

CHILDREN
CHANGE
COLOMBIA

2024 ANNUAL REPORT





Dear friends,

As we reflect on the achievements of this year, we are filled with gratitude for your unwavering support. It is through your dedication and belief in our mission that Children Change Colombia continues to create meaningful change in the lives of vulnerable children and their communities.

This year, we have worked tirelessly to address the pressing challenges facing children in Colombia. From expanding educational opportunities to safeguarding children from forced recruitment and supporting survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, our projects prioritize empowerment, resilience, and sustainability. These efforts are only possible because of your generosity and the partnerships we've built with local communities and grassroots organizations.

Nearly five years into my role leading CCC, I am thrilled to share some incredible milestones. Since 2020, we've tripled the number of beneficiaries and doubled our number of projects, geographical areas of work, and annual income—all while keeping administrative costs low. In 2024 alone, our programs positively impacted the lives of **4,320** children, a testament to the collective power of our work.

Amid Colombia's complex realities, there are reasons to celebrate, including the Senate's historic decision to ban child marriage. Milestones like this renew our determination to advocate for children's rights and inspire systemic change.

As we close another impactful year, we are excited to share our Annual Report, highlighting what we've achieved together. Thank you for your continued commitment—it empowers us to dream big and work harder to ensure every child in Colombia has the chance to grow, learn, and thrive in a safe and dignified environment.

With deep appreciation,



Angela Carreño
Executive Director





With the right support, children and young people can lead the way to a more just and hopeful future.

Table of Contents

05.	Introduction/About us
06.	Our aims
07.	Areas of work
08.	Why Colombia?
11.	SDG/Impact numbers
12.	Protecting Children's rights
13.	New implementing partners
14.	New strategic partners
16.	Project's Map
17.	Our work in 2024
18.	Reintegration into Society, Prevention of Forced Recruitment
20.	Sexual and gender-based violence
23.	Access to Education
30.	Emergency Response
31.	Capacity Building & Events

Introduction

This report is primarily an account of Children Change Colombia's work in the field and its activities to promote the protection of children's rights in Colombia during the year 2024. The following pages contain descriptions of each of our projects in Colombia.

We are pleased to be able to tell you that in 2024 we supported **7** local grassroots organisations and implemented **13** projects.

We supported **4,320** children in Colombia, plus **126** children from London, and their families.

We also conducted **3** workshops with our local partners - online and in person - as part of our capacity-building programme.

About us

Children Change Colombia (CCC) is the UK's largest charity working exclusively in Colombia, with offices in London and Bogotá (Colombia) and over 33 years of experience. We believe that, with the right support, Colombian children can claim their right to live safely and in peace and demand that the adults responsible for protecting their rights do so - in this way, children can change Colombia.

Over the last three decades, CCC has helped more than 77,000 children to overcome the trauma of poverty, armed conflict, displacement, and a lack of education, and has invested £17 million in 76 multi-annual projects all across Colombia. To help children achieve this, we rely on strong local partnerships with Colombian organisations who truly understand the needs of the children they work with, and have the experience and knowledge to find effective solutions. We are committed to working with the children who need us most and in areas (thematic and geographic) that we feel are neglected by other organisations.



Defend children's rights



Tackle neglected issues



Strengthen children's organizations

The past 33 years we've supported

76 Projects

In 15 administrative areas on the 32 of Colombia

£17 Million

invested in Colombia

77,263 children

to overcome the trauma of poverty, armed conflict and lack of education





Areas of work



Reintegration into Society, Prevention of Forced Recruitment

CCC supported 60 foster homes in **Villavicencio**, and **Bogotá** where children who were formerly involved in the armed conflict are restructuring their lives and reintegrating into their communities. We also had prevention projects in **Chocó**, **Nariño** and **Meta**.

Our education projects in **Magdalena** and **Antioquia** aim to enhance both access to and the quality of education in these regions. Through interactive, hands-on learning approaches, children develop practical employability skills designed to improve their livelihoods. They also benefit from entrepreneurship training and have the opportunity to pursue higher education, supported by university scholarships.



