



Our Impact 2022



Children Change Colombia

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Overview: Understanding Our Impact



Children Change Colombia works with the most at-risk children in Colombia to keep them safe and defend their rights in the long term.



We want to help children to create a society where their rights are respected and they are included in important decisions that affect their lives now and in the future.

To do this, we work in partnership with Colombian children's organisations that have a proven record in defending children's rights and helping them demand change.

Our 30 years of working with children have convinced us that giving **children the ability to speak up for their own rights** is a powerful way to ensure that **children's rights are protected in a lasting and effective way.**

In order to back-up this conviction with evidence, we have developed a system that enables us to effectively measure and understand the impact of our work each year.

The information presented in this report has been collated by our partners and assessed against a set of overarching indicators – verifiable changes that show we are achieving our key strategic aims of:

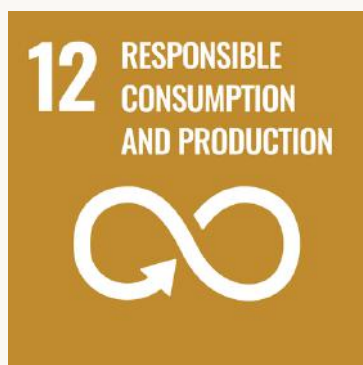
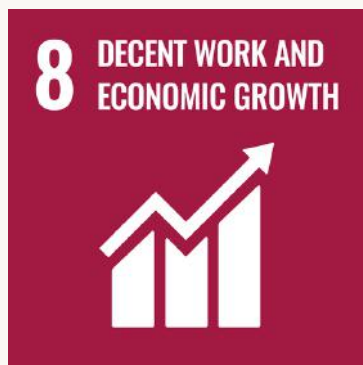
- 1) Protecting children from immediate harm and defending their rights in the long term.**
- 2) Tackling neglected issues that threaten children's rights.**
- 3) Strengthening children's organisations in Colombia.**



The following report pulls together our overall organisational impact in 2022 in these three areas.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Due to the diversity of our projects and partners in Colombia, we are able to work towards many of the **UN's SDGs**, whilst still principally concentrating on our **three key strategic aims**. Below are the UN's SDGs that Children Change Colombia was able to champion in 2022.



Overview: 2022 in Numbers

we helped 2,022
children to change
Colombia in 2022

The People

- Children and young people we worked with: **2,022**
- Further children – siblings, peers and neighbours of the children who participated in our project activities – whose lives we indirectly impacted: **1,369**
- Adults that participated in our project activities or attended forums, performances and campaigns led by children from our projects: **1,108**
- Further adults whose lives were impacted: **2,115**
- **Total people (children and adults) who are better equipped to protect children's rights as a result of our work in 2022:** **6,614**

The Issues

- Recruitment of children into armed groups and reintegration into society
- Sexual and gender based violence
- Exclusion from Education

Overview: 2022 in Numbers

The Partners

In 2022, we worked with 8 inspiring organisations, providing crucial funding for their programmes, as well as the technical support needed for them to become stronger organisations and be able to better defend the rights of at-risk children in the long-term.



Other Impact Numbers

747 Email subscribers

1,486 Instagram followers

3,055 Facebook followers

982 Twitter followers

Protecting Children's Rights

In 2022 we protected the rights* of...

2022

children against discrimination

2022

children having the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities

53

children through family guidance as they develop

233

children from harmful work

748

children against violence

462

children from sexual exploitation

224

children with a safe placement

748

children from exploitation

1.274

children improving their access to education

286

children towards recovery and reintegration

1.274

children having the right to use their own language and culture

*These rights are defined within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Protecting Children's Rights

87%

of the projects we carried out in 2022 included positive leadership activities with children and young people

In 2022, our
8 partners:



participated in 13
reflection and learning
events

The Neglected Issue: Exclusion from Education



Education is every child's right. If children in Colombia are to break free from the poverty cycle, education is crucial. Not only does education give children opportunities to build independent and fulfilling lives, but it is also a joy that should be experienced by every child.

Situation

Even though the Colombian constitution requires children aged five to fifteen to go to school, approximately 1.2 million Colombian children (11% of all school-aged children) currently do not receive any formal education.

Although enrolment rates are often high, it can be difficult for the most at-risk children to remain in school. Indeed only about 88% of those who enrol in primary school stay there until the final primary grade.

