Terms of Reference

DGD 22-26 Programme, Thematic Evaluation

1. About Plan International

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We believe in the power and potential of every child, but this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination, and its girls who are most affected. Working together with children, young people, our supporters and partners, we strive for a just world, tackling the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood, and we enable children to prepare for – and respond to – crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national and global levels using our reach, experience and knowledge. We have been building powerful partnerships for children for over 85 years and are now active in more than 75 countries. Read more about Plan International's Global Strategy: **All Girls Standing Strong** at https://plan-international.org/strategy

Plan International Belgium (PIB) is an independent Belgian NGO and a member of the Plan International federation, which champions equality for girls and children's rights in over 80 countries. PIB has been in existence for over 40 years and carries out activities in Belgium with a range of audiences: children, teenagers and young people, schools and teachers, towns and local authorities, sports clubs, private companies, policymakers, as well as other stakeholders in international cooperation. PIB is governed by four governing bodies, which ensure the effective fulfilment of its mission. At the end of the 2026 financial year, Plan International Belgium had 70 employees.

Overview of the Participating Country Offices

The evaluation covers seven Plan International Country Offices (COs): **Benin, Bolivia, Ecuador, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Vietnam**, operating across diverse geographical, socio-economic contexts in Africa, Latin America and Asia. While each CO has its own strategic priorities and areas of intervention, all share a commitment to advancing children's rights and gender equality, particularly by addressing the barriers faced by adolescent girls and young women. Across these countries, persistent challenges include gender-based violence, harmful social and gender norms, unequal access to education, limited economic opportunities and barriers to sexual and reproductive health services. These challenges are often compounded by poverty, geographical inequalities and social exclusion, particularly among rural populations, ethnic minorities and other marginalised groups.

The COs share several **common programmatic priorities**, notably protection from violence, inclusive and quality education, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and youth economic empowerment. Their strategies also emphasise the importance of strengthening protective environments, engaging families and communities, promoting young people's participation and working with local institutions and civil society organisations. However, the relative emphasis on these priorities varies according to national contexts and the specific challenges faced by target populations. In **Benin and Senegal**, educational exclusion and barriers to youth employment are important areas of intervention, alongside protection and gender equality. In **Niger and Tanzania**, child, early and forced marriage, harmful gender norms and girls' access to education and health services are particularly prominent concerns. In **Bolivia and Ecuador**, programming combines protection, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and economic empowerment with a strong focus on humanitarian preparedness and climate resilience. In **Vietnam**, priorities include gender-responsive parenting, gender-based violence prevention and girls' life and vocational skills, with particular attention to inequalities affecting ethnic minority communities.

Beyond these thematic differences, the COs operate in different institutional and policy environments and vary in their geographical coverage, target populations, partnerships and implementation approaches. Although several countries have adopted legal and policy frameworks promoting gender equality and children's rights, gaps in access to services, institutional capacities and the implementation of protective measures remain important challenges. These contextual differences shape how each CO translates Plan International's broader mission into country-specific strategies and interventions, while providing opportunities for shared learning on approaches to advancing girls' rights and young people's empowerment.

2. Project Background

The impact sought by Plan International is a society in which the rights of children, adolescents and young people are fully realized while respecting gender equality. To achieve this, Plan International aims to ensure the economic and social empowerment of adolescents and young people, especially adolescents and young women.

The “DGD 22-26 Programme”, named after its main donor, the Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD), aims to contribute towards the economic and social empowerment of adolescents and young people, especially adolescent girls and young women. The DGD 22-26 programme started in 2022 and will run until 2026. It is implemented in 8 countries (Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Ecuador, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Vietnam) by the Plan International Country Offices and includes over 14 local partners and networks.

The DGD 22-26 programme supports the empowerment of adolescents and young people through different paths of change: (i) access to educational opportunities and continuation of their education; (ii) access to sustainable economic opportunities; (iii)

protection from all forms of violence; and (iv) participation in decisions and issues that concern them and their involvement in initiatives for gender equality.

These main paths of change go through 3 transversal approaches: (i) active participation of adolescents and young people as actors of change; (ii) contribution to changing gender social norms; and (iii) support from parents, communities, and political actors. The involvement and commitment of key partners and stakeholders in the private sector, education, and protection is essential to achieve these different changes. These paths of change are pictured in programme's theory of change available in annex.

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The evaluation covers eight Plan International Country Offices (COs): **Belgium**, **Benin, Bolivia, Ecuador, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Vietnam**, operating across diverse geographical, socio-economic contexts in Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia. While each CO has its own strategic priorities and areas of intervention, all share a commitment to advancing children's rights and gender equality, particularly by addressing the barriers faced by adolescent girls and young women. Across these countries, persistent challenges include gender-based violence, harmful social and gender norms, unequal access to education, limited economic opportunities and barriers to sexual and reproductive health services. These challenges are often compounded by poverty, geographical inequalities and social exclusion, particularly among rural populations, ethnic minorities and other marginalised groups.