Our areas of work



Sexual and gender-based violence

CCC worked this year in **Bogotá**, **Cartagena**, **Santa Marta**, **Quibdó** and **Barranquilla** to prevent sexual exploitation and gender-based violence by providing children and their families with psychosocial support, encouraging artistic expression, and activities to raise awareness of this issue in the communities.



Access to education

Additionally, to these three main areas of work Children Change Colombia also implemented an **emergency project** for internally displaced families in **Chocó**.



Why Colombia?

Colombia, a geographically diverse and culturally vibrant country, has a history marked by violence and conflict. The legacies of drug-trafficking cartels and the 52-year-long civil armed conflict continue to impact the country. Although the Colombian government signed a peace agreement with Las FARC in September 2016, its efficacy has been questioned. The election of President Petro in 2022 offered renewed hope, as his administration promised to enforce the peace treaty. However, cycles of violence persist in Colombia - the country has witnessed more than 60 massacres this year alone **(1)**. Such violence not only has social ramifications but also economic: according to a report by Colombian think-tank 'Fedesarrollo' and the Inter-American Development Bank, crime and violence cost Colombia 68 trillion pesos (USD 17 billion) in 2022, constituting around 3.6% of the GDP at the time **(2)**.

Poverty and social inequality are prominent within Colombian society. As aptly stated by David De Schutter - the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights - Colombia is "trapped in a vicious cycle linking conflict to poverty" **(3)**. While poverty rates appear to be falling - even dropping to a 33-year low across Latin America last year **(4)** - minority communities in Colombia continue to be affected disproportionately. In 2023, 58.4% of the national Indigenous population was living in poverty; moreover, reports show that the highest poverty rates are concentrated in the rural departments of Chocó, La Guajira, Sucre, and Bolivar **(5)**. Such levels of poverty and social division directly contribute to the patterns of violence and exclusion that CCC aims to confront.

Violence perpetrated by local armed groups persists, particularly in rural areas throughout the country. Poverty drastically limits the employment opportunities that children and young people have, thereby making them an "easy target for recruitment into the armed groups" **(6)**. According to the National Center for Historical Memory (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica), from 1958 to 2020, more than 17,860 children and young people (CYP) were forcibly recruited by armed groups **(7)**. Moreover, the 2022 Truth Commission report "Where there's truth, there's peace" revealed that between 1985 and 2016, 28,192 children were forcibly disappeared **(8)**.

Particularly in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, access to education is a core area of concern. In rural areas of Colombia, situations of poverty and social inequality make providing high-quality education difficult. Educational infrastructure is challenged by a crucial lack of funding, a limited number of qualified teachers, limited access to necessary resources, and a lack of internet access and computers. While the Colombian constitution requires children aged 5-15 to attend school, in 2021 over 5 million school-aged children were not receiving any form of education, representing approximately 30% of all school-aged children in the country **(9)**.

1. Justice For Colombia: "Colombia human rights update October 2024". <https://justiceforcolombia.org/news/colombia-human-rights-update-october-2024/>. November 2024.

2. El País: "The cost of crime and violence exceeds the annual education or health budget in Colombia". <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-11-15/el-costo-del-crimen-y-la-violencia-rebasa-el-presupuesto-anual-de-educacion-o-salud-en-colombia.html>. November 2024.

3. The United Nations Human Rights Council: "End of mission statement by Mr. Olivier De Schutter Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights". <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/poverty/sr/statements/20240904-eom-sr-poverty-en.pdf>. September 2024.

4. Thompson Reuters: "Latin America poverty hits 33-year low but inequality prevails, UN report says". <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/latin-america-poverty-hits-33-year-low-inequality-prevails-un-report-says-2024-11-12/#:~:text=Poverty%20in%20Latin%20America%20decreased,%2D19%20pandemic%2C%20ECLAC%20reported>. November 2024.

