

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

This past year, the local community strengthened its ability to respond to climate crises with disaster preparedness, early warning mechanisms and child protection measures.

More young people were equipped to enter the job market, thanks to skills training and access to internships and job opportunities. More than 80 Business Units were created recently, empowering 240 young people to generate income.

In addition, adults and youth learned about sexual and reproductive health and rights, helping to open communication between parents and adolescents.



# 149

Young people entered the labour market



# 1200

Girls accessed comprehensive sexual education



# 273

People equipped to respond to climate emergencies



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN GUATEMALA

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

"The pandemic has been difficult. I have been unable to study properly. My parents motivated me to participate in Plan training workshops, where we were told about the importance of education. My dream is to continue studying and become a community leader. Thank you, Plan and sponsors, for the support to materialise my dreams."

# CASE STORY: EDUCATION FOR A BETTER FUTURE



**NAME: MABELIN**

**AGE: 14 YEARS OLD**

**HOBBY: BASKETBALL**

"I believe in my dreams and goals. I understand the situation of many girls, due to their lack of education and sadly because parents accept it. Now, in my community, girls study to change their lives and have clear goals for their futures. Thanks to Plan for the work in my community."

## Meet Mabelin

**Like your sponsored child, Mabelin has been empowered by Plan International to change her life.** Mabelin is in secondary school, where she understands how vital an education is—and to help other girls and young women in her community do the same. With tools from Plan, Mabelin challenged stereotypes that limit access to education. She is now a leader in her community, helping others attain a better future.

## Challenging Gender Expectations

Most girls in Mabelin's community are not encouraged to stay in school. Many parents do not believe education is a priority for girls. When they drop out of school, girls often become part of an informal couple and get pregnant at an early age. For Mabelin, this was normal—no one talked to girls about this, not even parents or teachers.

Yet Mabelin now has the knowledge to challenge these limiting expectations. Along with other girls, she learned about self-esteem and gender equality, and about her right to an education. With Plan's support of a school scholarship, Mabelin is more secure in her future.

## Embracing Leadership

The Champions of Change programme helped empower Mabelin and other girls with leadership skills and opportunities.

Today, Mabelin embraces her leadership position as she speaks with youth and adults in her community. As a spokesperson, she participates in meetings with community leaders at the municipal level, where she speaks about the importance of secondary education for girls.

As a result, teachers and parents in Mabelin's community see the importance of girls' education, and help to advocate for equality.



*Mabelin participating in a workshop*

**WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 9,000 CHILDREN IN CARCHA**



# OUR PROJECTS IN CARCHA ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



After completing their internships, many young people continued working in the same companies.

## SKILLS TO SUCCEED



**It is difficult for young people, especially women, to find quality employment in Carchá.** Many young people work in the informal market, and most work as unskilled labourers.

In cooperation with the private sector, we helped establish a work project that helps youth access employment opportunities. Young people who have not been able to find a formal job, mainly due to lack of work experience, had the chance to access job training and internships. The programme lasts 2-3 months, giving participants time to learn, grow and develop.

By participating in the project, 55 young people learned marketable skills. The training was online, enabling youth to strengthen their technological abilities as well as essential qualities such as proactivity, honesty and customer service. Seven youth joined companies as interns. In addition, 19 young people had the opportunity to stay in a company to work formally.

## IMPROVING SEXUAL HEALTH



Many young people in Carchá lack information and knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights. The area ranks high in cases of adolescent pregnancy and many health-related topics are taboo.

Comprehensive sexual education for adolescents, as well as parents and teachers, is key. This year, in a project supporting the Ministry of Education, more than 700 youth learned about sexual and reproductive health and rights, responsible fatherhood, sexually transmitted infections, contraception and menstrual care.

Similar topics were addressed with 244 parents. While they were hesitant at first, their interest grew as the sessions progressed. Now, families talk more openly, helping youth get accurate information to make informed decisions.



“At first, we felt kind of nervous because they don’t usually talk to us about those things. I learnt about my rights and equality. I know that I have the right to decide if I marry or not, if I want to have children or not.”

**-Lesbia, 15, from Carcha**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



42%

Of women are illiterate



29%

Of the population has access to safe water



13%

Of students attend upper secondary school



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

- We will provide menstrual care kits to youth-friendly spaces and training for health care staff.
- Midwives can strengthen skills through a diploma course about early childhood. This will empower them to provide quality health care services in the region.
- Recently, two bills put the rights of diverse people and children's lives at risk. We will continue working in cooperation with children's organisations to prevent the approval of regressive laws.
- We will establish a flexible education programme so young people can complete their formal education.

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



"I thank you for all the support you have provided during the most difficult stage of the pandemic. You have never abandoned us, and this has allowed us to provide, more than ever, support to the poorest and most vulnerable families in Carchá."

**Antonio José Gutierrez León**  
Programme Area Manager, Carchá

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