

# Launch of “Because I am a Girl” Campaign



Millions of girls across the world are missing from classrooms due to child marriage, violence, discrimination and poverty. This is a major violation of their right to education and a huge waste of young potential.

Plan believes that girls' education is the keystone of sustainable development. Plan's experience in Bangladesh and its other programme countries in rest of Asia, Africa and the Americas, shows that supporting girls' education is one of the single best investments the world can make to break the cycle of poverty.

When girls reach their full potential, through improved status, better healthcare and education, it is the most effective development tool for society as a whole.

An educated girl is less vulnerable to violence, less likely to marry and have children when still a child herself. Her earning power is increased and she is more likely to invest her income for the benefit of her family, community and country. It is not an exaggeration to say educating girls can save lives and transform futures.

Plan's Because I am Girl campaign is a global movement for girls. It is a fight for securing girls' right to an education and equal chances in life. It is a fight to compel global leaders to give the power of education to millions of girls who have the potential to lift themselves and their communities out of poverty. Educated girls can change the destiny of our planet.

**Nigel Chapman**  
CEO  
Plan International



Today Plan launches a global campaign "Because I am a Girl (BIAAG)" in 68 countries including Bangladesh. The campaign aims to empower millions of girls by helping them acquire education and unleash their strength to change their life and the world around them.

In Bangladesh Plan places stopping child marriage at the centre of the campaign. When one in every five girls gets married before they are 18, as is the case in Bangladesh, it has much greater implications than a large number of infant mortality and pregnancy related deaths. Child marriage also imposes a huge economic cost through productivity loss as well as a social cost as it reinforces the prevalent power relations and deeply entrenched gender biases against girls.

We want to change the situation, but we cannot do it alone. Nothing short of a social movement would do. Through this campaign we are thus striving to engage different sections of the society, particularly boys and girls, opinion and religious leaders, community leaders, media and most importantly the government, get them share our belief and work in unison. Bangladesh already has many achievements to its credit and as it strives to graduate into a middle-income nation by 2020 it needs to sort out its development priorities - girls' empowerment must feature in that priority list.

**Myrna Remata Evora Mingming**  
Country Director  
Plan Bangladesh

## Children's Charter for the Prevention of Child Marriage

### Appeal to the Family

1. Birth Registration for a child must be completed within 45 days of the child's birth
2. Family members must discourage child labor
3. Family members must not apply any pressure on a child for marriage until they have reached the appropriate age

### Appeal to the Society

1. Teachers should be friendly with children and encourage learning
2. Teachers should discuss child marriage at Parents' meeting and take necessary preventive action against it
3. Teachers must not draw differences between girls and boys
4. Kazi or Purohit (marriage registrar) must not register marriages without seeing proper birth certificates

### Appeal to the Local Government

1. The Union Parishad will assist in the creation of organizations for children and child protection groups to prevent child marriage and intervene when they come to know of any incident of child marriage
2. UP Chairman will circulate necessary mobile numbers in the area (e.g. UNO, Upazila Women and Children Affairs Officer and Officer-in-Charge of respective police station )
3. Every year the Union Parishad will collect data on child marriage in their area and make them available at the Union Parishad information centre

### Appeal to the State

1. Ensure a more proactive role of the police in preventing child marriage
2. Play a strong role in the implementation of appropriate education and action on eve teasing
3. Include vocational courses in the school curriculum
4. The topic of the negative consequences of child marriage should be incorporated in text books to raise awareness

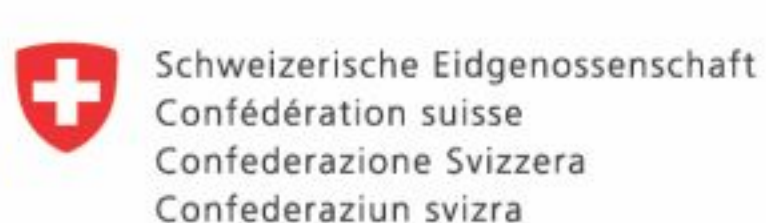
Note: The original Charter was in Bangla. Care was taken to keep the English version close to the original content



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