5. The United Nations Human Rights Council: "End of mission statement by Mr. Olivier De Schutter Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights".

6. The United Nations Human Rights Council: "End of mission statement by Mr. Olivier De Schutter Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights".

7. Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica: "Report - A war with no age". February 2021.

8. Truth Commission - Colombian Special Jurisdiction of Peace: "Report - There's Future where There's Truth". www.comisiondelaverdad.co. August 2022.

9. El Espectador: "In Colombia, 3 out of 10 people of school age are not studying, why?". <https://www.elespectador.com/educacion/en-colombia-3-de-cada-10-personas-en-edad-escolar-no-están-estudiando-por-que-noticias-hoy/>. July 2022.



Furthermore, in rural areas, access to education is strained by the routes that children must take to get to the available schools. Many children face long, perilous journeys, walking for hours through areas marked by active landmines, ongoing clashes between armed groups, and recognised 'hot-spots' for recruitment **(10)**. This is further complicated by severe weather phenomena. In mid-November, President Petro declared a nationwide state of emergency due to the extreme weather conditions, such as torrential rains and major flooding. The department of Chocó has been particularly affected, devastating entire indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities **(11)**. In this area, as well as other regions with poor infrastructure, the process of rebuilding will likely sideline local youth's education, disrupting it for the foreseeable future. The situation in Chocó quickly became dire as the guerrilla group Ejército de Liberación Nacional (the ELN) called an armed lockdown during this period of extreme weather, preventing aid from reaching these affected communities **(12)**. The presence of the ELN, among other armed groups (such as Clan de Gofo) has caused repeated episodes of mass confinement, further exacerbating the vulnerable education system in the department.

The link between poverty and sexual and gender-based violence is widely recognised, and applicable to the case of Colombia. In some of Colombia's major tourist cities, such as Cartagena and Bogotá, patterns of sexual violence are normalized. The influx of large numbers of tourists fuels local sex industries, which are sustained in part by the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). Estimates suggest that around 35,000 children are involved in CSEC throughout Colombia **(13)**.

Further, the majority of children who experience sexual or gender-based violence come from the lowest income groups, living on the outskirts of major cities or in isolated rural communities. Between January and August 2023, the national police registered over 8,000 sexual crimes against minors **(14)**.

Medellín has successfully redefined itself as a major tourist attraction within the country. However, reports noted a direct correlation between the significant increase in tourism and a nearly 60% increase in the number of sexual exploitation cases against minors in 2023 **(15)**. Recent data shows that close to 800 girls, boys, and adolescents were victims of sexual exploitation in Medellín between 2020 and 2022 **(16)**.

In 2023, Medellín was the third city in Colombia with the most records of sexual crimes against minors, with 594 cases in total **(17)**. The current figures are estimated to be even higher, considering the level of underreporting. Survivors of such exploitation have little incentive to report - only 5% of cases of sexual exploitation against minors in the city result in conviction **(18)**. Local experts and advocates explain that not only is the sexual exploitation of minors normalized, it is legitimized. Prostitution is presented as an economic opportunity and is organized in public settings: "it happens before everyone's eyes" **(19)**. Moreover, 80% of women engaged in prostitution reported that they became involved as minors **(20)**.

10. European Commission: "Indigenous children in Colombia: a route to school fraught with risks". https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/news-stories/stories/indigenous-children-colombia-route-school-fraught-risks_en. August 2023.

11. The City Paper Bogotá: "Colombia declares State of Emergency amid torrential rains and extreme weather". <https://thecitypaperbogota.com/news/colombia-declares-state-of-emergency-amid-torrential-rains-and-extreme-weather/>. November 2024.

12. Press Latina: "ELN assures that it will open humanitarian corridor in Chocó". <https://www.plenglish.com/news/2024/11/13/el-n-assures-that-it-will-open-humanitarian-corridor-in-choco/>. November 2024.

13. Children Change Colombia: "Colombia's Silent Problem". <https://childrenchange colombia.org/child-sexual-exploitation-colombia/>. N.d.

