

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

Thanks to your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in Guayas Los Rios. Learn more about the valuable ways your support has benefitted them.

This past year, access to education was key. Scholarships were awarded to students, and 100% of the scholarship holders continue to progress to higher levels within the school system.

Parents participated in training sessions where they learned about their children's right to an education. Mothers and fathers practiced positive parenting, challenged harmful cultural norms regarding fatherhood and masculinity, and nurtured healthy, gender-equal families.

Your continued sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Guayas Los Rios.



# 4208

School  
scholarships  
awarded



# 544

Family gardens  
helped provide  
nutritious food



# 861

Families  
learned positive  
parenting



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN ECUADOR

Hear from Jennifer about how COVID-19 has impacted her community.

"The pandemic affected many families, they faced economic problems, separation and pain from the loss of loved ones. In my family, we went through a very hard stage, my mom lost her job due to the pandemic. Plan helped us a lot and despite the economic downturn, my family is together and blessed."



# CASE STORY: FULFILLING HER LIFE DREAMS



**NAME: DAYANA**

**AGE: 17 YEARS OLD**

**HOBBY: READING**

"Let's not be overcome by our problems, let's face it because we are strong, and with our heads held high, let's fulfil our goals and dreams. Thanks to Plan's support, girls can see our present and future in a different way. I want to study medicine and become a doctor, and I'm sure I will."

## Meet Dayana

**Like your sponsored child, Dayana has been empowered by Plan International to change her life.** Before her participation in the leadership school, Dayana was shy and reserved. She was afraid to express herself in public, and she wasn't confident talking with her family about issues she was curious about.

## Facing Gender Challenges

Now Dayana is attending her last year of secondary education, after which she will go to university and study for the future she always wanted—to be a doctor. Dayana is the fourth of five siblings growing up in the Ecuadorian highlands, surrounded by high mountains and a river where her family caught fish.

The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted her family, who found themselves lacking money and food. In her family, there are more men than women, which meant Dayana was responsible for domestic responsibilities, such as caring for her younger brother as well as the animals.

Unlike her brothers, Dayana wasn't able to participate in social, cultural and sporting events, and had little time to play.

## Encouraged to Participate

With Plan's support, Dayana learned about her rights—and discovered her dream of becoming a doctor. Along with 43 friends, she took workshops on gender equality, self-esteem, communication, sexuality and leadership. Today, Dayana is confident and secure. She has her family's support and her priorities for her future are clear. Even better, she's encouraging other girls to pursue their dreams. Recently, Dayana participated in a TV interview to promote girls' rights and commemorate International Women's Day. With her newfound leadership abilities and confidence, Dayana—and girls like her—are changing the world and their places in it.



*Dayana's TV interview for International Women's Day*

**WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 10,354 CHILDREN IN GUAYAS LOS RIOS**



# OUR PROJECTS IN GUAYAS LOS RIOS ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Empowering women economically is key to addressing employment inequality. In Guayas Los Rios, 17 young women were awarded seed capital to promote their businesses.

## EMPLOYMENT SKILLS TO SUCCEED



In Ecuador, unemployment rates for women are more than double that of men. Although entrepreneurship rates are similar between young women and men, a higher proportion of women are motivated by need. Empowering women, with economic autonomy, is vital.

With training sessions and cooperation from the community Technical Business University, young people could gain information and resources to create their own small businesses and develop employment opportunities. Ten people accessed university scholarships, studying finance, tourism, foreign trade, and marketing. In addition, 14 young people sharpened their accounting skills and learned how to obtain business IDs.

Small businesses were supported with the tools and resources to grow, and a Social Enterprise was formalised by 10 women volunteers, generating job opportunities.

## SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS



Girls and women in Guayas Los Rios experience high levels of early pregnancy. In fact, in the last 10 years, the amount of adolescent mothers between the ages of 10 and 14 has significantly increased.

Knowledge and communication are key to addressing this issue. Many young people lack reliable, accurate information about sexual and reproductive health and rights. By participating in informational workshops and meetings, youth, parents and community leaders learned how to reduce early pregnancy and address gender violence and discrimination. Families improved communication around gender and sexuality, and parents talk more openly with their children. In addition to learning about sexuality and rights, young people gained self-esteem, and developed life projects with clear and specific goals for their futures.



"I learned about values, self-care, and the importance of good communication with my classmates. I shared the knowledge that Plan has given me with my family and friends so they are informed about their sexual and reproductive rights."

- Xiomara (12) from Guayas Los Rios

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



53%

Lack access to sanitary  
toilets



65%

Of Ecuadorian women  
have experienced gender-  
based violence



29%

Of people without work  
are between 25-34 years  
old



**Your support helps children to stand up for their futures.**

- Only 25% of Ecuadorian women work in careers related to mathematics, science and technology. We will help girls access these fields by teaching Digital Literacy and programming.
- To address unemployment and the labour gender gap, we will help promote a culture of savings, female economic empowerment and financial planning.
- Early pregnancy is an important health concern. We will help youth develop the leadership and activism skills to reduce early pregnancy and gender violence.
- The Champions of Change project will empower young men to act as agents of change, advocating for gender equality and positive, non-violent masculinity.

**We know the best is yet to come, and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in Guayas Los Rios.**



“Thanks to your support and commitment, girls and young women developed greater economic autonomy, decision-making and influence, and use technology to enhance their leadership and citizen participation.”

**Héctor Hurtado Sanchez**  
Programme Area Manager

## YOUR GENEROSITY WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN IN STANDING UP FOR THEIR FUTURE AND RIGHTS