



A BETTER NORMAL

GIRLS CALL FOR
A REVOLUTIONARY RESET

See the full findings by downloading the report at planau.me/a-better-normal

RESEARCH SUMMARY

This summary highlights the key findings and recommendations of Plan International's youth-led feminist participatory action research project, on young women and girls' dreams for a 'better normal'. The project was led by 22 young women aged 15-24 in Australia and Viet Nam and validated by girls across the world.

The pandemic as a portal

The pre-COVID-19 world undeniably failed girls and young women, in all our diversities. These failures have been exacerbated COVID-19. It raises questions, challenges and uncertainty; but equally, we believe it presents opportunities for reflection and change.

Our report shines a light on the impacts of these system failures and challenges on girls and young women, as well as our dreams for a just, equitable and sustainable future.

If this is a chance for this world to be co-created in an inclusive and transformational way, then we want the response to be just and sustainable and to centre marginalised voices.

In order to ensure this, we believe that the voices, experiences and opinions of girls and young women – in all our diversities – need to be amplified and heard.

This includes taking an intersectional lens, to ensure girls and young women of diverse socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, ability and other marginalising factors are heard.

After all, it is our future being created. Our passion drives us and allows us to imagine a better world, and we demand a seat at the table to co-create it.

Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.

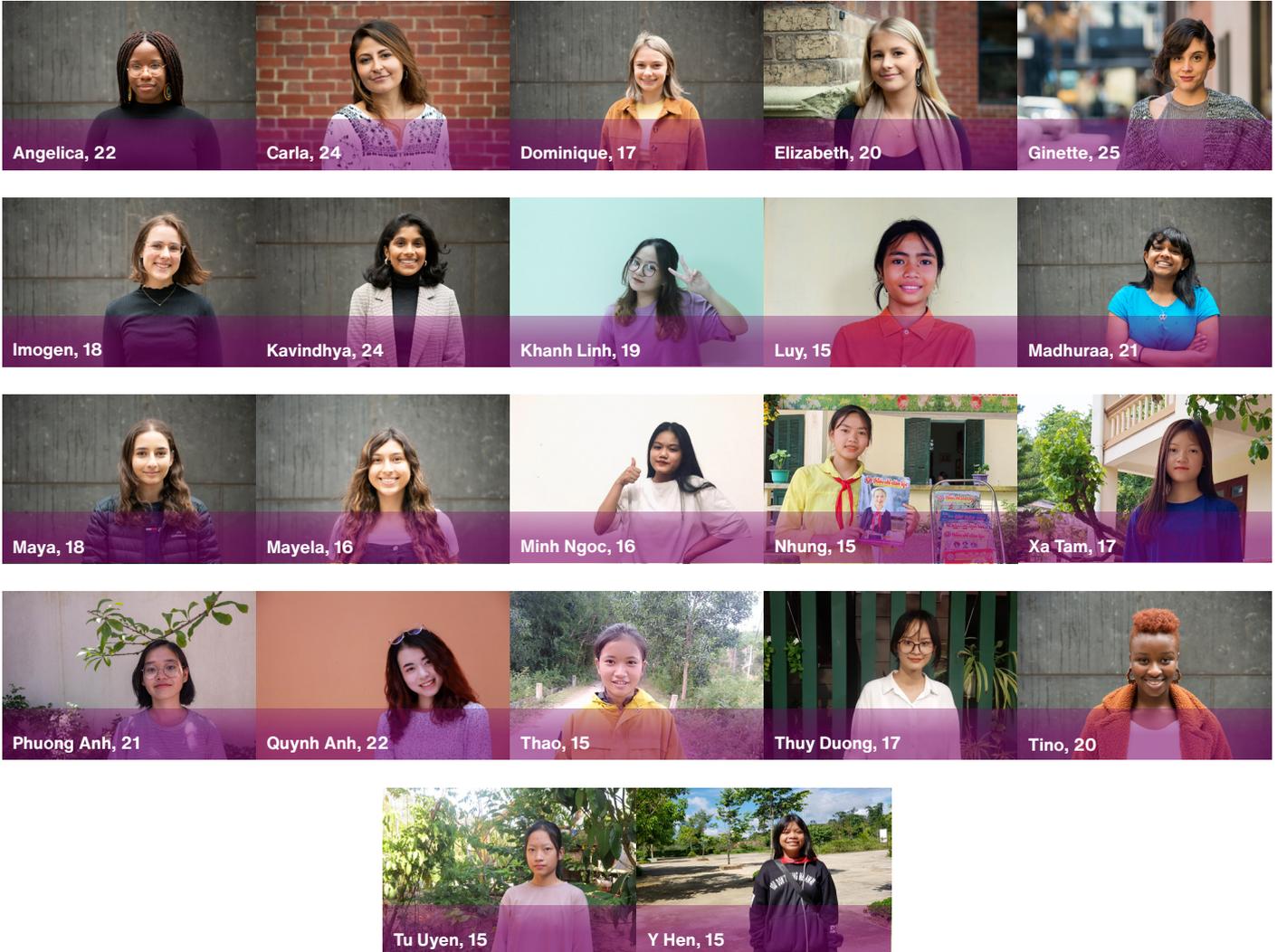
Arundhati Roy,
Indian author and activist

We will not go back to normal. Normal never was. Our pre-corona existence was not normal other than we normalized greed, inequity, exhaustion, depletion, extraction, disconnection, confusion, rage, hoarding, hate and lack. We should not long to return, my friends. We are being given the opportunity to stitch a new garment. One that fits all of humanity and nature.

