

Searching for elements of impact in the domain of primary education

A pilot study in Sierra Leone and Guatemala

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Executive summary

This report is the result of one of the studies commissioned by Plan Nederland to deepen the insight in the dynamics of processes that govern the outcome and impact of its involvement in primary education.

The study in Sierra Leone and Guatemala is a continuation of earlier efforts of Plan in Bolivia which seek answers to questions on behavioural changes of the stakeholders attributable to Plan's intervention, that lead to outcome and impact in the area of primary education. The study also questions how Plan's strategies are to be judged in view of the findings and what lessons could be learned so as to identify indicators for relevant behavioural changes.

In each country, the study selected four schools supported by PLAN through the construction or rehabilitation of the school (for Sierra Leone together with Quality Learning), four schools supported by Plan through the promotion of Quality Learning alone (without support for construction or rehabilitation) and four schools without any support from Plan or comparable other organisations.

The emphasis of the methodology was on questionnaires trying to assess whether or not there was a difference between the present situation and the situation of 4 years ago in terms of a number of core variables related to (a) access, (b) teachers, (c) involvement of the parents and (d) perceptions of children and parents on schooling and the curriculum. The field studies in the two countries took simultaneously place between January and March 2005.

Changes and impact

It was found that enrolment in Sierra Leone strongly increased in all the schools with the interventions of Plan. Remarkable differences were observed according to the type of intervention. Within this increased enrolment notably the considerable increase of girl-enrolment needs mentioning.

At the same time it was observed that the drop-out rates in the fourth and sixth grade of primary school in Sierra Leone diminished strongly, especially for the girls in the fourth and for the boys in the sixth grade. Attribution in Sierra Leone was not a problem because there was little left after the civil war while there were no other players involved apart from the Ministry of Education. In Guatemala total enrolment remained behind in the schools with Plan interventions, but the drop-out rates decreased considerably for girls and boys in the fourth grade and for

boys in the sixth grade. Attribution is more complicated in Guatemala, although the influence of the Quality Learning Programme is evident.

To explain these results in the last four years, differences were assessed in a number of core variables related to (1) access (inclusive costs), (2) to the motivation of teachers, (3) to the involvement of parents in the management of the schools and (4) to the perceptions of children and parents on schooling.

Developments in education and the context within which developments take place differ considerably between the two countries of study. The intervention programmes of Plan adapted to the developments in the country through different strategies and emphasis on different components of the strategy. Still two main pillars of the strategies are the same: access to education and quality of education. The effects of the interventions and the weight of the explaining factors were investigated in this study. The results can not be generalized, not even within the countries however, due to the limited number of cases included in the sampling.

Sierra Leone

The results of Plan's interventions in the sector of primary education are impressive and gave an important push to the desired development of education of the Government of Sierra Leone. In the schools that benefited from the interventions of Plan with the QL programme, the enrolment increased dramatically, especially for girls (74% and 102%) compared to 25% for boys and 35% for girls in the schools without Plan's intervention over the last four years.

Equally important are the changes of the drop-out rates. In the QL schools of Plan the number of girls that left school before reaching the fourth grade decreased with 50% (from 70% to 20%) for the girls and with 62% (from 65 to 8) for the boys. The comparable figures for non-Plan schools show an increase of 8% for the girls and a decrease of 10% for the boys in the schools. Corresponding figures of the drop-out rates in grade six are 29% for the girls and 20% for the boys against 8% for girls and 29% for boys in the non-Plan schools. Data on enrolment and drop-out rates may be somewhat distorted in the samples because of the still continuing instability of the society after the devastating war.

Some of the possible explaining factors for the obtained results were analyzed and lead to the following conclusions:

(1a) The safe surrounding allowed parents to send their children to school again, but widespread poverty and hunger in the rural areas hinder schooling since, although tuition fees have been abolished in 2002, parents can still not afford to pay for the school utensils of their children. With the QL programme of Plan and lack of remunerated work

(the absence of opportunity costs) at home, the alleviation of these costs for the parents is an important explaining factor of the results.

(1b) Cost of education plays an important role in the decision of the parents to send their children to school. But also the construction of school buildings showed their results in the enrolment figures. A proper school is an important centre for the community; it motivates the teachers and has a considerable influence on the drop-out rates of girls in the fourth and the sixth grade of primary school. It enhances therefore the sustainability of the results.

(2) The motivation of the teachers in Sierra Leone is enhanced through the QL programme, but the chances that the low qualified teachers can improve their personal situation is still minimal and hardly any direct effect could be observed on the obtained results.

(3) Parents are structurally involved in the school management through the School Management Committees. Its members are often representatives of the community as well and play a role in the communication with the "outside" world. Their direct influence on the outcome and impact of Plan' interventions are difficult to quantify but they certainly play a role by lobbying in the community for schooling.

(4) The perceptions of children about schooling are positively influenced by the presence of a proper school building, by the motivation of the teachers (less beating and scolding) and by the involvement of their parents in the management of the school. It enhances their eloquence of expression and it may have an important effect on the decrease of drop-out rates in the schools.

Guatemala

The results of the interventions in Guatemala are less visible by the actual increase of enrolment (enrolment is already relatively high). But important results have been achieved in lowering the drop-out rates in the fourth grade, especially for girls (from 71% to 25%) and in the sixth grade for boys (from 88% to 57%) in the schools with QL programmes. Comparable figures for non-Plan schools are a decrease from 69% to 58% for girls of grade four and from 84% to 81% for boys in grade six. In general, the drop-out rates decreased in Guatemala. The percentage of over-aged children decreased slightly, more for boys than for girls.

In this study some of the explaining factors of the obtained results have been analyzed and lead to the following conclusions:

(1a) The safe surrounding after the internal war would allow parents to send their children to school. In the money economy of rural Guatemala, children are often used as a working force in the low income families. Therefore two costs factors play a role in the decision making process in the families: the direct costs for the parents related to the schooling of the children and the perceived loss of income of the

families which the children could have added to the family's income if they would not have attended school (the opportunity cost). In the schools with QL programmes provided by Plan, the perception of the parents about the schooling changed dramatically. They now consider schooling as the normal course of life of children and do not count with additional income by children's labour. The perceived opportunity costs are reduced to zero.

(1b) Direct costs for the parents are minimized by the assistance of Plan in the QL programme. Part of the school utensils are financed through the intervention. For the access to education the influence of this part of the intervention is considered as less important.

(2) The Quality Learning Programme includes an additional training of teachers in new teaching methods which embraces among others group learning, change of relation with the pupils, actual use of the available materials and a structural involvement of the parents in the school management. This method has importantly contributed to the obtained results.

(3) Through the Parents' Councils, the parents have increasingly more control over the management of the school. The participation of the parents in the activities in the schools increased considerably, but the relation with the communities is still weak.

(4) Children's perception on schooling is influenced by the new teaching methods of the teachers and by the involvement of the parents. Fewer beatings in school are reported and the more horizontal relation with the teachers adds to their interest in school. It changes also the perception of children about their future and this has probably resulted in the decrease of the drop-out rates.

Still many problems remain to be solved to improve the access to and the quality of schooling in primary education. In Sierra Leone they are, principally related to access in the first place and quality as the next major problem in the near future. In Guatemala, the problems are of a more structural nature and solutions have to be found at regional and national level. Recommendations have been formulated accordingly.

This study about outcome and elements of impact also looked into the type of data and indicators. It mentions essential data and useful indicators that have successfully been used. They measure quantitative results and identify data which are representative for qualitative indicators influencing the outcome and impact of Plan' interventions. A more general discussion about data and indicators is included in the corresponding annex of this report.

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List of acronyms

MoE	Ministry of Education
SMC	School management Committee
CTA	Community Teachers' Association
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
CBO	Community Based Organization
GO	Government Organization
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NEU	Nueva Escuela Unitaria
COPARE	Comisión Paritaria de la Reforma Educativa
CCRE	Comisión Consultativa de la Reforma Educativa
WFP	World Food Programme
NPSE	National Performance School Exam
DFG	Development Grant Facility of the Post Conflict Fund
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
FAWE	Forum of African Women Educationalists
QL	Plan's Quality Learning Programme

	<u>Sierra Leone</u>	<u>Guatemala</u>
G1	Plan constructed or rehabilitated the school and Plan applies Q.L.	Plan constructed or rehabilitated the school
G2	Plan applies QL	Plan applies QL
G3	No Plan intervention	No Plan intervention

1. Introduction

[1.] This report contains the findings of two explorative studies in the area of primary education, one in Sierra Leone and one in Guatemala, undertaken in order to get more insight on the outcomes and, if possible to demonstrate, the impact of the interventions of PLAN in these countries. In some respect the explorative studies can be seen as complementary to an earlier study implemented by Especs for PLAN (the Netherlands) in Bolivia in 2003 as well as a study on the motivation of primary school teachers in the Concepción area in Bolivia in 2004.

[2.] The differences between the three countries are very considerable and indeed often hardly or not comparable. This, of course, also affects the way in which PLAN determines its strategies in these countries. There are also considerable differences between the studies. In Bolivia the emphasis was on the use of existing evaluations and a comparison between and assessment of two baseline surveys that had been done, while the second study was an in-depth study involving repeated and lengthy interviews and observations of a number of teachers in and around Concepción. The present explorative studies, however, are mainly based on an extensive questionnaire complemented by some life-stories.

[3.] These different methodologies all have their own strengths and weaknesses and it is interesting and relevant to note that also the methodology as followed in Sierra Leone and Guatemala clearly has something to offer. A more thorough understanding of the educational system and a continuous monitoring of the effects of interventions on all actors and parties concerned in each country will be necessary to timely adapt specific strategies. This also depends on the effects that other actors as Plan may have on the education system.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1. Context of the explorative study and its objectives

[4.] Plan Netherlands embarked in a major effort to try to understand the dynamics of processes that have a bearing on the quality of life of children. It does this in a holistic way and it seeks -in this case- to improve the assessment of the dynamics of processes related to primary education, which is one of the major policy topics of the current Dutch Government. The study in Sierra Leone and Guatemala forms part of this analysis in which Plan gathers information on output, outcome and (where possible) impact level in those areas that may influence the effectiveness, efficiency and the sustainability of their efforts in the field of primary education.

[5.] Plan has been active in primary education in the two countries for a number of years and the results of the interventions have been evaluated at programme level¹. Still many questions remained to explain the results, especially about the changes of behaviour of the parties involved like:

[6.] 1. What changes in behaviour were established in schoolchildren and relevant other persons and parties in the two countries?
2. To what extent can these changes be attributed to Plan's interventions?

[7.] Based on these identified behavioural changes, what consequences are to be thought of for future strategies in the sector and which indicators are essential and could be useful to measure effects of the behavioural changes in these countries? To what extent are these indicators applicable in other countries as well?

¹ Evaluation report on the Educational Renewal Programme in Moyamba District, November 2004 and on specific topics: Lessons Learned from Plan International's Rapid Education Trauma Healing Pilot Project in Freetown, Sierra Leone, by Leila Gupta, May 1, 2002 and Sierra Leone Peace Education Kit Evaluation of the Trial Implementation, by Curriculum Corporation, August, 2005; Evaluation of ROCCA Quality Learning, by Edburg consultant, December 2003.

[8.] The objectives of this study are therefore to identify behavioural changes of children, parents, teachers and communities that have had a bearing on the education system and to verify to what extent the primary education interventions of Plan contributed to these changes. The explorative study should bring about suggestions of indicators to measure these behavioural changes and give recommendations for possible adaptations of the strategies in the area of primary education in the countries where this explorative study has been done.

3. Methodology and scope of the explorative study

3.1 The scope of the study

3.1.1 Selection of countries and areas

[9.] A number of countries came into picture for this study on request of Plan Nederland. But not all countries were able to accompany the study due to other priorities, availability of time and/or staff and finally Plan Netherlands, in consultation with the regional and country offices, decided to select Sierra Leone and Guatemala. Plan has been involved in the educational sector in both countries for a number of years. These countries have different features and Plan's interventions show different strategies accordingly.

[10.] Sierra Leone is divided into 13 districts. Plan is working in five of them. The Plan Office in the country decided in consultation with the consultant on the district of Moyamba for the selection of the samples of this explorative study. Plan had all primary schools in Moyamba targeted for interventions in education. Some schools were (re)constructed, all primary schools received attention through the Quality Learning Programme. In the neighbouring district of Tonkalili with similar socio-economic features, primary schools were selected for control purposes.

[11.] The primary schools in the selected geographic areas were classified into three groups:

- a. Plan's interventions for access (e.g. construction support) and Quality Learning Programme (QL).
- b. Plan's Quality Learning interventions only²
- c. No intervention of Plan

The purposive sampling

[12.] Plan supports 415 primary schools in Moyamba District and the Ministry of Education employs some 1500 teachers for an estimated 80,000 pupils. About 200 schools have been (re)constructed by Plan and all schools in the district are included in the Quality Learning Programme.

² See annex III

[13.] An ad random sampling could possibly by chance exclude schools which have been (re)constructed by Plan. Therefore it was decided against an ad random sampling for the purpose of this study. Instead in collaboration with the Inspectorate for Education of the District, it was decided to select four schools with Plan's intervention with construction activities and QL programme, four schools with Plan's support through the Quality Learning only Programme and four schools without Plan's intervention. The last ones were selected in the neighbouring District of Tonkalili.

[14.] The first selected school of each group was a good example for the purpose of this study: to see if the intervention of Plan left traces in the school depending on the type of intervention. It was not necessarily the best example, or the best school, but it was clearly subject to Plan's intervention. Travelling in Sierra Leone is far from easy and therefore three other schools with the same type of intervention in the immediate surrounding of that school were indicated at random by the Inspectorate. The Inspectorate of the District of Tonkalili assisted in the selection of the schools without Plan's intervention but with socio-economic circumstances similar to the schools in Moyamba.

[15.] Guatemala consists of four regions and is divided into 22 departments. The selection of the departments took place in collaboration with Plan Guatemala on the base of accessibility and presence of schools attended by the different programmes of Plan. Plan support some 600 schools in Guatemala in the educational sector.

[16.] Not all schools in the selected departments have been supported by Plan and therefore the control group of schools could be found within these two departments. The same procedure for the selection of the three groups of four schools has been followed. In total 12 schools per country were included in the study.

[17.] Trends and enrolment data were collected and analysed over a period of four years from 2000/2001 and 2004/2005.

3.2. Method of research

[18.] Research was done through analysis of existing reports and evaluations for a first orientation, followed by discussions with Plan officers in the Netherlands and in the two countries at the level of the central office and in the areas of intervention.

[19.] A questionnaire was prepared in the Netherlands and adapted in the countries of the study. It contained questions divided into four different subjects:

- a. Accessibility to education;
- b. Motivation of Teachers and the curricula;
- c. Involvement of parents in education;
- d. Perceptions of children, including the role of the educational department and parents.

[20.] The questions about the perception of children were related to six individual children selected from class 2 and class 6.

[21.] It was assumed that more detailed information would be available in Guatemala than in Sierra Leone. Therefore the questionnaire for Guatemala was pre-coded for some 500 data per school; for Sierra Leone 200 open questions per school were formulated.

[22.] At the end of the field work period the answers of the 200 open questions in Sierra Leone were codified in the pre-coded questionnaire made for Guatemala. The elaboration of the data resulted in fractioned conclusions on each subject per country and the preliminary results were shared with Plan Nederland and during the workshop in Wageningen in April 2005.

3.3 Limitations of the study

[23.] This is an explorative study. In both countries only 12 schools have been questioned. In Sierra Leone all 415 schools in the District of Myamba are attended by Plan through the Quality Learning Programme and 216 schools have been (re)constructed so far. Therefore the results of the study can not be considered as representative for the Plan interventions. In Guatemala only 600 schools in the two departments have been supported by Plan and again the results of this explorative study can in no way be generalized over the country and less even as being representative for Plan's efforts in education in other countries.

4. Relevant information about education in the two countries of study

4.1 Context of the interventions of Plan in education

[24.] Plan has been active in the domain of primary education in the two countries for many years and several evaluations highlighted the progress and the difficulties Plan encountered in its efforts. In this study research was done to trace behavioural changes that influenced the process to provide adequate primary education to the children in these countries. The results of the study are to be viewed in the context of the development of primary education in these countries.

[25.] The results of the study will be presented in four different headings in this report according to the fields of investigation:

- Accessibility to education
- Teachers and curricula
- Involvement of the parents
- Perceptions of children and parents.

[26.] Each field was covered by a number of questions in the questionnaire and the results are presented and analysed separately per country. In order to understand the results better, general data about the countries and the context of the educational sector in the two countries will be described.

4.1.1 Selected data of the two countries³

Table 1

Selected data of Sierra Leone and Guatemala

	<i>Sierra Leone</i>	<i>Guatemala</i>
Area sq.km	71,740	08,890
Climate	tropical hot	tropical hot
Arable land	7%	13%
Population	6 million	15 million
Under 14 years	45%	42%
Life expectation	43	65
Mayor tribes	4	6
Major religions	3	3
Purchasing Power/cap	US\$ 600	4,200 US\$
GDP growth	6%	2.6%
Literacy rates:		
general	31	71
male	45	78
female	18	63

4.1.2 The educational sector in Sierra Leone

[27.] Sierra Leone consists of 149 chiefdoms and 14 ethnic groups, living mainly (65%) in rural areas. The four administrative regions are divided into 13 districts. Illiteracy was estimated in 1992 at over 80%. The educational system launched in 1993 was seriously affected by the civil war that ended in 2000. It left the country with an enormous number of difficulties because of a destroyed infrastructure, a scattered population with traumatic experiences, cultural beliefs that girls should not go to school (ration of boys/girls 1.42:1), by poverty and by poor access to school facilities. Other structural problems are related to lack of qualified teachers and a rising percentage of HIV/AIDS diseases.⁴

[28.] After the war the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport had asked external agencies to focus on education and to select specific districts for its support. Plan selected Moyamba District, where it had been working since 1989, until it was forced to withdraw by the war events.

³ The world Fact book, Sept. 6Th 2005

⁴ Sierra Leone Vision 2025: Strategies for Transformation (GOSL, August 2003)

[29.] The assessment of Plan in 2000⁵ reveals that a mere 50,000 of the 75,000 children of school-age in the District of Moyamba attended school, of which 81% in grade one to three. Some 60 % of the teachers in primary schools were untrained and taught in classes with 70-90 pupils each. Available data are confusing. The evaluation report of March 2000 still speaks of 35 pupils per class and 296 schools in August 2001 with an estimated 100,000 children in school age.

[30.] Plan faced a number of challenges in the district:

- Lack of access to quality education: 45% of the children of school-going age had no access to education; the drop-out rate was high, especially for girls and especially between grade 1 and 2 (estimated at 25%)
- Poor teaching and learning conditions with 60% of the teachers in primary schools untrained; shortage of school books and teacher guides
- Poor health conditions: food and sanitary facilities
- HIV/AIDS related diseases are on the rise and lack of knowledge about the diseases is wide-spread.
- Low income levels prevent parents from supporting children to attend school
- Unfavourable physical and socio-cultural environment like early girl child marriage, lack of knowledge about family planning and a weak civil society.

[31.] Plan Sierra Leone took up these challenges in 1999 and started a comprehensive programme, including areas beyond the Learning Domain (education sector): in the District of Moyamba it launched a programme on HIV/AIDS, health education, vocational skills and community involvement. For that purpose it made alliances with other NGOs and CBOs, GOs and International organizations. The total operational budget of Plan Sierra Leone ranks from 2 -3 million US\$ per year. Several parts of the programme of Sierra Leone were recently evaluated at different levels⁶

⁵ Evaluation report, November 2003, final version November 2004

⁶ Rapid Education in Sierra Leone, An Evaluation, Richard Maclure, July 2001

Lessons Learned from Plan International's Rapid Education Trauma Healing-Pilot project in Freetown, Sierra Leone, by Leila Gupta, May 2002
Evaluation report on the Education Renewal Programme in Moyamba District, S.L., November 2004;
S.L. Peace Education Kit, Evaluation of the Trial Implementation, Final Report, August 2005.

4.1.3 The educational sector in Guatemala

[32.] Guatemala is divided into four regions, 22 departments and 331 municipalities. 23% of the children are inscribed in pre-school institutions, 84 % in primary schools, 25% in secondary schools and 2% attend tertiary education. There are important differences between the urban and the rural areas. In average, children attend 4.5 years school (with 2.7-4.5 years in the rural areas and in the urban areas 6 years). Only 8 of 10 children enter into the education system of the country; four children reach the third grade of primary school and only three enter in class 6.

[33.] Children at an early age use to enter into the informal economic activities and are often considered as labour force by the parents. Parents mostly do not have the expectation that school education offers the children better chances at the labour market. This is partly caused by the lack of learning materials and the inability of the teachers to create a dynamic learning environment.

[34.] The evaluation of the Quality Learning Programme shows that a beginning has been made to change the teaching routines and the learning environment of the children and recommends strengthening the relations between the school and the community. In order to improve the sustainability the report advises to improve the links with the authorities concerned and with the communities in order to share the responsibilities of the education system.

[35.] With the signing of the peace agreement, the Government of Guatemala included the agreements of the "Identity and Rights of the Indigenous Population (1995)" and the "Socio-economic and Agrarian Aspects (1996)" with COPARE (Comisión Paritaria de la Reforma Educativa) and with CCRE (Comisión Consultativa de la Reforma Educativa). They have recently been revitalized and constitute a support to the QL II programme of Plan.

[36.] The Educational Reform seeks a focus that permits to understand educational processes in a holistic form to improve the quality of life and it allows alternative teaching methods. It looks for an integration of the communities into the education system which coincides with the strategies of Plan in the QL II programme. The First Quality Learning programme was developed on basis of the experiences of the USAID NEU (Nueva Escuela Unitaria) and adapted by Plan in 1997. The Programme itself ran from 2001 to 2003 and was recently evaluated. The QL-I programme had an estimated cost of over US\$ 1 million per year. QL II Programme has estimated a similar budget for the next six years.

5. The Results of this study

5.1 Introduction

[37.] The results of this study contribute to the understanding of the educational processes as mentioned earlier. For this reason a number of questions have been asked in 12 schools (three groups with each four schools) in both countries. The main features of the different group of schools will be described for a better understanding.

5.1.1 The selected schools in Sierra Leone

[38.] The 12 selected schools are distributed over the districts' capital and the rural areas. The four schools in Group 1 have been (re)constructed by Plan after the war events in the period between 2000 and 2002 and benefit from the QL programme. Three schools are located in the "urban" area of Moyamba town in the chiefdom of Kaiyamba: two are Christian schools (one only for boys) and one with Islamic orientation. The fourth school is located at 7 Km distance from the town.

[39.] The religious orientation of the schools originates principally from the founder of the school and it does not have a specific bearing on its financial capacity, nor does it influence the curriculum. Only that in the Islamic school Arabic is taught additionally. There are, however, some other features that show urban characteristics, like the level of enrolment, presence of other aid organisations and a more vocal strength of children. We will come back to these characteristics, when discussing the findings of the study.



[40.] The four schools of Group 2, where Plan only intervened with its Quality Learning Programme are located in the rural area of the district at two to four hours distance from the District Capital. Here the roads are in a

deplorable state, water and sanitation facilities are insufficient, the chance for jobs others than on the family farms is very limited and hardly any money market for agricultural produce exists. Most houses are made of mud. The schools (under which one with a catholic orientation) are in a deplorable state with leakages from the roofs and classes are crowded. The farming population is clustered in small dwellings and the schools are located close to the centres. Teachers use to live in these communities and are part of the communal life.

[41.] The third group of four schools (G3) has similar characteristics. They are located in the neighbouring District of Tonkalili and Plan is not working in this area. One of the schools is of Roman Catholic origin; two have been founded by the United Methodist Church and one by the Muslim Brotherhood. The structures of the schools are dilapidated and require rehabilitation. Part of the lessons is given under trees by lack of solid constructions. The WFP provides meals for all schools in this district. The rural schools of Group 2 and 3 are quite homogeneous in their characteristics as are the communities in which they are located. The communities are generally headed by a chief which is the only governing structure, no NGO's are present and no other community structures have been detected. All communities are composed of a mixed population of different tribal origins.



5.1.2 The selected schools in Guatemala

[42.] The 12 selected schools in Guatemala are all solid structures in different state of maintenance. All four schools of the first group existed already and were built between 1948 and 1998 in the surroundings of Jalapa. In Group 1, Plan rehabilitated or expanded the physical structure of the schools and provided school utensils for some of them. The adaptations financed by Plan included the costs of 1-3 additional classrooms and repairs of the schools. In

this group of schools all children speak Spanish and have a Christian religious orientation.