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Overview of DGD 2022-2026 programmes:

The DGD 2022–2026 programme is implemented across seven partner countries, Benin, Bolivia, Ecuador, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Vietnam and the national office (NO) of Belgium, with the shared objective of advancing the economic and social empowerment of adolescents and young people, particularly adolescent girls and young women. While each country programme is adapted to its specific context, all contribute to the programme's overarching ambition of enabling young people to exercise their rights, access opportunities and thrive in protective and gender-equal environments.

Across the eight countries, interventions are organised around **four interconnected areas of change: education, economic empowerment, protection from violence and youth participation**. Common approaches include improving access to safe and inclusive learning environments, developing vocational and entrepreneurial skills, addressing harmful gender norms, and engaging families, communities and institutions in supporting young people's rights and opportunities. Strengthening the capacities of local implementing partners and promoting collaboration among stakeholders are also recurring elements across the country programmes.

However, the relative emphasis on these areas and the approaches adopted vary across countries. In Benin, Niger, Senegal, Tanzania and Vietnam, the programmes combine education, economic empowerment and protection interventions, although their specific target groups and delivery mechanisms differ. Bolivia places greater emphasis on vocational training, entrepreneurship and life skills, while also integrating environmental protection and climate change adaptation. In Ecuador, the programme gives particular attention to youth participation and leadership, alongside economic autonomy and the prevention of gender-based violence, early pregnancy and forced unions. In Vietnam, interventions specifically target ethnic minority adolescents and young people, while in Niger, particular attention is given to out-of-school girls and young women. In Belgium, the project seeks to empower children, adolescents and youth, especially girls, as agents of change by strengthening their knowledge, leadership and activism on children's rights, gender equality, participation and protection from gender-based violence, while mobilizing schools, civil society and decision-makers to support these issues within a framework of international solidarity. To achieve this, the project combines three complementary approaches: (1) training

and accompanying young activists, volunteers and teachers; (2) creating an enabling environment through schools, partnerships, advocacy and awareness-raising; and (3) co-creating youth-led campaigns and policy recommendations with young people in Belgium and partner countries. Its methodology is relying on participation, global citizenship education, the “Champions of Change” approach, peer exchanges, and dialogue between young people and decision-makers.

The programmes also differ in their geographical scope, target populations, implementation periods and partnerships. Some interventions focus on specific municipalities or rural communities, while others operate across wider districts or provinces. Despite these differences, the country programmes share a commitment to addressing the individual, social and institutional barriers that limit young people's empowerment, providing a common framework for assessing results and drawing lessons across different implementation contexts.

3. Evaluation Focus

3.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

The DGD 22-26 programme will end on 31st of December 2026. In this framework, an Endline Study and Final Evaluation was commissioned in each country and was conducted or is now being implemented. These evaluations rely on a mixed-methods, participatory approach. They have a dual purpose of accountability and learning: it will measure all programme indicators against baseline and target values, assess programme performance against the OECD-DAC criteria (relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability), and generate lessons on what worked, for whom, under what conditions, and why. Findings will inform future programming, strengthen accountability to stakeholders and donors, and contribute to organizational learning on youth empowerment, employability, protection and gender equality.

Plan International Belgium wishes to complement these evaluations at country-level with a thematic evaluation at programme level. This thematic evaluation will heavily rely on data collected through the abovementioned endline studies and final evaluations. Hence, we will refer to this MERL initiative as a **synthesis of evaluation.**

This synthesis of evaluation will include **3 components:**

- **Economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women (Thematic Synthesis of Evaluation)**, focusing on the activities implemented to strengthen their skills, capacities, and technical competencies;
- **Support to and collaboration with Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms (Thematic Synthesis of Evaluation),** focusing on the activities

implemented to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the CBCPMs and their links with formal protection systems and specialized services;

- **Leave No One Behind (LNOB) (Learning Trajectory),** focusing on approaches and mechanisms implemented to include the most vulnerable and marginalized adolescent girls and youth women in our activities.

Component 1: Economic empowerment of adolescent girls and young women

As the DGD 2022-2026 Programme approaches the end of its implementation phase, Plan International seeks to assess both the effectiveness of its economic empowerment approaches for adolescent girls and young women and the sustainability of its achievements. The evaluation will examine what has worked well, what has worked less well, and under what conditions in relation to: (i) the development of soft and hard skills that support employability, entrepreneurship and economic participation; and (ii) access to, creation and strengthening of economic activities that contribute to improved economic well-being, autonomy and resilience. Attention will be paid to the extent to which these outcomes are likely to be sustained beyond the period of direct programme support, as well as to the factors that have enabled or constrained their continuation over time.

The evaluation will assess the sustainability of results achieved for participants, as well as the sustainability of the programme's approaches, capacities, partnerships and systems. It will explore how sustainability considerations were integrated throughout programme implementation, the contribution of different stakeholders to maintaining results, and the mechanisms that support the continuation of benefits after programme closure.

