



Management response to the mid-term evaluation of DGD-funded Programme 2017-2021 “We strive for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls” in Vietnam

Title of Report	Mid-term Evaluation of PIB’s multi-country programme (2017 – 2021) - Country Report Vietnam	Title of the project	We strive for a just world that advances children's rights and equality for girls
Date of Report	20/01/2020	Time period of the project	January 2017 – December 2021
Offices involved	Plan International Vietnam, Plan International Belgium		
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Completeness and quality assessment	<p>The Plan International federation provides all its National Organisations and Country Offices with guidelines and tools to serve as a guide to support the development of complete, clear and useful evaluation reports. As it is Plan International Belgium’s ambition to both comply with its legal obligations and consider them as learning opportunities, Plan International Belgium, together with the Country Offices involved, has taken several steps to assess the completeness and the quality of the mid-term evaluation of its 5-year programme funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation. Plan International Belgium staff jointly completed a completeness assessment form as well as a quality assessment form. In doing so, the feedback received from the Country Offices was also taken into consideration. Both forms were created by the Plan International federation and are to be used in a systematic way, across the federation, for baseline studies, mid-term and final evaluations as well as research. This exercise highlighted successes and challenges regarding the evaluation products and evaluation process. It raised several questions that are being discussed internally and with the consultants. The results of these discussions will be</p>		

compiled. They will feed into the capacity building of BNO's staff and the preparation of the final evaluation of the same programme and will be used to strengthen Plan International Belgium's evaluation system.

Evaluation criteria & Question(s)	Recommendation(s)	Acceptance by Management (Accept, Partially accept or Reject)	Comments and Key follow up action(s)	Timing	Responsibility
A. Relevance					
<p>Relevance</p> <p>How relevant are the outcomes, especially taking into consideration changes within the organisation such as the new global strategy and its focus on gender-transformative programming and influencing?</p> <p>Is the Vietnamese Woman Union supporting a gender transformative approach toward ECCE? How could Plan International</p>	<p>A1. Continue the process of research and analysis regarding prevailing gender norms and the potential of gender transformative approaches in the current programme. The analysis needs to expose what are prevailing gender norms, attitudes, behaviours, beliefs and what is the influence of these on lives of girls and boys, women and men. Do not limit the "exercise" to the BNO-programme but consider it as a holistic exercise that will need to inform all programmes implemented</p>	<p>Partially accept</p>	<p>This recommendation is only partially accepted because Plan International Vietnam (PIV) conducted research and analysis on gender before it started this programme, for example: PIV developed its Country Strategic Plan with a focus on gender and has mainstreamed gender in all its programmes; PIV completed a desk review on the gaps between boys and girls in the context of education (incl. violence at school).</p> <p>Additionally, in the context of this programme, PIV conducted research on gender such as the Parenting Model Review to look</p>		

strengthen this dynamic ?	by Plan International Vietnam (PIV).		<p>at the role of fathers and mothers in childcare and education.</p> <p>However, PIV acknowledges the need to further conduct research on the question and will¹:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study factors associated with the girls' leadership index of Vietnam; - Study how COVID-19 has impacted the education of ethnic minority children in Vietnam, with a focus on girls. 	<p>May to July 2020</p> <p>May to July 2020</p>	<p>PIV (M&E Specialist to coordinate and Programme Development Manager to take the lead in research)</p>
	A2. Invest in (additional) discussions and analysis that ensure the above-mentioned analysis is executed in a participatory way, i.e. (also) done by the community members themselves, the volunteers... Make the analysis part of a	Partially accept	In its daily work, PIV promotes a community-based development approach that focuses on strengthening the voice of children and local communities. At several stages of the project cycle (project design, implementation, evaluation), children, teachers, community volunteers and other		

¹ Please note that the suggested actions are not directly related to the DGD programme, but to the work of Plan International Vietnam as a whole.

