

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE FROM BOLIVIA

We wanted to share some exciting progress made possible in Bolivia - thanks to support from you!

In Bolivia, life can be challenging for children and young people. Physical punishment is culturally accepted in Bolivia. In addition, early childhood development is not well understood in this country as a result many children experience violence both at home and school. Young people lack opportunities to gain skills they need to get a good job. They also lack access to sexual and reproductive health education and therefore the rates of teenage pregnancy are high.

Throughout fiscal year 2020, with the help of your sponsorship, we were able to improve access to inclusive sexual and reproductive health education. We also provided positive parenting training to parents, and distributed food and hygiene kits to hundreds of families struggling through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are grateful to you for making these changes possible. We know you will enjoy reading on to see how your generosity is changing the lives of children, like your sponsored child, across this region.



## OUR IMPACT

**1,160** YOUNG PEOPLE  
LEARNED ABOUT SEXUAL AND  
REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN  
SANTA CRUZ, RIO SEGO AND  
VILLA ADELA

**4,500** SANTA CRUZ AND  
TARIJA' FAMILIES RECEIVED  
FOOD AND HYGIENE KITS

**1,167** PARENTS LEARNED  
POSITIVE PARENTING  
TECHNIQUES IN RIO SEGO,  
VILLA ADELA AND TARIJA

IN SANTA CRUZ , **150** WOMEN  
LEARNED EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

## PLAN INTERNATIONAL COVID-19 RESPONSE



COVID-19 is having devastating impacts all over the world. It is not only a health emergency, it is an education and protection emergency. Since girls are often worse affected during a crisis, Plan International is putting them at the heart of our response and long-term outlook. We have scaled up healthcare systems, food security, access to clean water, handwashing and awareness campaigns, and keep education in children's lives via radio broadcasts.

# PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Children's rights are not well understood in Rio Seco. A culture of machismo, gender inequality and traditional practices have led to a wide acceptance of violence in

communities, both at home and in schools.

To help keep children safe, particularly girls, we have trained more than 500 young people on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and how to protect themselves against abuse and prevent gender-based violence.

We have also held workshops with 152 parents on positive parenting techniques. Parents learned how to play an active role in raising their children and were made aware of the importance of treating girls and boys equally and without violence.

Furthermore, 144 local authorities have attended awareness raising sessions, so they better understand gender equality and violence prevention in their communities.



**CHILDREN ARE NOW ABLE TO GROW UP IN SAFE, HEALTHY AND GENDER-EQUAL ENVIRONMENTS**

## PROMOTING EQUALITY FOR GIRLS

A lack of sexual and reproductive health education means that girls are not able to make informed choices about their lives and bodies. Many girls in Santa Cruz get pregnant early. Negative gender norms also lead to high levels of violence against women. Cultural taboos around the topic prevent many girls from talking openly about their experiences and playing an active role in changing this situation.

To help empower young women to take charge of their lives, we have trained 810 girls on sexual and reproductive health, how to prevent early pregnancy, and how to prevent violence. Moreover, 209 young men have learned about positive masculinities and gender equality. We have also trained 60 municipal authorities to tackle gender-based violence in their communities.

*"The workshop that I attended with Plan was very useful. Thanks to this workshop I have been able to better support my community, identifying situations of violence and together with the Ombudsman for children and adolescents, we respond to these types of situations."*

**Evelin, 34 years old**



# PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Young people in Villa Adela lack access to sexual and reproductive health education. Teenage pregnancy rate is high, which regularly forces girls to drop out of school.



**60 MIDWIVES AND DOCTORS HAVE BEEN TRAINED IN IMPROVING CARE FOR YOUNG PREGNANT WOMEN**

This prevents them from gaining the skills and confidence they need to get a good job and play an active role in their communities.

To help empower young people to make informed choices about their lives, their bodies and their relationships, we have trained 70 young women and 30 young men on sexual and reproductive health and rights. They also learned about equality for girls, and how to prevent gender-based violence in their relationships.

We have also held community events, where 400 people, including mothers and fathers, learned about adolescent sexual rights and how they can be supportive of young people in their communities.

## COVID-19 RESPONSE

The COVID-19 crisis has impacted vulnerable families in Tarija severely. Families were already struggling under widespread poverty and a weak health system.

Now, many people are not able to earn an income. Parents cannot afford to feed their children and this has led to high levels of stress. Mandatory lockdowns have also increased the risk of violence in the home.

To help families survive through this crisis, we have delivered food and hygiene kits to more than 2,500 families in need, so they can keep themselves and their children healthy and reduce the spread of the deadly infection.

We are also working to protect children from abuse by sharing messages about preventing violence in the home and how to report abuse if it occurs. More than 7,000 families have also received information about the importance of hand-washing with soap, wearing masks, and physical distancing.

*"There is not much sale of my family's products here so we can no longer easily buy food every day. I tell people to continue their enthusiasm and not to lose faith. We must continue fighting to survive this coronavirus."*

**Noemi, 17, sponsored child**



# YOUR SUPPORT IS CHANGING LIVES

With your support, we will continue to protect children's rights so they are able to thrive.

In the coming year, we will continue to work with the children, families and partners across Bolivia:



- Ensuring all children, particularly girls, have access to quality and inclusive schools, and improve the quality of education by training teachers in new technologies.
- Increasing access to sexual and reproductive health education, so both girls and boys can make informed choices about their lives, their bodies and their relationships.
- Keeping children safe by raising awareness of children's rights and supporting local child protection groups. We also work with parents to provide positive care and raise their children without violence.
- Improving opportunities for young people, particularly young women, to gain the vocational skills they need to get a good job or start their own business.
- Supporting rural families to adapt to climate change and ensure their farming practices are environmentally friendly and sustainable so they can provide nutritious food to their children.

These are just some of the many ways your kindness will continue to touch the life of your sponsored child and other children. We would not be able to do this without supporters like you!

## MESSAGE FROM **ÁNGEL BALDERAS PADILLA**

Programme Area Manager, Santa Cruz



"Your support provides more opportunities for girls and boys to participate in our projects. Next year, we will continue to work to stop violence and reduce teenage pregnancies. We will also support young women start and develop economic ventures to recover from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 health emergency."

## MESSAGE FROM **LUIS ITURRY**

Programme Area Manager, Rio Seco and Villa Adela



"Huge thanks and warmest regards to you, dear sponsors! Thanks to your support, we are reaching important changes and improvements to the living conditions of children. Through Plan projects children also have better access to health and education services."

## MESSAGE FROM **CARLOS GUILLERMO JALIL ROJAS**

Programme Area Manager, Tarija



"With your help we've been able to make many positive changes in Tarija. In particular, we strengthened the prevention and self-protection of girls and adolescents against human trafficking. We have also been working hard to assist people during the COVID-19 pandemic."