In addition, the evaluation will look beyond the DGD 2022-2026 Programme by reviewing relevant projects and programmes implemented by other actors in the sector. This comparative perspective will help identify innovative and promising approaches to skills development, employability, entrepreneurship and sustainability from which Plan International and its partners may draw inspiration. The evaluation will be based on a review of programme documentation, monitoring data, evaluations and studies from the DGD programme and comparable interventions, complemented by online and in-person consultations with key stakeholders, with the aim of generating practical lessons and recommendations to strengthen the long-term impact and sustainability of future interventions.

Component 2: Support to and collaboration with Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms

Looking at the activities implemented in the framework of the DGD 22-26 programme, this evaluation will examine how these approaches contribute to preventing violence

and harmful practices - especially **Child, early and forced marriage and unions (CEFMU)** - affecting children, adolescents and young people, especially adolescent girls, and facilitate safe disclosure, referral and access to appropriate support. The evaluation will identify the **conditions needed to sustain** these protection functions beyond programme support, including local ownership, inclusive participation, institutional commitment, adequate resources, supervision, and accountability.

Based on a desk review of the endline studies and final evaluation results, the evaluation will examine how these mechanisms operate within their contexts, how they connect with formal protection systems, and the obstacles affecting their ability to fulfil their responsibilities. The meta evaluation will look at **innovative ways** – within and beyond the DGD 22-26 programme - of supporting CBCPMs to become more effective and more efficient, going beyond classical capacity building of its members via the same type of trainings overtime.

The findings will inform **practical recommendations** for strengthening the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of community-based protection mechanisms and their relationships with formal services in future programming. These recommendations will identify how to maintain essential protection functions beyond programme funding, including through sustainable financing, continued capacity development and supervision, and clearly agreed responsibilities among communities, local partners and formal services. They will be directly relevant for the next multi-country programme funded by the same donor and running from 2027 and 2031.

Component 3: Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)

As the DGD 22-26 Programme is reaching the end of its implementation phase, Plan International seeks to consolidate lessons learned **regarding the application of the Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) principle across different programme components and country contexts.**

The desk review and learning trajectory will focus on understanding how the DGD 2022-2026 Programme has operationalised the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle in reaching, engaging and empowering adolescents and young people facing multiple and intersecting forms of exclusion, with particular attention to girls and young women. The review will examine the extent to which the programme has successfully identified, reached and supported vulnerable and marginalised groups, including adolescents and young people from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, girls facing multiple vulnerabilities, young people with disabilities, and other excluded groups identified within each country context. Particular attention will be paid to how **intersectionality** has been considered throughout programme implementation, the barriers faced by different groups, and the strategies used to address these barriers and promote meaningful participation, empowerment and access to opportunities.

The review will analyse the LNOB approaches, methodologies and partnerships developed under the programme, assessing the **role of schools, youth**

organisations, community actors, specialised service providers and other stakeholders in facilitating access to and participation of marginalised groups. It will identify enabling factors, implementation challenges, gaps, trade-offs and lessons learned, as well as **organisational, programmatic and methodological conditions** that have contributed to effective LNOB implementation. Attention will also be given to **the relationship between LNOB and Global Citizenship Education**, exploring how issues such as gender inequality, participation, safety, discrimination and unequal access to opportunities can serve as entry points for strengthening GCE approaches among marginalised adolescents and young people.

The learning trajectory will be designed as a participatory process involving Plan International teams and partner organisations. Through a gender-transformative and human rights-based lens, it will document effective practices, innovations and promising approaches that have contributed to inclusive participation and meaningful engagement. Beyond identifying what worked and what did not work, the process will generate **practical lessons, tools, guiding principles and recommendations** to strengthen the systematic integration of LNOB considerations throughout programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Ultimately, the exercise aims to contribute to a more evidence-based approach for reaching those adolescents and young people who are most at risk of exclusion, discrimination, violence and unequal access to opportunities, while informing future programming across different contexts.

3.2 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

This synthesis of evaluation should answer between 5 and 10 questions under each component. The final list of questions will be discussed at inception stage and agreed upon with the consultants. Below is the list of questions that have been identified as relevant and will be the basis for the discussion.:

Component 1: Youth economic empowerment

- How effective were the economic empowerment activities (training, starting kits and other specific activities) in the DGD 22-26 programme?
- How can we improve the tools, approaches and methodologies used in the DGD 22-26 programme to ensure (all) girls and young women economic empowerment (including girls in a vulnerable situation/from marginalized groups)?
- What are innovative programmatic approaches for youth economic empowerment in low-income countries (beyond the DGD 22-26 programme and beyond PI's work)?

- What are the main gaps in terms of girls and young women economic empowerment? and how are these addressed?

- What conditions enable adolescent girls and young women to convert economic empowerment support into meaningful and lasting economic opportunities (across diff. contexts) looking at:
    - pathway constraints: what blocks/helps to go from learning (in trainings etc.) to entry to work (employment, self-employment, etc.),
    - contextual constraints: barriers on different level across different contexts,
    - enabling factors: what really supports employment or self-employment of young people/young women ex. childcare, supportive family, government help etc.?
- What is the relevant follow-up and support we must provide after the trainings, to deliver and sustain impact? What are the best practices and the weaknesses?