	community-based approach (and avoid having only an external study): empower communities to make the analysis themselves, so that they also will be able to follow-up on changes/results (i.e. qualitative research at grassroots level)		community members are invited to participate. In the next 2 years, the programme will increase the number of community members actively taking part in the activities. The programme staff will introduce them to some of the programme monitoring and evaluation tools. Community members will be invited to assess the interventions and provide recommendations at the regular team meetings of community volunteers and teachers.	September 2020 for the training, October 2020 – December 2021 for community volunteers and teachers to put it into practice	PIV (Programme Coordinator) in charge of the content for the training, VWU (Programme Coordinator) in charge of the logistics
	A3. From this analysis, a baseline situation will be revealed and relevant gender and gender transformative objectives can be set (and associated indicators identified).	Reject	This cannot be done in the current programme since baseline situation and objectives were defined at the start of programme implementation in 2017. However, this recommendation will be duly considered for future gender transformative programming. In addition, as mentioned above, PIV developed its Country Strategic Plan with a focus on		

			gender and has mainstreamed gender in all its programmes.		
	A4. The findings of the analysis can already give shape to a programme strategy that needs to ensure that gender transformative programming is understood and supported at all levels.	Reject	<p>This cannot be done in the current programme since baseline situation and objectives were defined at the start of programme implementation in 2017. However, this recommendation will be duly considered for future gender transformative programming.</p> <p>However, to ensure that gender transformative programming is understood and supported at all levels, we identified the following follow up action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - During the programme’s annual review meeting with all partners, the programme team will present Plan International’s gender transformative programming strategy. 	January-February 2021	VWU, supported by PIV (Programme Coordinator)
	A5. Close monitoring of the quality of the services provided by the VWU-volunteers and other	Accept	During the first three years of programme implementation, various programme models were successfully piloted. The		

	people trained by the programme.		<p>focus for the remaining two years of programme implementation will be on monitoring and coaching through field visits for purposes of quality assurance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up monthly field visits for monitoring and coaching (PIV and its partners, VWU and L&L, will alternate) - Invite local stakeholders at province, district and commune level to contribute to M&E activities. 	<p>May 2020 – October 2021</p> <p>January – November 2021</p>	<p>PIV (Programme Coordinator, Finance Officer, and staff at province level), L&L (Programme Coordinator and Programme Accountant), VWU (Programme Coordinator, Programme Officer)</p> <p>Teachers, commune representatives</p>
	A6. Elaborate a (stakeholder) mapping of nationally available expertise on gender and on	Accept	In March 2020, PIV initiated a mapping of national organisations to assess their knowledge and experience in 3 priority areas of PIV’s strategy: gender-sensitive parenting,	March to June 2020	PIV (Field Manager and Programme Manager, supported by M&E and Programme Coordinators)

	gender transformative programming specifically.		<p>preventing SGBV and youth empowerment. This mapping enables PIV to identify potential partners with the required gender expertise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalise the mapping; - Update the mapping after one year. <p>In addition, a stakeholder analysis will be completed by Plan International Belgium together with Plan International Vietnam, when designing the next programme.</p>	<p>June 2020</p> <p>July to September 2021</p>	
B. Gender					
<p>1. To what extent do current interventions contribute to gender equality?</p> <p>2. Which (f)actors restrict steps forward in terms of gender equality?</p>	<p>B1. Start-up participatory and in-depth analysis at the level of the parenting groups, what are prevailing gender norms and what would parents like to see changed?</p>	<p>Partially Accept</p>	<p>The programme is based on participatory approaches for community development; participation is therefore inherent to the functioning of the parenting groups (encouraging parents to discuss problems and identify solutions themselves). However, we acknowledge that further in-</p>		

