

## YOUR ANNUAL UPDATE

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

This past year, hundreds of young people gained technical and vocational skills, enabling them to work and support themselves. Additionally, 108 young women completed business plans so they can start their own businesses and become financially independent.

More than 100 young people also learned about their sexual and reproductive health. This will help them make informed decisions about their bodies, including how to form positive relationships without violence.

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



# 187

Youths completed technical training



# 123

Young people learned about sexual health



# 400

Parents gained knowledge on positive parenting



## 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 8,973 CHILDREN IN CAAGUAZÚ**



# OUR PROJECTS IN CAAGUAZÚ ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



## POSITIVE PARENTING



Community leaders work together to identify, prevent, and respond to cases of violence against children.

**More than half of children in Paraguay 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, 400 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, 700 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.

## GIRLS LEAD



**Negative gender norms in Caaguazú prevent girls from playing an active role in their communities.** Leadership positions are usually held by men, and girls and women are often excluded from community spaces.

Through leadership schools, 116 girls improved their confidence and gained the skills they need to take charge of their lives. Girls learned about their rights and gender equality. They also discussed topics such as feminist leadership and sexual and reproductive health.

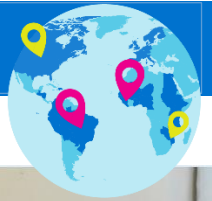
87 teachers also completed training on how to continue girls' leadership schools, and 45 communities have now committed to starting their own leadership training programs, helping to empower even more girls to raise their voices.



"I felt very special to have participated in the leadership school. I managed to overcome some of my fears and learned that any woman can lead. Now I feel extremely happy and confident. Thanks to Plan International for giving me this opportunity."

**- Jazmin (15) from Caaguazú**

# YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



## FUTURE CHALLENGES TO ADDRESS



**51%**

Of children in Paraguay experience physical or emotional abuse



**11%**

Of people in Caaguazú do not have access to safe water



**6%**

Of young people in Paraguay drop out of high school



**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.
- Many young people do not finish their education. We will support schools to provide safe and inspiring learning spaces for all children.
- 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.
- 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 Caaguazú.**



"Thank you for supporting the development of people's skills in the community. Your support contributes to increased knowledge, especially that of girls. Together we are changing people's lives and we are looking forward to continuing to count on you."

**Victor Edgar Garay**  
Programme Area Manager, Caaguazú

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