[43.] The schools in Group 2 had profited from the Quality Learning Programme of Plan. The schools were built between 1984 and 2000 and are located around Ribanal. This area suffered badly by the internal war conflict. Three schools have children with Achi as maternal language. Teaching is done in Achi in the first and (sometimes) second grade of primary school and slowly changes into Spanish in higher classes; the fourth school has only Spanish speaking pupils.

[44.] Three of the four schools without any intervention of Plan (Group 3) are attended by Spanish speaking children. The fourth one was built by USAID/CARE in 1977 and the children are Achi speaking. Two of the schools have Jalapa as the next major town; the others have El Chol as the next commercial centre. In a number of schools the teachers live in the major towns and move to the rural schools at a daily basis. As we will see in other sections of this report, this hampers the integration of schools in the communities. Rural schools are often not connected to the electricity lines and clean drinking water is a problem.

[45.] There is another characteristic that should be mentioned in this respect. Although school utensils, sanitary facilities and learning materials are available in some schools, their actual use is often limited: the school direction does not allow children to use the books because they may get dirty, the sanitary facilities are closed because there is no routine of cleaning and computers - where available- are not used because they may break down. Where appropriate, we will return to these attitudes when presenting the findings of the study.

5.2 Accessibility to education

[46.] Accessibility has been divided into the following components:

1. The physical ability to go to school in terms of distance (in time) and safety (when going to school or returning and within the school premises).
2. The cost related to going to school (and being absent at home)
3. (Changes of) enrolment in the schools.

[47.] Enrolment, of course, is of a different category than accessibility and cost may be a consequence of these two variables.

5.2.1 Physical ability to go to school

Table 2

Average walking distance to school (minutes)

	<i>Sierra Leone</i>	<i>Guatemala</i>
Group 1:	33	14
Group 2:	25	21
Group 3:	11	42

[48.] These data have been collected from the children in class 2 and class six of the primary schools (or the fifth if no class six was existent). It is interesting to note that the children in the "urban" surrounding of Moyamba need longer to reach their schools than in the rural setting. In Guatemala it often depends on the density of the population in the rural area.

[49.] For the safety of children a distinction has been made between the safety to reach the school and the safety in the schools. The safety on the road was subdivided into: accidents, violence/robbery, sexual harassment and other dangers. In Sierra Leone the teachers mentioned only twice a snake bite over the last year in two different schools; in Guatemala two robberies that affected children were mentioned.

[50.] The safety in school was judged by the number of serious accidents, verbal and physical violence, sexual abuse, other dangers and the existence of a first aid kit in the school. These questions were asked to the headmaster teachers, parents and children alike.

[51.] Children in Sierra Leone only mentioned beatings and scolding, but these were considered by the teachers as consequences of the behaviour of the children in the classrooms and not as a danger. No other dangers were mentioned in the two countries. First Aid kits were available in 10 of the 12 schools in Guatemala and none in Sierra Leone.

5.2.2 The costs of education for the parents

[52.] The costs for education of the children in the two countries have been calculated on the basis of the data provided by the parents. They are subdivided by opportunity costs (when the children attend classes, they can not work at home) separated by gender, by the costs for required school fees, uniforms, school

books, school utensils, meals, tutoring, sports, celebrations and ceremonies.

5.2.2.1 Cost for the parents in Sierra Leone

[53.] Since children do not add to the family income when they do not go to school there is no opportunity cost. Schools are free of tuition fees since 2002, although in one non-Plan school they still do pay the sum of US\$ 4.20 per child a year. School costs for parents in Sierra Leone are generally related to:

- opportunity cost: none
- tuition fees: none (one exception US\$ 4.20/yr)

Table 3

Average costs per group of schools in Sierra Leone (US\$)

School nr.	1-4	5-8	9-12	average
-uniform	4.18	2.26	1.93	2.79
-school books	0.44	0.00	1.40	0.61
-school utensils/materials	0.15	0.00	0.04	0.06
-provisions: meals	10.53	2.63	8.77	7.31
-tutoring	2.46	0.00	1.75	1.40
-sports	1.93	0.00	0.44	0.79
Total costs per child per year	19.69	4.89	14.33	12.45

[54.] Although the total costs for education are low, still many parents complain that it is costly to send children to school it. The major expenses are made for meals and the uniforms of the school. In the urban schools (G 1), meals are sometimes prepared and the parents are expected to pay for the costs. In rural schools these provisions are not made and children often will go to school without food. The total costs for all children in all the schools reach an average of US\$ 9.58 per year with no differences between boys and girls. The cost of US\$ 12.45 has been calculated for the totals of the three groups of schools.

[55.] However, there are differences between the three groups of schools. In the schools with no PLAN intervention (G3) the WFP is distributing school meals and parents have to pay a (small) contribution for this. Also, in these areas the parents have to pay for school materials and a school uniform.

[56.] In the schools where PLAN is applying the Quality Learning (QL) approach (G2) as well as in the schools (re) constructed by PLAN (G1), the WFP has terminated the provision of school meals since it had other priority areas to attend.

[57.] However, books and other school materials are provided by PLAN without costs to the parents. Total costs for the parents in these schools are 3 to 4 times lower than in the G3 and the G1 schools (this last observation is remarkable). Although this can be partly explained by the absence of costs for books, the difference must also have other causes. These are not yet known. Part of the explanation may be that tutoring (for the end of school examination) and sports in the G2 schools are done by the teachers without costs.

5.2.2.2 Costs for the parents in Guatemala

[58.] The costs for schooling has been specified and opportunity costs are taken into consideration, since most families produce for the market and the absence of the child on the farm or in the household means a loss of income. For the direct costs no differences between boys and girls have been observed.

Table 4

Average cost (expenditure and perceived opportunity costs) in main items per type of school, Guatemala (N=12)

average costs in US\$ by group school:	1-4	5-8	9-12	average
	G1	G2	G3	
- economic loss by the absence of boys	136	20	25	60
- economic loss by the absence of girls	92	0	47	46
- costs of school fees	0	0	0	0
- uniforms, knapsack, shoes	22	18	20	20
- school books	4	2	6	4
- school utensils	1	15	5	7
- meals in school	0	0	0	0
- sport	0	0	16	5
- celebrations and ceremonies	2	1	25	9
- total average cost per child/yr in US\$	257	56	144	152

[59.] The costs of education in Guatemala are considerable. The opportunity costs for boys were estimated by the parents at 40% of the total school costs, for girls this percentage was 30%. Ceremonies in the G3 schools constitute a considerable cost for the parents; it is remarkable that this is not the case in the G1 and G2 schools.

Note:

Total school costs have been calculated as the sum of total direct (financial) costs plus the costs created because the child in question cannot assist in work at home (opportunity costs).

Note:

The high cost for ceremonies is probably mainly caused by the consumption of beer and other drinks during meetings of the parents association or similar occasions. Why such costs occur mostly in the G3 school-communities is not known.

[60.] Absence because of the necessity to work at home is a considerable problem, especially during the harvest period when many fathers migrate to work as harvesters elsewhere. Absence due to the need to do domestic work is lowest in the G2 schools (6%) compared to 25% for the G1 and 19% of the G3 schools. The same pattern occurs for absence during the harvest time: 13% for the G2 schools, 35% for the G1 and 20% for the G3 schools. The school management in the G2 and G3 schools feels that it is not in a position to take effective action against this absence, probably because it is felt that little can be done about it. Yet, as shown in the G1 schools, this assumption is not correct.

Note:

Data about absence percentages of children during school periods for Sierra Leone are not available, so a comparison is not possible. Still families mostly stay in the communities and absence will be minimal.

Note:

The fact that the G1 schools in Guatemala have a higher absence than the G3 schools may be an accidental consequence of our sample. However, the fact that both G1 and G3 schools score clearly worse than the G2 schools may illustrate the importance of QL, also in comparison with the construction of schools without QL.

[61.] The total costs of the G2 schools are 3-5 times lower than those where Plan does not provide Q.L. One would expect that this is caused by the free provision of school books etc., but this doesn't explain it because, contrary to expectation, it appears that the costs for school materials in these schools are much higher (3 - 14 times).

[62.] The major difference is that none of the parents in the G2 considers any economic loss through the absence of the girls while attending school and only in one case of the boys. Furthermore the costs for uniforms, knapsacks and/or shoes are lower. So, the difference apparently is in terms of a changed perception of the parents in as far as opportunity costs are concerned especially for girls.

[63.] The very high economic losses parents consider in the group of schools built by Plan (G1) is remarkable, but cannot be explained.

5.2.3 The enrolment

5.2.3.1 Introduction

[64.] The accessibility to education is not only governed by the physical ability to reach school and the costs involved for the parents, since other factors play a role as well. Much depend on the attitude of parents towards schooling, the expectations of a secured future for the children and the possibilities to help the parents at old age if children attend school. All these elements finally determine the decisions of the parents.

[65.] Still we believe that the improvement of the physical accessibility and lowering the costs of education are important factors that influence the level of enrolment in the communities, especially in the rural areas. We therefore will analyse the enrolment of children in the selected schools, separated by gender and by type of intervention of Plan for the years 2001/2002 and 2004/2005.

5.2.3.2 Enrolment in Sierra Leone

Table 5

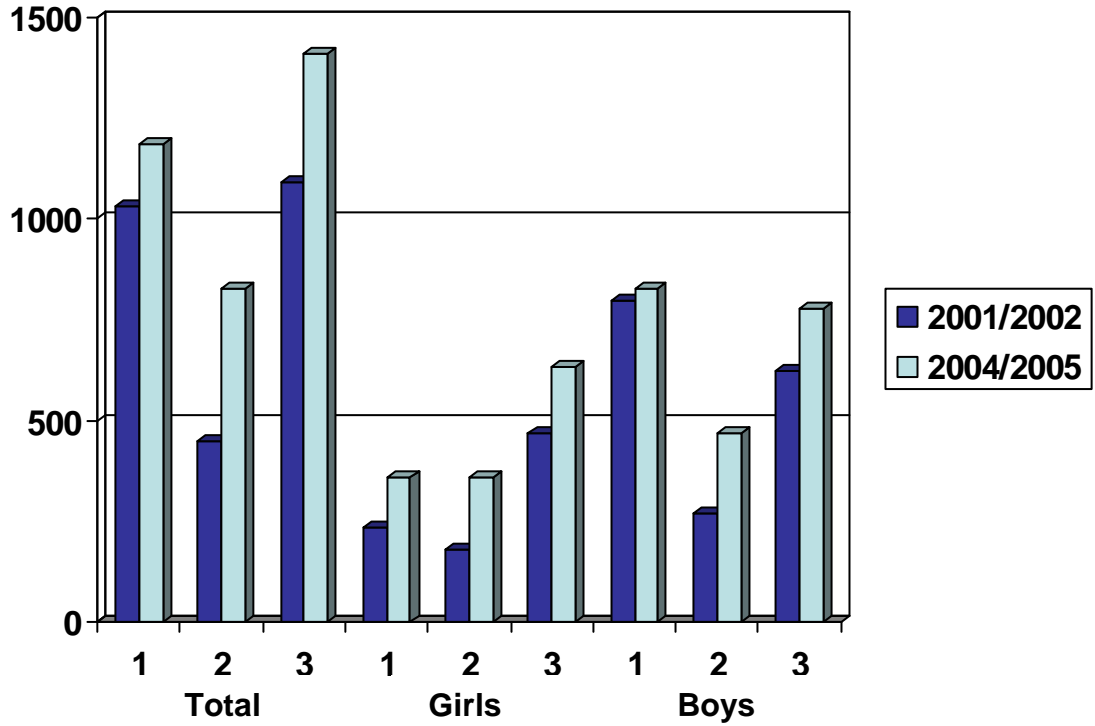
Enrolment 2001/2002 and 2004/2005 in Sierra Leone

Group		1	2	3	Total
Total	2001/2002	1032	448	1091	2571
	2004/2000	1184	829	1411	3424
Girls	2001/2002	234	178	469	881
	2004/2005	358	360	633	1351
Boys	2001/2002	798	270	622	1690
	2004/2005	826	469	778	2073
Increase %	Total	14.7	85.0	29.3	33.2
	Girls	52.9	102.2	35.0	53.3
	Boys	3.5	73.7	25.0	22.7

The changes of enrolment are presented in the following diagramme for comparability.

Diagramme 1

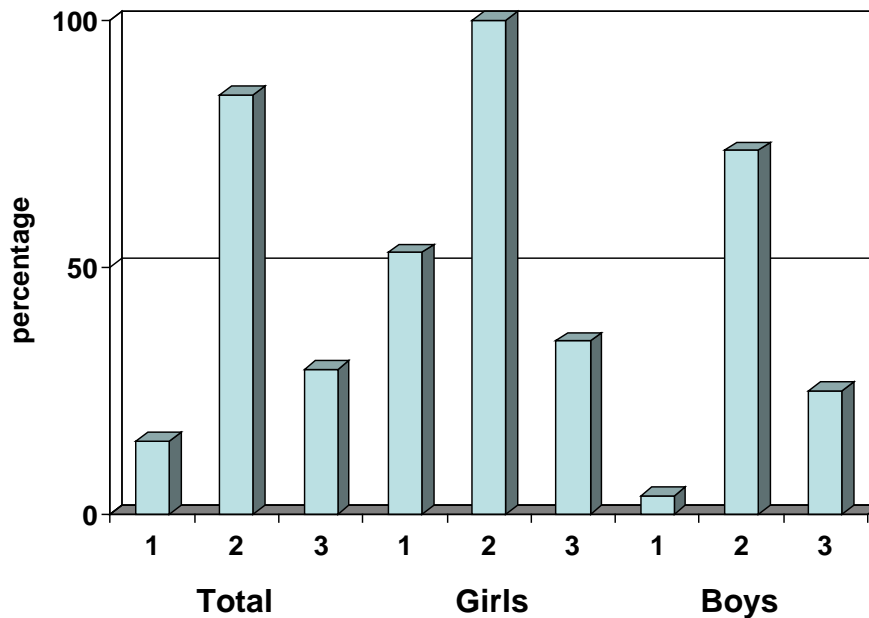
Enrolment 2001/2002 compared with 2004/2005 per group and discriminated by gender



[66.] The general enrolment has increased considerably (some 33%) over the last 4 years for all the three groups of schools as could be expected after the devastating war. The changes are visualized in the next diagramme.

Diagramme 2

Increase of enrolment 2001/2002 to 2004/2005 in percentages and discriminated by gender



[67.] The increase of enrolment in the first group of schools (reconstructed by Plan and Q.L., G1) is relatively low. This is probably caused by the fact that these schools are located in the urban area of Moyamba where most children were already going to school. Comparable are the rural schools with Q.L. intervention of Plan (G 2) with the rural schools without any outside interventions (G 3). The total increase reached 85% and even over 100% for the girls in G2 compared to 29 and 35% in G 3.

[68.] However, although the growth in enrolment in the G1 and G3 groups appears more modest than in G2 when considering the total, the increase of the enrolment of girls in the G1 and G3 areas was still considerable. This strong increase of girl enrolment is especially important, because -as teachers and parents reported- literate girls tend to be married off later than non-literate girls while in general, these girls will be the literate mothers of a next generation. Clearly the campaign of Plan (and the Government of Sierra Leone) for heightened girl's education has had an impact in the country.

[69.] The question has been raised if this strong increase of enrolment is attributable to Plan since an increase was to be expected after the war anyway. This is certainly true, but compared to the general increase of enrolment in comparable areas without Plan's intervention, enrolment has been accelerated enormously and more so for the girls.

[70.] The main reasons for these changes are, according to the parents, that no school fees are requested anymore since 2002 and Plan’s support for school utensils in the programme of Q.L. allows parents to actually send children to school. At the same time parents and teachers mention that an adequate school building is equally required to ensure a suitable learning environment. Other factors, however, play a role as well, as will be explained in subsequent sections of this report.

5.2.4 Drop-out rates in Sierra Leone

[71.] It is essential that children enter into the educational system. Also the number of years that they remain in school is of importance. The number of children that do not reach the fourth grade of the school is alarming high as can be observed in the following table.

Table 6

Percentage of children that do not reach the 4th grade of primary school per group of schools in Sierra Leone

Group girls/boys	1		2		3	
	g	b	g	b	g	b
2001/2002	76	43	70	64	40	41
2004/2005	37	63	20	8	48	31

The differences for grade six between the types of schools are remarkable as well, as shown in the following table.

Table 7

Percentage of children that do not reach the 6th year of primary school per group of schools in Sierra Leone

Group girls/boys	1		2		3	
	g	b	g	b	g	b
2001/2002	80	64	70	64	86	74
2004/2005	24	61	51	44	78	45

[72.] The data show a dramatic decrease in drop-outs, especially for girls entering the fourth grade, but also in the sixth grade for the groups of schools attended by Plan. The changes for the boys in grade six are less spectacular, but considerable all the same.

[73.] However, these figures are rather confusing for a number of reasons:

- The communities are not stable yet and the number of pupils per grade may increase or diminish with up to 100% per year. There is still an inflow and departure of children that move around among different communities.
- The data are not considered as reliable. Differences are noted between the data provided by the schools and those of the Inspectorate. In a number of schools the figures could not be traced since they were lost by the end of the war. Plan's data are different again because they are based on expectations for the following year.
- Birth certification has been introduced in March 2005 and it is difficult to estimate absence figures in an unstable society at large. It may be worthwhile to make an effort to study this in the near future by some case studies in the departments where Plan implements its projects.

[74.] Still these general data on drop-outs are not exceptional. The Country Study on Primary Education in Burkina Faso reports a drop-out rate between 10-15% per year⁷. But the percentages of the drop-outs are decreasing, whereas in Burkina Faso they are on the rise. The scarcely available data on repetition show similar levels in Burkina Faso as well and reach between 6 and 15%, slightly lower than the estimated average for sub-Saharan Africa (17%, UNESCO, Institute for Statistics, 2001).

[75.] In Sierra Leone a National Performance School Exam (NPSE) exists and a comparative analysis would have been helpful for this study. Its existence was mentioned very late during the field study and unfortunately there was no time to revisit the remote schools. It would be interesting though, if Plan Sierra Leone could collect these data for all the Plan schools in Moyamba District to compare them with the schools in other districts.

5.2.5 The enrolment in Guatemala

[76.] In Guatemala most children are inscribed in primary school when they reach school age. A number of them have attended pre-school institutions; (in rural areas less). Important changes of enrolment figures are not expected.

⁷ Local Solutions to Global Challenges: Towards Effective Partnership in Basic Education, Burkina Faso, September 2003, page 67.

Table 8

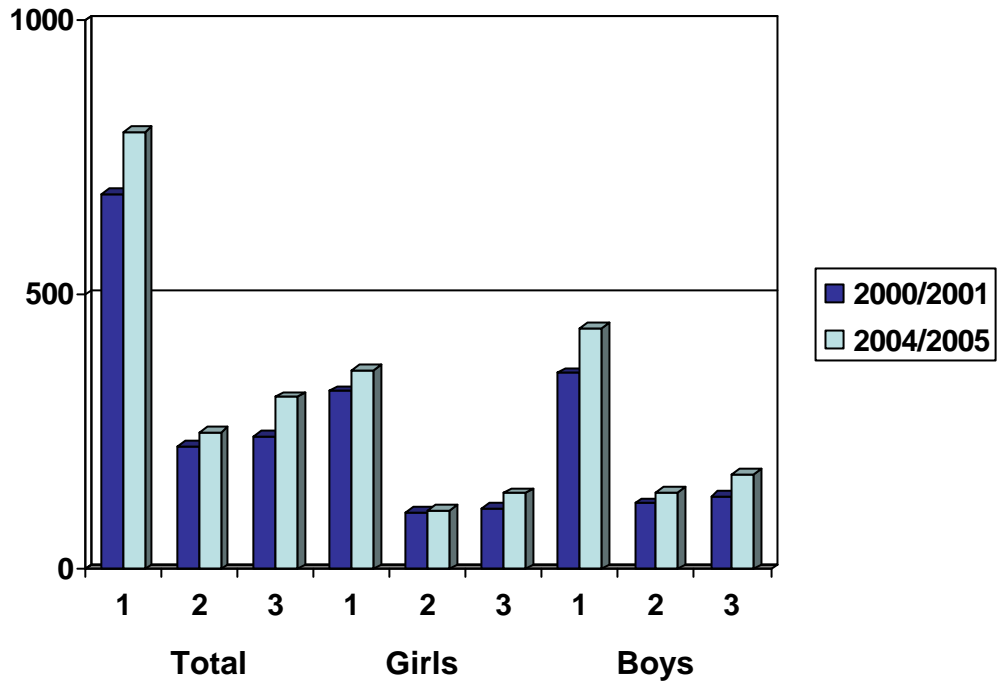
Enrolment 2000/2001 and 2004/2005 in Guatemala

Group		1	2	3	total
Total	2000/2001	683	224	244	1151
	2004/2005	798	250	314	1362
Girls	2000/2001	325	103	112	540
	2004/2005	364	109	139	612
Boys	2000/2001	358	121	132	611
	2004/2005	434	141	175	750
Increase %	Total	16.8	11.6	28.7	18.3
	Girls	12.0	5.8	24.1	13.3
	Boys	21.2	16.5	32.6	22.7
Over-aged pupils					
Total	2000/2001	438	149	121	708
	2004/2005	447	146	172	765
Girls	2000/2001	206	60	64	330
	2004/2005	198	64	76	338
Boys	2000/2001	232	89	57	378
	2004/2005	249	82	96	427

The changes of enrolment in the last four years have been visualized in the following diagramme.

Diagramme 3

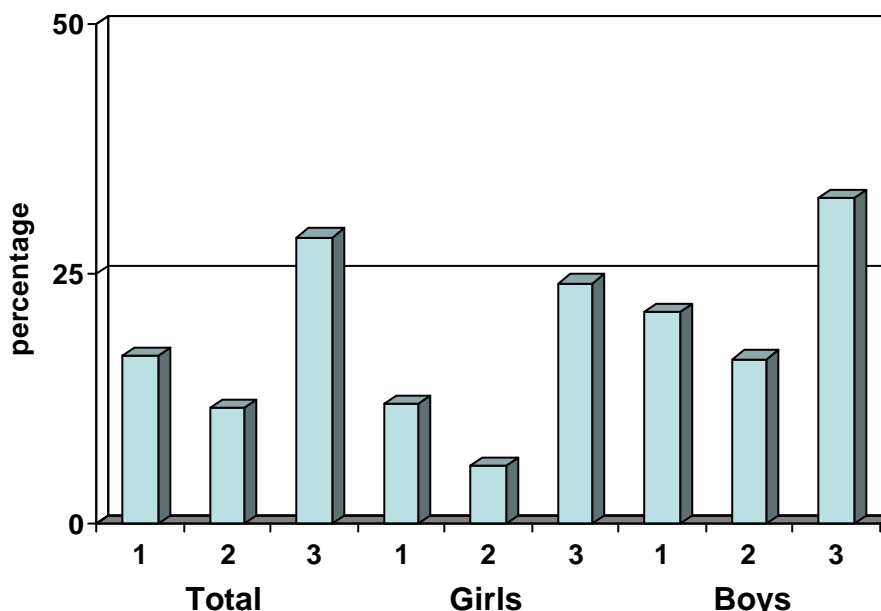
Enrolment 2000/2001 compared to 2004/2005 per group and discriminated by gender



[77.] In Guatemala enrolment varies per school. Although there are differences between the three groups (G1 increased with 16%, G2 with 11% and G3 with 29% since the year 2000), no specific influence could be observed by the intervention of Plan. The number of girls in relation to boys attending schools decreased slightly (about 4%) in all schools. The changes are presented in the following diagramme.

Diagramme 4

Increase of enrolment 2000/2001 to 2004/2005 and discriminated by gender



5.2.6 Over-aged children in school in Guatemala

[78.] The share of over-aged children is a continuous concern for authorities and Plan in Guatemala. This is due to repetition and late registration in the schools. The following data have been collected in the different groups of school.