14. Diario del Norte: "The Attorney General's Office revealed an alarming panorama of child sexual violence in Colombia". <https://diariodelnorte.net/nacion/procuraduria-revelo-alarman-te-panorama-de-violencia-sexual-infantil-en-colombia/>. November 2023.

15. The Independent: "Murdered tourists and sex trafficking exposes dark side of Medellín's tourism boom". <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/medellin-colombia-tourism-murder-america-b2500497.html>. February 2024.

16. Mesa Contra la ESCNNA en Medellín: "Análisis de la situación de la ESCNNA en Medellín y recomendaciones de abordaje para la nueva Administración Distrital 2024-2027". 2024.

17. Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses: "Boletín estadístico diciembre de 2023". https://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/documents/20143/879608/boletin_NNA_2023_diciembre.pdf. December 2023.

18. Mutante: "They are taking our girls away". <https://mutante.org/contenidos/se-nos-est-an-llevando-las-ninas/>. April 2024.

19. Mutante: "They are taking our girls away". <https://mutante.org/contenidos/se-nos-est-an-llevando-las-ninas/>. April 2024.

20. Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses: "Boletín estadístico diciembre de 2023". https://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/documents/20143/879608/boletin_NNA_2023_diciembre.pdf. December 2023.

These persisting socio-economic issues are dominating political discourse ahead of the 2026 national elections; pre-candidates from across the political spectrum are now starting their campaign preparations. The Colombian political space is also dealing with various cases of corruption and fraud. Recently, the former Foreign Minister Álvaro Leyva has officially been banned from holding public office for a decade following his illegitimate cancellation of the tender for passport production in Colombia **(21)**.

Moreover, Vice President Francia Márquez has attended yet another congressional hearing to answer for the startling lack of activity in the Ministry of Equality. This year, the Ministry has spent less than 2% of its allocated budget, while last year it spent less than 0.5% of its budget. The Ministry is accused of duplicating the functions of other sectors, such as the Ministry of the Interior and the Department of Social Prosperity **(22)**.

While Colombia continues to face multifaceted challenges, it is also actively making strides towards progress. The Colombian senate recently banned child marriage, repealing a 19th century article of the civil code that allowed children over the age of 14 to marry with parental consent **(23)**.

According to data from UNICEF and Plan International, there are 4.5 million girls and women in Colombia who were married before age 18, and 1 million girls who were married before age 15 **(24)**. The practice of child marriage was more common among rural and indigenous communities, some of which opposed the reform.

Colombia continues to implement processes of justice and peace. In November, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) charged six former commanders of Las FARC with war crimes against children, non-exhaustively including forced recruitment, sexual violence, and murder **(25)**. This comes as part of 'Macro Case 07', focused on child recruitment and the involvement of children in the armed conflict.



21. El País: "The Attorney General's Office disqualifies former Foreign Minister Álvaro Leyva for 10 years for having irregularly cancelled the passport tender". <https://elpais.com/america-colombia/2024-11-12/la-procuraduria-inhabilita-por-10-anos-al-excanciller-alvaro-leyva-por-haber-cancelado-irregularmente-la-licitacion-de-pasaportes.html>. November 2024.

22. Semana: "Francia Márquez, disappointed in execution. There is dissatisfaction in Congress over the weak results of the Ministry of Equality". <https://www.semana.com/politica/articulo/francia-marquez-rajada-en-ejecucion-hay-insatisfaccion-en-el-congreso-por-los-flojos-resultados-del-ministerio-de-la-igualdad/202455/>. November 2024.

23. Equality Now: "Colombia Has a Key Opportunity to End Child Marriage and Early Unions and Protect Girls". https://equalitynow.org/news_and_insights/colombia-has-a-key-opportunity-to-end-child-marriage-and-early-unions-and-protect-girls/. October 2024.

