

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

This past year, hundreds of young people improved their knowledge about their sexual and reproductive health. Girls and boys are now empowered to make informed decisions about their bodies. And training on gender equality is helping youth form positive relationships free from violence and abuse.

In rural communities, 15 classrooms were equipped with new teaching materials, books, and toys. Now 612 children can learn and play in safe and inspiring environments.

Your sponsorship will ensure even more success for children in Paraguarí-Guairá.



195

Girls completed leadership training



407

Young people trained on mental health and self-care



700

Children raised awareness on gender equality



## COVID-19'S IMPACT IN PARAGUAY

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

“There was a lot of stress because of the lockdown. We found it difficult to adapt to the virtual world, especially in education. The situation for many children and adolescents was very difficult. It was exciting for us to meet again and to join activities which gave us a chance to renew advocacy spaces and raise our voices.”

# CASE STORY: BECOMING A LEADER



**NAME: MILAGROS**  
**AGE: 18 YEARS OLD**  
**HOBBY: LEARNING**

“I am a girl with a strong desire for self-improvement. I had the opportunity to participate in Plan International's Leadership School. I learned many things, such as the importance of dialogue, fellowship, and self-esteem. I will show other girls that everything is possible.”

## Meet Milagros

Like your sponsored child, Milagros has been empowered by Plan International to change her life. Milagros is in her second year of high school and is now a leader at her school and in her community. With the right support, Milagros's disability is no longer a barrier to reaching her full potential.

## Overcoming Roadblocks

Milagros uses a wheelchair to get around her community, and she has to deal with regular epilepsy attacks. Her father passed away many years ago, leaving her mother to earn an income and support Milagros.

Children with physical disabilities often experience discrimination and abuse from their families, teachers, and peers. Although her mother always encouraged her, Milagros felt excluded at school, and she struggled with depression.

But two years ago, she joined Plan International's Leadership School where she met other youth, shared her experiences, and built relationships. The young leaders learned how to be more inclusive and supportive of those with different abilities.

## Striving for Inclusion

Milagros is now a role model for her peers. With her newfound confidence, she is speaking up for equality and inclusion in her community.

She also switched schools, where she now feels more supported by her teachers and classmates. Milagros is looking forward to completing her education and she has big dreams for her future.

With the skills she has gained, Milagros is now forging a path for all children to be given the same opportunities to succeed.



Milagros taking part at the Leadership School

**WE CURRENTLY WORK WITH 8,318 CHILDREN IN PARAGUARÍ-GUAIRÁ**

# OUR PROJECTS IN PARAGUARÍ-GUAIRÁ ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



## EMPOWERING YOUTH

**Rates of early pregnancy remain high in Paraguarí-Guairá.** Girls can suffer serious health complications, including death, from early pregnancy. Many girls also experience sexual abuse and domestic violence from their partners.

549 young people took part in training sessions on their sexual health. Topics included gender equality, how to form positive relationships, and how contraceptive use can prevent unwanted pregnancies. Seven new youth-friendly clinics are helping more than 3,500 young people access safe and supportive reproductive health care.

At schools, 183 teachers gained strategies for teaching sexuality education to youth. Through workshops at schools, students are also learning about their mental health, how to make goals for their futures, and the importance of violence-free dating.

Youth are learning about their bodies, improving their mental health, and forming relationships free from violence.

## POSITIVE PARENTING



**More than half of children have experienced physical or emotional violence.** Children's rights are not well understood by parents, and cultural traditions have normalised these practices during discipline.

Through training sessions, 515 parents gained new positive parenting skills. They learned about the importance of playtime for childhood development and how to care for their children without the use of violence. By including fathers and highlighting gender equality, girls and boys now have safe and loving homes to grow up in.

Additionally, 603 community leaders also improved their knowledge of child protection. They are now able to identify child abuse and family violence and can promote children's rights in their communities.



“Now I can value the importance of playing with my children. I do not remember playing with my parents, but I would have loved to.”

- América (43) from Paraguarí-Guairá



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



23%

Of people do not have access to safe water



6%

Of youth in Paraguay drop out of high school



51%

Of children in Paraguay experience physical or emotional abuse



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

- Children regularly experience physical or emotional abuse growing up. We will continue to provide parents with training on positive parenting techniques.
- Early pregnancy rates remain high. We will ensure all young people have access to sexual and reproductive health education so they can make informed decisions about their bodies.
- Many young people do not finish their education. We will support schools to provide safe and inspiring learning spaces for all children.
- We will also continue to advocate for girls' rights and provide leadership training so girls can play active roles in their lives and communities.

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



“Our trust in Plan International allowed us to support children and their families during the post-pandemic recovery period, prioritising child protection. We will continue working to make a positive impact on the lives of communities.”

**Noelia Errecarte**

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