Table 9

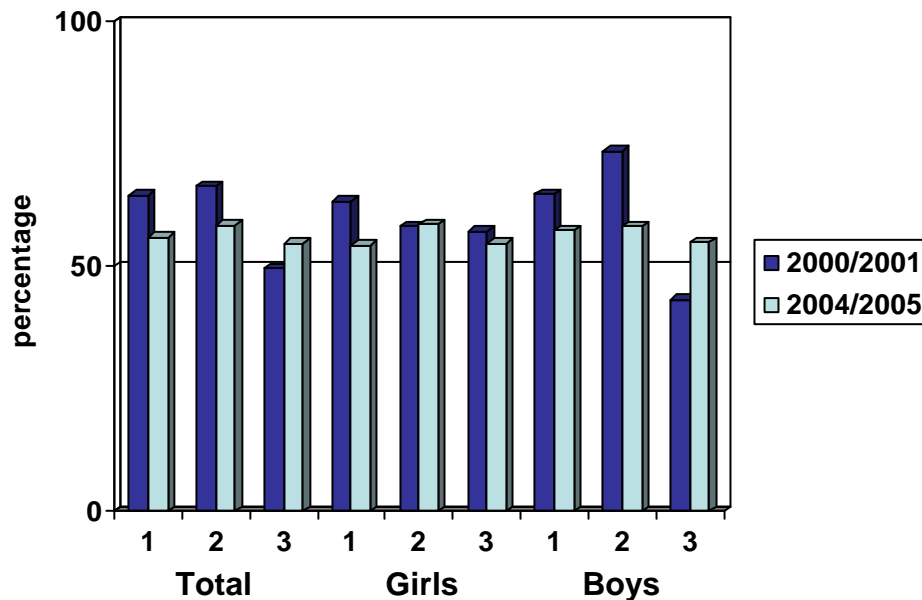
Percentage of over-aged children per group, discriminated by gender: 2000/2001 and 2004/2005

Group		1	2	3
Total%	2000/2001	64.1	66.5	49.6
	2004/2005	56.0	54.8	54.8
Girls %	2000/2001	63.4	58.3	57.1
	2004/2005	54.4	58.7	54.7
Boys %	2000/2001	64.8	73.6	43.2
	2004/2005	57.4	58.2	54.9

[79.] No major changes are observed between 2000/2001 and 2004/2005, but there is a modest decline in the percentages of over-aged children as shown in the next diagramme.

Diagramme 5

Percentage of over-aged children and discriminated by gender: 2000/2001 and 2004/2005



[80.] The percentage of over-aged pupils decreased in the schools attended by Plan, but raised in the other schools for boys. It is not clear if this is caused by repetition or by late registration.

5.2.7 Drop-out rates in Guatemala

Table 10

Percentage of children that do not reach the 4th grade per group of schools and discriminated by gender in Guatemala

Group	1		2		3		total	
	g	b	g	b	g	b	g	b
2000/2001								
Total	77		67		70		71	
Girls/Boys	82	72	71	64	69	70	74	69
2004/2005								
Total	47		35		65		49	
Girls/Boys	53	42	21	46	58	70	44	53

[81.] Drop-out rates are generally high in Guatemala, especially in rural communities. Data have been collected in the schools of the

three groups for the fourth and for the sixth grade. The percentages are related to the number of children attending the first grade.

Table 11

Percentage of children that do not reach the 6th grade per group of schools and discriminated by gender in Guatemala

Group	1		2		3		total	
	g	b	g	b	g	b	g	b
2000/2001								
Total	82		90		86		84	
Girls/Boys	84	80	93	88	88	84	88	84
2004/2005								
total	56	75	73	68				
girls/boys	66	48	100	57	62	81	76	62

[82.] The general drop-out rates are still high but decreased considerably from 2000 to 2004. Especially the retention of the girls up to class four improved dramatically in the schools with Quality Learning programmes. More modest, but similar developments have been observed in Bolivia where the drop-out rates decreased by two to four percent per grade between 1997 and the year 2000⁸.

[83.] Comparison of performance between the schools with different types of intervention is difficult, since no National Performance School Exam exists in the country. The Ministry does separate studies on performances, but they are not traceable per school. For Plan it would be interesting to enter into discussions with the Ministry to obtain these data on a regular basis. This will be taken up in the chapter of recommendations.

5.2.8 Conclusions on accessibility

Sierra Leone

[84.] Although a return to some form of 'normality' by itself will lead to increased enrolment as shown in the G3 schools, it is clear that Plan interventions on QL were and are of great and positive influence on enrolment. Increases in these schools reach from over 100% for girls and 85% for boys in the last four years against 53 and 23% as averages.

⁸ Evaluación conjunta de la Ayuda Externa de la Educación Básica en Países en Desarrollo, Informe de Estudio de País-Bolivia, Septiembre de 2003.

[85.] The (re)construction of the school building which often forms the centre of the community's life may help to sustain these results.

Children and parents appreciate this support in particular and it heightens the motivation of children and teachers to go to school. In their remarks they show evidence of this attitude: "I like to go to school, because now we have a proper structure" or contrarily "I don't like the school, because the roof is leaking and we all get wet".

[86.] Given the fact that these trends in increasing enrolment persist for the last 4 years, there can be little doubt that indeed an important impact has been achieved in the lives of those children who have followed education for 3 years or more. This is especially true for the girls. The costs are very important for the parents and often decisive, especially when it comes to sending girls to school.

[87.] It is a pity that W.F.P. stopped the food supply in the district since this seriously affects the learning ability of the children and the motivation of the parents to send their children to school. Plan Sierra Leone is in promising discussions with W.F.P. to restart its programme.

5.2.9 Conclusions on drop-out rates

[88.] Equally important as the increased enrolment is the number of years that the children remain at school. We therefore analysed the drop-out rates for the fourth and the sixth years. Here again we see dramatic improvements in the schools with constructions and QL programmes reaching from a decrease of 50% (from 70 to 20) in these schools for girls and 56% (from 64 to 8) for boys in the fourth grade. The average drop-out rates in the schools without Plan's intervention increased for the girls with 8% and decreased for the boys with 10 percent.

[89.] The drop-out rates in the sixth grade has improved as well. For girls the data are 29% less drop-outs in the last four years (from 70 to 51), and for boys 20% only (from 64 to 44) in the newly constructed schools with QL (G2). The corresponding data for the schools without Plan's intervention are 8% for girls and 29% respectively, but they remain high at the level of 78 and 45%.

Guatemala

[90.] In Guatemala no increased (or: less decreased) enrolment can be attributed directly to Plan's interventions. There is a general increase of enrolment of 18 % (girls 13 and boys 23) and Plan schools remain slightly below these figures. The most interesting phenomenon met here, when it comes to accessibility and

enrolment, is the apparent change in perception by parents in the G2 schools. Going to school in this G2 group is more and more seen as part of 'normal' life so that a reasoning in terms of 'opportunity costs' does not really make sense anymore. However, as stated, we could not observe a difference between G1, G2 and G3 schools in terms of enrolment (or: enrolment development). A factor of importance here may be the declining economy.

[91.] Major differences, however, are observed when it comes to drop-outs, especially in the fourth grade. The general drop-out in the last four years declined with a 22%. Here the schools with QL programmes achieved important results. The total drop-out decreased from 67 to 35%. For girls it is even more positive: from 71% in 2001/2 to 25% in 2004/2005 (the boys from 64 to 46%). In schools without any Plan intervention there are minimal changes over the years.

[92.] The changes in the sixth grade are less spectacular. The general drop-out rates diminished from 84 to 68% and only a considerable reduction in the rates was observed for the boys in the last four years (from 88 to 57%) in the schools with QL programmes.

[93.] As far as the percentage of over-aged children is concerned a moderate improvement could be noted. The general figure decreased from 60% to 55% and mainly for the boys in schools with QL programmes (from 74 to 58%).

[94.] These important results of the different Plan interventions in both countries seek for explanations. In this study several elements, other than the already mentioned costs to parents have been studied and we will try to interpret their influence on the results in the two countries.

6 The motivation of the teachers and the curricula

[95.] Teachers play obviously a crucial role in education. In the two studies presented here we have mainly investigated:

1. the relation between teachers and the community
2. the qualifications of teachers
3. the motivation of teachers
4. subjects included in the regular curriculum

[96.] The last subject has less to do with teachers as the curricula usually are set by the educational authorities. We have included it here because the combination of teaching and curriculum more or less defines the contents of the education received by children.

Sierra Leone

[97.] In order to appreciate the responses of Sierra Leone in the following sections one has to keep in mind (a) the tremendous poverty and (b) the fact that the presence of a nice school in the centre of the village has an important symbolic meaning, to be associated with concepts of peace, normality and relevance.

6.1 Teachers and the community in Sierra Leone

[98.] Teachers are normally living in the community where the school is located. Distances and transport possibilities would not allow for taking up residence in another place. In our study teachers already have been living seven years in the community on average and they have been teaching for five years at the school. There is no difference between G1, G2 or G3 in this respect. That is quite remarkable because the long lasting civil war ended only four years ago. There are no signs that teachers have the intention to leave the communities and they are grateful for the opportunity to be able to be employed at the school.

Note:

It is known that quite a few teachers now working in G1 or G2 schools were previously active in the IDP (internally displaced persons) camps in Freetown: so one would expect differences here. It may be that some of them came to Freetown from their present communities for apparently only a limited amount of time and/or that an equally substantive number of these IDP camp returned to the communities where G3 schools are located.

[99.] Most of these teachers are well integrated in the communities and they are called for when innovations reach the community or when important decisions have to be taken. Here the Community Teacher Association (CTA) plays an important role. In our study there is no difference between G1, G2 of G3 in this respect.

6.2 Qualifications of teachers in Sierra Leone

[100.] Formal qualifications to teach are extremely low as only three headmasters of the 12 schools have a Higher Teacher Certificate and five a Teacher Certificate. Other teachers have followed two to four years secondary school.

[101.] Teachers do little to upgrade their knowledge and/or skills, though possibilities are also restricted. The MoE organises refreshing courses or courses on special subjects during the summer holidays in Moyamba or Freetown. However, few teachers participate (fully) in these as many other things (logistics) have to be done when they are in the (district) capital. Some teachers take part in a three years course of distant learning, started by Plan but now taken over by the Government in a modified form.

[102.] No changes are observed in this respect when comparing the year 2000 with the present situation, there are also no differences between G1, G2 and/or G3.

6.3 The motivation of teachers in Sierra Leone

[103.] Teachers feel that they belong to the community in which they are living and this is also true for those who came from another place after being appointed by the Ministry. Many of them indicate that they seek higher levels of education in their profession but few opportunities are offered. The same is true for job opportunities: these are not available in the communities and probably they are not looked for either.

[104.] In most schools, teachers prepare pupils for the National Performance School Exam (NPSE) through remedial classes. This is done during the holidays. All teachers complain about low salaries and irregular payments. These answers are true for G1, G2 and G3 teachers.

[105.] Teachers in G1 schools show more willingness to perform additional tasks in and for the school including sports. This is the only difference in terms of motivation that came up through our questionnaires.

[106.] Although there are no differences observed between the activities of teachers in the different groups of schools, still an additional remark should be made here. In the schools with Quality Learning Programmes the teachers showed more interest in the process of development. They are more eloquent and they no longer take the given situation as acceptable. They seek more assistance, and they are more eager to improve the performance of the children. A spirit of possible change is noticed, but circumstances are still very difficult to change the actual situation.

6.4 Subjects included in the curriculum in Sierra Leone

[107.] HIV/AIDS is included in the curriculum of the schools as part of 'hygiene'. Local conditions were not included in the curriculum in any of the schools visited. In general, topics tend to be taught as separate subjects rather than being integrated with similar topics. This holds for G1, G2 and G3 schools. The G1 and G2 schools do not devote specific attention to gender issues, in contrast to the G3 schools.

[108.] In only 50% of the schools, trauma healing is part of the curriculum. This holds for G1, G2 and G3 schools. Trauma healing as part of the curricula is a complex issue. After the civil war, Plan became involved in education in the IDP in Freetown through the Rapid Education Programme. The curriculum included activities for the first four weeks completely devoted to trauma healing through plays and games and this was a very positive experience. This was soon changed into a two weeks treatment and the subject was included as a general introduction of "regular" topics.

[109.] Plan decided quite soon to move its activities to Moyamba, since it considered that the IDP camps would be dismantled. The aftercare was taken up by Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE) while transforming the camp schools in "normal" schools⁹.

[110.] In the Plan schools in Moyamba trauma healing was included in the regular programme. Children with more serious trauma benefited from school-based psychosocial counselling. This was executed by FAWE as well, but the form changed. It consisted in one or two individual sessions of 10-20 minutes each. This system was criticised by the evaluators in 2003¹⁰.

[111.] In 2003 the World Bank funded a Peace Education Programme by its Development Grant Facility (DGF) from the Post Conflict Fund which has recently been evaluated as a positive

⁹ CPO Sierra Leone, March 1, 2000

¹⁰ Evaluation Report on the Education Renewal Programme in Moyamba District, November 2004

experience. It involves a wide range of issues that are taken up in the normal curricula at the schools and include Music, Drama, Dance and visual arts as specific subject areas¹¹.

[112.] It remains unclear how the trauma-healing experiences as given in the IDP camps is connected with the Peace Education Programme by the DFG.
Guatemala

6.5 Teachers and communities in Guatemala

[113.] Rural schools in Guatemala are often not located in the villages and towns where the teachers live; rather they are located in between the villages they are serving. Therefore the school does not have a central place in the development of the villages and while the teachers themselves have to go out to the rural areas to do their job, they tend to send their own children to a different school in town.

[114.] For teachers there are two realities in their daily life: one is the reality of the employment in the school to which he has to walk or find transport and the other one is the reality of life within the village or town of residence. The researchers comment: "there are discrepancies between the school and the work calendars in families" (see annex IV). The teacher concentrates on his personal career and seeks to be transferred to schools in town and cities through additional qualifications and for better payment. He is less concentrated on the smooth and efficient running of the school itself.

[115.] In this respect no differences were observed between the different groups of schools. Plan's intervention with the rehabilitation of the schools could not change this, because it depends on the actual location of the school for rehabilitation. It is the municipality or the community that decides on the location depending on the availability of land for constructions.

6.6 Qualifications of the teachers in Guatemala

[116.] All teachers in Guatemala are officially qualified; they participate in all offered additional courses by the Ministry or Plan. That is not a problem as such. However, often these courses are on Fridays, during class periods and teachers are then absent from school.

¹¹ Sierra Leone Peace Education Kit, Evaluation of the Trial Implementation, August, 2005

6.7 The motivation of teachers in Guatemala

[117.] The difference between the QL and the other schools is evident. It is not very clear though, if these differences stem from the own motivation of the teachers, or if they perform differently because of the offered opportunities by Plan to have additional training for new teaching methods.

[118.] In any case children in QL schools show more self-confidence, more poise in their relationships as well as more inquisitiveness. On the other hand children in non-Plan schools are shy, less participative and uncomfortable in their relationship with their elders and strangers.

[119.] A general problem in Guatemala is the absence of teachers during class periods. They arrive late and close earlier than the official hours. The teachers with programmes of Quality Learning are more interested in bilingual education, in the participation of their students and in the use of resources. Classes are more dynamic, the relation between teacher-pupil more horizontal, with mutual respect and appreciation. This was shown e.g. in The Pahoj village school where the mobility of teachers every year evidences the differences between the teachers trained on QL by Plan and the new ones who show their preference for the traditional methodology.

[120.] This change of attitude results in a higher appreciation of the school by parents and teachers alike. Remarks are made as "now teachers do not hit children" or, "formerly, teachers used to spank, they were ill tempered and they always carried sticks to hit children", evidence a changing learning environment¹².

6.8 Subjects included in the curriculum in Guatemala

[121.] A number of subjects have been added to the standard curriculum in Guatemala. They are related to the own community, work and employment, environment, HIV/AIDS, hygiene, trauma healing and gender.

[122.] Hygiene and environmental issues are taught in all schools and community and employment subjects are touched in most of them. Trauma healing scores lower, but it is not relevant in all schools either. HIV/AIDS and gender score low as well and is taught in half of the schools only.

¹² Annex: Plan International's Survey, observations and comments by researcher Edgar Barillas (DÉCOR)-translation from Spanish.

6.9 Conclusions on teachers and curricula

Sierra Leone

[123.] If you are extremely hungry, you will be happy to eat whatever you can get. Yet, at the same time you know that sometime in the past and in other parts of this world, really nice food was/is available. Teachers in Sierra Leone, on the one hand are happy to have a job and that they get paid for it, although not much and at irregular times. They feel at home in the communities where they are living and working, but on the other hand in general they experience a lack of vision on a future where it pays to develop skills.

[124.] In the QL Programme teachers, children and parents slowly developed a changing attitude with a wider horizon with hope for improvements. The teachers are mostly unqualified, but are prepared to work for it as shown when engaging in extra curricular activities. However, it is a context of little promise and low energy intake and output.

[125.] The way Plan deals with trauma healing is less transparent. It gives the impression that Government and Plan consider that other programmes will take up these tasks. Plan has contracted FAWA to assist in this programme, but the last evaluation was not positive on the outcome

Guatemala

[126.] The most striking observation in Guatemala concerns the fact that schools are located outside the villages and as a consequence are not part of a particular community. The schools are not 'owned' and also for the teachers their schools are no part of their communal life. Rather, work and 'normal life' are clearly separated.

[127.] All teachers are qualified and eager to attend additional courses offered by the Ministry and Plan. These courses are mostly given during class periods and thus increase the absence from school, which is already a serious problem.

[128.] Through the courses in the QL programmes teachers are more interested to insert bilingual education, in the participation of the children in the classrooms and willing to create a more dynamic relation between teachers and among pupils. This change of attitude results in a higher appreciation of the school by parents and children and here again children refer to beatings at school: "Formerly teachers used to spank, they were ill tempered and they always carried sticks to hit children". The observed changed attitude may have influenced parents to accept schooling as a

normal course in the life of school aged children and disregard opportunity costs during that period.

[129.] Although the motivation of teachers has some influence on the willingness to apply new teaching methods, no clear relation with the obtained results on enrolment and drop-out rates can be established. A better atmosphere in the classroom may influence children's inclination to prefer school instead of working at home as well.

7 Involvement of the parents in education

[130.] When assessing the role of parents in relation to primary schools and their functioning, we have paid attention to:

- Organisation of parents' councils;
- The mandate of the parents' councils;
- Horizontal communication (relation parents' councils and the school)
- Vertical communication (relation between parents' councils with the Ministry, the Inspectorate, municipality, other NGOs).

Sierra Leone

[131.] The structural involvement of parents is of importance because it shows their interest and care. At the same time many of the members of the parents' councils are informal leaders in the communities also and they often function as the connection with the "outside world".

[132.] Parents in Sierra Leone are structurally involved in the management of the schools through the School Management Committees (SMCs) and through the Community Teachers' Associations (CTAs). The number of members varies from three to 10. Parents become members of the Parents' Council by voting. Although it has been promoted by Plan Sierra Leone, this is not typically for Plan schools only. In fact in a number of Plan schools the SMCs and CTAs are non-existent or do not function.

7.1 Mandate and participation of SMCs in Sierra Leone

[133.] Mandates of the parents' councils are not always clear and in each school where they operate, the parents give it a different shape. In this study 10 possible functions of the mandate have been included. The number of times that each function has been mentioned is shown in the following table:

Table 12

Mandate of SMCs in Sierra Leone

School nr.	1-4	5-8	9-12
1. nomination of teachers	1	2	1
2. budget/financial affairs	1	1	0
3. school utensils and books	1	2	0
4. school management	1	1	0
5. school meals	1	0	0
6. security	1	2	0
7. construction and facilities	1	2	1
8. uniforms, learning methods	2	2	0
9. adult education	0	0	0
10. pre-school/day care	0	0	0
Total	9	12	2

[134.] The Parents Councils gained considerably in importance for the running of the school, especially in the group of schools with the QL programme. Where they are in place, the committees in the PLAN schools are apparently more active than in the non-PLAN schools and (for example) have created subcommittees for specific tasks related to the community, like responsibilities for youth and women. SMCs and CTAs usually meet for emergency cases and often at regular basis at the beginning of a school year in addition to activities as may have been developed for youth and women.

[135.] The stronger involvement of parents with the management of the school and their participation in the decision making processes are evident. In a number of cases the communities and the parents show a keen interest when there is prospective of assistance from outside. In the preparation phase for school constructions and its immediate aftercare the involvement is high, but decreases once the school has been built. The councils have some difficulties to find new challenges and tasks for their immediate participation.

[136.] The relations between the parents' councils and the schools are generally good and cordial. Since the members of the councils are at the same time prominent members of the community communication is generally easy and frequent. In the villages no other structured organizations exist. Other NGOs seldom meet with the communities in the Moyamba district, except for FAWE and Pekin to Pekin, which are under contract of Plan for special parts of the curricula.

[137.] The programme of QL has some positive influence on the communication. The school management has more frequent and structured meetings with the local authorities to discuss issues of

mutual interest, like on the use of the children’s radio programmes in the community or on contracting teachers locally.

[138.] The SMCs have sporadically meetings with the Inspectorate of the Ministry of Education (which is also supported by Plan). Meetings are more often with the leaders of the community, especially in the schools additionally supported by Plan through Q.L. (G2 schools).

Guatemala

[139.] In Guatemala Parents’ councils have been created in all schools. In addition, all schools have a Students’ council as well, selected or nominated by the headmaster.

7.2 Mandate and participation of the Parents’ Councils in Guatemala

[140.] In collaboration with the local researchers 8 different functions have been listed for the mandate of the Parents’ council as mentioned in the following table.

Table 13

Mandate of the parents’ councils in Guatemala

School number	1-4	5-8	9-12
1. nomination of teachers	1	1	0
3. school utensils and books	3	2	1
3. vacation periods	0	1	0
4. curriculum	0	2	0
5. school meals	4	3	4
7. construction and facilities	4	4	3
8. uniforms,	0	0	0
10. pre-school/day care	0	0	0
total	12	13	8

[141.] The mandate of the parents’ council in the schools supported by Plan (G1 and G2) is more elaborated compared to the schools with no interventions of Plan. It has a say in the nomination of the director and the teachers, about the school utensils, about the security and the learning methods, where schools not attended by Plan do not exert influence.

[142.] The Parents’ councils in group 2 with QL are more active and actually do assist the school financially, in the maintenance

and cleaning, to discuss the curricula and then to try to diminish the absenteeism during harvest periods (of the farms). The involvement of parents changed remarkably in these schools as can be observed in the 12 different activities in the following table.

Table 14

The participation of parents in school management in Guatemala

School nr.	1-4	5-8	9-12
1. financial contribution school activities	0	4	4
2. cleaning of school premises	3	4	1
3. maintenance and upgrading of the school	4	4	2
4. discussion about progress of children	3	2	0
5. assistance to meetings	4	3	4
6. participation in outings and extra activities	1	4	1
7. parents can enter into classrooms	0	2	0
8. assistance to library and sport	1	2	0
9. assistance in classroom e.g. reading	0	4	1
10. sharing experiences, special act. children	0	4	1
11. voting for election parent council	4	2	3
12. taking part in committees	0	2	2
Total participation:	20	37	19

[143.] The activities related to Q.L. (G2 schools) have apparently brought about a new interest of the parents to get involved in the management of the school. This concerns especially the financial contribution, the cleaning and maintenance activities of the school premises and assisting the learning process of the children. The role of the students' councils is more extensive in the schools with Q.L. and includes discussions on the time of vacation and the curriculum of the school (apparently some flexibility is possible on these and related issues such as the length of the school-day). In both the G1 and G3 schools this interest is less.

[144.] The contacts with the municipality are minimal and with other NGOs only in two cases of the group with Q.L. Programmes. The schools of group 1 (reconstruction) meet frequently with Plan (3-5 times/year) and 2-12 times in the group with Q.L.

[145.] From written testimonies during the study, it has been noted that in some cases the participation of the Parents' council is further extended so that it also co-decides on the nomination of the director and the teachers. Contacts with the authorities are maintained mainly through the directors of the schools.

[146.] No differences in this respect are observed between the groups of schools, so this extension cannot be attributed to PLAN

efforts. The contacts of the councils with Plan are intensive (between 5 and 12 times a year). Other remarks disclose that parents' councils consider the supervision of teachers also as one of their tasks (e.g. reporting to the inspectorate when a teacher doesn't show up).

7.3 Conclusions on the involvement of parents in education

[147.] In this part of the study it has been tried to disclose the influence of parents and the parent's councils on the observed outcomes and impact of Plan's interventions. In all three groups of schools in both countries parents are structurally involved in the management of the schools through the School management Committees and the Community Teachers' associations of three to up to 10 members, mostly selected through voting. The mandate of the councils varies per country and per group of schools.

