



GREENCARRIER



**PROJECT REPORT GUATEMALA
SEPTEMBER 2021**

EDUCATION FOR ALL

Access to education is a basic human right for all children. It is one of the most effective means for young people to rise out of poverty and take the power of their own lives.

Plan International is one of the world's largest child rights organisations with operations in 78 countries. Quality education to give children and youth a good start in life is the largest focus area. In addition, Plan International has a special focus on girls and young women and that they should have the same opportunities as their brothers and male friends.

According to the UN Convention of the Child, all children and young people have the right to go to school. The UN Global Sustainable Development Goals strive to extinct extreme poverty, reduce inequalities, induce peace, justice and solve the climate crises.



Greencarrier, in partnership with Plan International, contributes to the global goals, with a special focus on Goal 4 "Quality education"

where the first sub-target is to ensure that all girls and boys can complete a free, high quality primary and secondary education (up to grade 12) resulting in relevant and applicable knowledge and skills.

IF ALL THE GIRLS AROUND THE WORLD WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE THEIR SCHOOLING AND COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL:

- The number of child marriages would decrease by 65 per cent.
- Child mortality would be cut by half and 3 million lives would be saved.
- 12 million children would be saved from malnutrition.
- The incomes of women would double.

Sources: *The World Bank, UNESCO*

WHY FOCUS ON GIRLS?

Already before COVID-19, 130 million girls worldwide were deprived of their education. During the last year, the situation has worsened, COVID-19 is the worst pandemic in modern times. Even if much indicates that children are not as affected by the disease, their lives are severely changed as they have lost education, care and protection.

Especially in crises situations, it is common that vulnerable families need to prioritise who should have access to education and often it is the daughters who have to stand back.



Briseida is wearing a facemask to protect herself from COVID-19 in Guatemala

Simultaneously, many studies prove the long-term gains of girls going to school, both to themselves, to their families and society at large. Educated girls have a lower risk of getting married at a young age, they become mothers later in life, and their children are healthier and survive to a larger extent.

Education also contributes to higher future incomes. Research shows that for every additional year a girl spends at school after the first nine, her future income increases by ten per cent. When women earn their own money they tend to invest more money back into their family, contributing to the next generation. In that sense, educated girls contribute to positive societal development.

In this report, we share information about the educational situation for children and youth in Central American Guatemala and

give an insight into the lives of a few young female students who have been part of the project.

PLAN INTERNATIONAL IN GUATEMALA

Plan International has had operations in Guatemala for 41 years. The country is the poorest in Central America, 60 per cent of the population live below the poverty line. Close to half the population is younger than 19 years and 1 out of 2 of these children are chronically malnourished. The most vulnerable group are the third of the citizens that are part of the native population, among which 4 out of 5 live under the poverty line and 2 in 5 are extremely poor.



A vital objective to Plan International in Guatemala is to support youth in their access to quality education so they can complete an inclusive primary and secondary education. Currently, among the indigenous part of the population, only 1 in 8 girls complete primary school.

Many parents in the rural parts of the country, as in the Jalapa region where this project is based, are themselves part of a vulnerable group. They have often only attended school for a few years, if at all. One-third of the indigenous population is illiterate. They often lack knowledge of the children's rights, have poor health and live on very small means.

The norms around girls and young women are typically quite conservative and authoritarian. Many girls and women are seen as domestic or cheap labour. This is induced by the widespread poverty in the region. Often adolescent girls are valued mainly for their reproductive abilities.

EVERY DAY SIX GUATEMALAN GIRLS AGED 10 TO 14 GIVE BIRTH TO A CHILD, MOSTLY THEY ARE VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE.

It takes time to change these values. A long-term work with awareness and knowledge raising activities are key to change the situation for girls and young women in Guatemala.

During the past year, the pandemic put many of the poorest and most vulnerable in Guatemala in an even more difficult financial situation as their normal means of income were affected. As the schools were shut down during the pandemic, the children in these families were having difficulties motivating that they should spend time studying at home when their help was needed to support the family. It is expected that the pandemic will increase the inequalities.

REMOTE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Plan International's project focus on the following aspects:

- Financial support to individual students of vulnerable families so they can continue their schooling.
- Norm change programs with families and local leaders and authorities to break stereotypes and change attitudes linked to schooling for girls and young women.
- As the schools were shut down for part of the year COVID-19 related adjustments were made to ensure that the education could continue.

Plan International Guatemala is supporting the Ministry of Education to create distance learning programmes through radio and

television, as well as developing non-formal education initiatives, which will be implemented in 2021. The new program contains a mix of remote education and in school teaching. The aim is to enable more young people to continue their schooling as less time is needed when some of the long travels to remote secondary schools can be used to support the family and household.

Below is a post from the launch event of the remote learning program on 18 March 2021. The Ministry of education and three mayors of the participating cities in Jalapa took part in the launch event.

Plan Internacional Guatemala
18 mars kl. 18:00 · 🌐

¡Las y los jóvenes deben continuar con sus estudios!
En el UP de Jalapa en asocio con Fundación DECA se realizó el lanzamiento del Programa Educación Flexible con el objetivo de que más mujeres y hombres jóvenes continúen con sus estudios.
Según el anuario estadístico del Ministerio de Educación, en el 2020 la cobertura educativa en el departamento de Jalapa en ciclo básico fue del 37.15%, y del ciclo diversificado 19.06%. Esto hace necesario ofrecer alternativas educativas y flexibles que permitan a jóvenes y adolescente acceder a la educación, y en respuesta se propone este proyecto, promovido por Plan Internacional con fondos de su oficina en Suecia.
En dicha actividad participó nuestro Gerente Antonio Salguero, Gerente de Aprender Verónica Aguirre y Tatiana Carranza especialista de educación, así como autoridades departamentales y del Ministerio de Educación.
👉 Conoce más en: www.planguate.org.gt
#PlanGuatemala
Visa översättning



PAOLA, 18 YEARS OLD

Paola is the daughter of a farming family in the small-town Los Ángeles San Luis Jilotepeque. She has always liked studying and she has dreamed of going to college and then establishing her own business and help support her family.

However, Paola had to drop out of school some time ago to help her family with their

small-scale agriculture business to contribute to the family's income while her younger brother stayed in school.

Before COVID-19, Paola's father worked as an evangelical preacher, travelling around in the region, but now with the pandemic he had to stay home and the economic situation became challenging.

However, with the new flexible learning program, Paola sees the opportunity to return to school and continue her education. The program enables her to save the time to travel to school so Paola can attend her studies. She hopes it will help her towards her dream, to start her own business and become a successful entrepreneur.



MERLIN, 16 YEARS OLD

Merlin lives in the small town Aldea El Aguacate with her parents, her younger brother and older sister, her aunt and cousin. Her father supports the family working as a taxi driver, her sister works in a nearby store and her mother takes care of the household.

Merlin received a scholarship from Plan International to be able to continue her high school studies. Her studies are focused on economic, marketing and communication.

“MY FAMILY DID NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO SUPPORT ME, I WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE MY SCHOOLING WITHOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP FROM PLAN INTERNATIONAL.”

Merlin's dream is to continue her studies to study criminology or become a police officer.

KEY TO A BRIGHTER FUTURE

The value of the support of Greencarrier has been of special importance. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the most vulnerable groups in Guatemala it increased the risk that girls and young women could not finalize their education. Together with Plan International, Greencarrier contributes to empowering adolescent girls so they can set agenda for their own lives and create brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Thank you, Greencarrier, for your support!