

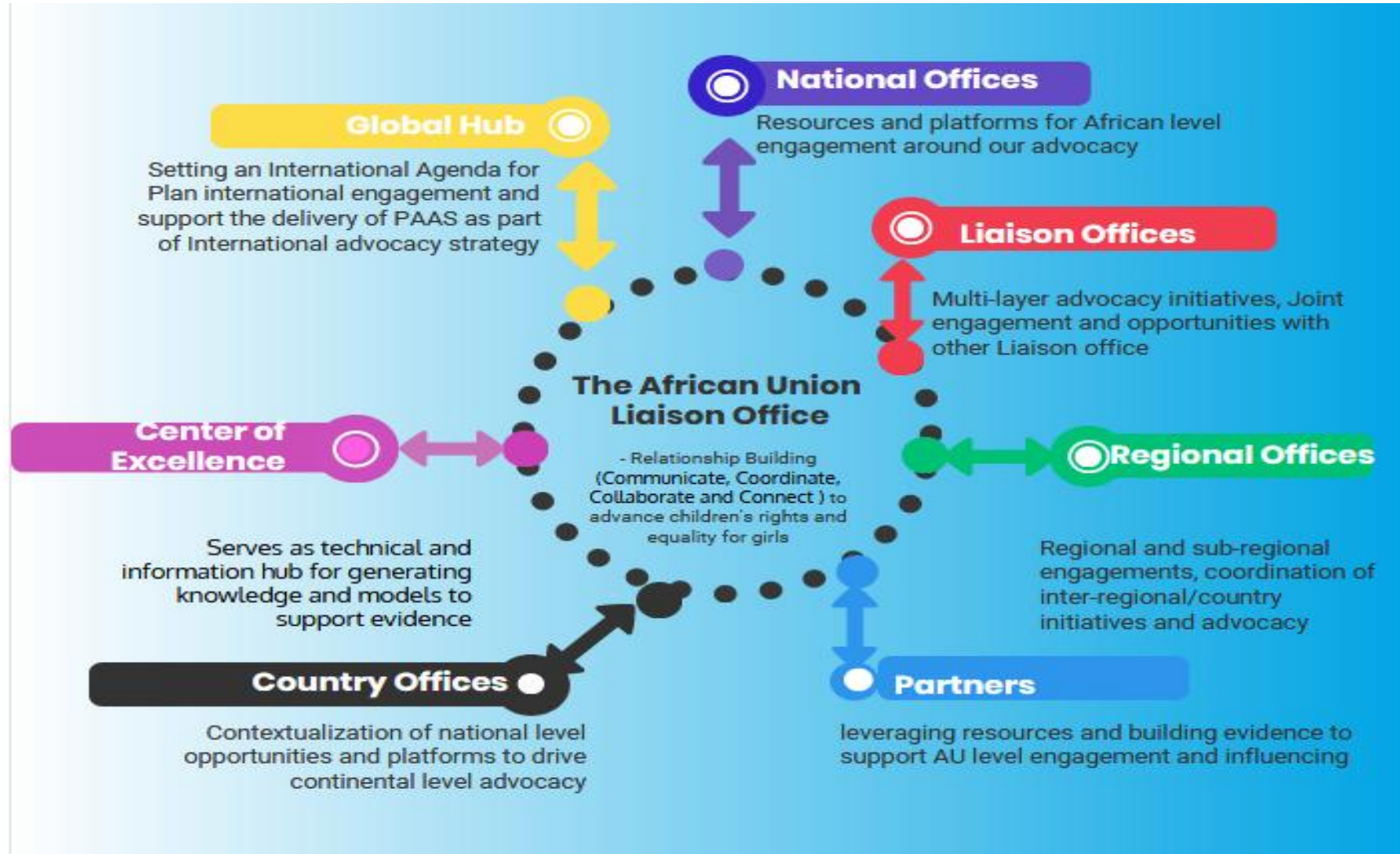


Plan International African Union Liaison Office (AULO)

Setting Future Prospects to Meet Gender Equality in Education in Africa

Emerging Evidence from Plan International's work on Girls'
Education in Africa

Delivery Methodology



AULO Implementation Strategy (2019-2023)

- Informed by the Plan International Pan African Advocacy Strategy (PAAS)
- **Goal:** Decision makers are held to account to advance girls and young women's rights and voices in key Pan-African institutions and in all situations, using human rights instruments and treaties
- **How:** By influencing decisions, actions and processes of the AU and other continental bodies on
 - Ending child marriage and harmful practices and
 - Protection of the rights of girls in crisis

Where are we on Girls Education?