- What support can local institutions, employers, financial service providers and partners realistically sustain after programme closure?

Component 2: Protection for adolescent girls and young women

Effectiveness of the CBCPMs supported by the DGD 22-26 programme:

- What does the available evidence demonstrate about the contribution of community-based protection mechanisms to preventing violence, abuse, exploitation and harmful practices, including CEFMU?
- How effectively do these mechanisms facilitate safe disclosure, referral and access to appropriate support, particularly for adolescent girls and young women?
- How effectively are community-based mechanisms connected to relevant social services, health, education, justice and specialised protection services?
- Which approaches have worked well, for whom and under what conditions? What gaps or unintended effects have been documented?
- How do the community-based mechanisms address discriminatory gender norms and unequal power relations that influence protection risks and access to support?
- How are unresolved referrals and gaps in service provision addressed by the community-based CP mechanisms?

Sustainability of these CBCPMs and Local Ownership:

- To what extent do community-based mechanisms strengthened by the programme continue to function independently?
- Which protection functions and links with formal services are likely to continue beyond programme support, and what evidence supports this assessment?
- To what extent do Child Protection community actors demonstrate ownership of the programme's objectives and approaches?

- What factors have contributed to the continuity or discontinuity of Child Protection community-level initiatives supported by the programme?

Innovative ways of supporting CBCPMs and monitoring their work:

- What combination of training, mentoring, supervision and operational support is most useful and feasible in different contexts?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen existing structures, improve coordination and reduce duplication?
- Which **essential costs** require continued financing, and what realistic arrangements could support them without overburdening community actors or local services?
- What **transition arrangements** are needed to maintain protection quality, accessibility and accountability after programme support ends?

Component 3: LNOB

Understanding Vulnerability and Exclusion:

- How was the Leaving No One Behind principle understood and interpreted by programme teams and partners across different countries?
- How was the LNOB principle integrated in the programme (proposal, reporting, tools)?
- Which groups of adolescents and young people were identified as being most at risk of being left behind?
- How were vulnerability and exclusion defined and measured in different contexts?
- To what extent did programme teams consider intersecting vulnerabilities (e.g., poverty, gender, disability, rural location, migration status, ethnicity, out-of-school status)?
- Which groups were eligible but remained unreached, withdrew, or benefited less, and what practical adaptations and resources would improve their inclusion?

Programme Design and Targeting:

- To what extent were programme design and participant selection processes effective in reaching marginalized groups?
- Which targeting mechanisms were most effective in identifying adolescents and youth from different socio-economic backgrounds?
- Which groups were reached successfully, and which remained underrepresented? (The analysis should distinguish recruitment, attendance, completion and actual benefit.)
- What barriers prevented some vulnerable groups from participating (in the DGD 22-26 programme or in similar projects and programmes)?

Participation and Retention:

- To what extent were marginalized participants able to participate meaningfully in programme activities?
- What barriers affected participation, attendance, retention and completion across the different groups?
- Which measures were most effective in supporting participation of marginalized girls and youth across the different groups?

Future Programming:

- Which inclusion strategies should be replicated, adapted or scaled up in future programmes?
- What minimum standards should be applied to ensure operationalisation of LNOB?
- What practical tools, checklists and guidance would help programme teams strengthen inclusion of different vulnerable groups?
- What recommendations emerge for programme design, targeting, implementation and monitoring in that takes into account intersecting or different vulnerabilities?

3.3 Child rights, gender and inclusion

In line with Plan International's values and organisational ambition, all evaluations prioritise a focus on child rights, gender and inclusion and try to understand the extent to which the project or programme applied gender and inclusion sensitive approaches, explicitly aimed for results that improve the rights of children and young people and gender equality and were successful in making progress in terms of gender transformative change.

In the framework of this meta-evaluation, the evaluators will design the evaluation questions, evaluation tools and analytical framework to explore the changes that took place with **an age and gender lens** and **a gender-transformative lens**. They will seek to understand if the documented changes vary according across age and gender groups and whether they address the root causes of gender inequality.

4. Users of the Evaluation

The meta-evaluation results are most important for Plan International and its partners. The findings of the meta-evaluation will help us improve programme quality, further develop our way of working together with children, adolescents and youth, and identify optimal collaborative approaches with the key stakeholders.

The evaluation results will be co-constructed and/or shared with the programme's stakeholders, especially the partner organizations and networks, Plan International

Global Hub, other interested PI COs/NOs, and other relevant actors at country/regional level.

They will also be shared with the main donor, the Directorate-General for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) (the Belgian Development Cooperation), as this evaluation is part of the contractual reporting to the donor. The main findings and recommendations will also be shared with Belgian NGOs and corresponding networks.