24. Plan International: "Country Profile - Colombia". https://equalitynow.org/news_and_insights/colombia-has-a-key-opportunity-to-end-child-marriage-and-early-unions-and-protect-girls/. N.d.

25. Relief Web: "Colombia charges former FARC leaders with child recruitment". <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/colombia-charges-former-farc-leaders-child-recruitment>. November 2024.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Due to the diversity of our projects and partners in Colombia, we are able to work towards many of the **United Nations' SDGs**, whilst still principally concentrating on our **three key strategic aims**. Outlined are the UN's SDGs that Children Change Colombia was able to champion in 2023.



Impact numbers

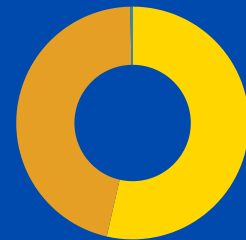


Children and Young People



Non binary
0.3%

Boys
46.1%



Girls
53.6%

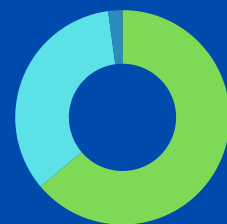
4,320

Adults



Non binary
2.1%

Men
34%



Women
63.8%

1,920

Protecting children's rights

In 2024 we protected the rights of...

4,320

Children against discrimination

4,320

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

1,103

Children having the right to use their own language and culture (Indigenous and Ethnic communities involved)

2,863

Children improving their access to education

1,457

Children from exploitation

1,457

Children against violence

570

Children from sexual exploitation

389

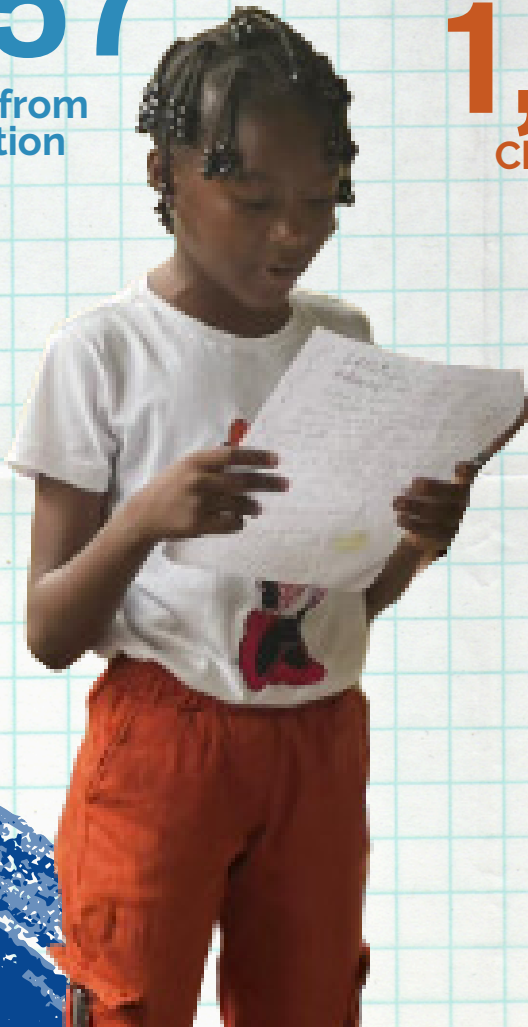
Children towards recovery and reintegration into society (prevention and protection)

69

Children through family guidance as they develop

281

Children with a safe placement



New Implementing partners

Two new project partners will be working alongside CCC in the project: 'Preventing sexual and gender-based violence in Bogotá, Barranquilla, Santa Marta, and Cartagena. One new project partner will be working alongside CCC implementing the upcoming project: "Football for Peace in Tumaco".



Founded by the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, CUR promotes knowledge to address regional and national challenges through programs in sciences, arts, and philosophy. Within this project, CUR will provide music and arts training to foster protective environments for children, enhancing life skills and citizenship. CUR will offer its facilities and staff for music sessions, while CCC will provide psychosocial support, workshops on reproductive and sexual rights, prevention training, and care pathways for victims of gender and sexual violence.