“Not enough has been done to counter the challenges of access to education by girls. This includes campaigns to end FGM and child marriage, and sexual harassment/abuse of girls in schools... If this is addressed, it will ensure girls’ transition in education so that they don’t drop out of school or miss out on quality education.”

Young woman, aged 25-30, Kenya

Some of the gendered issues that prevent girls from learning include:

- School-related gender-based violence
- Lack of comprehensive sexuality education
- Child marriage and FGM
- Discriminatory social norms and unequal attitudes to girls' education, including prioritizing investments in boys' education
- Poverty and the direct or hidden costs of education
- Long distances to travel to access education, and related safety concerns
- School environments that are not gender sensitive
- Emergencies : Natural disasters, conflict and protracted crises can deepen gender inequities in education
- Curricula that do not support girls' futures : Life skills, employability and entrepreneurial skills, and sex education are often missing from the curriculum.
- Girls' voices aren't heard in decision making. Often policy makers and education leaders do not understand the barriers facing adolescent girls, and policies do not reflect their needs and rights.

“Some parents use their girl children to settle debts, thereby forcing them to get married to people they don’t love.”

Adolescent girl, Cameroon¹⁵

“We are burdened with all household tasks. After marriage, we work even more.”

Adolescent girl, Egypt¹⁶

“Girls never feel comfortable using the existing latrines, because they are cracked and in poor condition, so they are afraid to use them. They also worry that boys will walk in on them, because the latrines are shared.”

Adolescent girl, Benin¹⁷

- “My mother told me it would be best to look for a man so he could buy me things I needed, like sanitary pads.” The man’s family paid just \$40 for her to become his wife and a year later, she had a baby boy. (at 15)
- Pauline was forced to stay at home and felt frustrated and alone. But then she joined a local girls’ rights club set up by Plan International and things started to change.
- Before long, she was elected chair of her district club. “I felt so empowered,” she says. “It gave me the confidence to talk to my uncles about how I wanted to go back to school.”
- Pauline is now a nursery school teacher after completing college. at a local college.



- **Girls Get Equal:** Plan International directly supports millions of African girls to get the education they need to transform their lives and secure their futures.
- This means working to ensure free and equal access to quality, safe education for all girls, including in areas affected by emergencies.



Gender Transformative Education: Exemplary Projects in Girls Education in Africa

Girls' Education Challenge: Sierra Leone

- GEC) project has been working in five rural districts since 2013 to reach 21,600 marginalized girls and children with disabilities.
- Through an integrated development approach, we are directly supporting these two vulnerable groups to stay in school through the full education cycle, until they can sit the examinations at the end of Junior Secondary School. So far, the GEC has had a positive effect on creating a girl-friendly environment for learning.
- During the Ebola outbreak by providing increased support to remote learning via radio
- 16-year-old Memunatu – Plan's Inclusion Program - improved accessibility, teachers received training to help them better support children with different needs, and students – as well as the wider community – learned about children's rights



Keeping Girls in School: Kenya



- Plan International Kenya formed a partnership with the Kilifi County Director of Children's Services to launch a mobile application dubbed 'Vurugu Mapper', which helps map cases of abuse against children across communities.
- Unlike in the past when cases took several days to get to the authorities, such cases instantly get to the authorities. The department has so far tracked over 250 cases of child abuse, including those from the most remote of places, where locals are unable to access help from the authorities.



CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

- Promotes gender equality, girls' rights and change in social norms through **youth engagement** and **peer-to-peer groups** with boys and girls aged 10-19.
- Working both with girls and boys, the goal of this program is to empower girls about their rights and to engage boys in a conversation about gender equality, harmful gender norms, their rights and the role they play in being allies for change.
- Also works to foster intergenerational dialogues to ensure that the youth's commitment to gender equality is supported by their families and their communities.
- Joan is committed to ending child marriage in Uganda.
“Champions of Change is one of the greatest things that has ever happened to me,” says Joan



Girls Safe School project in Rwanda

- In order to take a multi-level and holistic approach to the systemic challenges adolescent girls were facing in their communities,
- Builds the personal, social and material assets of girls in order to reduce barriers to accessing quality education.
- This has included the construction of latrines, the distribution of menstrual health kits, the provision of vocational training, the distribution of livestock, and sensitisation meetings for girls to increase their knowledge on SRHR and GBV.
- Plan International in Rwanda has also supported programmes to address parent-child communication around sexuality through village-based forums called “parenting evenings sessions”.



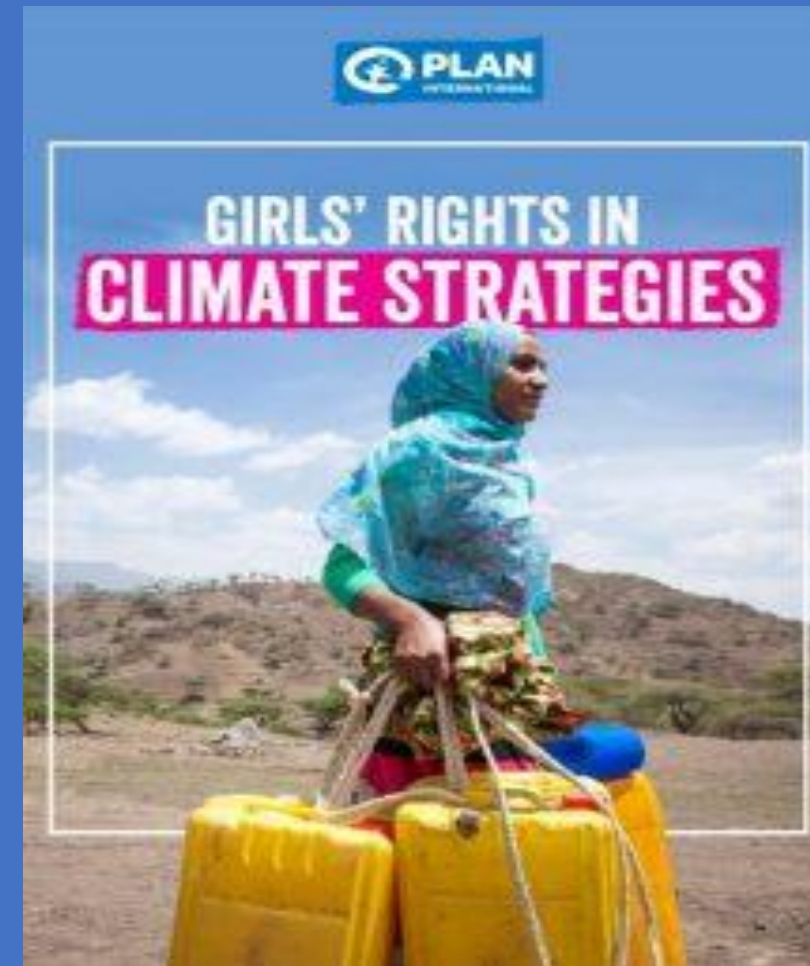
Boarding school in rural Mozambique

- is helping girls challenge expectations and buck the trends that see half of girls married by 18 and only 1 in 10 completing their high school education.