The DGD 22-26 Programme has a strong commitment to local ownership and locally led development approaches, whereas the process and end-results of this evaluation should follow the same principles. The audience and those who will be affected by the results of this evaluation are the children, youth, and communities we work with and for.

5. Evaluation Design

5.1 Overall Evaluation Approach

This evaluation will focus on effectiveness, sustainability and inclusion. The aim is for Plan International to improve tools/approaches/methodologies in relation to the 3 components (Youth economic empowerment, protection and LNOB).

This evaluation will adopt a theory-based approach and will draw on contribution analysis, sustainability assessment and evidence synthesis methodologies. The evaluation team will be expected to propose a **robust analytical framework grounded in the programme's Theory of Change and informed by current evidence in the fields of youth employability, entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, and Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms.** The analysis should also identify **lessons learned and promising practices** to strengthen the effectiveness, sustainability and inclusion of future interventions.

5.2 Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

This evaluation will primarily use qualitative methods and evidence synthesis approaches. The evaluators are expected to develop a detailed methodology for data collection, management and analysis in direct response to the evaluation questions. This methodology will be further unpacked in the Inception Report by the evaluator once the evaluation is underway. The methods proposed will:

- Allow triangulation of evidence from different sources and stakeholders;
- Align with Plan International's MERL Standards;
- Apply a gender-transformative and human rights-based lens throughout the evaluation process;

- Strengthen learning and strategic reflection among programme stakeholders.

This evaluation would be based mainly on the following sources of information:

- On the one hand, on the available documents of the midterm and final evaluations carried out in various countries as well as other relevant documents of the programme (reports, methodologies, studies…).
- On the other hand, on the experiences, tools, methodologies, approaches of other development actors (INGO, NGO, support services…) who have developed relevant expertise on those themes.

In addition, to complement the existing information, the evaluation team will plan visits to Belgium (several stays of a few days) and /or to the Plan International Country Offices (more or less one week) in order to meet some of the programme's stakeholders (Plan staff, partners) or other local actors (INGOs, NGOs, CSOs, local services…).

The evaluation will include the following methods:

1° Literature and Document Review: The evaluators will conduct a comprehensive review of programme and external documentation, including (non-exhaustive list): Programme proposals and theories of change; Annual reports and donor reports; Baseline, midline and endline studies; Market analysis ; Targeting tools, participant databases; Monitoring data and learning products; Previous evaluations and assessments; Relevant national policies and strategies; Recent evidence and good practices related to the 3 components and developed by other INGO, local NGO, service providers.

2° Key Informant Interviews (in person or online): Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders (no more data collection with programme participants)

3° Learning and Validation Workshops (in person or online): The evaluation will include a series of stakeholder workshops to:

- Share good practices and success stories;
- Validate preliminary findings;
- Reflect on lessons learned;
- Identify successful approaches and innovations;
- Develop recommendations for future programming.

Important remarks:

- The candidates will explain in their technical and financial offers how they plan to ensure quality at each step of the evaluation (design, data collection, analysis…).

- The number of Country Offices participating actively can vary across the three components of this evaluation. The methodologies (documentation review, workshops, KIIs) used for each component can vary too.
- There will need to be a separate tool for each different target group and each country. Each tool will be available in EN, FR or EN, and translated in the local language when necessary. Each tool will be recorded on an online data collection platform and the data collected will be protected.

5.3 Participant selection and recruitment

This evaluation should ensure the meaningful participation of representatives of programme stakeholders involved in the design, implementation, coordination, and sustainability of programme interventions. The evaluation team will also carefully consider the actors (organizations or resource persons) who did not take part in the DGD 22-26 programme but who could contribute to this evaluation. Plan International wishes in particular to invite other NGOs or partners to join in the learning sessions. The logistics of this participation must be foreseen by the evaluation team in the planning of resources and included in the budget.

Please consider:

- Plan International Country Office staff;
- Plan International Belgium staff;
- Local partner organisations and networks;

In addition, you should consider in each country, depending on the information already available:

- Government representatives;
- TVET and training providers;
- Other INGO and local CSO/NGO
- Private sector partners and employers;
- Financial and social service providers where relevant;
- Youth employment and entrepreneurship experts;
- Relevant donor representatives;
- Experts and practitioners.

The evaluators will identify stakeholders whose perspectives are required to answer the evaluation questions and will justify the selection criteria in the Inception Report. They will provide clear instructions on how the participants to this evaluation will be selected.

The recruitment of participants will be led by the evaluators and facilitated and supervised by PI. It is to be noted however that some stakeholders might be harder to reach out to and engage with at this stage, considering the programme has ended in some of the countries.

5.4 Sampling Approach

The choices made regarding stakeholder selection and sampling (type, number) and document sampling should be justified and documented in the Inception Report. The financial and technical offer should include an estimated sample size and composition (for instance: # documents reviewed, # workshops and #participants, # KIIs).