Sierra Leone

[148.] There exists a remarkable difference of the mandate between the different groups of schools. The Plan's schools (Group 1 and 2) are more elaborated than in the non-Plan schools (Group 3). In most schools the parents' councils meet once a month or when emergency arises.

[149.] This difference is sometimes reflected in the actual participation of the parents when using the mandate. In one case in Group 2, the SMC could remove a headmaster, because of malfunctioning. In other cases they support subcommittees for youth or women and lobby in the community to send children to school.

[150.] Activities are more visible when there are prospects of assistance from outside like a new building. The attention diminishes afterwards and new challenges are to be found. Plan could take some interest to assist the parents' councils to define new concrete tasks to enhance their participation in the management of the schools.

[151.] The relations with the community are natural and cordial, since the school is an integral part of the community. There are only sporadic meetings with the Inspectorate of the Ministry and very seldom with other NGOs.

[152.] The influence of the involvement of parents on the observed results of the intervention of Plan is difficult to quantify, but the lobbying activities to send children to school and the

presence of an existing organisation that supports the interests of the school is certainly worthwhile and contributed to the obtained results.

Guatemala

[153.] Parents' councils have been formed in all schools of Guatemala, mostly selected by voting and sometimes nominated by the headmaster. The mandate of the councils is more elaborated in the Plan schools than in the non Plan schools and include a say in the nomination of teachers and the director of the school.

[154.] Their actual participation is considerably higher in the schools with QL programmes through financial contribution, cleaning and maintenance of the premises, their assistance in extra activities and in the classrooms. They actually use the mandate to co-decide on the nomination of teachers and feel it as their task to control their performance.

[155.] Plan maintains strong relations with the Parents' councils in the schools where they finance the interventions with QL programmes or rehabilitation. The Parents' councils sometimes report on the performance of teachers and school directors to the Inspector of the Ministry of Education directly but are often frustrated by the response.

[156.] The increased involvement of parents in the management of the school surely contributed to a better control of the performance of teachers and enhanced the interests of the children to go to school. It is difficult to estimate their actual influence on the results attributed to the interventions of Plan. Structured relations with other NGOs and the municipalities are weak so far and the influence on the educational process is still minimal.

[157.] In both countries many members of the parents' councils are illiterate and they feel that they are at a disadvantage to deal with educational matters, even if it only concerns the management of the school. Still the councils exert some pressure on the school to improve their performance.

8 Perception from children

[158.] How children feel at school is important as a means to know how motivated they are to learn. A number of questions have been asked to get an insight in their preferences at school and their expectations after school:

- Why do they go to school in the first place?
- Do they prefer single or combined classes?
- How do they feel about mixed (boys and girls) classes?
- Do they feel comfortable with the number of pupils in the class?
- How do they do their homework?
- How is practical work assessed by the children (if relevant)?
- What do they expect to do after leaving primary (and perhaps Secondary) school and how is the appreciation of their parents?

Sierra Leone

8.1 How children feel at school in Sierra Leone

[159.] Almost all children in Sierra Leone feel that they are forced to go to school, especially by the parents. Still there is a remarkable difference in the way they express themselves between the different groups of schools. In the G1 and G2 schools children are more eloquent in their explanation and include reasons of social responsibilities towards parents and communities in their answers.

They mention that they want to learn, to get a job, and to help their parents. They refer to others that have been educated earlier and they want to be like them.

[160.] Getting beaten by the teachers and the absence of a suitable building are reasons to dislike school. One gets the impression that the children in group 3 (without Plan's intervention) are afraid to mention the beatings of the teachers. If they would not go to school they will have to work with the parents on the farm or do domestic work at home. Children in group 1 would attend non-formal education courses like masonry or carpentry. To go to a proper school building apparently adds to the motivation and the absence of a suitable building apparently can be a reason to dislike school.

[161.] Children prefer single classes in Group 1 and 2; less in group 3. Their reasoning is that they feel that in combined classes there is too much noise and children of different levels do not

understand the lessons or have to learn the same thing all over again. Most schools have one or more combined classes; most often grade 5 and 6 are together. Teachers try to avoid combined classes by placing chata mats in the rooms to divide the space.

[162.] Except for an only-boys school, all classes are mixed and most children like that. They feel that the boys can help the girls with their school work and it creates a competition between the boys.

[163.] In the average classroom of the schools of group 1 there are 31 pupils; in group 2:34 and in group 3:65. The children in the smaller classes in Group 1 and 2 (13 and 14 children/class) feel that the classes are too small. From 30 to 60 they don't care or feel that they are large. In group 3 the children don't care about the size of the group except in one class with 135 children.

[164.] Reasons for the high number of pupils per class are given by the headmasters: either there are insufficient teachers or the inflow of children that attend school grew very rapidly. The nomination of teachers from the Ministry of Education is slow. In some cases the communities help out by contracting a local teacher on their own expenses.

[165.] In all but one school all children said that they prefer classroom frontal teaching instead of learning in groups. No differences between the three groups of schools have been observed. The probable reason is that they are not familiar with other teaching methods. This would mean that the introduction of newer teaching methods is far behind in Sierra Leone.

[166.] Children are used to get homework and consider it as a part of going to school. They don't like or dislike it, but are forced by parents and teachers to comply. In the district capital where Plan constructed the schools, the guidance of parents and brothers and sisters is higher than in rural areas where most parents and many brothers and sisters are illiterate. Children receive in the rural areas little assistance at home when doing their home work.

[167.] Apart from the all-boys school, there is no practical work at schools. Some mention physical health practices, like washing hands, but in total it is minimal.

[168.] All interviewed children considered working at home as the most probable future once they would have finished school although some of them could imagine becoming a doctor or a nurse. Here again especially the children from the schools with a proper building and QL (G1) were more eloquent in expressing future opportunities. These schools were, however, situated in the district's capital and it is of course well possible that the social

environment in the district capital influences the way children express themselves.

[169.] Parents find it important that their children provide them with some income once they (these parents) have grown old. They follow the progress of the children at school and expect them to pass the exams and celebrate the successes. At the same time beatings and scolding are applied if children do not comply with the expectations in the G2 and G3 schools. It is remarkable that in G1 schools children do not mention any beatings at home and the parents react more mildly to failures.

[170.] Terminating successfully the sixth grade of school is not considered by the parents as something more special than passing from one class to another.

8.2 Ideas on the future from children and parents in Sierra Leone

[171.] The opinion of children about their future is often limited to the examples they see in their immediate surrounding by which they are inspired. Here again the pupils of the schools attended by Plan are more eloquent in their answers. They long to be doctors, nurses or a NGO worker. Above all they want to earn money for their parents. In the non-Plan schools they feel that their future depends on the parents and mention being a minister or a teacher as possible jobs.

Guatemala

8.3 How children feel at school in Guatemala

[172.] In Guatemala all children like to go to school. In schools with QL programmes children feel that the parents oblige them; in the other groups of schools it is mainly the pressure of the government that has been mentioned. If they would not go to school, children would have to work with their parents: to bring water, wood to cook and to work in the household to prepare food.

[173.] All schools have combined classes for organizational reasons (lack of infrastructure, lack of teachers and/or a low number of pupils). In half of the cases grade 1 is combined (not always with grade 2) and so it is often grade 2. The reason mentioned by the teachers is the convenience of combining two small classes which may be class two and class five. Pedagogically this is questionable. It is remarkable that the number of combined

classes increased in seven of the 12 schools (G1, G2 and G3 schools).

[174.] Children are divided in their opinion about combined classes: in G1 schools (constructed by Plan) they do not favour combined classes; in most other schools (both G2 and G3) they are happy with it, especially when the number of pupils is low.

[175.] Directors of schools (with one exception) do not like combined classes, teachers in some cases, although not in the same cases as parents. Officers of Plan remarked that they favour combined classes in a number of cases as this allows for a better use of scarce teacher capacity. Most children want a larger number of pupils in their classes, especially in the G2 schools because this facilitates interaction; in the other groups of schools children are indifferent.

[176.] Children in all but one school favour mixed classes (boys and girls) because of mutual assistance. Teachers do most of the talking in the G1 schools (90% of the time it is the teacher who is talking) and G3 schools (85%), much less in the G2 schools (57%). All children like to work in groups.

[177.] Children do their homework because of pressure from parents and, somewhat less, because teachers oblige them. However, they don't dislike homework. In G2 schools they experience this pressure less often. Parents, older brothers and sisters rarely assist them with their homework.

[178.] All children like the practical work in school; out of school only children in the schools with Q.L. are happy with practical work.

8.4 Ideas on the future from children and parents in Guatemala

[179.] Generally, all children strive to finish primary school. When children pass or finish the school, there is, however, no celebration at home or in the school (one exception). When they fail to pass, children just repeat the year (G1 and G2 schools), but in the G3 schools most children leave without repeating the last class. Children in the G1 and G2 schools mention a wish to continue studying after finishing primary school but when asked what the most likely course of events will be all of them respond that they will have to work in the farm (boys) or do domestic work (girls) at home. No differences between the three groups of schools have been observed.

[180.] Although the following was not part of the study, still it is interesting to note that in the schools with Plan' interventions, the boys want to continue studying after finishing the Secondary school; in the non-Plan schools they want to work. The girls in the schools constructed by Plan do not want to continue studying: they want to work or get married. In the group of schools with Q.L., the girls have study as the first priority and marrying as the second. In the non-Plan schools the wish to study and to work after the Secondary school are equally divided.

8.5 Conclusions about the perceptions from children and parents.

[181.] That more children attend school (Sierra Leone) or remain for more years at primary school (both countries) - the main outcome of this study - may be influenced by the way those children feel in and about the school. Therefore some questions have been related to perception from the children who attend school.

[182.] Still a minor part (Guatemala) and an unknown percentage (Sierra Leone) do not go to school and it would be of interest for Plan to commission special studies to investigate the reasoning of the parents and children not involved in the educational process.

Sierra Leone

[183.] Children feel that they are forced to go to school. In QL schools they add reasons of social responsibilities towards parents and communities.

[184.] If they would not go to school they will have to work at home. Beatings at school by teachers still occur in all groups of schools and this is still one of the major reasons to dislike school. A proper school building adds to their motivation.

[185.] Single classes are preferred by children in schools attended by Plan and less in the non-Plan schools, but they are happy with the mixed classes (boys and girls). The boys feel that they can help the girls and that it stimulates competition between them.

[186.] Most children are indifferent to the number of children in the class and only exceptional small (less than 13), or large numbers (more than 60) are criticized. The reasons for the large classes are given by the teachers. The nomination of teachers by the Ministry is too slow or the inflow of new pupils too sudden.

[187.] Frontal teaching in the classroom is common and only one school experienced group learning. Preference for frontal teaching by most of the children is probably based on ignorance of other methods.

[188.] Children consider homework as another obligation inherent to the attention of school. They find little assistance by the (mostly illiterate) family with the exception of the children in the district capital. Most children consider working at home and getting married as the most probable future once they finish school. Children in the schools of Group 1 in the more urban setting of the district capital imagine other possibilities and are more eloquent in expressing future opportunities.

[189.] Parents find it important that children can provide for income in their old age and give praise in case of success at school and punishment and beatings if they do not comply. In the schools in the town of Moyamba Group 1) parents react more mildly.

[190.] *Summarizing*, it may be too early to isolate the effect of the perception of children on the results obtained by the interventions of Plan. The state of development in the rural areas of the country and the dominant culture in the isolated communities do not favour an early independent development of children and less so after the long-lasting war events in the recent past.

[191.] Still by absence of opportunity costs and financially free access to schooling the individual opinion of the child may have an influence on the decision of the parents. In the surrounding of the more urban setting of the district capital, children develop more capacity to eloquently express their opinions. The total influence of the perception of the children on the results, however, remains limited.

Guatemala

[192.] All children in Guatemala like to go to school, but feel the pressure of the parents (group of schools with QL) or of the government (other groups) as well. If they would not go to school they will have to work at home.

[193.] The number of combined classes in all schools are on the rise, caused by lack of infrastructure and/or teachers or too small a number of pupils. For reasons of convenience they may combine class two and five or any other combination. This solution may pedagogically be questionable.

[194.] Children prefer combined classes, when the number of pupils per class is low because this facilitates interaction. In other

cases they don't like it. Mixed classes (boys and girls) are preferred by nearly all children.

[195.] Children are aware of other teaching methods. They all like to work in groups. Especially at schools with QL, teachers leave more space to the children to intervene during the lessons.

[196.] Homework is done under pressure from the parents or teachers, but at schools with QL they experience it less as an obligation. At home they do not find any assistance to do their homework. Children of the schools with QL like practical work out of school as an extra activity

[197.] Children in the Plan schools repeat when they fail; in the non-Plan schools they tend to leave the school. After finishing primary school all children indicate that they will have to work at home, but children in the Plan schools mention a wish to continue education.

[198.] After Secondary school, children of the Plan schools imagine to continue studying; in the non-Plan schools they want to work.

[199.] Although parents and the government oblige children to go to school when they are of age, one gets the feeling that at home frequent discussions take place about its convenience, judged against the advantages to assist at home. Costs and opportunity costs certainly are important determinants for the decision, but the specific individual interest of the child will play a role as well.

[200.] The general atmosphere in the schools and the behaviour and performance of the teachers influence the opinion the child has about the school and the schooling. QL programmes offer more possibilities to adapt the teaching methods and to increase the pleasure to be in the classroom. At the same time, children have little influence on the performance of the teachers, which is mainly governed by the education system in the country.

[201.] *Summarizing*, in total it has been perceived that the influence of the perception of children on the outcomes of this study is difficult to quantify, but changed teaching methods may have helped the child to decide on his preference to stay longer at school.

9 General discussion on the outcome and impact

[202.] The educational processes in Sierra Leone and Guatemala are at a different stage and barely comparable. Plan has adapted its strategy in each country to the predominant situation but maintains two pillars to enhance primary education: access to education and quality learning. The emphasis and the operational implementation differ in both countries; the outcome and impact and weight of the explaining factors differ as well.

9.1 Outcome and impact in Sierra Leone

[203.] In Sierra Leone the educational level was low, even before the devastating war started. Now after the war, developments in the educational sector of the country give the impression of an accelerated improvement of the outcomes by the endeavours of the government without any interference from outside.

[204.] The presence of Plan with its specific contribution in a geographically limited area resulted in an important push of these developments in the same direction. At the same time Plan's interventions broadened the approach and included parents, teachers and communities in their efforts which resulted in a structural improvement of the methodology to enhance the educational process. The accelerated enrolment and the decrease of the drop-out rates are outcomes that have an important impact on the life of the children that benefited from the programmes.

[205.] The additional efforts of Plan resulted in impressive improvements of the enrolment and in a decrease of the drop-out rates, especially for girls. Not much is known about the number and the reasoning of parents who keep the children at home. The absence of opportunity costs for children in the communities surely has for many families facilitated the decision to send children to school. It is difficult to value the different inputs that caused these results.

[206.] Some elements have played an important role like the financing of the costs of schooling by the parents. In the rural areas of this poorest country in the world cash money is scarce and few parents can afford to pay for schooling. Food supply is a major problem and it was lamented that the World Food Programme stopped its supply in the district of Moyamba in 2002. New efforts are made to restart the programme in the district.

[207.] It is difficult to see the influence of a changed motivation of teachers on the results. New teaching methods have hardly been introduced in the classrooms, although more teachers are interested in additional courses if they are readily available. The low level of teachers in general remains an issue of concern.

[208.] The curriculum is slowly being amended and broadened with additional subjects, but trauma healing will remain problematic for many years to come.

[209.] The structural involvement of the parents just started in the communities and offer a promising possibility to enhance the process and influence the quality of teaching in the schools. It may already have contributed to the fast increases of enrolment and lower drop-out rates of the children.

[210.] *Summarizing*, it may be too early to isolate the effect of the own perception of the children on the obtained results. Children in the rural communities are culturally bound to ancient traditions and the possibilities to co-decide about their own future are often determined by their immediate surrounding. Some changes are visible in the more urban environment of the district capital.

9.2 Outcome and impact in Guatemala

[211.] In Guatemala the educational process is often victim of political changes, and racial and cultural discrimination by the leaders of the country. In the rural areas the opportunity costs for children to go to school are generally high and parents have to decide if they can afford the absence of their children from their homes or pay the cost to send them to school.

[212.] In the last four years the enrolment increased modestly, mainly for boys, but the number of years that the children remain at school increased considerably.

[213.] Plan's interventions have had a positive influence on this process, especially for girls and the drop-out rates at schools with QL decreased considerably.

[214.] When searching for the elements that caused these changes, one arrives easily at the conclusion that it is mainly the attitude of the parents towards schooling. But the reasons for this change of attitude are less easily to define. It is most likely that a number of measures in a holistic approach have contributed to the results. The supply of school materials, the introduction of new teaching methods through training, the involvement of the parents through the Parents councils have all together made these changes possible and influenced in a positive way the perception of parents and children about schooling.

[215.] Two major problems came afore in this study and are related to the performance of teachers. First it concerns not so much the quality of teaching or the applied methodology, but more specifically the absence of the teachers during class periods. This seems to be a structural problem in most schools.

[216.] The second problem is the lack of integration of the school in the communities. This has already been mentioned in earlier reports. Many schools are located outside the towns where the teachers live and this creates a duality in the attendance of the teachers. On the one hand they are involved in the school where they are nominated; on the other hand their families are living in town and form part of the social life in that place.

[217.] In those cases it will not be so easy to involve the school community with the school management. Still, from this study it is clear that the motivation of children, the control on the teachers and the participation of the parents depend to a large extent on the involvement of communities in the school management.

[218.] *Summarizing*, the involvement of parents in the running of the school not only enhances the performance of the teachers and the functioning of the school, it also has influence on the perception of children about the value of schooling and their interest to remain at school. Still many problems are to be viewed in the context within which teachers relate to their schools and to the community.

[219.] These are structural changes and it is important to acquire more insight in the processes that affect the performance of teachers and its effects on the outcome of primary education in rural areas. To this effect some recommendations are formulated in the following chapter.

10. Recommendations

[220.] On the basis of the results of this study a number of recommendations have been formulated to improve the performance of Plan in both countries. They are mainly related to the strategies in the area of primary education and refer to additional studies that will be necessary to understand better the processes that are taking place. Some other recommendations are related to the practical implementation of the work and call the attention to problem areas to improve the effectiveness, the efficiency and the sustainability of the endeavours of Plan in both countries.

[221.] Since developments and strategies in the countries are different, the recommendations will be separated for each of them. They are placed in order of priorities as far as the issues are concerned, but do not necessarily coincide with the available funds of Plan in the countries.

10.1 Sierra Leone

1. [222.] This study was not an evaluation, but still we feel that the strategy in the field of primary education of Plan is highly effective to increase the enrolment of children and to decrease the drop-out rates in the rural areas. It is recommended that Plan continues in this way and, depending on the availability of funds, steps up with the construction of school buildings.
2. [223.] A case study is recommended to determine the number of children at school age that do not attend school and the reasoning behind it. This may prove to be a rather complicated and time consuming study with the scarcely available data, but it should allow an acceptable degree of generalization.
3. [224.] Another specific study will be needed to again determine the drop-out rates if these rates are to be used as outcome indicators in the future.
4. [225.] In this relation the scarcity of food has been mentioned during the study by children, teachers and parents. It is recommended that Plan do its utmost to ensure the restart of the WFP in the District of Moyamba through advocacy and lobbying.

5. [226.] A short study is recommended to get more insight in the results of the National Performance School Exam discriminated by gender and type of school.
6. [227.] It is recommended to commission a special study on the effects of enrolment of girls and the influence of the number of years they remain at school on the practices of marrying off in the rural families.
7. [228.] Other forms of teacher training will have to be thought of for the introduction of new teaching methods. In most of the existing old schools there is no place to store materials in a proper way, especially in the rainy season nor is there enough physical space to experiment with learning in groups in the classrooms. A start could be made in the schools rehabilitated or constructed by Plan.
8. [229.] The involvement of parents in the school management through the SMCs showed to have positive effects. It is recommended to update its mandates and to reconsider their concrete tasks after e.g. school construction has been finished. The parents show interest but lack vision on how to intensify and diversify their participation in the school management.
9. [230.] By advocacy and lobbying with the appropriate Ministries, Plan may contribute to ban beatings in the schools and at home what seriously affects the interest of children to attend classes and also increases fear of failure at school.
10. [231.] Plan SL supports the Inspectorate of Education in the District of Moyamba, but its functioning does not show sufficient effectiveness. A special programme to strengthen that inspectorate will be needed to sustain the obtained results in the future and it should function as a pilot for the other Inspectorates in the country. This should involve training and material support; the Ministry of Education should be responsible for the nomination and the salaries.
11. [232.] Energy and water are still problematic resources in the major part of the district. It directly affects the well-being of children, who spend much time on the collection of firewood and water before and after school hours. Plan could -if funds allow- investigate the use of alternative energy for the communities and intensify the efforts to provide drinking water for the families.
12. [233.] The issue of trauma healing programmes in the schools needs to be re-assessed.

[234.] The recommendations in fact reconfirms the adequacy of the followed strategy in Sierra Leone, and aim to strengthen some aspects by including studies for a better understanding of the processes and outcomes that take place. No major changes of strategies are recommended.

10.2 Guatemala

[235.] The teachers in Guatemala are formally qualified to teach. Additional training is required to improve their performance in the classrooms. But one of the main problems is their actual presence at school and the real time that they dedicate to teaching in the classrooms.

[236.] These problems are typical in a number of countries in Latin America and are caused by the low remuneration of the teachers, the political instability and changes of priorities at the national level and by discrimination of rural areas and also racial differences. They can not be solved at local levels. Still some tendencies may help to come closer to solutions. In this context the following recommendations are given.

1. [237.] In Guatemala, as in a number of other Latin American countries, there are tendencies to decentralization and privatization of the educational sector. Through advocacy and lobbying with major donors Plan could support the decentralization and –when appropriate- the privatization processes to the municipality and community level.
2. [238.] Plan could enter into negotiations with the specific trade unions for education to better regulate the presence of teachers in the schools and to improve their salaries, eventually positively discriminating for the rural areas.
3. [239.] Within the process of decentralization Plan could select a few strategic municipalities and lobby for its full fledged implementation in the primary education sector and support those with the existing programmes of QL. The purpose is to study the communication and decision processes that emerge in this process and to treat it as a pilot programme for other municipalities.
4. [240.] In the Ministry information is available about the results of samples of National Performance School Exam which can not be traced so far to individual schools. Plan should enter into negotiations with the Ministry to make those data available for analysis and relate the results to different type of schools.

5. [241.] Parents are sensitive to changes of performance at schools and change their attitude if they feel that schooling is more valuable than working at home. A campaign of Plan with these specific objectives could be worked out and tried in a few schools where Plan implements the QL Programme. This change of attitude is in many cases important for the decision of parents to send their children to school or to keep them at home to assist the family. This pilot could be combined with recommendation 3.
6. [242.] It is recommended that Plan pays attention to the organization of the time teachers spend in the schools. The actual teaching time is low and the Inspection of Education has not shown to be influential in this respect. In the study in Guatemala it could not be determined if special support to the Inspectorates could be effective.
7. [243.] After the internal war, most communities returned to normal life. By absence of data at municipal level a specific study is recommended to determine the number of children who do not attend school and the reasoning of the parents. This could be done in a number of those municipalities within in the areas of Plan's interventions.
8. [244.] One of the main reasons will be the expected additional income that children add to the family. The study should include elements to determine the factual additional income that they might bring and in how far the families are depending on this extra income. This study could be combined in the pilot project mentioned in the recommendations numbered 3 and 5.
9. [245.] It is recommended to commission a specific study on the influence of the use of computers in the schools as related to the perception of children about schooling.

[246.] As may be observed from the recommendations, the study disclosed mainly structural problems in Guatemala and if this view is shared with Plan, its intervention' strategy should be formulated accordingly with emphasis on advocacy and lobbying, followed by training and specific studies.

11. Looking for data and indicators

[247.] This study was not an evaluation, but a search for elements of impact in the sector of primary education. Furthermore we were invited to look for indicators which could be of potential use for the identification of such elements of impact or outcome. Here we use the terms as defined by the OECD/DAC.

