

**PLAN INTERNATIONAL, INC.**  
**Oral Statement to the Human Rights Council**  
**Universal Periodic Review of Ecuador**  
**19 September 2012**



**Thank You Madame President.**

**Distinguished Members of the Human Rights Council,**

**Plan International welcomes the recommendations made by the Human Rights Council and adopted by Ecuadorian government for the benefit of children and adolescents living in the country.**

**School dropout and educational lags contribute to the gradual increase of child labor, an issue that affects indigenous children and girls due to gender-based discrimination. Education is mainly focused on transmission of content, memory development and repetition. Social investment is needed to improve the quality of education. Ecuador should review and implement its education policies and programmes to ensure that they reflect the country's cultural diversity and include traditionally excluded population groups such as indigenous people, people of African descent and people with disabilities.**

**Teenage pregnancy in Ecuador has increased, and figures have doubled in the last decade. The average age of first intercourse is 13 years. Access to sexual adolescent care services should be promoted and ensured to all. Sexual education should be included in school curricula, with total coverage from primary to secondary education, and with the inclusion of families and communities.**

**Violence against children in schools and in the family, including corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure, is an issue of major concern in Ecuador. The legal framework and public policies should be strengthened to ensure full protection of children against all forms of violence.**

**Ecuador should sign and promptly ratify the new Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications procedure, confirming the country's continuous engagement towards the improvement of the rights of children and adolescents.**

**It is important that the development of policies and implementation of laws and programmes is done by the State in close collaboration and in open and transparent dialogue with Civil Society Organisations and NGOs.**

**Thank you, Madame President.**