5 Ethics and Safeguarding

Plan International is committed to ensuring that the rights of those participating in data collection or analysis are respected and protected, in accordance with Ethical MERL Framework and our Child and Youth Safeguarding Policy. All applicants should include details in their proposal on how they will ensure ethics and child protection in the data collection process. Specifically, the consultant(s) shall explain how appropriate, safe, non-discriminatory participation of all stakeholders will be ensured and how special attention will be paid to the needs of children and other vulnerable groups. The consultant(s) shall also explain how confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be guaranteed.

Concretely:

- the consulting team and all enumerators will need to complete successfully the Safeguarding training, either in person or online;
- the consulting team will need to collaborate with PI MERL team to complete the necessary applications to the Ethical Review bodies;
- the consulting team will need to collaborate with PI staff to fill in the Safeguarding risk analysis and will be required to implement the identified mitigation measures;
- the consulting team will need to explain how they proceeded to consider the participants' wellbeing and safeguarding throughout the evaluation;

the consulting team will need to pay a close attention to the protection of personal data across the process, starting with an analysis of the type of data collected, the risks associated and the mitigation measures to implement.

As a child-rights organisation, Plan International believes that involving children and young people in Monitoring and Evaluation exercises is important. By listening to children and young people's voices and views on issues that affect them, we can better understand their lived realities and can better evaluate and adapt our programmes. However, there are specific risks when involving children and young people in Monitoring and Evaluation initiatives. Their participation can expose them to risks of various forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation before, during and after their engagement.

The participation of children and young people in Monitoring and Evaluation demands careful consideration of - and establishing robust measures to address – safeguarding. Here are Plan International's Safeguarding principles:

- Respecting and protecting well-being, dignity rights and safety.
- Ensure voluntary, informed participation.
- Ensure confidentiality and anonymity.
- Ensure duty of care and report and respond to safeguarding concerns (disclosure protocol)
- Ensure data collectors/translators/consultants have experience and knowledge about working with children, adolescents, and youth (safeguarding and code of conduct training, communicating with children, adolescent friendly discussion techniques, etc).

6 Key Deliverables

Deliverable	Format	Length (approx..)
Inception Report (including data collection tools, evaluability assessment, and evaluation matrix)	Word	10 p.
Annotated Literature Review and Evidence Synthesis Report for each component	Word	10 p.
Summary of Key Informant Interviews (list of interviewees, notes and main observations)	Word	5 p.
Documents and tools related to the training and supervision of the enumerators	Word, PPT	/
Facilitation and Documentation of Learning or Capitalization Workshops	Word, PPT	/
PowerPoint Presentation of Preliminary Findings for each component	PPT	/
Draft Evaluation Report (without executive summary)	Word	45 p.
Final Evaluation Report (including Executive Summary)	Word	50 p.
Final Data Collection Tools	Excel, Word	/
PowerPoint Presentation of Final Findings for each component	PPT	/
Completed Consent and Assent Forms	Original paper version/ scanned documents	
Dissemination Products (2 for each component)	TBC	TBC

Rem.: The consulting team will receive a report template, that is a list of sections that must appear in the report. This will include introduction, methodology, ethics and safeguarding, limits of the study, etc.

Dissemination products could be:

- A summary of best practices, weaknesses and recommendations regarding the approaches, tools, and methodologies used by Plan during the DGD 22–26;
- Compendium of Promising Practices and Case Studies (beyond the Programme and Plan International);
- Practical and relevant toolkit boxes to guide the different phases of the programme (start-up, implementation, evaluation) for the technical staff (collaborations and partners);

  Examples: Practical Guidance Note: Applying LNOB in Youth Empowerment Programmes, and a LNOB Toolkit, including Vulnerability analysis checklist; Inclusive participant selection checklist; Inclusion monitoring framework; Practical tips to engage marginalized groups; Examples of disaggregation categories; etc.
- Specific recommendations on the mechanisms and expertise needed at all levels (BNO, COs and/or partners) for a proper implementation of these aspects;
- Two pagers of good practices and success stories for communication with the sector and other actors.

7 Timeline

The selection process is subject to the condition that a contract can be finalised with the selected evaluation team by 31 December 2026 at the latest. Due to administrative and budgetary constraints, the contracting authority reserves the right to cancel or terminate the selection procedure if the contract cannot be signed before that date, in which case no compensation may be claimed by the candidates.

Activity	Time	Estimated Days of Work	Responsible	Individuals Involved
Tendering	November 26			
Background Checks and Contracting; Inception Call/ Inception Workshop	December 26 (!)			
Briefings and Inception meeting	December 2026 (!)			

Submission of draft Inception Report, including data collection tools	December 2026 (!)
Final Inception Report	January 2027
Preparation for Data Collection	February 2027
Data Collection	January and February 2027
Data Entry and Cleaning	February 2027
Data Analysis	February 2027
Validation of findings with key stakeholders and respondents	March 2027
Submission of Draft Report	March 2027
Submission of Final Report	April 2027
Submission of Other Deliverables (e.g. any Communication Products, Datasets etc)	April 2027

It is also important to note that the data collection, analysis and reporting will have to be fully complete by the start of June 2027, so that all payments can take place before 30/06/2027.