[248.] This chapter is divided into two parts:

- The first part will mention data and indicators for outcome and elements of impact as far as we encountered them during the implementation of this study. They are limited to the area of primary education and follow the four fields of investigation: accessibility to education, motivation of teachers and curricula, involvement of parents and the perception of children and parents.

- The second part presented in annex 5, is strictly not part of this study and deals with a general discussion on data and indicators for outcome and elements of impact beyond the area of education and beyond the scope of this specific study in the two countries. In this part we try to contribute to the structure and the systematization of the search for suitable indicators. Although we strive for general validity in this contribution, examples and specifications may be given from the educational sector in which we have advantages because of this recent study.

11.1 Data and Indicators in this study

11.1.1 Introduction

[249.] Data of measurable direct outcomes like enrolment and drop-out rates were collected, but they were also collected for indicators to provide information about and to represent achievements in terms of qualitative indicators that are not directly measurable like involvement of parents in the education system or perceptions from children¹³. In this sense data about direct outcome may be also considered as indicatives for impact.

¹³ OECD/DAC: Indicators are quantitative or qualitative factors or variables that provide a simple and reliable means to measure achievements, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

[250.] In this study the data about enrolment, drop-out rates and over-aged children in schools have been collected. Since it has internationally been agreed that primary education has its intrinsic value, the increase of enrolment and the decrease of drop-outs, as well as the decrease of over-aged children in schools, attributed to the interventions of Plan are considered as an important impact of its efforts.

[251.] Factors that contributed to these results are probably manifold and some may be more important than others. A number of them have been included in this explorative study, but in hindsight, not necessarily the most important ones. The reason is that the study focussed on the effects of the actual interventions of Plan in the countries and not on the development of the educational sector at large.

[252.] The factors that were included in this study covered the fields of the physical accessibility, motivation of teachers, involvement of parents and the perception of children about schooling. The influence of each factor on the realized outcome (and impact) is difficult to weigh and are different for each country. Here they are mentioned in order of importance as they are perceived by the consultant in this study. Other factors at local level and more so at national (and international) level exert their influences on the educational process. They are perceived, but not analyzed in this study. Some of them are mentioned in the recommendations for further investigation.

[253.] In the following chapter essential and obtainable data for quantitative and qualitative indicators are mentioned. They are essential to enhance insight in the processes that influence the outcome and impact on education, but they are certainly not exhaustive in this field.

11.2 Data and indicators in Sierra Leone

[254.] Cash income of rural families in Sierra Leone is extremely low and parents consider that there is no opportunity costs attached to the schooling of the children. There is no doubt that Plan's financial assistance to the parents for school materials is of utmost importance for their decision about schooling for their children. An important indicator for this decision making process is therefore the actual costs for the parents when sending their children to school.

[255.] Food supply is related to the low production levels of the farm families and the lack of food for children affect the presence and the concentration of the children at school. In the given situation in the country the presence of outside support for the

supply of food is a factor of influence on the results. In this case the presence of the WFP is important information that should be taken into account.

[256.] After the many years of war in the country, many schools were destroyed and equally many communities do not have of a proper school building. The data collected on the outcome indicate that the school building as such is an important factor that contributed to the obtained results. At the same time it has an influence on the motivation of teachers and on the perception of children about schooling. The presence of a suitable school building is therefore considered as an important indicator for enrolment and drop-out rates.

[257.] But cost for schooling and the presence of a building are not the only factors of influence. In the study it has been noticed that in the school communities, where parents are structurally involved, the increase of enrolment and especially the decrease of the drop-out rates are remarkably higher. In this case data collected to indicate the structural involvement of the parents are related to the elements of the mandate of the parents' councils and the participation of the parents in the management of the schools.

[258.] The existence of a structure for the participation (mandate) and together with the communication with the community has certainly contributed to the results. An indicator to measure the involvement of parents is therefore the number of elements mentioned in the mandate of the parents' councils.

[259.] Another influential factor may be the perception of the children themselves. In the decision making process in the family the wish of children to attend school will also play a role, especially in Sierra Leone where by absence of a developed money market for agricultural produce, the opportunity costs are minimal.

[260.] To study the perceptions of children, the eloquence of their answers about their school environment (combined classes, mixed classes and size of the classes and expectations about their future) and the number of times that beatings by teachers have been reported, give an indication about their feelings to go to school. A direct indicator then could be the answer to the direct question if they like to go to school and why or why not.

[261.] To *summarize* the discussion on data and indicators for Sierra Leone we conclude that data could be collected on:

- Changes of enrolment in absolute figures discriminated by gender as long as few data about enrolment rates are available.

- Changes of drop-out rates in the fourth and the sixth year discriminated by gender.

[262.] As obtainable data for explaining factors for the qualitative indicators could serve:

- the cost for schooling for the parents as an indicator for the accessibility to education
- the presence of food supply programmes as a second indicator for accessibility to education
- the presence of a suitable school building
- the existence of parents' council and the elements of its mandate as an indicator for the involvement of parents
- the extent to which children like to go to school as an indicator of their influence on the decision making process in the family.

11.3 Data and indicators in Guatemala

[263.] Contrarily to Sierra Leone, farm families depend for their income to a large extent on the agricultural market and on employment outside their communities. Schooling is viewed by the parents as one of the options for the children. The other option is to keep them at home to avoid costs and put them to work to contribute to the family income.

[264.] Therefore the perception of the parents about the value of the school to provide for income in the future is very important. Actual costs and perceived opportunity costs are measured against these expectations in the decision making process. The opportunity costs are rising with the age of the children and it will be increasingly difficult for the parents to make a decision in favour of schooling. Therefore two sets of data are related to the process: The actual cost to parents and the perceived opportunity costs for the children of different ages attending school.

[265.] A second influential factor is the involvement of the parents in the school management. Different from Sierra Leone, the actual participation has more influence on the results than the mandate of the counsels does. This is especially the case for girls in relation to the drop-out rates in the fourth grade and for boys in the sixth grade of primary school. Therefore the number of activities and the diversity of the participation of parents could serve as indicators for the involvement of parents.

[266.] With the available (alarmingely elevated) data on over-aged children, more studies will be needed to get insight in the causes. The percentages of over-aged children in school are data on outcome, but this study did not include the search for explaining factors for this phenomenon. The possible causes like late inscription and/or repetition of classes should be clarified. No indicators can therefore be recommended at this stage.

[267.] A third factor of influence is the motivation of teachers to change their teaching methods. The new teaching method of QL is not only more attractive to the teachers, but it also influences the perceptions of parents and children about education as well. The motivation was measured by the arrangements in the class rooms, the inclusion of bilingual teaching and the space that teachers offered to children to talk in the classroom. Other qualitative differences were observed like the relation teachers-children, mutual respect and use of available materials. A suitable indicator for the motivation of teachers is simply the application of new teaching methods.

[268.] This influences also the perception of children and their willingness to go to school. Included in the new method of teaching is the more horizontal relation between teacher and children and abolishing the use of the cane for punishment. With increasing age of the children, their possibility to co-decide in the family circle on schooling increases as well. Therefore their perception of school and the relation with the teachers is important in this respect.

[269.] It is difficult to decide on a suitable indicator for the perception of children, since all mentioned that they liked school but only marginal differences between the types of schools could be found on the other corresponding questions. More study will be needed to determine on a suitable indicator for the perception of children about schooling.

[270.] Finally the study concluded that the combination of lowering the cost for education, the application of new teaching methods and the involvement of parents together in a holistic approach brought about the changes of the outcome on enrolment, retention and over-age children. The collection of data on this combination will be an indicator for the progress that the educational system is making in the schools attended by Plan.

[271.] To *summarize* the discussion on data and indicators for Guatemala, we conclude that data could be collected on:

- changes of enrolment and enrolment rates (if available), discriminated by gender
- changes of drop-out rates in the fourth and sixth grade, discriminated by gender

- changes of rates of over-aged children, discriminated by gender
- [272.] As data on explaining factors for the indicators could serve:
- the actual cost of education for the parents
 - the opportunity costs for all grades, discriminated by gender as an indicator for the change of attitude of the parents towards schooling
 - the number of activities of the parents council and its diversity as an indicator for the involvement of parents
 - the number of teachers applying new teaching methods
 - the hours of actual teaching in the classroom
 - the frequency of occurrence of the combination of lowering the costs, changing the attitude of parents and the involvement of parents in the school management.

Annex I

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference Education Studies Sierra Leone and Guatemala

1. Introduction

The RED Unit at Plan IH in partnership with the NLNO has initiated a process aimed at strengthening the CPME system to meet the requirement of communities, partners, grant donors and management, and improve access to the type of information needed by National Organisations (NOs). The project entails the establishment of an innovation fund to support a number of pilot countries to improve their monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Sierra Leone and Guatemala are two of the five selected countries.

One of the objectives of the project is: "The NLNO is provided with its short term information needs for annual reporting to the Dutch Government (for 2004, 2005 and 2006) which show improvements in quality each year". NLNO wants to improve its annual report 2004 by means of an assessment of Plan's performance on primary education¹⁴. The assessment will be done through the analysis of existing material (BI-online, PWW learning domain, annual project reports, and evaluations) and through a questionnaire in combination with two field studies in Sierra Leone and Guatemala. The questionnaire is sent to the Learning Advisors of the all the CO with NLNO grant funding for primary education. The focus is on gathering information at activity, output (and were possible) at outcome level. The focus of the two studies in Sierra Leone and Guatemala is on gathering information at outcome and impact level. It is expected that the combination of the questionnaire, the two field studies and the already existing information will provide sufficient information for an assessment at aggregated level of Plan's achievements on primary education.

The above described methodology and the results thereof are an input for the kick off workshop in April of the Innovation Fund for Enhanced Monitoring and Evaluation (refer to the project document for more details).

Please take notice that the two field studies are not an evaluation of the two projects.

In the present case, these Terms of References refer to the two field studies.

2. Objective

¹⁴ Primary Education was chosen because NLNO direct a major part of its grants funding to education; furthermore, education is one of the major policy topics of the current Dutch Government and the international agenda.

No suitable methods have been developed so far to measure impact appropriately. However, an attempt is worthwhile to search for elements that influenced directly the welfare of children within the educational sector by the interventions over the years.

The main question to be answered concerns the relation between the outcomes of the interventions in the sector education to behavioural changes. These changes may occur within the framework of formal education or as a spin-off in other sectors. The objectives of this study will be to discover:

- Which behavioural changes can be observed and
 - To what extent the primary education interventions of Plan contributed to these changes.
3. The approach, scope and reporting
- a. The scope of the study
- i. Geographical delimitations
- Preliminary sampling of the communities in collaboration with Plan Nederland (Amsterdam) and the CD in Sierra Leone and Guatemala;
 - Sampling of the school-communities with the CD and the staff of the PUs;

Sampling:

A stratified sample based on:

- Considerations related to intervention strategy;
- Geographical ones. These are primarily practical ones.

The considerations related to intervention strategy refer to the need to have in our sample three types of schools (and teachers, pupils and communities):

- Education quality interventions
- School access interventions (e.g. only construction support)
- No intervention schools

The no-intervention schools will also not have been strengthened by other organisations outside the Ministry concerned. The other two types may have been touched by non-PLAN support but the main selection criterion is that they have been touched by PLAN support. In principle we aim to have 4 schools of each type in the total sample per country, so 12 schools in total.

A cluster will be made for each type of school in collaboration with local Plan staff, also based on accessibility criteria. Then within each cluster one school with at least four years support will be selected at random. The three schools closest to the selected

school will also be included. And for the cluster without (Plan) intervention the same method will be used.

ii. Thematic delimitations

The thematic delimitations will be based on:

- Discussions with Plan Nederland (Amsterdam), the CD and the PU staff on the strategy in the sector education;
- Discussions with the CD and staff of the sample PU's about the actual interventions in the educational sector and the strategy that is followed.
- Discussions with the staff of the sample PUs about the activities of Plan in the sample school-communities;

The main pillars of PLAN interventions will be used as point of departure:

- Accessibility
- Training of teachers
- Involvement of the parents
- Perceptions of children, methodology of teaching, and the role of the MoE
- Impact: trends, thresholds and expectations.
- Every individual experiences lasting changes in his or her thinking and behaviour during his or her life. Otherwise we would never grow up. In order to measure impact we need at least two steps. First to identify such lasting changes, second to select those of these changes that are likely to be affected by PLAN interventions.

In Sierra Leone, the war experiences of many children are likely to embrace so many lasting changes that, for some time to come, changes caused by experiences and insights gained at primary school will have less impact. However, we need not to be too pessimistic on this. In fact, going to school and returning home afterwards, may also be experienced as a threshold: coming back to 'normal' life. Life as it ought to be.

The trends are to be indicated through indicators measured on available data as they are classified according to the questionnaires (box 1 – 8). The reliability of these data is to be checked. In as far as these data are age specific, the focus will be on pupils in class 2 and 6 of primary school. In doing so, the indicators as formulated by PLAN will be taken as point of departure.

b. Indicators

Possible quantitative and qualitative indicators for change over the last four years have been classified in the pillars as follows:

Accessibility to education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School distance, quality of roads, transport possibilities - Gender relations
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Costs for tuition/uniforms/schoolbooks/materials - (bi)languish learning - School meals - Security - School facilities - School periods in relation to labour requirements at home
Training of teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - level of professional education of teachers (titles) additional courses, threshold impact of learning - motivation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - affinity (hours spent in school; additional jobs outside school) - salary - alternative labour opportunities
Involvement of parents in education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - existence of parents council - structure of the council and frequency of contacts - horizontal communication with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the school - the teachers - the children - vertical communication with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the inspection - the ministry of education - municipality/community organisation - other (N)GOs - mandate of the council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - about nomination - budget - school utensils/books - schoolmanagement - organisation of pre-school - day care of children - social control
Perception of children, curriculum, role of educational department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attitude of children regarding schooling - combined classes - size of classes - group/class-learning - practical work - curriculum offered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gender sensitive - HIV/Aids education - active learning - hygiene education - local adapted curriculum - role of inspection: number of visits / data collected / mandate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role of MoE in - curriculum development - training of teachers - nomination of teachers - payment of salaries - costs for construction and/or maintenance of infrastructure. - relation with parent’s councils - decisions about pre-school or post-primary school education.
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The total of these indicators (if readings are available) should give a fair insight of the changes that occurred in the educational sector in the last four years. Not all will be positive, but the picture should give an indication of progress or obstacles for progress and give an input for the development or adaptation of the strategies for each PU in the countries.

The thresholds are partially related to some of these trends. Going to school for the first time, is one. Successfully finalising (parts) of schooling school another one. Passing from one class to another is a threshold if there is a possibility that one does NOT pass.

These thresholds can be quantified. At the same time the need to assess what difference such passing made in the perception of those involved is important. In the first place the child itself. But also the parents: was it a real decision to send the child to school or was it a matter of course? Is the passing from class to another celebrated? Etc. Similarly for the teachers: what thresholds are in their minds? The percentage of children that does not drop out? That pass a certain test? Are new teaching methods accepted as the routine for teaching?

This threshold dimension may help to map perceptions and expectations. Why parents send their children to school? What would they like that their children would do once they finish school or (much) later? Do they appreciate the usefulness of schooling, also for their daughters? But if they think it is more important for the boys, why?

Once the trends are known and the background of thresholds as well as the perceptions, expectations can be ventured, including the influence of PLAN.

In the end, basic data will be provided, indicator readings on a number of the CPME indicators, comments to these, including the reliability. Important is that these data and readings can be collected again in future so as to give more info on trends, for all three types of intervention strategies. Further insight will be

provided in perceptions, the relative importance of school, the motivation of teachers, etc.

A number of indicators have been used in recent evaluations and this investigation serves as triangulation to verify the obtained data. Two main questions remain to be answered:

- to what extent may the changes be attributed to the interventions of Plan?
- what are the likely consequences of the observed changes that may serve as indicators for impact?

The attribution to PLAN will be assumed to be justified if PLAN has been engaged in efforts to stimulate change while no other actors can be identified that have been involved in efforts to promote change such as would be reflected in the indicator readings. In case one or more actors, in addition to PLAN, have been involved in efforts to stimulate such indicator changes, attribution will be based on the amount of funds that each actor is estimated to have spent on the unit(s) (school, teacher, community) whose change supposedly is reflected in the indicator(s) concerned.

The consequences of the observed changes that may serve as indicators for impact requires insight in what the expected effect of the changes mean at impact level (individually and for the community) and an effort should be made to verify if these expectations materialized in some cases, because these cases represent the real possibility and hope for positive changes in the future. These cases would then be used for real life histories for boys and girls.

Separate of this investigation the available data of the school communities will be compared to data of regional (district, province or department) or national averages as a yardstick for future reference.

After conclusion of the study an assessment will be made of the adequacy of the research methodology and suggestions for adaptations will be proposed. Moreover a more precise suggestion for studies will be elaborated on the question: "Why are the results as they are?" This seems important for verification of the adequacy of the strategies followed in the countries.

c. Data collection

Once the discussions about the indicators have been finalised in the countries, it will be decided in operational terms which data, where, by whom and at what places will be collected.

The selection of local consultants will be made in collaboration with the CD-office of the country.

The local consultants will be instructed and the logistic arrangements agreed upon.

The first visits to the PUs, to the communities and schools will be done together and arrangements for communication will be set up.

Depending on the results of the visits it will be decided which children and families will be selected for more in-depth interviews.

Compilation of life histories of children and their families.

Available data about the communities will be compared with regional (district, province or departmental) or national averages as a yardstick to be able to verify changes over time in the same areas.

An assessment on the adequacy of the research methodology will be made and eventual suggestions for adaptations for research will be proposed.

Suggestions will be proposed for studies on the question: "Why are the results as they are"?

4. Implementation of the study

a. Preparation

It will be required to avail of information about the interventions in the last few years in the countries and the PUs and of the results at output and income level. The existing evaluation reports already give a fair insight about the activities financed by Plan and the results of these activities.

It is important to discuss thoroughly the indicators at all levels and determine if they will be suitable for the purpose of measuring elements of impact. Three rounds of discussions will be held for that purpose: with Plan Nederland, CO and PUs.

b. The field studies

In collaboration with the CO in the countries the contract arrangements with field researchers will be made, the travel schedule accorded and briefing on the progress of the study agreed on. Three visits per country will be required, all with duration between 10 days and one week. Maximal flexibility should be allowed for, however. The field researchers will be required for fieldwork during almost the whole period.

Transport for and during the field studies remains a largely unknown factor and has to be sort out locally. It would be an important support for the field study if the Country Office could

provide for transport from the capital to the PU's and the Plan officials in the PU's for local transport.

c. Reporting

Espec b.v. will be responsible for reporting. After each field visit a (short) progress report will be submitted and after the last field mission a compilation of the data per country will be composed together with the recorded life histories from the countries.

A month after the field visits a comparison between the countries and an analysis of the data will be made for the final report. At the same time the applied methodology will be assessed and (eventual) adaptations proposed together with suggestions for further studies as deemed required for the M&E system of Plan.

5. Budget

NLNO provides the funds for these studies. The budget is included in the contract with the consultant. The Country Offices are authorised to charge NLNO for the additional costs related to the studies.

Annex II

The Questionnaire

For easy comparison prepare two separate sheets for each school-community with the following list of issues: one for 2000 and one for 2004

(You may have to add issues to the list. Please label them with a), b), c) etc. e.g.:26a, 43 b.)

- I. Information required per school-community
 1. The community-general information
 1. Name of the community:
 2. Location of the community: map or drawing, add photos
 3. Major towns for services and commerce in the surrounding:
 4. How to reach the community from the next office of Plan?
 5. Description of the community: -history, -size, -composition of population, -, -services, -governance, -major (international) organisations etc.
 6. Institutions for (in) formal Education: type, importance, enrolment, coherence of the system, adequacy of the system for the location, languages.

7. Description of the changes in the community in the last four years and the causes of these changes; major events that took place in this period.

(From existing material, discussions with knowledgeable people of the community and especially how children see changes.) Are there differences between the views of the adults and the children?

1.1. Information about the selected school-community

8. Name of the school
Type of school

For all the following data especially the changes in the last four years are of importance

9. Description of the infrastructure of the school: photos, value, year of construction (financed by?)
10. Number of class rooms
11. Number of teachers, actually giving classes
12. Other staff of the school
13. Number of pupils per class
14. Gender relation per class

15. School management composition-gender relation of management daily management
- 1.2. Accessibility to education
 - 1.2.1 to children
16. Distance from home to school; distance to other schools-if any?
17. Transport possibilities
18. Quality of the roads
19. Security of the roads (what happens in case of an accident on the road?)
20. Security at school (what happens in case of an accident at school?)
21. School periods in the year and its adequacy in relation to work requirements at home, specified for male and female.

What changed on all these issues in the last four years?

- 1.2.2 Costs of education
22. Children not available for labour requirements at home (opportunity costs), specified by gender.
23. Costs for tuition
24. Costs for uniforms
25. Costs for schoolbooks
26. Costs for school utensils/material
27. Provisions at school: school meals (costs);
28. Tutoring (costs)
29. Sports (costs)
30. Is there a difference in the use of the provisions between male and female pupils?

What changed on all these issues in the last four years?

- 1.2.3 To parents/adults
31. Period of teaching in the year
32. Adequacy of the periods in relation to work, specified for men and women
33. Time of the day for male and female
34. Adequacy of the time
35. Combined classes: reason for positive or negative
36. Adequacy of the time for combined classes.
37. Infrastructure for teaching of adults; Adequacy
38. Security of the road and the school for men and women
39. System of teaching; curricula, thresholds and expectations

What changed in the last four years on all these issues?

1.3 Teachers

40. What are the names of the teachers?
41. Tasks of each teacher at the school
42. How long is the teacher in the community?
43. How long is the teacher involved in the school?
44. Level of professional education of the teachers
45. Additional courses of the teachers
46. Which are the courses they attended (subject, duration, costs involved)?
47. What are the threshold impacts of learning for teachers?
48. Motivation:affinity (hours spent in school, apart from giving classes)
49. Additional voluntary tasks in the school
50. Additional jobs outside the school
51. Conformity with salary level
52. Reason for teaching in this community
53. Reason for teaching in this school
54. What are alternative job opportunities in the community?
55. What do they minimally aim at with the children?
56. What are the ambitions for themselves?

What changed in the last four years on all these issues?

57. How is the curriculum structured at school?
58. Does it include practical work?
59. Does it include items on gender?
60. HIV/AIDS
61. Hygiene
62. Local adapted curricula
63. Trauma elaboration
64. Practical work

What has changed in the last four years on all these issues?

2. Involvement of parents in education

65. Does a parent council exist?
66. How is the council selected/nominated/voted into?
67. What is the structure of the council (functions, members, who represents the council vis a vis other entities, names?)
68. How often does the council meet?
69. When was the last meeting?
70. Where do the meetings take place?
71. What are the topics of discussion?
72. Are minutes of the meetings made? (Verify and eventually copy)
73. Who are the results of the discussions shared with?

Horizontal communication:

74. How would you describe the relation between the parent council and the school?
75. How is the relation between the parent council and the school management structured?
76. How often does the parent council meet with the school management?
77. When was the last meeting?
78. Is there any evidence of the meeting?
79. Who is present on these meetings (names?)
80. Where do these meetings take place?
81. How would you describe the relation between the parent council and the teachers?

Vertical communication:

82. Does the parent council meet with the school inspection (if yes, how often, when was the last meeting; any evidence?)
83. Does the parent council meet with representatives of the MoE? (if yes, how often, when was the last meeting; any evidence?)
84. Does the parent council meet with the municipality/community organisations (if yes, how often, when was last meeting; any evidence?)
85. Does the parent council meet with Plan (if yes, how often, when was last meeting; any evidence?)
86. Does the parent council meet with other NGOs (if yes, how often, when was last meeting; any evidence?)

If the parent council does not have the mandate, please inquire who has:

87. Mandate of the parent council: on nomination of teachers
88. Budget/financial affairs
89. School utensils/book
90. School management
91. School meals
92. Security
93. Construction and facilities
94. Uniforms, learning methods
95. Adult education
96. Pre-school/day care

The same questions as about the council are to be asked to the school management and cross check the answers. Any deviation or unclear statements are to be clarified.

What has changed in the last four years on all these issues?

