

ANNUAL UPDATE

GUATEMALA

BAJA VERAPAZ



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

60% of residents of Baja Verapaz are indigenous and based in rural communities. Festivities here are celebrated with dancing and local food, like tamales. The majority work in agriculture. Many people in Guatemala have migrated due to increasing natural disasters and poverty. This year our youth groups trained 567 of their peers about protection and safety, and we worked with youth, and especially young women, on economic empowerment through our entrepreneurship and vocational programme.



457

girls and young women returned to school



459

young men trained in positive masculinities



60

at-risk families received monetary transfers

“THROUGH PLAN’S CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE PROJECT, I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS.”

Anahi, 12 years old, Sponsored Child





NAME: MARÍA

AGE: 18

**DREAMS TO BE: MATHS
TEACHER**

“BEFORE, I THOUGHT I ONLY HAD TWO OPTIONS: MARRY VERY YOUNG, OR MIGRATE. TODAY, I AM STUDYING AND HAVE MY OWN BUSINESS.”

Meet María

Like the child you sponsor, María is determined to build a bright future for herself.

María is a clever, ambitious student from rural Guatemala. The oldest of nine siblings, no obstacles have been strong enough to get in the way of María's determination.

Knowledge Is Power

In María's community, many young women either are married off at a young age or move to the United States in the hopes of better work. Making matters still more complicated, María's immediate community is home to only a primary school, and the closest secondary school is far away.

Still, María has always been determined to stay in school and support her family. As a Sponsored Child of Plan International, María enrolled in Plan's "Connections for Success" programme, where she learned about empowerment, entrepreneurship and business management. At the end of the workshop, María won seed funding to start her own small business, a grocery store.

Nothing Can Stop Me

From the outside, María is a force to be reckoned with. A strong maths student and an aspiring maths teacher, modest María attributes her success to Plan's Leadership School, where she learned about her rights and the importance of determination. Today, María is a vocal advocate of girl's rights and the importance of education. "My advice to girls and adolescents is: keep studying and learn about your rights and self-esteem," María tells us.



María is a confident student and leader.

OUR PROJECTS IN BAJA VERAPAZ ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



“Before becoming a Community Youth Promoter, I was very lonely,” 14 year old Sponsored Child Franklin tells us. “Today, I belong to the group.”

WE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD



Rates of gender-based violence and poverty are high in Guatemala. Every child and young person has the right to live a life free from any form of violence.

Since July 2022, Plan International’s Champions of Change project has focused on building the agency of young girls and women in Baja Verapaz to become the next generation of leaders. This year, 886 teen girls and young women learned about consent, self-defense, reproductive health and the rights of women and girls. As part of our effort to break the cycle of gender-based violence, we coached 459 teen boys and young men in positive masculinities, respect, communication and equality. Another 595 parents took part in our sexual education courses, creating safe, non-judgmental spaces to discuss the prevention of early pregnancy.

SAFER TOGETHER



Poverty and climate change are causing more people to leave Guatemala, and young people are at risk of being trafficked along the way.

This year, we worked with 20 existing community protection networks in Baja Verapaz. Together with community members we discussed the prevention and protection of child victims of human trafficking. 567 youth were taught by their peers about safety, trafficking, violence and they created a strategic plan to implement in local boys’ and girls’ clubs for protection. 50 victims of human trafficking are now receiving treatment and psychological support, and 60 at-risk families were supported by emergency cash transfers to prevent potentially dangerous migration.

“As a Community Youth Promoter, I can teach my community what I have learned. Before, I was shy, and now, I am able to train boys and girls.”

- Jenifer (15) from Baja Verapaz



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 Baja Verapaz.

- 80% of cases of violence occur at home. With your support, we will continue to collaboratively organise Community Protection Networks for a safer, stronger Baja Verapaz.
- Just 41% of young people in Baja Verapaz continue from primary school to secondary school. Plan International's Flexible Education project will make it easier for girls to return to school and proceed to higher education.
- 71% of people in Guatemala earn money through informal means. We will aim to offer entrepreneurship and vocational training to 900 young people in Baja Verapaz.

Thank you for your continued support.



“Thank you very much for your generous contribution, which has allowed us to transform the lives of children in this region. We will continue to work hard for children’s rights.”

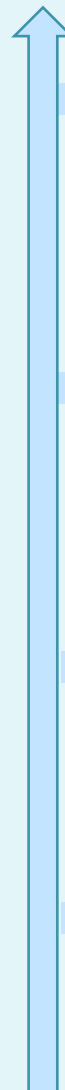
Nicolas Veliz
Programme Area Manager

THE PLAN EFFECT



Your sponsorship commitment becomes 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



FEBRUARY



600

parents develop community child protection networks

MARCH



958

teens learned about sexual health and rights

APRIL



743

students receive scholarships

NOVEMBER



885

young people learn vocational skills