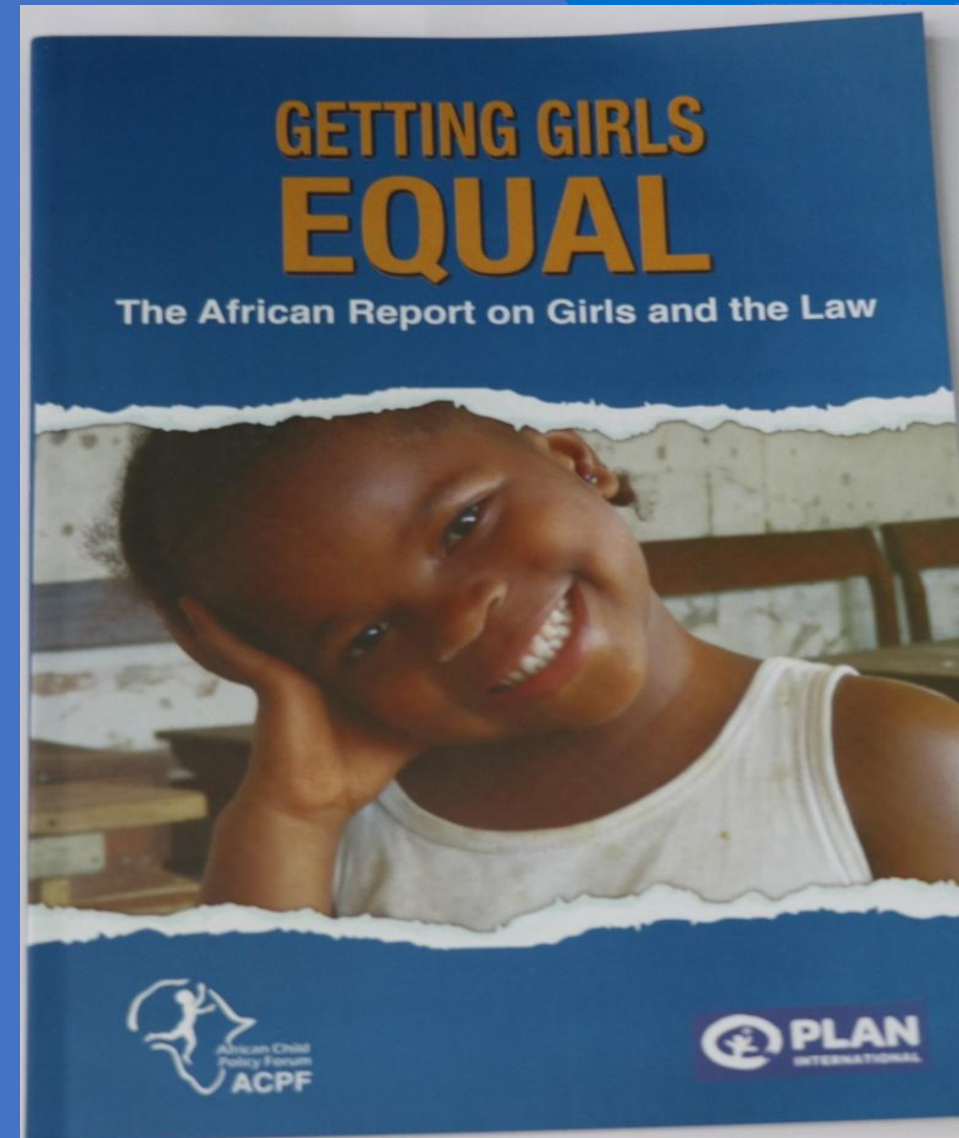
Research & Advocacy

- Plan International is advocating for governments around the world to include gender equality, human rights and the empowerment of women and girls in their climate change policies and ensure girls' education becomes a key component of climate change strategies.
- Girls rights and education are powerful solution to climate change
- In partnership with Brookings Institution and UNICEF