In Rural Colombia, Children are far more likely to drop out of school early than students in urban settings. On average, rural children receive 5.5 years of education while children from towns and cities stay in school for 9.2 years. Consequently, illiteracy rates among children over 15 years are almost four times higher in the countryside – 12.5% compared to 3.3%.

Solutions

“O-lab App: Improving access to education for indigenous children in rural areas in La Guajira Colombia” – El Origen Foundation

The project aimed to increase children's access to education within basic and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and maths) subjects using the O-Lab app (an offline learning platform). It also aimed to improve their academic performance, encouraging independent learning, improving their technological literacy, and improving the overall quality of their education. This project ensured that most of the participants came from indigenous communities, pushing them to receive the quality of education they deserved and teaching them life skills.

The O-Lab App: 881 beneficiaries registered in the O-Lab App application of the proposed activities during the execution of the project. The beneficiaries presented advances in the use of the O-Lab App platform, despite the country's mandatory confinement situation, as well as the low availability of connectivity and internet in rural areas. The results were remarkable: the students were participating in the offline classes provided by the app as well as creating their own aligned to their ethnic culture and territory history.

88.1% of students improved their overall academic performance and their 21st-century skills by giving them access to complementary education resources in basic and STEAM subjects through the O-Lab app. 80% of students also developed their soft and socio-emotional skills and achieved their basic learning rights (milestones) established by the Ministry of Education. Finally, 80% of students strengthened their knowledge of and interest in basic and STEAM subjects and were able to create innovative and creative projects tackling the challenges facing their communities.

Manaure municipality – Poromana Community: Within the productive units identified, we can mention a successful case of an entrepreneur of the Poromana community, in the municipality of Manaure. Her name is Karen Vanessa Riveira. With her business idea Provision of Rural Tourism and Ethnotourism services, she has achieved commercial alliances with different travel agencies, tour operators and hotels in the municipalities of Riohacha and Manaure.

The Neglected Issue: Exclusion from Education



“Education and Empowerment for Change and Innovation in Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta”- Mision Gaia Foundation

The project aimed to educate and motivate students and teachers from rural educational institutions in the district of Minca, for the development of personal and professional skills. These skills will allow them to improve their educational and professional performance, feel empowered in their lives, achieve their goals, break the cycle of poverty, and improve their quality of life, through the design and implementation of extracurricular activities of applied training, development of projects and participation in work internships.

During the first period of project development, 160 CYP participated, 83 boys and 77 girls. 143 parents were positively affected by the participation of their children in the project and 18 teachers learned new techniques on education. More than 22 sessions on agro-ecology and sustainable tourism were carried out, as well as 20 sessions on vocational training and English language. CYP felt encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities and created a communications collective, where podcasts, videoblogs and other activities were successfully completed.

Project: Children Acting for Peace and Rights in Acadesan" Acadesan Foundation

This project is based in the Pacific region of Colombia and aims for 300 Afro-Colombian children from Chocó in three local schools to develop socio-emotional skills and improve their capacities to participate in peace-building processes and to involve themselves in the protection of the environment within their territories. This is an ongoing project that started in April of 2021 and began to generate great results.

However, the project was paused in October due to the socio-political issues present in the region, such as shortages, mining stoppage, minefields, difficulties when accessing communities, among other related issues.

Alongside our project partner Acadesan and the strong willingness of the community we were able to continue this project in 2022. During this period, the project was developed in two out of the three educational entities estimated - Potedó and Cucurupí. For the upcoming period, the project will be developed in three different schools. Among all the possible participants in the project, **227 children were direct beneficiaries**. Initially, the project estimated 200 would be the number of direct child beneficiaries from the project. This represents an increase of almost 12% of the overall participation.

Oro Molido Foundation

In 2022 we started a new partnership with Oro Molido Foundation, a non-profit organization that works on providing opportunities for children and young people that live in rural coffee-growing communities in Antioquia, Magdalena and Huila.

Their programs focus on Education, Health, and Infrastructure. Among the initiatives on education are scholarships to outstanding students from rural communities, an school of music, a Peace Marching Band, an educational radio program and students research seedbeds.

The Neglected Issue: Sexual and gender-based violence



Sexual violence violates children's rights, damages their health, welfare and development, and increases their vulnerability to further violence. It is the major 'silent' problem affecting children and young people and it is not being addressed as a national priority. The harmful effects of sexual violence can endure generations. A child born of sexual violence can experience rejection and alienation as a result of the mother's severe psychological trauma.

