



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday 7 April, 2022

Spokespeople available for interview in Romania, Moldova and Poland

Time to stand up for children, especially girls, impacted by conflict in Ukraine

As the most recent conflict in the Ukraine enters its seventh week, countless lives, homes and childhoods continue to be lost. Plan International warns of a rapidly deteriorating situation for children and families stranded in areas that are encircled with a lack of safe exit routes, facing a daily challenge for survival with limited access to water, food and warmth.

Stephen Omollo, CEO, Plan International said *"We stand in solidarity with everyone whose lives are being torn apart by the conflict in Ukraine. We are calling for an immediate end to fighting and long-term peace for the sake of all children and young people. We must act now before more lives are lost."*

Through this conflict, humanitarian needs are multiplying by the hour. People who have been forced to flee have left with whatever they can carry - they urgently need shelter, protection, blankets, food, water and medical assistance, and emotional care and support.

Dr Unni Krishnan, Global Humanitarian Director, Plan International said: *"We are hearing stories of unprecedented human suffering in scale and intensity. Some children are impacted by a second violent conflict and uprooted for the second time in a short lifespan. It is critical that this conflict ends"*

"Repeated incidents of missile strikes, bombing and gun fighting in conflicts and wars take a heavy toll on young minds. Left unattended, such violence leaves lasting footprints on their mental health."

Plan International is working closely with local organisations to help children impacted by the conflict and in desperate need of humanitarian assistance and protection. We are working with organisations in Moldova, Poland and Romania to ensure that children and families receive help as they cross the border from Ukraine.

In Germany, Plan International is coordinating with authorities and working with partners in child protection, to provide child-friendly spaces and activities, and provide psychosocial and psychological support for refugee and displaced children and their families.

A team from Plan International is in Ukraine to meet with civil society and humanitarian agencies to identify how best to support and strengthen their response.

Speaking ahead of [Stand Up For Ukraine](#), the global pledging event for refugees and internally displaced people to take place in Warsaw on 9th April, Dr Krishnan urged donors to prioritise the needs of children, especially girls, in their funding decisions.

Dr Krishnan said: *“Ensuring flexible funding from donors is critical to ensure that the response can adapt to a situation that is changing daily”.*

Plan International welcomes the massive and rapid support for the humanitarian crisis arising out of the conflict in Ukraine.

Dr Krishnan continued: *“All funds to alleviate the suffering and of people affected by the conflict in Ukraine must be additional and must not be diverted from other under-funded humanitarian crises taking place globally”.*

“This conflict has put children and young people, particularly girls, at significant risk of violence. It is essential that urgent support is delivered to provide holistic programmes to prevent and respond to all forms of sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children.”

The protection and safety of children on the move must be a top priority. Plan International is particularly concerned about the protection and safety of separated or unaccompanied children, especially girls and young women, who are more vulnerable to abuse and trafficking.

Millions of children are witnessing the horror of this conflict. The violence will take a heavy toll on the mental health of children, young people and their caregivers. Plan International is supporting organisations to provide psychosocial support to help children begin to deal with the horrors they have witnessed and start on the path to recover from their distress.

The conflict in Ukraine has disrupted the education of a generation of children. Getting children back to learning is critical to provide a protective space and a sense of normality. Plan International is working with government authorities and organisations in Moldova, Poland and Romania to support the integration of refugee children into local schools.

Read more about Plan International’s response in [‘Through the eyes of a girl: Children’s lives impacted by the crisis in Ukraine’](#).

For more information or interviews, please contact:

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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 it’s 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 80 years and are now active in more than 75 countries.