

## Guayas Los Ríos

### Ecuador

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

This past year, key projects fostered skills and strengthened resources so young people and families can plan for a brighter future.

For example, girls and young women are taking on leadership positions and challenging discriminatory practices. Natahlya, a 16-year-old member of the Because I Am A Girl movement, says: "My activism motivates me to generate a change that benefits us women, the knowledge that I can raise my voice for those girls and women who cannot do so."

Parents – especially fathers – promoted gender equality through the Early Childhood Project. Here, families work together to learn about and share positive parenting techniques, nutritional information and advice on raising healthy, happy children.



Girls are challenging gender norms and the digital divide.

**"Teen pregnancy-free zone workshops made me aware of what can happen if we are not informed."**  
—Aurora (11)



### Impact in Numbers

**100**

**Families learned about nutrition and positive parenting**

**271**

**Volunteers received Menstrual Hygiene Kits**

**142**

**Students earned school scholarships**

# A scholarship transforms Damaris' life



**NAME:**

**Damaris**

**AGE:**

**12 years old**

**DREAMS TO BE:**

**A doctor**

**“This scholarship not only gives me the opportunity to get an education, but it also relieves my grandparents of their worries.”**



## **Meet Damaris**

**Like many children in Guayas Los Ríos, Damaris is optimistic about achieving her goals and building a strong future.**

Damaris lives in an indigenous rural community in Cotopaxi, Ecuador, with her grandparents. She is an outstanding student who is passionate about natural sciences and wants to become a doctor.

## **The Impact of Economic Resources**

Damaris dreams of a future helping the sick in her community – but without an education, she has little chance. Her main obstacle is an economic one, as her family has few financial resources.

According to official reports, in Ecuador, lack of access to education is a persistent problem. This is especially true in rural areas like the one where Damaris lives. This situation negatively impacts children's development and places unfair limits on their hopes and dreams.

Damaris' education was at risk without the financial means to cover her school expenses, threatening her goals for the future.

## **The Power of Education**

Damaris excels in her studies – and with her hard work and dedication, she earned a comprehensive school scholarship from Plan. This scholarship covers school expenses, including supplies, uniforms, and shoes. As she gets older, her education will help her access even more opportunities for her future.

Damaris' dedication stands out in the community. With her grandparents in mind, she says she is grateful for the help “to build a better future for me and my family.”



Damaris is a dedicated student with big dreams for her future.

**We Work With 9,163 Sponsored Children in Guayas Los Ríos**



# Projects That Support Lasting Change

## Effective Parenting

**More men are participating in active fatherhood.**

Traditionally, raising children in Guayas Los Ríos has been the responsibility of women. The Early Childhood Project aims to help families strengthen parenting skills, and increase fathers' participation in caring for their children.

This year, 294 parents developed positive and active parenting skills, gaining valuable tools for raising their children with a focus on equality and health. Families improved their knowledge of food and nutrition in key stages such as pregnancy and early childhood.

In addition, men redefined masculinity to fit a more inclusive family. Danny, a father who participated in the project, reports: "Now we are putting into practice the knowledge acquired to be better dads, getting us more involved in the positive upbringing and active fatherhood of our sons and daughters."



The project promotes gender equality in caring for and raising children.

# 400

**Parents participated in food fairs to learn healthy recipes**



Community leaders podcasting about gender equality.



Through mentoring programmes, 15 young women learned leadership skills.

## Raising Our Voices

**59% of women in Guayas Los Ríos believe their political participation is important.**

Girls and women mostly participate in informal political spaces in Guayas Los Ríos. Activate Equality provides a space for girls and women to lead more official initiatives on gender-based violence and rights.

This year, over 100 people promoted the Because I Am A Girl Movement, advocating for actions on gender equality. Through the leadership of girls and women, the inequalities normalised by society are challenged. Girls learn, lead, decide, and thrive – becoming agents of change in their communities.

These changes also encourage men to realise their responsibility to confront discriminatory and violent behaviours, and to exercise positive masculinities.

**"Being mayor for a day was an incredible experience. I felt great pride in being able to say as a girl I can achieve what I set out to do."**

—Jurlendy (17)

# You're Supporting a More Equal Future



Young people develop resilience in the face of climate change.

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

Many young people lack access to technical or university education. This year, we will help young people gain marketable work skills. We will continue promoting mentoring spaces as well.

Rising temperatures are affecting Guayas Los Ríos. We will support youth and adults with information and resources to address climate change.

Gender gaps persist, affecting women's empowerment. Through equality programmes like Perzonitas, men learn to challenge discriminatory practices and act as allies, with a focus on positive parenting and active fatherhood.

## Message from Plan Staff

"We thank our sponsors for their support, which has allowed impressive results in the lives of boys and girls. Your contribution makes a difference in promoting sexual and reproductive rights, as well as creating safe and violence-free environments in communities."



Héctor Hurtado  
Sánchez,  
Programme Area  
Manager, Guayas  
Los Ríos

## 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

**639**

**People joined the  
Because I Am A  
Girl movement**

**462**

**Youth joined the  
Pregnancy-Free  
Zone Project**

**25**

**Girls learned  
programming  
skills**

**330**

**Flood-affected  
families received  
emergency funds**