Situation

The majority of children who experience sexual violence come from the lowest income groups, living in slums on the outskirts of the cities or in isolated rural communities, and the abuse is usually either at the hands of a member of their own family, or the criminal gangs that control their neighbourhood.

It is estimated that around 200,000 children in Colombia are sexually abused each year and that over 35,000 children are involved in commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC).

Solution

"Reducing conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation against children and young people"- ACJ and Circulo De Estudios Foundations

This project supports children affected by, and at risk of, conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the cities of Quibdó, Cartagena and Bogotá by strengthening their capacities to overcome the trauma they suffer as a result of their experiences and to help them understand how to protect themselves from future violence.

This year, the estimated number of children and young people, both direct and indirect, who would benefit from the project within the approach of the initial proposal was 448. **The actual number of CYP that have benefited from it during this period is 1,141.**

This represents an increment of the 39% of CYP who have benefited, including both direct and indirect beneficiaries.

In the case of Cartagena and Quibdó (CDE) 64 CYP were direct beneficiaries of the project: 53 children (17 boys, 36 girls) and 11 young leaders (6 boys and 5 girls). Whilst in Santa Fe (ACJ) we have helped 243 children and 419 adults.

At least 80% of children and young people are now trained in self-care and self-protection practices and tools; they know how to act when facing risks in their communities, 70% of families and caregivers participated and contributed to the reduction of gender-based violence, sexual violence and CSEC and 80% of community members (public officials, teachers, community leaders, and youth leaders) participated in advocacy activities to demand the protection of children's rights.

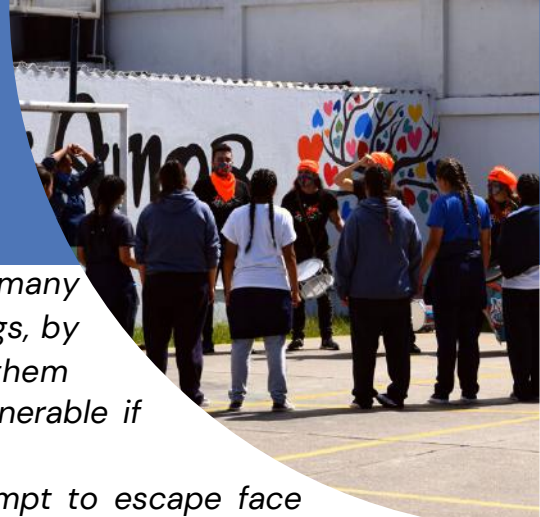
Short Film Festival: In July, a "smartphone short film festival contest" was held. In this festival, young people performed different stagings to promote CYP rights. A Facebook live was launched to award the best, encouraging art piece (film). 60 young people participated, managing to strengthen their technological skills. **19th Street Festival:** earlier this year, one of our supporters: 802OREI visited ACJ's project in Bogotá alongside our MEAL Officer. They experienced this festival full of dance, music and artistic expressions from the children of the foundation.

The Neglected Issue:

Forced recruitment into armed groups or criminal exploitation

Protracted violence and poverty in Colombia have led to many thousands of children being recruited into armed groups and gangs, by force or under the impression that becoming a member will offer them an escape from grinding poverty, of which they are extremely vulnerable if they have nowhere else to go.

Armed groups forcibly brutalise the children and those who attempt to escape face paying with their life. Those who do manage to escape face severe stigmatisation and insufficient support from the State to build a new life.



Situation

Although the largest guerrilla group, the FARC, has demobilised, FARC dissidents, alongside the ELN and the paramilitary successor groups, still operate across Colombia, taking advantage of power vacuums left by the FARC. The narcotics trade and illegal mining continue to fund criminal armed organisations who threaten human rights in many parts of the country.

According to the National Centre for Historical Memory (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica), from 1958 to 2020, more than 17,860 Children and Young People (CYP) were recruited by armed groups. As of December 2021, the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar) has calculated that 121 minors had been recruited by illegal armed groups in the national territory.



60 Children and young people
32 Activities and sessions in three different juvenile centres.

Solution

Youth Reintegration Into Society: A Community-based Approach Towards Mental Health”- TDJ and CRAN Foundations

We launched this project in July 2022. It provides a novel community-based narrative approach to psychosocial care, trauma and reintegration.

Its goal is to help children and young people (CYP) at risk of joining gangs and young people formerly associated with armed groups to gain access to the resources and skills they need to deal with a variety of traumatic situations and stigmas.

