectations regarding income from companies have, for the time being, been adjusted downwards. In the short term, our focus on fundraising from Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) will not be taken any further. This is because, as a result of the corona pandemic, expectations for SMEs are not good.

### Income from lottery organisations

Actions by third parties pertain to the National Postcode Lottery, from which for the coming years Plan International expects to receive an annual income of €3.2 million. Furthermore, additional project applications will be submitted to the National Postcode Lottery every year.

### **Income from government subsidies**

In addition to the GAA and Yes I Do strategic partnerships, which ended on 31-12-2020, the long-term budget includes the three new strategic partnerships (Break Free!, She Leads and Leaders of Peace). From FY22, implemented cuts to the alliance budgets will affect the long-term budget, in terms of both expenditures and income.

## **10.6 Explanation of the key ratios**

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### **Mission related expenditures**

Mission related expenditures, expressed as a percentage of total expenditures in the long-term budget, are stable in an expected range of 89 to 90 per cent. Plan International maintains a policy of spending received income as quickly as possible in accordance with the objective. This, to keep (temporary) allocated funds and reserves as low as possible and thus limit the level of free reserves.

### **Fundraising costs and administration and control**

For the coming years, a controlled cost development is expected with regard to fundraising costs (8%) and administration and control costs (2%).

### **FTE developments**

In the long-term budget it is clear that efforts are being made to reduce the number of FTEs. On the one hand, this is partly because the temporary increase in FTEs for the acquisition of new strategic partnerships has now come to an end. On the other hand, we are also striving to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the Communication, Marketing and Fundraising, Sponsor Service and Operations departments. Temporary-employment contracts currently underscore the flexibility of Plan International's workforce and this flexibility will remain necessary if we want to be able to quickly react to (unexpected) fluctuations.