<p>3. How can the programme be adjusted to influence social structures surrounding gender roles and perceptions?</p>			<p>depth reflection and analysis could be done around gender norms within the parenting groups. We therefore identified the following action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise discussions on gender in the parenting groups (based on the module on gender included in the guide for parenting groups). 	<p>September 2020 – October 2021</p>	<p>Community volunteers to facilitate the discussions</p>
	<p>B2. Include gender specific indicators going beyond disaggregated data in the programme monitoring.</p>	<p>Reject</p>	<p>This cannot be done in the current programme. However, this recommendation will be duly considered when designing the future programme.</p>		
	<p>B3. Participation of fathers: Whilst fathers are encouraged to participate in the parenting group meetings, no specific strategies are implemented to attract more fathers. Consider testing some strategies that may have better results attracting</p>	<p>Accept</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide training to partners on men’s engagement in ECCD 	<p>October – December 2020</p>	<p>PIV (Programme Coordinator & Technical Lead) in charge of the content, VWU in charge of the logistics</p>

	fathers, for example specific trainings, specific themes addressed towards fathers, rescheduling timing of meetings, include trainings were fathers and mothers are “obliged” to participate simultaneously, male role models...				
	B4. During DRR/CCA activities, the relation between impact of climate change and unequal power relations between men and women can be introduced to and discussed with the participants. Also, the role of women in community resilience and coping strategies can be highlighted during a participative reflection on (perceived) roles of men and women in DRR/CCA.	Partially accept	<p>During the DRR/CCA activities, the programme identified women as a vulnerable group. In order to make sure that women’s voices are heard, we identify the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building for women on DRR/CCA (mainstreamed into village meetings) - Promotion of women’s initiatives for environmental protection - Capacity building for village leaders on how to facilitate discussions on DRR/CCA and on how to encourage the participation of both men 	September – December 2021	L&L (Programme Assistant) in charge of providing the training content, District People’s Committee in charge of organising it; community members to carry out DRR/CCA initiatives and share their experiences, L&L (Programme Assistant) to provide technical support, VWU

			<p>and women in DRR/CCA activities</p> <p>The relation between the impact of climate change and unequal power relations between men and women could be further discussed in the framework of the next programme.</p>		(Programme Officer) to coordinate
C. Sustainability					
<p>1. To what extent can we expect implementing partners and government institutions to sustain the interventions and achievements after the end of the programme (in terms of technical skills, financial means and prioritisation)? Where will additional support be needed?</p> <p>2. How is the sustainability</p>	<p>C1. The current programme involves many different entities for the implementation of all programme activities, including VWU agencies at national and local levels, L&L as a technical partner, DOETs, BoETs, PIU, commune authorities. PIU is responsible for harmonisation, avoiding overlap and creating synergies of different (Plan) programmes at local levels. PIU need to be strengthened in terms of human resources: number</p>	Reject	<p>PIV does play its role in the coordination of all programmes at province and district level to avoid overlaps and create synergies between the different (Plan) programmes. Since this programme has 2 components and involves many stakeholders at all levels (from the commune up to the central level), the programme team developed a Programme Manual to clearly identify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and to coordinate the 2 components in order to be more efficient. Also, it is clearly indicated how the results of this</p>		

improved by the advocacy for national-level scale-up of the various approaches of the programme?	of staff and capacity to take up full responsibility for local level harmonisation		programme contribute to the other programmes and the strategy of PIV at the province level.		
	C2. L&L as technical expert: to develop a “business model” to become consultant regarding DRR/CCA, i.e. capitalisation of their knowledge and selling their expertise.	Reject	This is an interesting recommendation for L&L on how to make their organisation grow but it is not clear how this will improve the sustainability of our programme results.		
	C3. VWU as implementing actor: needs to make continuous investments in capacity building at local levels to ensure technical capacities at local levels. A clear plan needs to be developed to clarify who will be responsible for quality control of service delivery when the programme ends or in non-programme sites, and what the quality criteria are? If Plan International Vietnam	Accept	<p>PIV has developed an M&E manual that describes quality criteria and quality control mechanisms and includes quality monitoring tools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local volunteers will be trained on quality and coached on the operationalisation of the control mechanisms and tools. Other local volunteers, who have already been trained on the manual, will be provided 	Quarterly 2020 & 2021	PIV (Programme Assistant), VWU (programme management team), L&L (Programme Assistant) to provide training and coaching in programme sites; VWU to take the lead