The purpose of this project is that CYP enhance positive bonds within the community and change situations of vulnerability and criminality through the use of narratives of resilience, creating protective and healing environments. So far, the results have been amazing! Please take a look at the figures:



87 Children and young people
10 Psychosocial sessions for the two first objectives in Bogotá, Villavicencio and Restrepo.

Cross-cutting Issues



There are three cross-cutting topics we work on alongside our three neglected issues, which could evolve to become higher priorities in the future. They are the following:

Young people and the Environment

The current climate change situation urges all of our projects to be aware of the natural environment and to make choices that benefit the earth, rather than hurt it. Some of the ways to practice environmental awareness include: conserving energy and water, recycling and activism. CCC is already working on environmental issues in its projects with Acadesan in Chocó and Mision Gaia in Magdalena.

Children and Young people on the Move

Colombia hosts around 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees/migrants, & according to the United Nations, the has highest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world (7.7 million). CCC is currently working with IDPs in Quibdó, with Venezuelan families that live in the “Zona de Tolerancia” (Red Light District) in Bogota and with indigenous and Venezuelan children in la Guajira. Additionally, most of the children that participated in the CDE project in Quibdó come from families of internally displaced people.

Pandemic

Covid-19 has affected all projects run by CCC since 2020 and has been a key factor in the design of any further new projects, and will be for the foreseeable future. The basic needs of many at-risk people we work with have not been met (food, rent, toiletries); many have faced new challenges, including health risks, family confinement, school closures, and economic vulnerability. Additionally, the rates of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect have also increased during the crisis. We have been working with our partners Mision Gaia and El Origen to fill the education gap left by the pandemic.



Capacity Building *Activities*

Children Change Colombia has been working with local partners in Colombia for several years, and we have put reporting and administration systems in place during that time which will enable us to track expenditure and impact. Our partners report to us biannually on activities, finance, and achievements, and every quarter regarding outstanding activities. The partners will use different tools to monitor progress against a set of clearly defined processes and activity indicators, relevant to the outcomes specified above, and periodic meetings will be held between project managers and coordinators in order to monitor the progress of the project. CCC has a MEAL Officer based in Colombia who supports the partners in the writing the project proposals, oversees the work, visits the projects on a regular basis and offers technical and financial support, advising on any issues that arise.



CCC has two technical partnerships with UK-based organizations specializing in Childhood Trauma and Safeguarding. Action for Child Trauma International trains and supports local people and NGO staff, giving them the skills to treat children and young people traumatized by conflict, violence, and disaster. With them we implemented a face to face workshop in Bogotá taught by instructors Pilu Rivas and Almudena García, who travelled with the Operations Manager of ACTI, Zara Bracegirdle, from Spain and the UK to Bogotá to deliver the course.

In February, CCC staff and 19 representatives from our partner organisations came together from several regions of Colombia. ACTI provided online training to civil servants from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare (ICBF), with which CCC signed a technical cooperation agreement this year. The ICBF gave a workshop to our partners on sexual and gender violence and the report pathways in Colombia.

CCC established new partnerships with **InmerseMe** and the **Rebel Business School**, experts in the project, in regard to Entrepreneurship and English courses for example.

CCC has also developed safeguarding activities such as:

- Safeguarding workshop with the focal points of the CCC project partners. Both staff of CDE and ACJ teams participated.
- CCC has developed encounters with the ICBF (Colombian National Institute of Family Welfare), seeking to articulate the institutional framework. In these activities, face-to-face sessions were developed to strengthen joint work strategies.
- Technical assistance sessions were arranged by the ICBF team for members to publicize the ICBF care routes in cases of violence.



UK Office: 5 Richbell Place, Holborn,
London, WC1N 3LA
Phone: (+44) 07852 985 711
Email: info@childrenchange colombia.org

www.childrenchange colombia.org

Facebook: Children Change Colombia
Twitter: @ChildChangeCOL
Instagram: childrenchange colombia

Colombia office: Carrera 5 # 67 – 84,
Oficina 302, Bogotá
Teléfono: (+57) 312 298 8980
Email: colombia@childrenchange colombia.org

Written by: Liliana Rodríguez and
Louisa Ryder

Designed by: Louisa Ryder

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Photographs show real participants in CCC-funded projects.

*Quote names: All the children's names in case studies have been changed for safeguarding purposes.