

ANNUAL UPDATE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

SAN JUAN



Together with your sponsorship, children and families are making positive changes in San Juan. Learn more about the valuable ways we work with children and communities.

In the fertile San Juan valley, farming continues to play a huge role in the lives of families. With a large population of young people, youth are searching for what their future will hold.

Over the last year, hundreds of young women and men gained the knowledge they need to take charge of their bodies through sexual and reproductive health education. With the support of their parents, youth are now able to make informed decisions and reach for a brighter future.



864

Young people learnt more about sexual health



1,085

Parents gained positive parenting skills



120

Youth created community development plans

“I LIKE PLAN BECAUSE THEY TALK ABOUT RIGHTS. WE LEARNT HOW FAMILIES CAN RAISE THEIR CHILDREN WITHOUT ABUSE.”

Abigal, 10-year-old Sponsored Child





NAME: NAZARETH

AGE: 17

**DREAMS TO BE: A
COMMUNITY LEADER**

“BELONGING TO A YOUTH GROUP IS THE BEST THING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO ME. LEARNING ABOUT MY RIGHTS AND HAVING MY VOICE BE HEARD IS WONDERFUL.”

Meet Nazareth

Like the child you sponsor, Nazareth is taking steps toward achieving her goals. Naza, as her friends and family call her, lives with her mother and two little brothers. Nazareth helps her mother around the house, but she dreams of becoming a leader in her community.

Overcoming Gender Inequality

In the Dominican Republic, girls are expected to help out at home and often experience early marriage. Street harassment is also prevalent, which often prevented Nazareth and her friends from taking part in community activities. Nazareth loved to play volleyball, but most sports teams were only for boys.

At school, Nazareth joined a youth group where she learnt about gender equality and sexual and reproductive rights. Along with 300 other young people, Nazareth has gained new skills in advocacy and leadership.

Nazareth and her friends have now created a community development agenda that seeks to solve the challenges faced by young people.

Becoming a Leader – On and Off the Court!

To go along with Nazareth’s community advocacy, she has also coordinated a new girls’ volleyball team in her neighbourhood. She encourages other girls to join the team and to feel empowered to take charge of their lives.

Nazareth’s family and teachers beam with pride when sharing how she has grown into a confident young woman who strives for change in her community. Nazareth knows that there are many challenges to overcome, but she firmly believes that small actions will lead to giant steps in ending all inequalities.



Nazareth gaining leadership skills

OUR PROJECTS IN SAN JUAN ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



Young women and men are able to make confident decisions about their bodies and their sexuality thanks to newfound knowledge on reproductive health

MY BODY, MY FUTURE



More than one in four girls in San Juan become pregnant before the age of 18. Access to sexual and reproductive health is limited, both at schools and at home.

To help girls make informed decisions about their bodies and their futures, 150 adolescents at risk of early marriage or pregnancy took part in training sessions on reproductive health and safe sexual practices.

A further 1,920 students also gained knowledge on their bodies and their rights, helping them understand how early marriage and early pregnancies can prevent them from reaching their full potential.

Youth also took part in sessions on building self-esteem and financial literacy, giving them the tools to confidently take charge of their lives.

SUPPORTING PARENTS AND YOUTH



For many families in San Juan, early marriages and pregnancies are common experiences. A lack of sexual health knowledge throughout generations means that youth have few role models to turn to for support on their changing bodies.

In three regions of San Juan, awareness raising sessions reached over 860 young people on how to take care of their sexual health and avoid early pregnancies.

These sessions also targeted parents to equip them with the same knowledge, which they can share with their children as they grow older. More than 1,000 mothers and fathers are now committed to helping their children reach their full potential by making informed choices about their bodies.

“This project helped me learn many things that I did not know before, and I can talk about these issues with my friends. I learnt that it is not good to get pregnant at an early age because it causes us many problems.”

- Estefany (12) from San Juan



YOUR SUPPORT MEANS BETTER FUTURES



The best is yet to come – and together we will continue to work for a brighter future for the children in San Juan.

- Around 30% of girls become pregnant before the age of 18 in San Juan. We will continue to promote girls' rights and spread awareness on the harms of early marriage so girls can reach their full potential.
- More than half of girls and boys experience physical violence growing up. We will advocate for children's rights and provide training to parents on positive child-rearing practices.
- The Dominican Republic is one of the top countries impacted by climate catastrophes. We will support communities to develop disaster risk management plans and build resilience for the future.

Thank you for your continued support.



"Thanks to your donations, Plan can support children and youth so that they enjoy their right to a long, safe, and protected life."

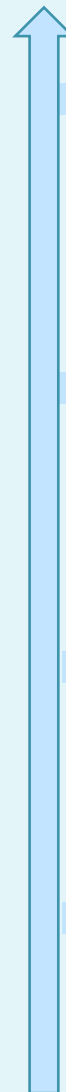
Xiomara Garcia
Programme Area Manager, San Juan

THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment is turned into effective long-term change – providing help for self-help. We involve children at the centre of all projects, bringing effective and sustainable solutions to families and communities. With Plan's Effect, your commitment helps empower communities to transform their lives and futures.

THE LAST 12 MONTHS



JANUARY

1,700

Young children attended early childhood learning centres



MARCH

1,920

Students improved their knowledge on sexual and



APRIL

300

Youth were trained on girls' rights and gender equality



MAY

50

Young people learnt entrepreneurial skills