3. Perceptions, curricula, role of MoE.

3.1 Question for children of class 2 and class 6

(Note down all names of children interviewed)

97. Why do children go to school: compulsory by the Government?
98. Compulsory by the parents
99. Why do children want to go to school: don't want to go, but are forced
100. Want, because of:.....
101. What would they do if they would not have to go to school?
102. Do they attend in single class rooms or in combined class (more grades together)
103. Do they prefer combined classes?
104. Do they attend together with boys/girls?
105. Do they favour this mixture? Why
106. How many pupils in the class?
107. Is that too much or they don't care?
108. Do they learn in groups in the class, or are they always all together?
109. What do they prefer?
110. Do they have home work? If yes what do they have to do
111. Do the parents look at the home work?
112. Do the parents help with the home work?
113. Do they have brothers or sisters in the school? (*Special attention to these children, because of changes in the last four years; note down addresses for later life stories*)
114. Do they help with home work?
115. Do they have practical work to do for school?
116. Do they like that part?
117. What do the children want to reach by going to school?
118. Do they celebrate the passing from one class to another at home?
119. What happens if they fail?
120. How do they celebrate the end of the 6th grade?
121. What would they like to do after leaving school?
122. What do your parents want you to do?

What do the children think that has changed in the last year?

3.2 Role of inspection

123. What is the mandate of the inspection?
124. To whom do they report?
125. Number of visits per school
126. When was last visit to this school?
127. What were the results of the visit?
128. Which data do they collect?
129. Does the inspection data available for other schools
130. With whom did they have contact in the school?
131. Do they have contact with parent councils?
132. Do they have contact with school management?
133. Do they have contacts with the municipality/community organisations?
134. With whom (*to verify later*)

- 135. Do they have contact with Plan?
- 136. Do they have contact with other NGOs?
- 137. What do they think about the performance of this school in relation to others?

What has changed in the last four years on all these issues?

- 3.3 If a representative of the MoE is available; otherwise to be checked in another regional locality or in Freetown
Here questions are to be raised concerning:

- 138. Curriculum development (who composes the curriculum)
- 139. Training of teachers (who is responsible, where is the training; how long is the training; what education do you need to enter into training?)
- 140. Nomination of teachers (who nominates; on what basis: professional education, experience, language, career development)
- 141. Structure of levels of salaries
- 142. Payment of salaries (when, how)
- 143. Costs for construction and maintenance of infrastructure (average costs per class room/school, standards?)
- 144. How are the relations with school management?
- 145. How are the relations with parent councils?
- 146. How are the relations with NGOs?
- 147. Decisions about day care, pre-school or post-primary school education. Who is responsible (MoE, Municipality, Community, NGO's?)

What has changed in the last four years on all issues?

- 4. Discussions with the school management
- 148. What do children do after leaving primary school?
- 149. Does the management know how many went to a post-primary education?
- 150. Does the school management know how many left their homes after study?
- 151. Does the management know anything about the food security of the families?
- 152. Do children eat before they come to school (what?)

What do they think about the different programmes and influences?

- 153. Trauma elaboration
- 154. AIDS/HIV
- 155. Local adaptations
- 156. Gender
- 157. Other
- 158. Inspection
- 159. MoE

- 160. NGOs in general
- 161. Plan
- 162. Municipality/community organisations

How have these influences changed in the last four years

How do they see the future:

- 163. What are their main concerns for the children?
- 164. What are their main concerns for the teachers?
- 165. What are their main concerns for the school?
- 166. What are their main concerns for the community?
- 167. How do they appreciate Plan's activities?
- 168. What do they see as the main assistance of Plan?
- 169. What do they expect from Plan in the future?

Financial information:

- 170. What is the budget of the school this year (*evidence*)
- 171. What is the composition of the budget (*evidence*)
- 172. What were the expenses this year (*evidence*)
- 173. Who financed the expenditure?
- 174. How much has been financed by whom

What did Plan finance:

- 175. In infrastructure (how much, when and what is the estimated percentage of the expenditure)
- 175. For teaching materials (how much, when and what is the estimated percentage of total expenditures?)
- 176. For salaries of teachers and staff? (How much, when and what is the estimated percentage of total expenditures?)
- 177. For teachers training (how much, when and what is the estimated percentage of total expenditures?)
- 178. For improving accessibility for the children (roads, transport, security, tuition fees, meals, books, uniforms curriculum development, etc. (how much, when, what is the estimated percentage?)
- 179. For the general school management (studies, transport, meetings, training, accountancy control etc.) How much, when, what is the estimated percentage of total expenditures

II. Information required from Plan office, responsible for the school-community selected

- 180. Name and address of the Office of Plan
- 181. Names and functions of the responsible officers of plan for the school community
- 182. Estimation of the yearly budget for this school in the last four years

183. Estimation of the yearly expenditure for this school in the last four years
184. How is the payment to the school done and when?
185. Which items are financed by Plan for this school in the last four years?
186. How is the financial control in this school organised

What does Plan know about the school?

189. What are the yearly expenditures of the school?
190. Who finances the school?
191. How much pays each participant of the total expenditure
192. Are other financiers involved in the same items as Plan in the school?
193. If yes, what is the estimated percentage of each financier?
194. What were the objectives of the Plan's interventions?

What were the expectations of Plan with regard to:

195. The number of pupils in this year
196. The gender division in the school
197. The number of pupils to finish the primary school
198. The level of professionalism of the teachers
199. The infrastructure of the school
200. The functioning of the management
201. The functioning of the parent council
202. The changes at school
203. The changes in the community
204. The changes in the schooling system
205. The division of responsibilities for the school
206. The changes in the lives of the children, separated by gender
207. The changes in the future of the children
208. Any other ambition or expectation.

Annex III

Quality Learning in Sierra Leone and Guatemala

What is Quality Learning in Sierra Leone

1. Introduction

In 1999 after the civil war the Rapid Education Centres were provided with refreshing courses for the duration of 3-5 weeks for unqualified and qualified head teachers. Plan provided for 106 centres the funds for training of the country's voluntary teachers, plastics, nails etc. for school sheds up to 100%, which amounted in 2000/2001 to LE 50,000.-

As from 2001 the costs were shared with the Ministry of Education in a relation of 50-50%.The Ministry not always complied with its share. The project was terminated in 2002.

2. Actual situation

Plan started in 2002 with a programme that included additional to the construction or rehabilitation a package of measures that should enhance the quality of the learning in the primary schools.

This included:

- *Context books* on science, mathematics, social studies, English and Agricultural World Science Dictionaries. It also provided teacher's guides at all the schools.
- *Exercise books* for the children, pens, pencils, rulers, writing books, chalk, cartons, teaching gaiters, blackboard rulers, blackboards, sport sets (footballs, nets, volleyballs, sport outfits (14/school).
- *Distant education* in modules to qualify teachers in three years courses (this has been changed now and replaced by a one year course to qualify teachers in one year for class 1, 2 and 3).
- Establishment of *school management committees* to involve the community in the learning process. In the concept of the School Improvement Programme (SIP), CTA's (Community Teaching Associations) were set up.
- Assistance of Plan to set up *parents councils* to administer the schools by the communities themselves.
- *Support to NGO's* like Pekin-to-Pekin to include hygiene in the learning process and to FAME to include trauma relief, gender and HIV/AIDS education in the learning process through workshops. (For trauma relief, the strategy has been changed at the national level. This will now be replaced by active and practical learning).

- *Reinforcement of the civil society* to set up youth groups and the establishment of a child to child radio emission.

What is Quality Learning in Guatemala¹⁵

1. Introduction

Quality Learning has been introduced in 198 schools in eight departments in Guatemala in January 2001. The first phase terminated in December 2003 with an extension to June 2004 and continued in Q.L.II thereafter. The cost of the programme was calculated at US\$ 1.33 m. at implemented by the NGO "Programas y Proyectos de Desarrollo Integral (PRODI)" The programme has been evaluated in 2003 and recommendations have been formulated for the next period of Q.L.II.

2. Actual situation

Quality Learning in Guatemala has been geared to changes of methodology of learning and to improve the involvement of parents and the community in the education system.

This included:

- Prepare and distribute material for training of teachers;
- Training of teachers of 195 schools in the area of intervention of Plan
- Training technical assistants and pedagogical specialists in charge of the schools
- Adapt the contents and learning methodology of rural schools for indigenous and non-indigenous children
- Provide the funds and the materials to implement the new process of learning
- Provide proper furniture for the children
- Strengthening civil society and democracy in the educational community
- Promote the inclusion of the parents in the school community
- Promote the inscription in the schools
- Increase hygiene and health in the schools
- Conclude an agreement with the Ministry of education in favour of active learning methodology
- Assist and monitor the local authorities for the 195 schools.

¹⁵See: Informe final de la evaluación ROCCA Quality Learning, Dec. 2003, p.23

Annex IV

**Comments by Edgar Barillas
(DÉCOR)**

PLAN INTERNATIONAL'S SURVEY, OBSERVATIONS AND COMMENTS

EDGAR BARILLAS (DECOR) (*translation from Spanish*)

1. About the Research.

The search for the impact outputs of the educational area within Plan Guatemala's activities was supported by the DECOR technical team. This team consisted of four technicians that carried out the field work, an anthropologist working in the life stories and a teacher in charge of the team. It was possible to obtain, in two weeks, baseline information and there was a good approach in 12 rural public schools for boys and girls, finding the issues to be investigated through a project with more depth and a larger coverage. In other words, this research allowed on one hand, a more precise definition of the impact outputs from the work developed by Plan and on the other hand, to determine the actions that Plan must carry out in order to pay more attention to the first observations and conclusions we have reached in order to verify, modify or discard them.

Since this was not a participative research during the two day field work per school, it must be taken into account that there might be a margin of errors in the surveys, which may be compensated in part, by the comments of the technicians that collected the data and by life stories as well. As an example, the tendency of trying to provide an image of good work in schools and the grateful expressions for Plan's support were notorious, more so in the first work day in every school.

With regard to the schools' image, teachers – especially directors, tried to alter their routine to make a good impression on the researchers. In some cases, it could be noticed that right on the day of their arrival, the school provided school supplies or school snacks. In one school, children were even requested to say that they would receive their school supplies that day. The team always detected on their first day in every school, the teachers in charge of school's supervising pretended to be highly evaluated but the appearances gave way to the daily reality.

However, the structural issues were always clear and these affect the country's education; not only in this school: there were discrepancies between the school and work calendars in families, there is no effective time for classes, a poor teaching education with regard to participative methodologies. There are not enough resources besides a deficient use of the available resources. Supervision is mainly focused on administrative issues, on infrastructure and the fulfilling of teachers' duties.

They also tried to provide the image that they were taking advantage of the educational resources, especially those provided by Plan – but it was observed that due to different reasons, those resources are not available to teachers or children (usually they are, incomplete and uncontrolled, in the directors' offices).

The Presidential Libraries that were meant for teachers' use were incomplete and the teachers did not use them. The same goes for text books destined to be used in the classroom or and as consultation aides for children in their investigations. Usually, they do not reach the intended persons. This aspect was more pronounced in non QL schools and those without Plan's participation.

Likewise, the new curriculum is not being implemented although teachers tried to give the impression that they were working in a new educational method. It was observed that the textbooks based in skills are considered to be "not too good" , the criteria being that the old ones ,sent by the Ministry of Education, are better since "there is more to study", meaning they have more text and less development of skills.

It is evident that schools continue working with the traditional educational method. They are focused on textbooks for memorization, copying, and reciting, repetitive activities. Skill development is not pursued and the end result is that schools work on making children study for an exam so as to "be promoted" to the next grade, by the end of the school term, instead of easing the development on autonomous thinking, activities, reasoning and life skills and values. The truth is that they are not interested at all in a significant learning process.

It was also observed that the position of desks in line, in front of the teachers was broken and now desks are forming a circle. However, in most cases, this is not due to the change of teaching methodology but for the need of teaching different grades in the same classroom. These are multi-grade schools. In regard to the QL schools, although the recently approved curriculum has not been implemented yet, the training of teachers carried out by Plan is taking the same direction (change of teaching role based in skills, cooperative work etc). It is one of Plan's greatest achievements, that a change is being noticed in these schools. Sadly it does not happen in non QL schools and or in those under the exclusive responsibility of the government. This was noticed by the researchers, the anthropologist in charge of life stories and the DECOR team's coordinators. The three of them agree in such issues as:

Children in QL schools show more self-confidence, more poise in their relationships as well as more inquisitiveness. On the other

hand, children in non-QL schools are shy, less participative and uncomfortable in their relationship with their elders and strangers.

Teachers in QL schools are interested in bilingual education, the participation of their students, and the use of resources (not only those from the Government or Plan but also the ones obtained in the community). Classes are more dynamic, the relationship between teacher-pupil is horizontal, of mutual respect and appreciation. Some issues found in a QL school offers, an example. The Pahoj village school where the mobility of teachers every year evidences the difference between the teachers trained on QL by PLAN and the new ones showing their preference for the traditional methodology (emphasis paid to the educators' teaching instead of the students' learning).

Bilingual education as a valuable and shaping tool and not as an issue.

Parents have noticed the change and express their satisfaction

Overall, we might say that we were able to get beyond appearances. This was better perceived on the second work day in each school and by less directed discussions.

In regard to the tools for collecting data, the initial work with Klaas and Ines allowed the expansion of the issues to be observed. These were mentioned in the original design. We tried to identify more of Plan's impact on the improvements made in quality education. Even with the observations mentioned above about the trend of presenting an unreal ideal image (nothing new in the research word) the tool that allowed the approach not only to the issues but also to the informers gave more credibility to the answers. The wideness and depth ness of the issues were also a good way to go beyond the conditioned replies. An example of that is the item asking teachers to number and quantify the activities carried out during a school day. The quantity of tools applied in every community tells us about a wide universe that counts as a high level of approach to the schools' contexts and to Plan's actions. On the other hand, the quantitative approach intended for certain issues did not provide good results due to two reasons:

- (a) The complexity of the issues and the difficulty in obtaining precise information in such a short time and
- (b) The limited number of sample schools

On observed issues.

The difference between the QL and the other schools is evident and this is a process that needs to be more developed. Time is used

more effectively in class; there is an increase of significant learning in children, a better use of the educational resources and a better work attitude among teachers. Even if non QL schools get support from Plan in regard to resources and infrastructure, the training of teachers on QL teachers helps them to take better advantage of these recourses as could be observed.

These changes generate a better appreciation of schools and also that the community looks at them as valuable and necessary for the attendance of children of both genders. The feeling that children are being shaped in "useful things" and not only for the food have they received shows that the appreciation level has increased.

It can also be observed that there is an awareness of the changes in the traditional role of teachers by part of the school community. Remarks such as "now teachers do not hit children" or, "formerly, teachers used to spank, they were ill tempered and they always carried sticks to hit children. Now they are kinder so there are more children", have a deep meaning since the community is aware that the teacher's roles have changed.

Although the schools visited in Jalapa are monolingual (Spanish as maternal language) and the ones in Baja Verapaz have students for whom this is not so, work must be done in all the country's schools for the awareness of "Unity in Diversity", which is one of the axles of Educational Reform. However, it can only be appreciated in Baja Verapaz and not in Jalapa. - Communities noticed the schools where bilingual intercultural education is provided and one can see that there is a change in its qualification in spite of the fact that there is still a long way to go. Not all teachers or parents share the value of bilingual and intercultural education for traditionally, it has been considered that schools must only promote learning in Spanish. This is then a sensitive transformation in the educational model.

The hint that there are changes in education in the QL schools and that the communities value it, are two aspects that speak well of the NGO hired to carry out the training of the teachers as well as Plan's actions. It might be said that we determined that, in general terms, there is impact in the change of educational models and the school role in the development of the communities.

The observation of the twelve schools takes us to the conclusion that there are procedures in Plan's work that might be modified to obtain better results. Later, we will expand on this briefly.

Are the QL schools on the way of helping to develop the communities or changes impact only the school environment? The answers to this question can take two directions. One has to do

with the educational aspect per se and the other one has to do with the appreciation of Plan's integral work in the communities.

In regard to the educational issue, we must start by pointing out that Plan's effort loses strength by having to "compete" with the public programs from MINEDUC. What is more, the fact that the QL schools are under the supervision of the Government through the Ministry of Education means that Plan's actions must follow the orders of the Ministry. In other words, Plan's actions must follow the others that by being official are compulsory.

In practical terms, this means that the time used by teachers to be trained by Plan must be added to the time granted by the Ministry for training and other activities. This causes a marked decrease of effective time for classes in the school calendar. Sometimes, it might even be that Plan's own programs, planning training courses for teachers on important issues; help decrease the work of teachers with the children. If added to this, there are similar initiatives from the municipality, NGOs, other public institutions etc. the landscape is very complicated. One action addressed for Plan's exclusive responsibility of training on QL schools, might be the solution to this problem.

With regard to Plan's general work with the community and the specifications of educational work within them, we could think that it would be helpful if the school work program was more effective but this does not happen. Even if implemented, and according to what was observed, there are no coordination meetings between the different projects. So the community and school often are involved in several activities benefiting them but with no linkage among them. Since these are small communities, the representatives of the different organizations (public and NGOs) are the same people so the attention paid to their own programs is dispersed.

It would seem that the easier solution would be to impose that meetings should be coordinated in Plan but reality overcomes this expectation. By opting for this kind of work, the community would stay away from the possibility of discussing a development integral program, and only apply for and assist in isolated projects. A joint planning of all of Plan's work components with the community would be more effective in order to establish chronograms of actions to be taken into account at school as the centre of the strategy. Is this not too much to ask from the school?

Not really, because if the community defines a work strategy with Plan and other institutions, the school must visualize not only the pre-primary and primary school programs but also the joint needs of training. This means, the community must define what kind of training it needs for their younger generations. Then Plan may define, more precisely, where to aim their efforts for a higher

impact in the community devolvement. Here comes the other aspect observe during the field work that takes us, once more, to the educational field.

It is the fact that the changes found and due to Plan's efforts to attain quality education in schools have not made teachers implement the community wisdom as a work resource. If we consider that the communities have knowledge of the world and society that has been transmitted from generation to generation or by people that have had a specialized education, then we could think that these resources may make the learning, offered only by textbooks or the teacher's performance, more valuable. By including the knowledge from the community as an educational resource, we are, once again, placing the school as a centre joining the efforts and potential of the community. We believe that this aspect should be included strongly in the training of teachers.

To finalize, we consider that it would be convenient to point out some recommendations on the premise that schools must be under the direct responsibility of Plan, through an agreement signed with the MINEDUC:

Plan's educational work must focus even more on the link between community work and the strengthening of the community's educational management.

There must be a major link between the family, community and school, not only in regard to the management of support but also on the learning processes of children. The traditional knowledge of the community, the didactic resources available, that are unknown to the school, the availability of parents, are talents that should not be set aside.

By the communal empowerment of education, we must try to make the Government fulfil its duty and decrease the high level of tolerance existing in Guatemala in regard to the absences (so as not to say unfulfilment) of teachers. It is our impression that this constitutes one of the larger impediments to achieve a significant learning among children. On the other hand, the ideal teachers must enjoy work security and continuity in the community so as to make the investment made in their training as worthy as possible.

At the same time, Plan should do all on its power to strengthen the teachers position in the community (accepting that it is more important the continuity, permanency and compromise of the teacher with the community that the academic grades).

It is of main importance that children be assured of a complementary program of food, from the start until the end of the school term. Due to the State difficulties to provide this on time (and it is not foreseen at short term), Plan should make provisions

with the community so as to guarantee that children have a diet (not only of quality) aimed not only to an improved school performance but also to a decrease in desertion rates.

ANNEX V

General discussion on Data and Indicators

General Discussion on outcome and indicators

Introduction

On the conference on Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan in Wageningen of April 13th, 2005 a general discussion took place in preparation of a number of pilot projects in five countries to enhance the system of monitoring and evaluation for Plan International.

In this context the consultant prepared a paper on this issue that was presented to the participants. The written document has been reproduced as annex to this study and should serve as a general introduction to the subject.

The written story

Conference on Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan programmes IAC-Wageningen: April 13th, 2005
Alex Bartelink

1 About the terms

What are we talking about, when we say monitoring and evaluation? In our study we prefer the use of the terms as formulated by the DAC (Development Assistance Committee) of the OECD (Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development) in Paris where all donor countries (22 plus the EU) are united together with IMF, UN and W.B. as observers.

2 Levels of assessment

Inputs should lead to results. The total of results has different levels: output, outcome and impact. So there seems to be a relation between input, output, outcome and impact which is generated by activities.

It looks as if there is a sequence in the levels of results, but that is merely a wishful thinking, because you believe in the logic of your strategy: you take it for granted that the output you achieve with your programme, will lead to outcome and finally to impact of your intervention. We will come back to this wishful thinking later. First we would want to know why we do monitoring and evaluations at all.

3 A necessary burden: the summative evaluation

Although evaluation is my *métier*, at the same time I always feel that the costs involved for monitoring and evaluation is subtracted from the children for which all the available money of Plan has been earmarked. So why do we do these studies?

For one, those who support Plan (privately of Government) want to know (and have a right to know) what has been done with the money. That is a question of trust. It seems that "trust" in the Western World is slowly loosing its force. The loss of trust has a high price.

Governments and private spenders alike increasingly wish to know in ever more details how the money has been spent. And not only after the use of the money but in the last few years, even before the money has been used. The term *result based management* came into being and the relations between the providers of the funds and the organizations that use that money are no longer based on trust, but increasingly on a contract and proof is to be given that the funds are used for the objectives for which it has been provided.

This is a bureaucratic reason for evaluations: *the accountability*. It is, however, important to fulfill the wishes of the providers as far as accountability is concerned to ensure continuity in the flow of funds.

4 A formative evaluation: a guidance

The second reason for analyzing the results of programmes is to check if the programme maintained its value in a fast changing environment. It is the *learning process* of evaluations that may add value to the programmes. But only then, if the management is able and willing to adapt the programme whenever need arises.

Those who give the order for an evaluation should have secured that the management is willing and able to accept the consequences of the outcome of the evaluation and adapt its policies.

Where does that bring us?

I feel we should distinguish between the two needs of required information:

5 on the one hand: What is required to satisfy the donor?

The donor is mainly interested in the output and outcome of the interventions in view of their own objectives. For the Dutch

government interventions should have a clear relation to (1) poverty alleviation (2) the gender imbalance, (3) effects on the environment. In the operational sense this is formulated in the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) as internationally have been agreed upon. The Government will need these data to justify their funding. In the case of education this comes down to:

- How many more children come to school because of the intervention?
- How does the intervention influence the gender relation?
- In what way is the quality of education enhanced?

Data and indicators for these could be:

- (1) Changes in total enrolment;
- (2) Number of years that children attend school, separated by gender;
- (3) Changes in the ratio boys and girls going to school;
- (4) Changes of percentage of children that make it successfully to the 3rd grade;
- (5) Changes of percentage of children that make it successfully to the 6th grade.

Note: *In the UNESCO/Plan study in Middle America for unclear reasons completion of the fifth year is taken as a threshold. Plan should clarify this difference.*

All these changes could be caused by other factors than of Plan interventions and here we have a problem of attribution. The general economy of the country, the legislation, the available government budget for primary education etc. all may have major influences on these changes.

Therefore we will need to compare the results of the Plan intervention with those areas where Plan is not working: *the control areas*. These areas should be similar to the areas of Plan-interventions. In most countries these data are available and the difference that Plan induces in the areas of intervention (domains) can be made visible. The efforts to obtain these data are relatively small and should be kept at a minimum.

These indicators can be used *world-wide*, not because these are the special interests of the countries concerned (it may be), but mainly because the donor community is willing to spend resources to achieve these millennium development goals.

6 What is required for the learning process in Plan?

On the other hand, more information is needed to assess the strategy of the Plan interventions in a particular country. We then

should go back to the logics that govern the areas (domains) of intervention.

Information (but mostly common sense) gives us the logics of developments in the domain. E.g. for education you will need: adequate schools, teachers, reasonable possibilities for children to go to school, effective methods of learning, learning the right things, or in the case of drinking water supply: reasonable access to water, clean water for health protection.

In order to formulate the strategy it is important to assess all the elements that form parts of the logics of the domain.

The lesson we may draw from these examples is that Plan continuously *should look for the weakest element* in the logics of the domains, complementing the efforts of other stakeholders, especially the governments. This entails that a continuous dialogue with the Governments is required and a clear division of labour should be sought after for the elements of the logics of the domains. If Plan is not able or willing to focus on these weakest elements in the logics, it operates on the margin of the problems and should consider pulling out of the domain.

