

## Santa Cruz

### Bolivia

**Positive changes are happening in Santa Cruz. Learn more about how we're supporting children and girls' rights through our collaborative, equality-driven work.**

Even as natural disasters have created havoc in Bolivia: heavy rainfall flooding the Pirai River and drought in Cabezas, the Santa Cruz community is working to strengthen resources for young people and families.

To mitigate the effects of climate disasters, water and sanitation infrastructures are improving. Trainings and mock drills help pupils respond effectively to such crises. Parents and community members are sensitised about positive parenting. Training sessions are providing sexual and reproductive health and rights information to young people, enabling them to make healthy and informed choices about their bodies. In addition, young girls are leading businesses to boost the local economy, and in turn gaining confidence and self-esteem to draw out their life plans.

**"When I was younger I suffered from bullying at school. With Plan's training, I have learnt the value of speaking up. Now, I want to support my peers." - Darleyn, 17**



Access to opportunities is vital for children in Santa Cruz.

### Impact in Numbers

**3,839**

**young people trained in gender sensitivity**

**860**

**adolescents empowered through sex education**

**81**

**health personnel trained in reproductive rights**

# Maria Belen, a Story of New Horizons



**NAME:**

**Belen**

**AGE:**

**15**

**DREAMS TO BE:**

**An entrepreneur**

“Being part of the youth network helped me understand gender equality, the capacity of women entrepreneurship to generate resources.”



## Meet Belen.

**Like many young girls in Bolivia, Belen faced challenge in her pursuit of education.**

Belen lives in Quivinchá - Betanzos with her mother, stepfather, grandparents and three younger brothers. After completing primary school, children in Belen's community must migrate to nearby cities to access secondary education. However, this pursuit is expensive, and inaccessible for many. Moreover, due to lack of local employment opportunities, many children begin working as early as age 13, taking on jobs in mining, masonry, or agriculture. Some others remain home to assist with family farming and livestock rearing.

## The Impact of Entrepreneurial Resources

Under these precarious circumstances, Plan's project that supports feminist leadership in the Bolivian highlands aim to empower Belen and her peers by providing access to the local market, income and resources. The initiative organised honey production skill training in their community, coupled with workshops on leadership skills, sales strategies, and digital marketing. These resources enabled young girls like Belen to participate in city fairs, market their products, and pave the way for their futures as budding entrepreneurs.

## The Power of Education

The local authorities took note of this success story, and collaborated with Plan to develop curriculum centered around entrepreneurial ventures as formal modules for secondary education. This has enabled many children like Belen to access secondary education without leaving their communities and families. With new aspirations for the future, Belen proudly states, women can take the same jobs as men.



Belen and her peers sell honey at a local fair.

**We Work With 5,962 Sponsored Children in Santa Cruz**



# Projects That Support Lasting Change

## Young Entrepreneurs

**Financial freedom is linked with empowerment, especially for young women in Santa Cruz, who are often confined to caregiving roles.** Our project provides opportunities for economic and social development to women, especially those from vulnerable communities, strengthening their technical, business, and life skills.

Trainings are directly connected with market needs, covering fields like sales, gastronomy, inventory management, and customer service. Small businesses are also supported with seed capital, with a gender-sensitive focus, to encourage entrepreneurial ventures.

For holistic and sustained development, Plan International empowers young participants through leadership workshops. With higher self-esteem and self-care in young women, and developing positive masculinities in young men, they make more informed decisions regarding their life plans, preventing unwanted pregnancies, and living a life free of violence.



Community leaders receive seed capital as award for winning business ideas.

# 323

**young people acquired technical skills to increase their employability**



Promoter training an Educational Unit student in safeguarding in emergencies.



Yus Leidy in front of her house.

## Girls Respond to Disasters

**School is a safe space for many children in vulnerable regions and we want to keep it that way. During hazards and disasters, young girls and children with disabilities are more likely to be physically abused or neglected.**

To improve coordination capacities and ensure safety of young girls during events of disaster, we work with school and local authorities to create plans for a gender-sensitive, effective and quick response.

With a focus on protection, education, and health service, mock drills are conducted for school authorities and students. We also support schools in improving their water and sanitation infrastructure, create school brigades consisting of trained teachers, strengthening young girl's agencies through training spaces, and enabling their participation in school committees.

**"During our mock drill, after we left the building, I learnt how important it is to leave the classroom in a orderly way and make sure we stay safe." -Yus Leidy**

# You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Leading teenager participating in a workshop on SRHR.

## Together, we're working to create a more just world.

Protecting children from violence remains our utmost priority. We will collaborate with governmental institutions to enhance their role in safeguarding youth rights and ensure AIDA centres function effectively across all units for structural prevention actions.

We will engage with government and local partners to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks protecting children, and a comprehensive development in early childhood.

We will enhance marketable skills and entrepreneurial capabilities of young women. Actions will focus on building capacities for meaningful employment among adolescents and young adults.

## Message from Plan Staff

"Our teams have launched projects that provide healthcare, education and protection services personnel for children to assist with their various concerns. We invite you to continue accompanying the work we have been developing for Bolivian children and adolescents."



Franco Duran,  
Programme Unit  
Manager Santa  
Cruz

## The Plan Effect

Sponsored children are at the centre of everything we do, and they help plan our programmes based on what's important to them. Sponsors' donations are a gateway into a community. This helps build trust and credibility to attract even more funds from new sources. This makes more sustainable programmes possible in sponsorship communities. This powerful synergy is something we call The Plan Effect.

## Progress in Numbers

2,313

students access  
recreational  
spaces in school

1,537

education  
personnel trained  
for disaster

26,287

students benefit  
from school  
emergency plans

9

health centres  
have better water  
access