Sonya Renee Taylor,
African American poet and activist

MEET THE RESEARCH TEAM AND CO-AUTHORS

Plan International's Youth Leaders are a force to be reckoned with. They are fierce, powerful and feminist, working to amplify the voices of young people to tackle inequality head on. This research was conducted by 22 youth leaders in Australia and Viet Nam.

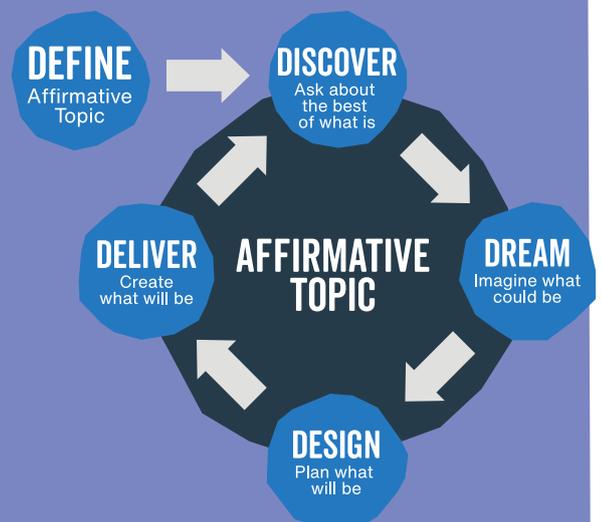


ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROCESS

This innovative research and advocacy project used feminist participatory action research (FPAR) and Appreciative Inquiry techniques and methodologies. It was underpinned by the recognition that girls and young women have the capacity to understand our context and experience, agency to shape our lives and communities, and the expertise to identify and prioritise our needs.

We followed the 5D appreciative cycle to define our topic of inquiry and discover the positives, challenges and inequalities in our world, to then dream our vision for a new, fairer and more sustainable world. We then designed our recommendations for change, and delivered our unique co-authored report.

We will also be campaigning and advocating on the various recommendations, both in the immediate aftermath of this report's launch and ongoing.



OUR VISION

We envision a world in which everyone constantly strives to create the best world possible. A world where everyone feels valued and heard, and free to do what they love. A world surrounded by kindness, peace, opportunity and acceptance for each other, with equality in leadership and the protection of rights. A transformation of the way society works to truly co-exist with the Earth, leaving an equitable and hopeful place for the generations to come.

GLOBAL SUPPORT FOR THE VISION

1K+ girls and young women across
99 COUNTRIES engaged with our vision

7 in 10 validated our vision

325 girls and young women, aged 10-24 and across 25 countries covering six regions, provided 'deep dive' responses

90% from each region expressed their agreement with the vision

50-60% from each age group (10-14, 15-19, 20-24) voted for "Love this!" about the vision



We understand that there are many facets, experiences, perspectives, structures and paradigms that make up a vision like this, which are needed to support a world that emulates such a vision.

We have broken down these facets into six main pillars, which expand upon our overarching vision to demonstrate how, together, we can co-create our new world.

These expanded visions resonated strongly with girls and young women globally, with 9 in 10 expressing strong agreement for each pillar.

Educated citizens of the world

Gender Justice

Protection of rights and access to resources

Inclusion and equality in power

Freedom to be human

Climate Justice

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** Address gender inequality, and in particular negative norms, attitudes and stereotypes
- 2** Encourage young women's leadership, including by adopting concrete measures to ensure more young women enter into positions of power
- 3** Protect our rights and ensure equitable distribution of resources
- 4** Ensure health prevention and promotion for all, in particular by recognising and responding to the unique vulnerabilities of refugees, children and youth with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ individuals and other vulnerable groups
- 5** Prioritise participatory policy- and law-making, in particular centring girls' and young women's voices, experiences and solutions on the issues that affect us
- 6** Transform the education system to one that emphasises teaching compassionate understanding of others and is participatory and learner-centred, providing opportunities for self-reflection and encouraging children, adolescents and young people to connect what they are learning in the classroom to their wider worlds
- 7** Deliver climate justice and listen to, respect and act in accordance with scientific evidence and expert advice, as well as Indigenous knowledge and expertise