

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

In 2020, La Libertad was the second hardest-hit area in El Salvador following two massive tropical storms. As a result, two of Plan's projects in this region for this year focused on disaster preparedness.

Since 2018, Plan's interventions in La Libertad have lowered instances of teen pregnancy by 7%, from 29% to 22%, decreasing annually. This statistic has been tied to Plan's grassroots, ground-up work with community members in La Libertad, offering gender-inclusive sexual health education and quality care to young people across the region.

**Your sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in La Libertad.**




**188**  
Youth attended reproductive health & rights workshops



**265**  
Young people received vocational training



**98**  
Communities in La Libertad are impacted by Plan's actions



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN EL SALVADOR

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

"My mom passed away from Covid-19. My father got depressed and was not able to work. It was a very hard time for my family. Plan helped us with a voucher to get food and for the funeral expenses. Currently, I have a scholarship from Plan. I am studying accounting. My dream is to work in a bank."

# CASE STORY: BREAKING STEREOTYPES



**NAME: BRENDA**

**AGE: 19 YEARS OLD**

**HOBBY: MOTORCYCLES**

"We live in a country full of stereotypes. The biggest challenge has been gaining the trust of men. At first, they didn't believe that a woman would be able to fix a motorcycle. Plan supported me: I participated in the Plan programme that supports young entrepreneurs and obtained seed capital to start my business."

## Meet Brenda

**Like your sponsored child, Brenda has been empowered by Plan International to change her life.** Growing up as a girl in Chalatenango, the odds were stacked against Brenda. Close to 39% of girls in her rural community do not have access to education, and many grow up to be young mothers and later, housewives. Fueled by her love of motorcycles, Brenda knew that she wanted more.

## Supporting An Inclusive Education

This year, Brenda was one of Plan International's 1,058 sponsored young women in Chalatenango. In our work to promote equitable financial independence, we work with Chalatenango's teen girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 29 who want to pursue formal employment or start their own businesses.

Plan supported Brenda's ambitions of opening a motorcycle repair shop. We helped her afford the cost of her high school education, as well as her training to become a mechanic. After her vocational training, Brenda joined Plan's young entrepreneur workshops, where she learned about practical skills like marketing, basic accounting, commercial image, product prototyping and customer service. She also learned about generally important topics, like sexual rights and reproductive health.

## Skills To Succeed

Brenda then went on to Plan's Entrepreneurial Methodology course, 60 hours of training in vital business skills like developing a business idea through case studies, collaboration and exchanging ideas. Upon finishing the unit, Brenda received some of the best evaluations in her group, meaning that she received equipment, materials and supplies to jump-start her motorcycle shop.

Through this training, young women like Brenda build a lifelong sense of independence and agency, changing their lives by earning the equivalent of \$200 to \$300 a month. Brenda is proudly proving to the men in her community that she can do anything.



*Brenda at her motorcycle workshop*

# OUR PROJECTS IN LA LIBERTAD ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Systemic inequality takes a village to dismantle. This year, foster children and aspiring entrepreneurs alike received valuable support to build strong, safe lives.

## FINDING A WAY HOME



**By 2015, more than 3,000 women in El Salvador were living in detention centres.** Local law stipulates that mothers may live with their children until they reach 5 years old, at which point, they will be put into foster care.

This year, Plan continued its “Building New Beginnings” (BNB) programme to care for the growing population of incarcerated women and their at-risk children. 25 foster families have received workshops on emotional health, parenting and gender roles. Two new foster families have been trained on the sensitive integration of their foster children who are freshly leaving detention centres.

Plan also followed up with 17 families who have participated in our BNB programme from years past, complete with aid kits. 20 women were trained in providing emotional care for children raised in detention centres.

## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER



**75% of unemployed people in El Salvador are women with a low level of education.** This statistic is born out of systemic sexism, a lack of information about contraception and limited resources for education. It is also linked to a high risk for women, who become targets for criminal activity and violence.

This year, Plan International offered vocational training to 265 young people in La Libertad, teaching them marketable skills like cooking. These sessions incorporated valuable lessons in self-esteem, finance and sexual health.

30 young people have completed a workshop on entrepreneurial methodology. 295 people completed courses on healthy masculinity and gender equity.



“I have learned how to make a business plan and how to calculate costs through training processes. They also help us with seed capital to make our project grow. Now my business is sustainable.”

**- Silvia, 32, from La Libertad**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



22%

Of pregnancies in La Libertad occur in girls between 10-19 years old



38%

Of young people in El Salvador are enrolled in secondary school



23%

Of teenagers have access to health care



**Your support helps girls and boys to stand up for their futures.**

-Girls in La Libertad are vulnerable to gender-based violence. We will collaborate with community leaders to create formal Community Child Protection Mechanisms.

-39% of enrolled secondary students – already just a fraction of young people in La Libertad – are girls. We will continue to provide scholarship funding for youths.

-More than one in five teen girls in La Libertad will be pregnant by age 19. We will continue to work with community members of all ages to improve sexual health education.

-A lack of access to quality health care in young people threatens the lives of teen mothers. We will work with local health centres to improve resources for vulnerable people.

**We know the best is yet to come, and together we will continue to work for a brighter, happier future for the children in La Libertad.**



“Thank you, on behalf of all the benefitted families, for helping us to make a difference in the 98 communities where we work, especially in the lives of young people. Your support motivates us to continue working.”

**Mary Gonzalez**  
Programme Area Manager, La Libertad

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