8 Budget

The total budget is about 90,000 EUR (excl. VAT).

Milestone	Detail	Amount to be Paid (%)	Expected Timeframe
Inception Report and data collection tools		30	December 2026 (!)
After restitution of preliminary findings		30	February 2027
Final Report and other deliverables		40	April 2027

Please provide a budget detailing the different costs (types and quantity in each budget line). In addition, include in this budget a lump sum for each workshop of at least 5,000 EUR per country, that will cover all costs related to logistics and participation. Finally, also specify in how many countries and for how many days you plan to travel.

9 Expected Qualifications

We expect the consultancy team to include at least **one evaluator leading the full evaluation and learning processes**, supervising the evaluation team and taking ownership of the products. This the key role he/she will play:

- Lead the analytical framework;
- Prepare and oversee qualitative data collection and analysis;
- Prepare and oversee learning workshops;
- Synthesize findings and lessons learned;
- Develop practical recommendations, guidance, and tools.

We also expect the consultancy team to include **several experts**, **in economic empowerment** among adolescents and young people in low-income countries, **in community-based protection mechanisms,** with a focus on CEFMU**, and in inclusion and vulnerability.**

Finally, experience and expertise in leading and implementing learning trajectories can be shared between several team members but should be sufficient in the team. The same applies to proficiency in French, English and Spanish.

The team should include between 3 and 5 members and the profiles we are interested into are the following:

Lead consultant:

- University degree (Master's level or above) in Economics, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Public Policy or a related discipline;
- Minimum 10 years of experience in international development programmes;
- Demonstrated expertise in multi-country evaluation, synthesis of evaluation, in depth desk review;
- Experience conducting (multi-stakeholder) programme reviews, learning exercises, capitalisation studies, or utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Experience with qualitative evaluation methodologies and theory-based evaluation approaches;
- Demonstrated expertise in:

    - Leave No One Behind (LNOB) approaches;
    - Social inclusion;
    - Human rights-based approaches;
    - Gender-transformative programming.
- Very good organizational and communication skills;
- Excellent analytical, facilitation and report-writing skills;
- Proficiency in the language(s) spoken in the country/subregion: French, English, Spanish;

Additional Assets (for the lead consultant)

- Experience evaluating programmes funded by DGD;
- Knowledge of Plan International's gender-transformative approach, MERL standards, results frameworks and/or programme models.

Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment Specialist

- University degree (Master's level or above) in Economics, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Public Policy or a related discipline;
- Experience conducting programme reviews, learning exercises, capitalisation studies, or utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Demonstrated expertise in entrepreneurship development among adolescents and young people in low- and middle-income countries;
- At least 7 years of experience in youth employment, entrepreneurship ecosystems and private sector engagement;
- Experience assessing vocational training, employability and entrepreneurship interventions;
- Strong knowledge of barriers and opportunities affecting adolescent girls' and young women's economic participation;
- Experience working with development programmes in Africa, Asia and/or Latin America.

Protection from Violence Specialist

- University degree (Master's level or above) in Economics, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Public Policy or a related discipline;
    - Experience conducting programme reviews, learning exercises, capitalisation studies, or utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Demonstrated expertise in protection approaches and mechanisms for adolescent girls and young women in low- and middle-income countries, with a focus on CEFMU;

- At least 7 years of experience in protection approaches and mechanisms for adolescent girls and young women;
- Experience assessing child protection mechanisms and approaches interventions;
- Strong knowledge of barriers and obstacles affecting adolescent girls' and young women's protection;
- Experience working with development programmes in Africa, Asia and/or Latin America.

Inclusion and Vulnerability Specialist:

- University degree (Master's level or above) in Economics, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Public Policy or a related discipline;
- Experience conducting programme reviews, learning exercises, capitalisation studies, or utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Expertise in one or more of:
    - Poverty and social exclusion;
    - Disability inclusion;
    - Youth inclusion;
    - Gender equality;
    - Intersectionality.
- Experience identifying barriers faced by vulnerable populations;
- Knowledge of practical inclusion tools and frameworks;
- Knowledge of the Belgian context.

Learning and Facilitation Expert:

- University degree (Master's level or above) in Economics, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Public Policy or a related discipline;
- Experience conducting programme reviews, learning exercises, capitalisation studies, or utilisation-focused evaluations;
- Extensive experience facilitating:
    - Learning journeys;
    - Communities of practice;
    - Reflective workshops;
    - After-action reviews;
    - Knowledge management processes.
- Experience translating findings into operational recommendations and tools.
- Experience in multi-stakeholders and cross-country exchanges;

- Knowledge of the Belgian context.

10 Contact

Please address any question related to the present ToRs to geraldine.lamfalussy@planinternational.be before 18/11/2026. Responses to the questions will be sent to all applicants by 20/11/2026.