7 The planning of the country programme and the strategies of the domains

Plan, however, operates in several domains, all geared to improve the well-being of children. An analysis for all domains as the one made for education in Guatemala and Sierra Leone may provide the basis for the Country Strategy Plan. The total analysis gives a coherent picture of the constraints that the well-being of children in the country is facing.

The relative importance given to the weakest elements of all the domains decides on the emphasis of the efforts between the domains and finally on the use of the available funds and manpower. It is recommended to choose one leading domain to ensure coherence in the total programme and synergy between the domains. We are in fact talking about the *relevance* of the programme, the relevance of the domains and of the strategy in the domains.

8 The validity of the strategies and the validity of the indicators for monitoring

In this changing world, the adequacy of the strategies will depend on the changing interventions of a number of stakeholders over time and of the changing involvement of Plan. If we agree that Plan's strategies are based on the alleviation of the constraints of the weakest element in the logics of the domain, we assume that

the whole system improves according to the progress made to strengthen that weakest element. That would mean that the monitoring indicators are only related to the outputs of the activities that are implemented to strengthen that weakest element.

Every time that Plan changes its priorities in the domain, because of the changing strength of the elements of the domain's logic, a part of the indicators for monitoring change as well. E.g. if all the necessary schools have been built in Sierra Leone, probably the weakest element is then the quality of the teachers or the income of the parents to provide for food and the provision of learning materials.

Monitoring is an internal process. It is directly related to the output of the activities.

9 Outcome and its indicators.

Outcome is related to the achievements in the domain to which the Plan activities made a significant contribution by strengthening the weakest element in the logics of the total domain. In the case of education it is the final results of the primary education. These are measured with the indicators that the donors of funds want to hear as mentioned earlier.

And where is the impact now?

In different countries different traditions have been developed to measure impact. The German government mostly wants to know what lasting effects the interventions finally have on the individual person; the British are more interested in the changes of the systems applied in the sector, the W.B. and IMF want to know how the performance of Governments has changed. The Dutch government is especially interested in certain target groups, like the rural population, the minorities, the poor, and the women.

Plan falls under that category as well, having children as their specific target group. Finally Plan wants to know: "What difference do the Plan interventions make on the well-being of the children?" Sometimes you may have to by-pass the obvious: lack of schools may be solved by lobbying for credits from the World Bank rather than building the school itself. To secure food-intake before school or during school hours may be secured by influencing the W.F.P. or the Government agency rather than distributing food through Plan. Influencing the Government and/or the trade unions of Guatemala to ensure the presence of the teachers in the class rooms may have more impact in that sector than training the teachers.

Plan then has two fundamental tasks (like any extension worker in rural areas): (1) Plan is foremost a broker, an intermediate between Government and Donors and the children in disadvantaged areas. This is a delicate task, because one has to estimate the chance that the lobbying efforts will be successful and worthwhile. If it is considered to have little chance of success, one may have to decide to look for alternatives within the reach of Plan or close the domain.

(2) Implementing activities in the domains in the weakest elements of the logics, where other organizations are insufficiently involved in.

Measuring results is then at these two levels as well:

(a) What effects had the lobbying activities on the well-being of the targeted children in the country?

(b) What effects had the implementing activities in the weakest elements of the domains on the well-being of the targeted children in the country?

Impacts is defined as long-term effects induced by the intervention

We may expect that primary education have lasting effects on the children at personal level, at the level of the community and at the level of the society at large. The additional value of the intervention of Plan may be estimated on the base of the difference of the Plan-schools with the control group of schools and are expressed with the measures and indicators used for outcome: more children and better quality of teaching

Still, during the period of primary education, some other effects may be registered that have an effect on the entire further life of the children beyond the period of the primary education. Two examples may be given here:

In Sierra Leone (and possibly in a number of other African countries):

When girls are given the opportunity to attend primary school without additional costs (provision of learning materials), parents are more willing to delay the moment that they are married off. Although it is difficult to describe the advantage for the girl, it may be assumed that a later marriage offers a better prospective for her personal development.

In Guatemala, a number of schools are provided with computers. When children acquire during the primary school the motivation and capacity to use the computer and have access to internet, it will probably open a new world for them and influence the development capacity for the rest of their lives. Here again it will be difficult to describe the possible positive and negative effects of that capacity for each individual child, but it is assumed that better

access to information enhances the prospective for a personal development.

These consequences of the interventions in the domain of primary education may be considered as *long-term effects (impact)* and could be measured additionally, e.g.

10 Other information needed to monitor programmes, management, human resources, finance.

In this paper we did not include the need for other types of information that donors and Plan would like to gather, like:

- development of human resources
- financial management of the funds
 - distribution of funds over the countries
 - distribution of funds per domain
 - distribution within the domains
 - overhead costs
- partnership development
- relations with other donors
- relations with governmental agencies etc.

But we should bear in mind that the gathering of information is costly and should be kept at a minimal level. We have the impression that the workload in the Plan Offices is (too) heavy and it may be difficult to maintain this level of activities over a longer period.

11 What could be done?

- a. Each country could analyse the domains of intervention and identify, the elements of the domain.
- b. Rate the strength of the elements in the logic of the domains e.g. 1 to 5 (1= strong; 5 is very weak)
- c. Describe the strategy for the domains including the input and the activities.
- d. Describe the relations between the strategies to ensure coherence and synergy between the domains.
- e. Propose the measures and the indicators for internal monitoring purposes for each activity.
- f. Mention measures and indicators for outcome/impact at the level of the domain.

In a number of countries it may not be clear why some of the elements are or remain weak in the domain. Requests could be formulated for specific in-depth studies to improve the effectiveness of the strategies.

Annex VI

Life histories of some pupils In Sierra Leone and Guatemala

**LIFE HISTORIES OF 4 PUPILS IN MOYAMBA DISTRICT
(Sierra Leone)**

The first one is a boy at WAM primary school Levuma—a sixth grade pupil

Idrissa Tommy

The boy's name is Idrissa Tommy who is staying in Levuma with his older sister. He does not have both father and mother. He is not initially from Levuma and I wanted to know why he was there. He sounded kind of intelligent and when I was doing their interview he told me he was the first to be in school everyday, therefore he takes the keys and the school bell home. He comes to school 7a.m everyday and sweep before the others come.

Q; Where are your parents?

A; I was staying in the village with my relatives who do not know about education.

During the war my mother was pregnant and when it was time to deliver because there were no medical services in the bush where we where, she and the baby could not make it, they both died.

After the war my relatives sent me to my sisters who are in Moyamba, so that I could go to school.

My father disappeared during the war and we have not seen him up till now.

My older sisters are married to men in Moyamba. The sister I stay with is not very old, just older than me by 2yrs.

Q; Do you help with a lot of work at home and is your sister responsible for the school cost?

A; I help with a lot of work at home before I go to school but I finish for school very early. My sister is not responsible for my school cost, her husband and herself cannot afford it, even though they do upland rice farming, so my uncle in the village farms, and sells produce.

When the money is ready, he pays for the school cost but it is not as easy, because every Friday I go back to the village to help my uncle on the farm so he will be able to take care of me. We work groundnut and cassava farm.

Q; Do you do well in school?

A; Yes, I do very well like coming first or sometimes third

Q; Why are you doing well?

A; I know the only way I will be out of my present situation is by acquiring education.

I went with him to his house to see his sisters. The two sisters are older than him. He is the last one in the family. One of his older sisters just had a baby. Their home was a very poor one; the husband of the sister does not look like somebody who can send any one to school. No wonder he gets his fees from the village. The brother in law was even scared of talking to me. I was told the mother died in 1998. I was able to confirm Idrissa's story. Idrissa's father left since 1984.

Joseph Forbie's story

Joseph is a student of St. Columba's primary school, one of the best schools in Moyamba. He is staying with his aunt and her husband but is doing very well in school. He is one of the fastest runners in the school. He is in class 5 and 16yrs old. He lives one mile from the school and comes to school late almost everyday. I wanted to know why and he told me he stays with his aunt who gives him a lot of work to do in the mornings. He said he cannot finish. he gets water from a distance.

Q; Where is your father?

A; My father died, 2000. The war brought him to Moyamba. He was not born here. I was used to moving around with him. He was married in the village he came from and had children there. He got married to my mother and had us, so we do not know the children he had before. He became very ill and died.

Q; What happened to your mother then?

A; She is still living in town but can not take of us. I do not see her every day because I stay very far from where she lives and I have a lot of work do at home, as I can only see her after school or during lunch time.

Q; With whom do you stay?

A; My aunt, who is a teacher.

Q; Does she help you with you homework?

A; No she has a lot of work to do. He has to do a lot of notes and marking. My younger sister, who attends St. Joseph's Secondary school and she is in junior secondary 1, sometimes helps me with my homework and she is staying with my mother.

Q; What positions do you come in school?

A; Class 1 first, class 2 first, class 3 first and class 4 second.

I went home with him and I met the rest of his family. The aunt was on her sewing machine, mending old clothes but status seems like average. She told me that Joseph's father was her brother. The mother cannot take care of all of them when the father died. I am a member of several organizations and I get like per diem to help subsidize my salary as a teacher. I have 8 children living with me. I have 4 which are mine, my husband's nephew and the others including Joseph.

She told me his school work is very impressive. All the teachers praise him and therefore I feel good to help. Her name is Mary Bundu. She told me she likes children.

Joseph Lahai

Joseph Lahai is a student of St. Columba's primary school is 8yrs and he is in class 3. He was very neatly dressed and comes to school by every day, the only pupil I have met that comes to school in a car. His father is the principal of St. Michael's secondary school, Moyamba that is run by the Roman catholics. The mother is also a teacher that teaches next door to their house. Their house was well kept with every household furniture inside.

They live two doors away from Joseph Forbie. The lahai's have seven children. He eats every day before he comes to school and brings Le500 for lunch. His duty in the home is to wash the pots when he goes home from school and then study time begins. He comes first every year in he different classes. Mother and father help him with his studies. I went home with him and met with his mother and 2 sisters. He is the baby in the family

I talk to his mother who said she is Gladys Lahai and she is the one that told me that the car that takes Joseph to school is the school bus belonging to St. Michael's sec. school which picks up teachers in the morning. She says the very little they have goes towards the priority areas like feeding and education.

Michael Katta

Michael Katta is another pupil of the St. Columba's who is 13yrs old and is in class 6 and is not doing so well now, his physical condition and academic work had dropped so badly and I wanted to know why.

Q; Where are your parents?A

A; A father died but my mother is still here. My father died in a fire caused by petrol. My father could not survive the burns and died later in the hospital in Freetown. My father had 4 children and I am the youngest. The eldest has finished

secondary school but not doing anything substantial in Freetown. Class 1 was first, class 2 eleventh, class 3 twentieth and he continues to deteriorate.

I went to his house and his house was overcrowded with sisters, some uncles and a lot of other people. I spoke first to his elder sister as the mother was not home. The elder sister is at home and just had a baby while she was doing a vocational course. Their mother was doing petit trading in Freetown before father died. But not engaged in much in Moyamba. Michael's slippers were seized by the school authorities because they cannot put slippers on to school. They told me Michael's shoes was broken a week before, but could not be replaced yet.

The mother is called Fatmata Katta. She said the husband had 3 children before they got married, so they had 7 children together. When her husband died could not upkeep the kids and herself in Freetown that is why she came home to her family place. Now she is doing MCH aid training. She goes to their village to ask for help and she will be given food produce she brings back to Moyamba and sell. How do you get school accessories for Michael, she said she usually ask her brothers. If they have they will give, if not he goes without. She told me Michael is taking the NPSE for the second time.

Life stories Guatemala

01Rabinal05.

ANA

Escuela OFICIAL MIXTA. ALDEA PAHOJ.
ALDEA POHOJ, RABINAL. BAJA VERAPAZ

Ana es una jovencita achí, pequeña de estatura, sencilla pero de mirada inocente y alegre.

Tiene quince años y en la tercera de los diez hijos que forman la familia Ixpatá Acoj. La primaria la estudio en la Escuela Oficial Mixta de la aldea Pahoj.

Todas las mañanas se levanta a las 04:00 de la mañana para ayudar en las tareas del hogar. Vive en una casita de tejas ubicada en un cerro rodeado de pinos y encinos. En el terreno se observan flores, pocas matas de café y algunos animales domésticos. También son notorios dos depósitos de agua que surten de este líquido a sus habitantes. Ella comparte sus responsabilidades cotidianas con su abuelita de 70 años.

Se levanta temprano para llevar al molino de mixtamal, el maíz con el que elabora las tortillas del desayuno. Cuando termina sus tareas domésticas, junto a sus hermanitos, sale para la escuela para impartir clases de computación a los alumnos que han mostrado interés en aprender a manejar la computadora.

“Me levanto temprano y hago los oficios. Primero junto el fuego, después barro, lavo los trastos. También riego las flores. Temprano voy a dejar el maíz al molino que queda allá cerca de la escuela, regreso a casa a echar las tortillas y luego otra vez a la escuela.”

Por las condiciones socioeconómicas de la familia sus padres migraron a la ciudad de Guatemala en busca de trabajo. Su papá trabaja como jardinero y su mamá y sus hermanas mayores venden tortillas para los vecinos de la zona 11 de Mixco. “Mi mamá se fue a Guatemala desde que yo tenía 8 años. Mi papá trabaja en la zona 11. Mi mamá hace los oficios y vende tortillas”.

Su abuelita cuenta que como a Ana le gusta asistir a la escuela de la aldea, no quiso vivir en la ciudad de Guatemala. Ana agrega que a ella le agrada más ir a la Escuela que aprender a tejer. Aunque esta artesanía está muy arraigada en la cultura de las mujeres de Rabinal.

Ana empezó a estudiar a los 9 años de edad, iba a la escuela con su hermana mayor quien solo llegó a hasta 3er grado. “Mi mamá nos mandó a las dos”. Muy contenta y orgullosa dice: “Yo no perdí ningún año”. “Ahora aquí en Pahoj, vivimos solos con mi abuelita

mis dos hermanos pequeños y yo. El que esta en primero tiene 7 años, y el de 11 en quinto”.

En el 2004 Ana se vio obligada a ayudar económicamente en los gastos familiares, por eso decidió cursar el 6º. grado de primaria en un programa especial que se imparte por la radio. Este sistema le permitía trabajar por la mañana en la Escuela de Pahoj. Aunque a la fecha no ha recibido ningún centavo por impartir sus conocimientos, a ella no le preocupa, puesto que el ir a la escuela es una felicidad, actitud que se refleja en su rostro cuando sale corriendo a atender sus responsabilidades diarias.

Un maestro de la escuela la apoyó, el año pasado, para que terminara la primaria. Por la radio escuchaba las lecciones que transmiten todos los días. Y los miércoles en la escuela de la aldea, este profesor le explicaba cualquier duda que tuviera.

Este año estudia primero básico, por las tardes. Junto con otras amigas van a clases a un instituto que funciona en una aldea vecina. El profesor las lleva en su carro, de esta forma se ahorran el pago del transporte que por cada viaje cobra Q.1.10.

Su abuelita nos cuenta: “la Escuela de Pahoj ha cambiado mucho. Anteriormente era un cuarto de tejas. Cuando vino Plan Internacional se hizo un proyecto que cambio todo”.

Ana agrega: “ahora hay letrinas, una cocina nueva, 4 aulas y 3 computadoras para que aprendan los niños a usarla. Hay una pequeña biblioteca y lo más importante, los niños han aprendido a organizarse, porque en la escuela hay un gobierno escolar”.

Cuando empecé a estudiar en la Escuela había los mismos escritorios que hay ahorita. Los escritorios no han cambiado, son los mismos, pero no había carteles, ni rincones de estudio. Esos empezaron en el año a 2000, cuando vino el profesor que está ahorita de director.

La abuelita de Ana cuenta: “Antes no habían muchas casas, solo tres o cuatro. Ahora hay escuela y se puede estudiar, antes no existía. Incluso hay proyectos que han servido para que la escuela cambie, como la cocina para la refacción de los niños. Antes los maestros pegaban, eran bravos y llevaban varas para pegarles a los niños. Ahora es más bueno el maestro. Por eso hay más niños”.

Antes la escuela era de teja, así como esta casa. Nosotros la construimos, acarreamos arena y bloc para construir. Los papás trabajaron como albañiles, pero además este proyecto pagó albañiles. Nosotros ayudamos acarreamos piedrín y bloc. Antes solo había diez o quince niños y solo había un aula. Antes cocinaban el atole los patojos, pero corrían peligro de quemarse, si

se les caía el atole encima. En la nueva cocina algunos días se cocina gallina para los niños, como cuando es el día de la madre y el 15 de septiembre. El día del maestro no se celebra. Otra cosa diferente es que ahora hay computadoras. Ana recuerda "cuando llevaron las computadoras a la Escuela los profesores preguntaron ¿quién quiere estudiar? y yo dije yo quiero estudiar. Yo nunca había visto una computadora. Para mí fue algo increíble, para mí fue fácil aprender. Pero otros no aprendieron nada. Entienden el castellano, pero no ponen atención. Le ponen más importancia a jugar, por eso les cuesta más y no porque no entiendan el español".

"Como el año pasado no había instructor de computación, porque el director que estaba salió de la escuela, me pidieron que yo fuera a dar las clases a los niños. Aparte él me dio el estudio en Rabinal. El 6to lo estudié con ONIGER y saqué mi sexto por la radio. Él me compró los libros. Yo empecé a dar clases en la Escuela en abril del año pasado, de computación".

"Estudie el sexto por la radio porque no podía ir a clases. Como en la escuela tengo que atender a los niños no puedo dejarlos solos, por eso saque mi sexto grado así. En esa radio los maestros dan clases por eso me apoyaron. Entonces los días miércoles me daba clases en la escuela, y en la casa oía las lecciones por la radio. El diploma me lo tiene que dar el profesor, de la escuela, porque el director del año pasado es maestro en OIGER, entonces el me lo va a dar. A mí todavía no me han entregado mi diploma, lo tiene el profesor".

"En la mañana empiezo a trabajar en la escuela a las 07:00. Al aula de computación van entrando por grupos. Reciben clases solo los niños de 5to y 6to nada más. En cada período llegan 3 niños porque solo hay 3 computadoras y antes de salir a las doce, ordeno y limpio el salón. Regreso con mis hermanos a la casa para almorzar y vuelvo a salir porque a las 12:30 pasa el profe para el Instituto. Entramos a clase a la una y salimos a las cinco de la tarde.

Ana tiene amigas en el básico, con las que la vemos jugar alegremente fútbol durante el recreo. Ella dice: "Regreso en el carro de profesor a la casa, cenamos en familia. Me cuesta hacer las tareas porque no hay electricidad en la casa, pero si tengo que hacer oficio, los hago en los ratos que me quedan libres, al otro día en la escuela".

Las tareas las tenemos que hacer con candil en la casa, porque dejan muchas tareas, porque no hay luz. Lo que más nos dejan es caligrafía y matemáticas. Los sábados no estudiamos. Solo descansamos domingo. El sábado lavamos ropa, nos bañamos y el

domingo en la noche vamos al culto, porque de día vamos al mercado y trabajamos. En el culto me gusta cantar en el coro.

Dicen que otras escuelas son diferentes a la nuestra. Aquí en la escuela los niños trabajan solos, trabajan con guías, y si la guía dice con la ayuda del profesor los niños le piden ayuda. Allí los niños trabajan en grupos, por eso no pueden faltar. Si un niño falta tiene que pedir copia a sus compañeros que si llegan y tiene que ver cómo hace para ponerse al día. Las otras escuelas son diferentes porque no trabajan con esas guías. Solo son 6 escuelas. Sí esta la de Pahoj, la de Chichipac, la de Xesiguan, San Luis, La de Joya de Ramos y Las Ventanas, esas si están con PLAN. Las demás no están. Aquí solo los de Plan han venido.

“Un buen maestro tiene que apoyar a la comunidad. Y los alumnos tienen que ser responsables. Yo nunca he faltado a la escuela, porque si no me voy a quedar y no voy a hacer nada”,

Hay algunos niños que no llegan a estudiar porque ayudan a sus papas. Tienen que entregar comida a los papas en el campo. En cambio “nosotros como somos pocos en esta casa y como mi papá no trabaja aquí, vamos todos los días a la escuela”.

En la Escuela enseñan de todo. Ahora es diferente la escuela porque antes los niños tenían que ir a trabajar con sus papás. Mi papá viene en época de cosecha de café, pero como es poco lo que hay no perdemos clases. El se vuelve a ir cuando termina el trabajo.

En la casa hablamos Achí, y en la escuela aprendemos castellano. En la escuela ya no hubo preparatoria para que los niños aprendan castilla, porque la maestra se fue a otra escuela. Ahora no hay alumnos. “Como hay algunos alumnos que no entienden el Achí yo les doy las clases en español, y a los que si saben les explico en Achí”.

“A los niños les explico qué quieren decir los símbolos de la computadora. Los primero que enseñé es a pintar, a borrar y después el Microsoft. Algunos se están poniendo las pilas y ya están aprendiendo como encender, como apagar. Yo aprendí en 3 meses. Allí me daban una hora de lunes a jueves. Como aquí en la casa no hay electricidad, solo aprendo en la escuela. Ahí no hay libros para la computadora. Yo aprendí a pura práctica.

Otra cosa bonita que tiene la escuela es que hay gobierno escolar. Cuando viene Plan Internacional siempre se presentan esos niños. Esta el secretario, el presidente y el tesorero. Hay de todos los grados. El año que pasó yo era la secretaria. Yo llevaba los apuntes de cada reunión.

Se anota lo que hablan las mamás sobre los desayunos o cualquier colaboración. Cuando no hay clases faltamos, como el año pasado. Solo un maestro venía, era solo el director, él nos enseñaba a todos. "Plan Internacional nos ha ayudado mucho porque ellos han trabajado y nos han ayudado. Sin ellos no hubiéramos trabajado nada, porque a plan mandamos solicitudes y nos atienden".

"Los niños que están afiliados en Plan Internacional son ayudados. Los que quieren van allí y uno se inscribe. Nosotros nos enteramos porque en la comunidad hay Comités y ellos avisan que el que quiere se puedes afiliar a Plan Internacional. En el comité de la Escuela hay papás y mamás de niños, pero también hay algunos miembros que no tienen hijos en la escuela. Ellos llegaron a las escuelas a informarnos de Plan Internacional, para ver quiénes se quieren afiliar. Los afiliados no pagamos nada".

"Este año les dieron cuadernos a todos los niños de las escuelas, otros años solo se los han dado a los afiliados. Este año si les dieron a los que no están afiliados. Cuadernos y lápices".

"El ministerio de Educación solo da el atole para los niños de la Escuela, pero Plan ayudó en la construcción de una cocina nueva". El ministerio da ayuda, pero las mamás son las que hacen el atole para los niños. Cada mamá va una vez al mes. El niño representante del comité de redacción apunta que día le toca a cada mamá. También hay comité de limpieza y de orden.

"Al salir de la escuela los afiliados no tienen compromisos con Plan. A veces los que quieren seguir estudiando los básicos pueden solicitar una ayuda a Plan. De los que han sido apoyados ninguno a ayuda a la escuela, solo yo. Están en sus casas y no trabajan, ni estudian en básicos".

"A demás de ayudar a los niños, Plan a nivel de la comunidad, apoyó regalando depósitos (tinacos) para agua ínter domiciliar. Los que estaban interesados hicieron solicitud para que los incluyeran en ese proyecto de Plan". Plan a dado otros apoyos porque hay proyectos aquí. Algunos tienen hortalizas. Ellos no piden cuotas, no piden nada. Han apoyado mucho a la comunidad. A la gente le gusta.

Ana tiene la ilusión de algún día poder ser secretaria y luego ir a la universidad. Por ahora asiste al básico con otra joven de Xesiguan y otras patojas. "Allá tenemos un maestro y una maestra. El profesor no cobra nada por llevarnos a clases".

La joven achi dice: "al saber más de computadoras podré ir a trabajar a cualquier lugar, como a Rabinal. Además me gustaría usar el Internet y discos. El profesor y el director a veces me

enseñan cómo, pero ahorita no he aprendido. Si manejo la computadora voy a ayudar mejor a mi familia.

A Ana no le interesa ir más lejos, aunque tiene oportunidad de ir a Guatemala e incluso a Estados Unidos porque tiene parientes que han migrado de forma indocumentada a ese país, porque no quiere dejar a su abuelita. "Me gustaría trabajar en Rabinal". Aunque en la casa solo Ana es la que ayuda a la familia.