	considers the post-hoc study in project regions where Plan International Vietnam has been present before an analysis of the remaining technical capacities of local staff and volunteers can be part of this study.		with more coaching from PIV and VWU; - PIV and its partners will develop an exit strategy to ensure the sustainability of the programme models. The strategy will clarify who will be responsible for quality control of service delivery.	October 2021	in non-programme sites PIV (Programme Coordinator) in collaboration with the partners VWU and L&L
D. Community Based Approaches (CBA)					
How do PIB's participative approaches (community-based approaches) contribute to increased sustainability and quality service delivery?	D1. Continue the CBA and partnership with VWU because this creates direct linkages and thus cooperation with direct ECCE beneficiaries (parents and their children)	Accept	- Continue the community-based approach and the partnership with VWU.	Continuous	PIV (Programme Coordinator)
	D2.1. Make the empowerment goals more specific: What does it mean, what are the different components of empowerment, how can stakeholders themselves define their proper empowerment goals?	Reject	Empowerment is key to the community-based approaches that are successfully implemented in this programme, and the different components of empowerment have been considered. At this stage, within the scope of the current programme, it is not feasible to go through a process		

			with all stakeholders to define their empowerment goals. However, when preparing the future programme, stakeholders will be invited to discuss empowerment, its different components and which empowerment goals could be set.		
	D2.2. Make the empowerment goals more specific: consider indicators that are more directly linked with the empowerment objective in the logical framework?	Reject	The creation of new indicators related to empowerment is not feasible at this stage. However, the recommendation will be duly considered when designing the future programme, and a discussion with all stakeholders as described above should take place.		
	D3.1. Continue to invest in empowerment of parents via the parenting groups: Introducing a participatory baseline/context analysis, group action plan, participatory assessment plan	Partially accept	As explained above, empowerment is key to the community-based approaches that are successfully implemented in this programme, and participation is inherent to the functioning of the parenting groups. However, we acknowledge that the issue of the empowerment of parents		

			<p>via the parenting groups could be explored further.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss how all parties involved understand this recommendation and how they would want to work on parents' empowerment given the time left and the resources available. 	September 2020 – October 2021	PIV (Programme Coordinator and field staff), VWU (programme team) and L&L (programme team)
	<p>D3.2. Continue to invest in empowerment of parents via the parenting groups: (Better) linking parenting groups with other community initiatives, for example to link participants to initiatives that work towards components of empowerment that are not specifically integrated in the current programme approach, for example the economic empowerment component</p>	Partially accept	<p>In the programme proposal, it is mentioned that “ethnic minorities will be strongly empowered to claim the rights of their young children to access high-quality care and education”. Therefore, empowerment of the parents is not an objective as such, but a means to an end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on the actions following recommendations D2.1. and D3.1., the PIV programme team wishes to explore whether the other components of empowerment would help parents improve ECCD for their children. To start with, 	May 2020 – November 2021	PIV and L&L to be the technical lead, VWU to coordinate in the field

			the team will work on economic empowerment and introduce more livelihood models on (agri-) nutrition to the parenting groups (e.g. raising ducks and chickens for eggs and meat in order to improve child nutrition).		
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Corrigendum

In Annex 3 of the Vietnam country report written by South Research, the logical framework with updated indicator values was based on a draft report on the data collection, which was shared with South Research before the data validation workshop. However, Plan International Vietnam eventually decided, after discussion with its implementing partners, to include the data nutrition rate calculated by Plan International Vietnam rather than the data published by the authorities. Therefore, the nutrition rate is finalized as follows:

Indicators	Baseline survey results	Midterm targets	Midterm review results
Child stunting rate (Under 5 years of age) in the targeted communes	25.68% Sin Ho: 28.81 KonPlong: 19.02	20%	22.2% Sin Ho: 19.5% KonPlong: 25.4%

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