Founded in Montería in 1974, UniSinú emphasizes comprehensive education and social responsibility, with campuses in Cartagena and Bogotá. Its Social and Human Sciences Faculty addresses issues like childhood, gender-based violence, and migration. In this project, UniSinú will engage its law, psychology, and humanities faculties to conduct workshops, advocacy, and creative activities like murals and newsletters, empowering youth and building advocacy networks. With strong community ties and experience with vulnerable populations, UniSinú will drive impactful, intersectional interventions in Cartagena, promoting gender equity and human rights.



Fútbol Pazífico is a sports-focused initiative in Colombia that uses football to promote peace, social inclusion, and community development in regions affected by violence and conflict. The program is designed to engage children, adolescents, and youth, particularly in the Pacific region of Colombia, an area historically impacted by armed conflict, poverty, and marginalization.

The initiative often incorporates methodologies that combine sports with education and psychosocial support, addressing themes such as conflict resolution, teamwork, gender equality, and leadership development. By fostering safe spaces for play and interaction, Fútbol Pazífico seeks to strengthen community ties, promote values of coexistence, and provide alternatives to violence, especially for vulnerable youth.



New strategic partners

4.



This global leader in parent, carer, and baby wellness has over 20 years of experience and a network of 4,000 supporters worldwide. They specialize in nature-based teacher training on Nourishing Touch, a method fostering parent-child communication and understanding through skin-to-skin contact. Building on previous work in Bogotá, Cartagena, and Quibdó, this collaboration introduces Nourishing Touch to equip families with tools to prevent and address domestic and gender violence from infancy. The Teach Love program offers tailored techniques for children from infancy to preschool, fostering resilience and long-term well-being in communities.

5.

STOP THE TRAFFIK

The UK charity pioneer in human trafficking prevention. They work to unite people around the world by inspiring, informing, equipping and mobilising communities to know what trafficking is and how to protect themselves and others. CCC was part of their project "Power of 10" alongside 10 other Colombian charities working on sexual exploitation to identify patterns of modern slavery and identify solutions.





International Human Rights Center, Loyola Law School, Los Angeles:

As part of our advocacy activities, CCC presented with them a UN parallel report on armed groups' recruitment of children in Colombia for an upcoming review session under the Convention on the Rights of the Child-CRC.

The Pre-Sessional Working Group for the CRC will convene between February 3-7, 2025. Our report will be reviewed by the Pre-Sessional Working Group to help create the "List of Issues" that will be sent to the Colombian government to address.



International Institute of Business Analysis and COMBA international:

CCC staff, trustees and volunteers worked with these two organisations to develop our 2025-2030 strategy that will be launched next year.

