

ANNUAL UPDATE

GUATEMALA

POLOCHIC



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

Polochic is a small region, home to just 40,516 people. Vulnerable to the effects of climate change, the people of Polochic are threatened by landslides, forest fires and flooding. Thanks to your support, we have been able to provide 822 scholarships to students in need. Young people completed comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights training, part of our effort to reduce high rates of teen pregnancy and gender-based violence in this area.



38

midwives received improved equipment



19,000

textbooks donated nation-wide



3,220

girls and young women nation-wide have learned leadership skills

“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 POLOCHIC ARE HELPING CHILDREN THRIVE



This year, our projects in Polochic focused on nurturing the leadership skills of young people, particularly girls and young women.

BUDDING BOOKWORMS



Less than 55% of women in Polochic are literate.

In collaboration with teachers at the primary and secondary school levels, we worked to make reading and maths more accessible to young people in Polochic through our Lecto and Mate teaching programmes. In total, students at 14 schools across the region used a combination of worksheets and technology (tablets) to keep pace with their grade level and have fun at the same time.

We spoke with local parents to emphasise the value of keeping girls in school, underlining topics of gender equality, self-esteem and economic empowerment.

STRONGER TOGETHER



In 2022, 29 cases of acute malnutrition in children under 5 were reported in Polochic.

The last year, we have worked with local parents and health care workers to improve the well-being of children in Polochic, particularly those who are under 5 years old. Caregivers learned about the importance of breastfeeding and practised cooking nutritious meals, avoiding non-nutritious foods. 38 midwives learned about the role of breastfeeding in early childhood development, and received new tools to provide sanitary, hygienic care. 45 mothers took on additional leadership roles in their community, bolstering their knowledge about livestock, including vaccination, diseases and home hygiene. Today, these mothers raise broiler chickens for their families.

“Plan taught us recipes and how to monitor our children’s weight and height. They always supported us, and we were so excited to receive the chickens.”

- Mirna (29) from Polochic



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 Polochic.

- The last years, more than 800 teen pregnancies have been registered in Polochic. With your support, we will provide sexual health education to teens and young adults.
- 50% of children in Polochic suffer from chronic malnutrition. We will provide training in nutrition, health and breastfeeding to local mothers.
- 25% of students who drop out of school do so because of their family's financial situation. We will continue to make education flexible and more accessible to all young people in the area.

Thank you for your continued support.



“We are very grateful for the support you provide to your Sponsored Child and their family. With your help, children are becoming leaders, and families’ lives have been transformed.”

Rogel Rolando Leal
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



123

young people participate in entrepreneurship workshops

MARCH



622

students receive scholarships

NOVEMBER



65

mothers learn about nutrition

DECEMBER



337

teens complete health education course