"Mis planes para el futuro son seguir estudiando computadora. Trabajar de secretaria en Salamá o Rabinal, pero a Guate no. Solo quiero salir cerca, aunque deje a la abuelita con los niños chiquitos. Si eso pasa tiene que venir mi mamá a cuidar a los niños".

O2.Pahoj.05
Aldea PAHOJ, RABINAL. BAJA VERAPAZ

PEDRO

Es padre de tres niños de la escuela. El mayor tiene 10 años está en quinto; el segundo 8 años, está en segundo y el otro tiene 7 años, en primero. El más pequeño tiene 5 años comenzados.

Por mi parte tengo 2 años que fui elegido por la comunidad como secretario del Consejo Comunitario de Desarrollo COCODES. El COCODES tiene un año de funcionamiento, pero nosotros tenemos 2 años en el comité. Durante los dos años hemos logrado muchos proyectos con Plan. El comité ha funcionado muy bien con el apoyo de PLAN INTERNACIONAL. El Comité Comunitario de Desarrollo, no trabaja sin Plan.

A Plan mandamos solicitudes para apoyo de infraestructura, o vienen a visitarnos la facilitadota. La que acaba de ingresar es nueva. Pero por ahora hemos logrado la energía eléctrica, pileta, las computadoras y los tinacos que cada vivienda tiene. Una parte pone el Plan y la mano de obra no calificada la pone la comunidad.

Para este año, como el comité siempre trabaja y platica con Plan Internacional, se construyó en conjunto, una cocina en la escuela y desde hace una semana está funcionando. La cocina sirve para la refacción de los niños y está bien ordenada. Mientras que se construía la cocina, todos los de la comunidad, el comité y la junta escolar decidimos que como es verano, era mejor que a los niños se les diera en la refacción sandía, por el calor.

Esa cocina beneficia a la comunidad por eso estamos agradecidos con Plan. Eso ayuda a muchas familias aquí.

Nosotros como comité no entramos mucho a la escuela, solo podemos ver como funciona desde afuera. Pero puedo decirle que se ve muy ordenado, porque todos los niños pertenecen a una comisión. Además los niños han elegido un comité adentro de la escuela. Tienen una junta directiva. Hay comisiones de limpieza para limpiar todo el terreno que forma la escuela.

Otro beneficio que ha traído Plan está dirigido a la educación de lo que los niños, por eso han salido adelante con los estudios. Plan ha donado una biblioteca, sillas, mesas, vitrinas y archivo de libros.

Yo como comité comunitario de desarrollo agradezco los proyectos de Plan. Juntos hicimos el proyecto de los tinacos. Plan y el comité durante el trabajo de la construcción de tinacos y la cocina, tuvimos la colaboración de toda a comunidad y las familias.

Como secretario me he dado cuenta que cada vez que se ejecuta un proyecto según Plan la comunidad tiene que poner una parte, y la gente ha cumplido. Con la cocina casi no hemos tenido problemas durante la construcción. Yo no tengo tanto estudio, aunque sea secretario Comité. Pero de niño asistí a la escuela de aquí de Pahoj para estudiar. Solo estudié hasta 2 grado. Eso fue hace como 22 años. Ahora tengo 34.

Los maestros a veces venían a veces no. No había responsabilidad porque no había quien supervisaba. Desde hace como 8 años la escuela comenzó a cambiar. Pero cambió más cuando vino Plan porque la Escuela se ve más ordenada.

Sin la motivación de los maestros los niños no aprenden nada. Antes de 2do ó 3ro no pasaban los patojos. Los niños no pasaban, dejaban de estudiar. Ahorita los niños ya llegan a 6to. Los que salen de 6to ya bajan al pueblo a estudiar básico. Hay más interés en estudiar.

Plan ha motivado a la comunidad. Por ahora con la facilitadota de Plan no hemos platicado, pero los anteriores han tenido reuniones con los comités y la junta directiva y han dejado mucha motivación a la comunidad. Antes sin Plan, nuestra gente no animaba a los niños. Plan viene a motivar a los niños y a los papás.

Desde hace 5 años, tengo mi hijo en la Escuela (el que está ahorita en 5to) y me doy cuenta de los cambios de la Escuela de Pahoj. Cuando empezó a estudiar él, los niños se desanimaban y abandonaban la escuela. Pero Plan le dice a uno que hay que animar a los niños.

Su mamá y yo le decimos que tiene que tener atención en el estudio, porque es de gran beneficio para un niño que aprende. Ahora estamos pensando que si saca 6to, ya sabemos en que colegio va a estudiar. Por el momento creemos que tiene que ir a uno de Rabinal porque ahí se puede comprar libros. Aquí no hay bibliotecas para estudiar ni hay librerías para comprar.

Plan comenzó hace como 2 ó 3 años con la pre-primaria para los niños pequeños, porque ahí salen más avanzados y tienen más experiencia para empezar a aprender a escribir. Para mi hijo pequeño, el de 5 años, sería beneficioso porque ahí aprendería a hablar castellano.

En Chategua y en Xiixim, que está al frente de nosotros, dicen que los maestros no les ayudan a los niños. En cambio aquí tenemos buenos maestros. Tuvimos un maestro que duró como 5 años, casi dio la vida por nuestros niños. Cada vez que Plan daba capacitaciones, de como manejar los niños en la escuela, el profesor era muy activo y animaba a los otros.

Con el director y los maestros que están entrando a la Escuela también hicimos un convenio y están de acuerdo con que Plan siga dando capacitaciones a los maestros para beneficio de los niños. Aunque hay días que no dan clases, sabemos que es porque los maestros están aprendiendo. Porque no nos sirve que todos los días vengan los maestros, si no están capacitados para trabajar con los niños. Creo que es necesario que se haga trabajo conjunto entre papás y maestros, de lo contrario la educación no trae ningún beneficio.

Las computadoras de la escuela traen un gran beneficio, porque nosotros antes no podemos ni tocar ni un teclado. Tenemos miedo. Ahora los niños aunque no salgan muy bien preparados como en otras Escuelas, ahora pueden buscar otro trabajo mejor que el nuestro, porque tienen más confianza en tocar las cosas en el trabajo.

Ahora sabemos que Pahoj tiene tres computadoras y las otras Escuelas no tienen nada. Así los niños tienen más confianza. Ahorita la necesidad más grande es saber de computadoras porque uno aunque sepan leer y escribir, si no saben manejar la computadora es como ciego, porque no sabe trabajar.

Nosotros no sabemos los pensamientos de cada niño. Tal vez en el futuro algunos se van a dedicar a la agricultura, pero hay otros que si se capacitan en la computadora van a trabajar en otra cosa. Ahora sabemos que para la agricultura también se necesita estudio, porque hay que capacitarse, y saber leer los folletos para mejorar la agricultura. Y si necesita leer una manual agrícola, también se necesita manejar la computadora.

Yo trabajo en agricultura y un poco aserrando madera. Por de pronto tengo experiencia en albañilería. Casi solo trabajo aserrando madera, en un terreno propio. Yo tengo como una empresa solo para entregar material.

Por mi parte les digo a los niños que estudien para que busquen otro trabajo diferente a aserrar madera. Me gustaría que fueran maestros, porque con el estudio pueden tener otro trabajo.

Mi esposa trabaja por eso todos los días baja al pueblo. Sale a las siete de la mañana y regresa a las cuatro de la tarde. Ella no estudió aquí porque es de Chateguan. Pero dice que ahora es más bonita que antes, porque antes todo lo tenían que comprar los padres. Ahora Plan da una gran ayuda a los papás porque da materiales escolares a todos. Ahora hay que invertir mucho dinero para comprar materiales para 3 ó 4 niños. Si uno no tiene un buen trabajo se va mucho dinero y no puede comprar útiles escolares.

Mi esposa sacó 6to. Grado. Ella trabajó 4 años en la Junta Escolar y un año de facilitadora de la Escuela de Paho. Apoyaba la refacción escolar con otra institución. Ahora cuando hay algún mandado que los maestros van a realizar, siempre la llaman a ella para que les de una experiencia, para que cuente a las mamás. Como ella tiene experiencia de manejar fondos, y cómo se debe gastar. Porque hay mamás que no pueden hacer cuentas. Ella ha trabajado apoyando la Escuela.

Hace como dos años trabajó como madre guía y les dio capacitaciones a todas las mamás y a los niños. Por medio del trabajo ella quiere salir adelante y como le gusta estudiar, a hora está estudiando 3ero básico.

Por mi parte a mí me gusta estudiar, pero a mí no me da tiempo y yo siento que no puedo dedicarme a estudiar porque tengo que cuidar unos animalitos, por eso no puedo. Como a ella le gusta estudiar yo no me opongo, porque sin estudio no hay trabajo, ni hay dinero. A ella la conocen en todos lados, por eso la buscan y la llaman de todos lados.

Por ahora Plan no ha pedido que la gente se afilie. Hace años entraron muchos niños afiliados. Por de pronto hay 32 niños afiliados. Ahora ya no hay más porque no hay plazas.

Los afiliados han recibido el beneficio de útiles de la escuela. Y los que no están afiliados han recibido el beneficio de la cocina. Ese es un proyecto comunitario y no solo para el afiliado. Por eso las mamás se tornean para trabajar

El afiliado no tiene ningún compromiso. Los beneficiados solo tienen que darle mantenimiento a la cocina. En ese caso son las mamás. La misión que tienen las mamás es dejar ordenado y limpio, eso se hizo para todos, por eso no se hace ningún pago mensual.

Hace como un año tuvimos una reunión y no han autorizado para que se afilien más porque hay un cupo limitado.

El relación al trato que ahora les dan los maestros a los niños creo que es bueno, porque no son bravos con los alumnos. Este año los maestros no nos han dado información de los niños, pero el año pasado no hubo problemas con los profesores. Depende de cómo se comporten los niños. Si los niños actúan mal, los maestros los corrigen.

Ahorita conforme a Plan trabajan los niños solos y los maestros son como guías. Eso es bueno, porque si a cada rato pasa el profesor regañando, los niños no le agarran confianza. Y si los niños trabajan solos agarran más confianza para el trabajo.

Plan para mi ha pensado muchos beneficios a los niños, porque da mucho apoyo a la educación. Para mi es bueno, porque esa institución si apoya a los niños y a los maestros en la educación.

Los maestros tienen que ser con más experiencia en el trabajo y más estudios. Si yo fuera niño quisiera que el maestro fuera más sencillo. Que corrigiera mi trabajo, que me diga si mi trabajo está bien o no.

Creo que Plan ha dado capacitaciones para manejar los niños. Porque antes los maestros se enojaban si uno no hacía buena la letra que le enseñan, Regañaban y castigaban a los niños. Ahorita no me gustaría que tratara así a mis hijos, porque los niños con poco regaño se van y se alejan de la escuela, porque no les tendrían confianza a los maestros. Ahora agarrando a los niños con confianza los niños agarran más experiencias.

Antes le pegaban a uno. Ahora los niños trabajan con maestros con experiencia porque se han capacitado. Gracias a Plan Internacional, los niños trabajan solos, sin miedo porque tienen más confianza a los maestros y ellos los guían. Para el futuro de mis hijos quiero que cada tengan más experiencia y aprendan las cosas que yo no tuve oportunidad.

03.Rab.05

José

Aldea Chichupac, Rabinal. Baja Verapaz

José es padre de un niño de la escuela Rural de Chichupac. Aproximadamente tiene 35 años de edad. Trabaja en agricultura, como mozo, siembra milpa. A veces sale de mozo a ayudar o trabajar para otro. Pero aquí pagan poco, solo pagan Q.25.00 al día es poco, eso no alcanza, aunque uno fuera fijo. Eso no alcanza. Su señora murió de hepatitis hace 4 años. La niña tenía 4 años, por eso se regresó de Petén. Al enviudar se vio en la necesidad de vivir con su madre para que lo ayudara en la educación de sus hijos menor y se ocupara de las tareas del hogar.

Los hijos mayores son varones y estudian internos en un colegio que se llama Amigo de los Niños, en Guatemala, ellos son afiliados. Están apadrinados, de Estados Unidos les mandan ayuda. Allí les dan estudio y no pagan el hospedaje, ni comida, lo que pone do José es la ropa y los útiles. El mayor está en 2º. Básico y el otro en 6º. Primaria.

Nos cuenta don José "Yo nací en Xuabaj, pero vine a vivir aquí, a la aldea Chichupac, después de la violencia me vine a vivir aquí, como en el 1985. Aquí había mas gente pero la mayoría se desplazaron para otros lugares durante la violencia a otros lugares. Antes aquí era un caserío. Nosotros nos venimos con mi papá para acá, porque hay más familias. Durante la violencia vivimos en otra aldea que le dicen El Palmar. Por San Luís tenemos otra casa, y vivimos por un tiempo allá. Si porque aquí ya no se podía vivir".

Cuando se calmó todo, nos regresamos para vivir aquí y empezamos a reconstruir toda esta aldea con los vecinos. En ese tiempo la escuela de aquí, se quedó a medias pero después la empezamos a construir con la ayuda del CIF, también construimos la iglesia.

Esta aldea esta bien organizada porque aquí hay catequistas, hay promotores, hay de salud, hay de agricultura, hay comadronas, auxiliares, hay COCODES. Hay comité de Padres de Familia de la Escuela y esta Plan.

El CIF, nos dio financiamiento para reconstruir. Aquí no había escuela antes. La Escuela estaba en El Tablón, en Xuabaj. Todos los niños se iban para allá a Xuabaj, por el Tablón que queda como a unos 5 kilómetros de aquí para abajo. Allí iban niños del Tablón, de Xuabaj, de Toloxicop, del Palmar, Cobij'a, todos los niños venían a recibir clases aquí. En esa época solo había un maestro.

Yo estudié allí en Xuabaj, hasta 4to. Hasta allí llegué yo porque el maestro se fue porque vino la violencia, y se descontroló todo. Yo tenía 12 años, eso fue como en el 82 que dejaron de dar clases. No hubo clases bastante tiempo, se dejó de dar clases y las familias se fueron a vivir a otros lugares.

Recuerda don José que se empezó a construir la escuela como en 85 u 86, y recuerda que la maestra asignado para la escuela del Tablón empezó a dar clases en Chichupac porque la de El Tablón estaba destruida.

También asegura que antes era diferente, porque en esa época eran varios grupos los que tenía que atender la maestra. Éramos varios grados de primero a sexto y le costaba mucho atender a todos.

Nos informa don José que un tiempo después vino PLAN INTERNACIONAL. "Vinieron antes del 2000 a trabajar con niños. Apadrinaron niños y trabajaban con familias dando poyetones, estufas para el hogar les dicen. En Flor de Naranjo dieron láminas y creo que mayas para las familias que estaban afiliadas".

Nos cuenta "hasta ahora esta mi otro niño en la escuela, pero no esta afiliado como otros niños pequeños. Solo recibe los programas que tiene la escuela como mobiliario, pizarrón, escritorios y capacitaciones, como todos los niños. Otros proyectos como el poyetón son para las comunidades, esos beneficios son para todos. En el poyetón de la escuela tienen que colaborar las mamás. Ellas vienen a hacer el atole. Están organizados en grupos de dos mamás a hacer la refacción escolar diariamente.

Don José a firma "Ahora que esta Plan vemos un apoyo en cuanto al mejoramiento del mobiliario de la escuela, y tienen un programa que le dicen interactivo. Miro yo que los materiales que les dan a los niños son más divertidos para ellos porque trabajan en grupitos".

Aquí hay 4 maestros de primaria y la de la pre-primaria. El director también tiene un grupo. Los maestros de ahora ya no les pegan a los niños. Dan sus clases así con guías: ellos, los patojos trabajan casi solos solo se les guía y trabajan solos con sus guías.

Cuando empezó a estudiar en 1er año mi hija en la escuela, hace 5 años, tenían menos materiales, ahora Plan Internacional dio una biblioteca entonces tienen mas material didáctico. Antes no había cocina ni mobiliario. Antes no había porque estaba empezando.

Con la comunidad Plan Internacional tiene un proyecto de agua potable, eso es para toda la comunidad. En las casas hay chorro pero tiene muy poco agua. El agua no es suficiente para las 75

familias de la comunidad. Ese proyecto se construyó en el 80, pero en esa época eran muy pocas casa alcanzaba.

Yo tengo un hijo de 15 años, otro de 12 y la que está en la Escuela. Ellos son varones ya salieron de aquí. Ellos están estudiando en Guatemala en un internado. Están en un Colegio de una institución que se llama Amigo de los Niños.

Aquí hace falta algo porque cuando mi hijo salió de sexto se fue a ese colegio y tuvo que repetir 6to grado porque le falta computación, porque los niños de allá en la primaria ya saben computación, por eso tuvo que repetir un grado para nivelarse con los niños de allá.

Sobre ese problema don José platicó con el profesor Esteban y los niños, porque estima que es necesario elaborar una solicitud a Plan internacional para pedir computadoras para los niños de Chuchupac, "para que cuando salgan los niños estén más preparados para que cuando los niños salgan de aquí ya no les cuesta entrar en el básico o trabajar". Tenemos la solicitud allá pero aún no han respondido.

Al respecto José dice "como en la Escuela los niños están organizados en un gobierno escolar, entonces revisaron las necesidades de la escuela y llegaron a la conclusión de que ellos necesitaban computadoras para la escuela, y ellos mismos elaboraron su solicitud. Solo pidieron el visto bueno al comité de Padres de Familia y entregamos a Plan, pero no nos ha respondido".

También informa que además de hacer esa solicitud a Plan Internacional, solicitaron apoyo al Ministerio de Educación para que les dieran un financiamiento para construir un salón para esas maquinas, para sanitarios y para la reparación de ventanales porque creen que es necesario tener una escuela con instalaciones más seguras.

Además los padres saben que al mejorar las condiciones físicas y el equipo también necesitan un personal capacitado que oriente a los niños en el aprendizaje. "Con los papás pensamos que si Plan Internacional nos da las computadoras tendríamos que pagar nosotros los padres de familia a un maestro que venga a enseñar a los niños a usar las computadoras y con otros gastos como la electricidad".

Para este padre de familia la educación de los niños tiene que ir acompañada de un compromiso no solo de los niños y la familia sino de los maestros, como lo deja ver cuando afirma: "Para que los niños sean mejor en el futuro es necesario que también los

maestros se preparen y reciben las capacitaciones que Plan da para ir mejorando la educación de los niños”.

En el caso de los vecinos dicen que Plan los apoya porque cuando hay familias de escasos recursos con algún enfermo Plan los ha apoyado en comprar medicinas.

También hay niños afiliados a Plan los que deben renovar su afiliación cada año, para ello deben actualizar sus datos y renovar la foto familiar y la foto del niño. José tenía un niño afiliado pero como se fue a vivir un tiempo para el Petén no puedo renovar la afiliación “yo ya no estaba, por eso ya no seguí en ese programa de Plan. Anteriormente habían 48 afiliados, y si uno no renueva la papelería de los niños ya no lo toman en cuenta después y si ya no hay cupo no aceptan más niños”. Al enviudar regresaron porque no podía quedarse en Petén con los niños. Allá vivieron 5 años, les costó adaptarse otra vez a sus abuelos.

“El compromisos que los niños tienen con Plan es solamente colaborar con la escuela en los proyectos. El compromiso de los papás es que le den buen uso a los materiales. Por ejemplo si les dan un poyetón tienen que cuidarlo, darle mantenimiento, no consumir mucha leña para no botar muchos árboles. Eso es el compromiso.”

Para los niños la educación que les dan ahora es de mucho beneficio porque al salir de aquí y si van a otro lugar van mejor ambientados y comparten con otros niños. No son tan tímidos porque aquí las clases son participativas. Así los niños al salir de aquí son más participativos.

Cuando Plan empezó a apoyar esa metodología yo estaba en el comité de padres de familia, entonces me di cuenta como era la metodología. El profesor nos reunió a todos los padres de familia y nos expuso la idea de que si queríamos usar esa metodología aquí Plan Internacional iba a capacitar y dar materiales didácticos. Entonces levantamos un acta y dijimos que íbamos a probar cómo funciona. Hace como tres o cuatro años fue eso. Y cuando vimos que si funcionaba seguimos con esa metodología y Plan. Mi hija estaba como en primer año.

El Comité de Padres de familia fuimos los que autorizamos que viniera Plan aquí. Además ellos dieron una capacitación para informar a los maestros sobre la organización de los niños. Después de eso todos los maestros regresaron a las aldeas donde trabajan y dieron a conocer a los padres de familia. Hay otras aldeas que no quisieron. Hay otras aldeas abajo que no trabajan con Plan. Hay aldeas que solo tienen niños afiliados y solo reciben materiales como tinacos o pilas, pero no tienen maestros capacitados.

Nos aclara: "En los proyectos comunitarios tenemos que poner la mano de obra, por ejemplo cuando dieron las estufas estuvieron capacitando a las personas, como cada familia iba a instalar el poyetón en su casa tenía que capacitarse. Pero para el agua potable vino personal capacitado, nosotros tuvimos que poner la mano de obra no tecnicada para hacer las zanjas, y colocar las tuberías y la albañilería viene personas capacitadas".

Todos los maestros aquí están presupuestados, no son por contrato. "Hace tres años tuvimos una maestra por contrato, solo un año vino a trabajar y se fue, ahora no hay problema porque todos están presupuestados. Todos son de Rabinal. Todos van y vienen todos los días porque no se pueden quedar aquí.

Hay dos maestros achies y pueden hablar con los niños, son los de primero y segundo, "eso es bueno porque aprenden a leer y escribir en nuestro dialecto, o nuestro idioma. Eso es bueno porque los niños tienen más confianza con los maestros. Los otros dos no saben Achí".

Además la maestra de pre-primaria también es Achí. "Eso es bueno porque lo que pasa es que cuando los niños empiezan en primero hay niños que no pueden castilla, entonces si el profesor habla en achí le da más confianza porque le comprende. En cambio si viene y empieza con castilla no entienden y no le ponen caso. No siente confianza".

Este padre opina "Un maestro tiene que ser activo y atento con todos los grupos de los niños. Porque si el maestro solo se dedica a poner trabajo y no hay quien los revise y coordine no aprenden porque como son niños se distraen y empiezan a jugar, en cambio si hay alguien dirigiendo la actividad pues es bueno".

La metodología "es buena porque a veces hacen trabajos de investigar y el niño se pone a pensar que es lo que va a hacer y utiliza su creatividad. Entonces por eso pienso yo que le queda de experiencia y cuando ya sea grande ya piensa y analizan dice que es lo que debe hacer. Esa es una de las cosas buenas que trae la metodología de hacer actividades y trabajos de pensar.

Para José "Los niños aprenden a ser responsables porque al hacer una actividad tienen que hacer una tarea o presentar un material que piden. En algunos casos piden asesoría a los papás. Los papás tienen que ayudar y uno tiene que orientarlos y no hacerles los deberes. Ver que es lo que necesitan. Los niños cuentan que materiales necesitan para hacer sus trabajitos".

"Los niños son bien pilas, no le tienen miedo a la gente. Ellos platican y no tienen miedo a la gente de afuera. Preguntan y se

acercan a la gente. Ellos aprenden de tanto hacer actividades aprenden.

Esta metodología les enseña a pensar y no dejan tantos deberes. Yo creo que solo de copiar y hacer planas no aprenden los niños, esa era la metodología de antes. Antes uno hacía el montón de planas y no aprendía, uno lo hacía porque se lo dejaban y si no arrancaba las hojas y las tiraba, llegaba al otro día a la escuela y no llevaba nada. Yo creo que es mejor ahora porque es de participar.

La telesecundaria es muy costosa. Los que estuvieron este año tenían que venir a la escuela a ayudar a los maestros y por la tarde tienen que ir a clases y están todo el día estudiando. No todos pueden porque tienen que ayudar a trabajar. Si se van a estudiar diario, diario, tienen que pagar donde vivir, y aquí todos somos de escasos recursos no podemos costear todos esos gastos.

Muchos se fueron a estudiar el fin de semana en Rabinal, creo que el colegio se llama Vida Nueva. Va medio día los domingos.

Yo espero que en el futuro podamos tener una escuela de básicos, porque no todas los niños pueden ir a Rabinal. No todos aquí tienen familias en Rabinal para que es vaya los niños. Ahora son pocos los niños que salen de la Escuela. Tal vez de aquí a unos 5 años sale un buen grupo y se puede pensar en crear el básico. Se podría aprovechar las instalaciones de la escuela primaria, como en El Sauce.