

## Cusco

### Peru

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

In Cusco, gender stereotypes and opposition to sexual education limit young people's awareness of their rights, increasing violence risk and restricting their access to education and career opportunities.

In collaboration with the community and government, Plan has advocated for integrated sexual education in schools, focusing on inclusivity and gender equality, especially for young girls and women. So far, 685 teenagers from 26 institutions, 60% of them women, have completed our leadership training programme.

Additionally, our work with training centres has supported women entrepreneurs, contributing to one woman receiving national recognition as "Enterprising Woman 2024" from the Lima Chamber of Commerce.



A mother playing with her daughters.

**"Plan's activities have strengthened my knowledge, enabling me to advise classmates on violence protection and menstruation."**

- Fernanda, 12, Sponsored Child



### Impact in Numbers

**350**

**young leaders tackle sexual rights and violence**

**600**

**young people trained as peer educators**

**15**

**Children Advisory Councils formed**

# Advocating for Gender Equality



**NAME:**

**Lisbeth**

**AGE:**

**14 years old**

**DREAMS TO BE:**

**A lawyer**

**“In 5 years, I see myself finishing my law degree, and in 15 years, I see myself practicing law, helping more women achieve equality and justice.”**



## Meet Lisbeth

**Like many children in Peru, Lisbeth is optimistic about achieving her goals and building a strong future.**

Lisbeth, a 14-year-old aspiring lawyer from Cusco, has been involved with Plan International since she was six. Currently, Lisbeth shines as a peer educator in Plan's Decide without Violence project. Here, she empowers her peers with knowledge and strategies to prevent violence and teenage pregnancy, to make a meaningful impact in her community.

## Challenging Gender Stereotypes

In Lisbeth's community, violence against women and practices like forced or child marriages are often seen as normal. Challenging these norms is difficult, as both society and even the girls themselves may accept them without recognizing the long-term consequences.

Lisbeth believes the key to addressing this issue is changing families' and young girls' perspectives on gender. "I believe we can achieve equality faster by teaching young people that women are not objects and that we have the same opportunities as men," she says.

## Saying No to Violence

Through Plan's Decide without Violence initiative, children and young people learn about their sexual and reproductive rights and how to prevent violence.

As a peer educator, Lisbeth has seen how this project helps families and children reject violence. The leadership training has empowered her to speak out against violence and support other women, making a significant impact in her community.



Lisbeth leading a meeting for her peers.

**We Currently Work With 7,014 Sponsored Children in Cusco**



# Projects That Support Lasting Change

## Supporting Women

**Traditional gender stereotypes, limited educational resources, and violence have made it difficult for young women in rural Cusco to have access to equal economic opportunities.**

In collaboration with the community, Plan aims to break these gender stereotypes for young women, by supporting them as leaders, with an active say in decision-making in their households as well as the community.

Our project contributed to 50% of young women entrepreneurs participating in trade fairs within their communities and beyond, which helped them boost their income and enhanced their business relationships.

Additionally, eight local governments provided technical assistance in business management to 54 young women.



A female-led enterprise being evaluated in Cusco.

# 54

**young women started their own agricultural businesses**



Peer educators participating in team activities in Cusco.



Yurisa trained to be a peer educator in Cusco.

## Supporting Sexual Health

**In Peru, opposition to sexual education by conservative groups leaves young people, especially girls, vulnerable to higher risks of teenage pregnancies and gender-based violence.**

Our training programmes on gender, violence, and sexual health engaged young men in rethinking traditional roles and developing action plans, which deepened their empathy for teenage girls facing violence. Notably, 60% of our young leaders were women who advocated for greater adolescent representation in schools and local government.

Additionally, 73% of teen leaders from 26 schools took action to address key issues affecting their age group and reached more than 3,000 people in the educational community.

**“I learned about sexual and reproductive health and the effects of substance abuse. We share this knowledge with our families, leading to gradual community change.”**  
- Yurisa, 14, from Cusco

# You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Girl smiling in a local costume.

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

Limited awareness and child protection make children more vulnerable to violence. Next year, Plan plans to strengthen the leadership skills and influence of young people in local decision-making.

In Cusco, 71% of reported cases of sexual violence involve children under the age of 16. Next year, young people will strengthen their knowledge on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, including topics like positive masculinity.

Nine out of every 100 pregnant women are teenagers. Next year, Plan will advocate for enhanced sexual and reproductive education for young people in schools and health facilities.

## Message from Plan Staff

"Boys, girls, teenagers, and young people don't just participate in our programmes – they actively exercise their rights and advocate for their peers, thanks to your support. We are committed to continuing our work and making a positive impact on the lives of children in Cusco."



Boris  
Choqueneira  
Villa, Programme  
Unit Manager,  
Cusco

## 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

60

teenagers elected  
as local and  
political leaders

6

municipalities  
funded youth  
ventures

90

teenagers trained  
in sexual health  
and rights

369

mothers trained  
in handwashing  
techniques