11 Applications

Interested applicants should provide a proposal covering the following aspects:

- Detailed response to the TOR
- Proposed methodology
- Ethics and child safeguarding approaches, including any identified risks and associated mitigation strategies
- Proposed timelines
- CVs
- Example of previous work
- Detailed budget, including daily fee rates, expenses, taxes etc.
- Police Certificates of Good Conduct – especially where there is primary data collection

Please send your application to Plan International Belgium **by 24/11/2026** referencing "DGD 22-26 Programme, Thematic Evaluation" in the subject line and including support documents as outlined. Applications who do not submit the above requirement will not be selected.

12 Annexes

Annex 1: Checklist for Completeness and Quality
Annex 2: Global Policy: Safeguarding Children and Young People
Annex 3: Ethical MERL Framework
Annex 4: Programme's Theory of Change
Annex 5: Glossary

Annex 5: Glossary

Plan International Glossary

Disability: The term "persons with disabilities is used to apply to all persons with disabilities including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various attitudinal, environmental and institutional barriers, hinder the full realisation of their rights as well as their full and effective.

Empowerment is a strategy to increase girls', boys' and young people's agency over their own lives, and their capacity to influence the relationships and social and political conditions that affect them. Lack of power is one of the main barriers that prevent particularly girls and young women from realising their rights. This can be overcome by a holistic and sustainable strategy of empowerment, involving girls, boys, and young people in changing gender norms to the benefit of all. Gender-based empowerment focuses on promoting simultaneous change in norms, attitudes and behaviours; social and economic resources and safety nets; as well as policy frameworks and budgets. It is a core strategy of any effective work promoting gender equality and inclusion. While empowering girls and young women is key if promoting their rights, it is also essential to engage boys and young men as partners and co-beneficiaries in the realisation of gender equality. Gender norms and stereotypes often privilege boys and young men; however, their behaviours and decision-making are also constrained and shaped by rigid social and cultural expectations. Men and boys can play an important role in overcoming gender inequality and discrimination both as power holders and as beneficiaries of change.

Gender reflects the norms, expectations and beliefs about the roles, relations and values associated with different genders, including female and male, in a specific society. Gender plays a significant role in defining relationships and power dynamics between and among people, and in shaping people's barriers and opportunities. In most societies there is a binary understanding of gender (with just two options - 'female' and 'male, or 'feminine' and 'masculine'). This does not accurately reflect people's diverse identities and tends to make invisible some of the specific forms of exclusion faced by LGBTIQ+ people.

Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e., gender) differences between male and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private. The term "GBV" is most used to underscore how systemic inequality between males and females, which exists in every society in the world, acts as a unifying and foundational characteristic of most forms of violence perpetrated against women and girls. The term "gender-based violence" also includes sexual violence committed with the explicit purpose of reinforcing gender inequitable norms of masculinity and femininity.

Gender equality means that all persons, regardless of their gender enjoy the same status in society; have the same entitlements to all human rights; enjoy the same level of respect in the community; can take advantage of the same opportunities to make choices about their lives; and have the same amount of power to shape the outcomes of these choices. Gender equality does not mean that women and men, or girls and boys are the same. Women and men, girls and boys, and individuals with other gender identities have different but related needs and priorities, face different constraints, and enjoy different opportunities. Their relative positions in society are based on standards that, while not fixed, tend to advantage men and boys and disadvantage women and girls. Consequently, they are affected in different ways by policies and programmes. A gender equality approach is about understanding these relative differences and intersecting identities, appreciating that they are not rigid and can be changed. It is important to keep these differences and intersecting identities in mind when designing strategies, policies, programmes and services. Ultimately, promoting gender equality means transforming the

power relations between women and men, girls and being fair to produce equal and measurable outcomes.

Gender Transformative Approach refers to Plan International's commitment to contribute to gender equality and inclusion by explicitly tackling the root causes of gender inequality, particularly unequal gender power relations, discriminatory social norms, and legislation, in all our work.

In all their diversity: The term "in all their diversity" is used throughout the Gender Transformative Marker. Diversity acknowledges that everyone is unique. It means recognising, accepting, celebrating, and finding strength in individual differences such as gender, age, nationality, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

Inclusion is about bringing people into a process in a meaningful manner. It is the process of improving the terms for individuals and groups to take part in society and to fully enjoy their rights. It requires addressing the root causes of exclusion and understanding how intertwined the roots of different forms of exclusion are. Inclusion involves improving the opportunities available to girls, boys, youth, in particular those who are vulnerable and excluded, including children with disabilities, who are excluded based on the social groups they identify with or are associated with, as well as respecting their dignity.

Sexual and gender-based violence refers to any act that is perpetrated against a person's will and is based on gender norms and unequal power relationships. It encompasses threats of violence and coercion. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature, and can take the form of a denial of resources or access to services. It inflicts harm on women, girls, men and boys.

Social norms: Norms are shared beliefs about what is typical and appropriate behaviour in a group of people, including women, girls, men, and boys. Around the world, social norms on gender shape the unequal status of women and girls and the expectations of their role in society.