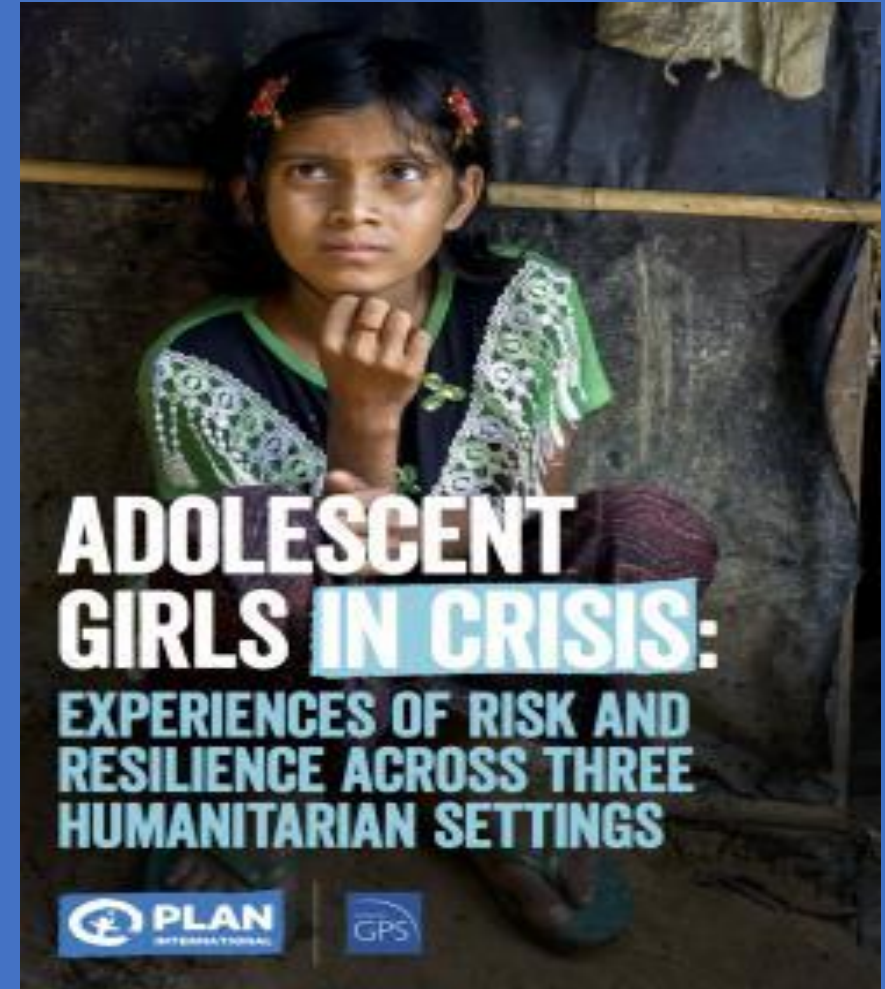
- “*Getting Girls Equal: The African Report on Girls and the Law*” : spotlight the situation of girls in Africa and the need to redouble efforts in law, policy & practice to achieve equity and gender parity for all (ACPF & Plan International)
- A Mobile App for sharing “*Getting Girls Equal: The African Report on Girls and the Law*” and other reports

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.plan.international.aulo>



Adolescent Girls in Crisis: Experiences of risk and resilience across three humanitarian settings

- The Adolescent Girls in Crisis research is drawn directly from the voices and experiences of girls in three of the world's most troubled and volatile locations: South Sudan, the Lake Chad Basin
- "The best thing to do if you want to protect a child, and most importantly a **girl** in an emergency situation, is to ensure his or her **education**" Says Sewa, **Plan International** Delegate at #WD2019.



What needs to be done

The following recommendations are based on what adolescent girls have told us about their experiences and their priorities for the future:

- Increase participation of adolescent girls in decision making
- Ensure adolescent girls' education does not suffer
- Prioritize provision of adolescent girl-friendly health information and services, to include mental health issues and sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Tackle gender-based violence in all its forms to improve security for adolescent girls.

“Enroll us in schools , provide skills acquisition, provide basic amenities (hospitals, electricity, water) so as to help us live our lives better and easier.”

Girl, 13, Lake Chad Basin

Thank you!



 WITH A PENCIL IN HAND, SHE CAN WRITE HER **OWN** FUTURE.

WHEN GIRLS STAY IN SCHOOL LONGER:

-  **GIRLS' INCOME INCREASES**
-  **LIKELIHOOD OF CHILD MARRIAGE DECREASES**
-  **CHILD SURVIVAL RATE INCREASES**
-  **THE COUNTRY'S GDP INCREASES**