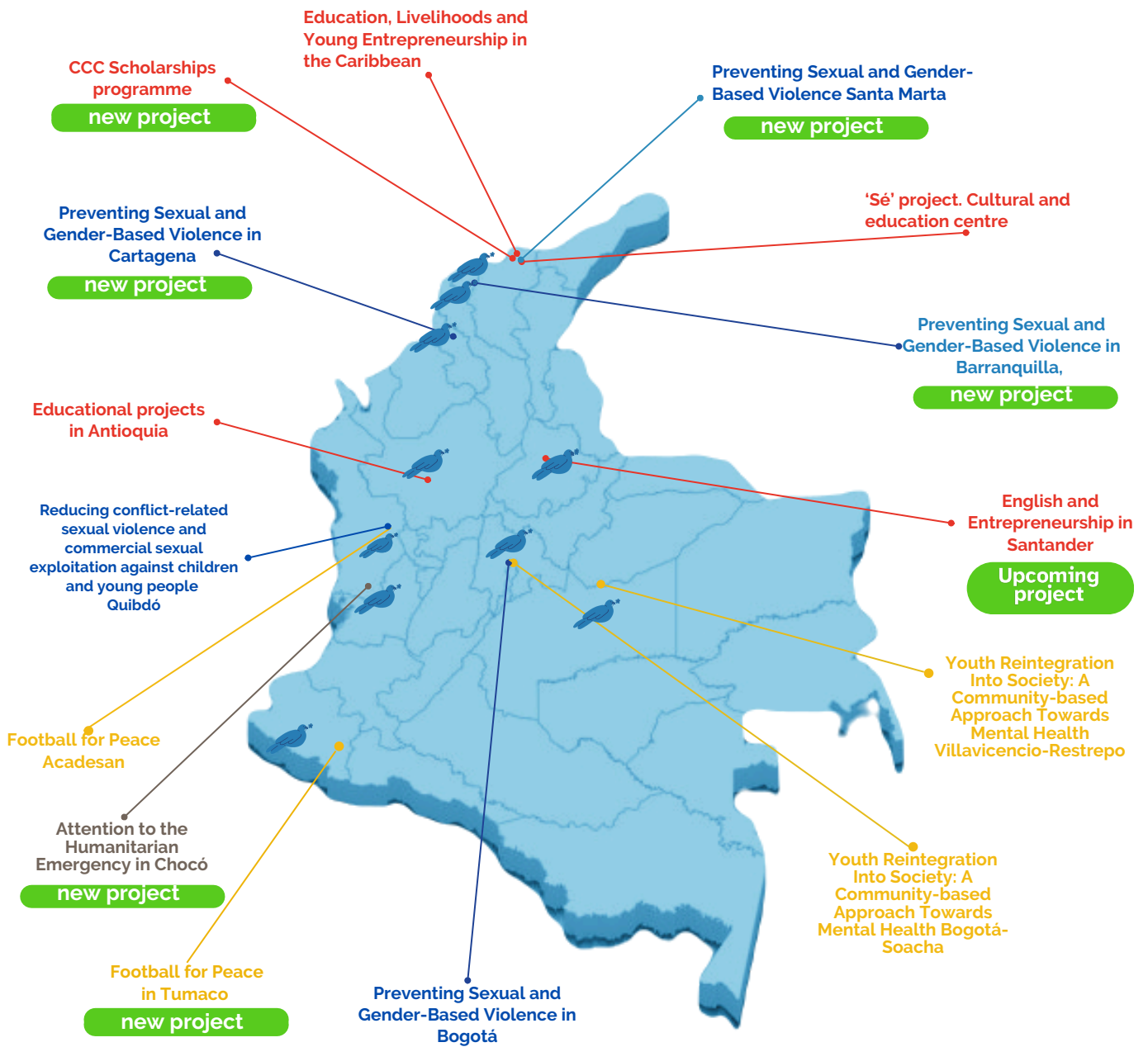


CCC has had a close relationship with the UK Embassy and the Ambassador George Hodgson. This year they hosted CCC to present the "PazA la Mochila Project" to the European Embassies in Bogotá.



CCC Projects

Colombia



- Reintegration into Society, Prevention of Forced Recruitment
- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Access to Education
- Emergency Response
- Paz A La Mochila Project

United Kingdom





Our work in 2024

Children Change Colombia is passionately committed to transforming the lives of vulnerable children across Colombia by tackling critical challenges such as forced recruitment, sexual and gender-based violence, and barriers to education. Our work focuses on creating lasting change through innovative, community-driven projects that address these pressing issues at their roots. Partnering with grassroots organizations, we foster resilience, promote peace, and empower children and their communities to envision and build a brighter future.

In the following pages, we invite you to explore the results and achievements of our impactful projects. From educational milestones in rural schools to the transformative power of sports and arts programs, each initiative underscores our dedication to creating a safer, more equitable future for Colombia's children. These outcomes highlight not only the significant progress made, but also the vital role your support plays in enabling sustainable, community-led change. Together, we are paving the way for a generation of empowered children to thrive and succeed.

Reintegration into Society, Prevention of Forced Recruitment

Sexual and gender-based violence

Access to Education

Emergency Response



1.

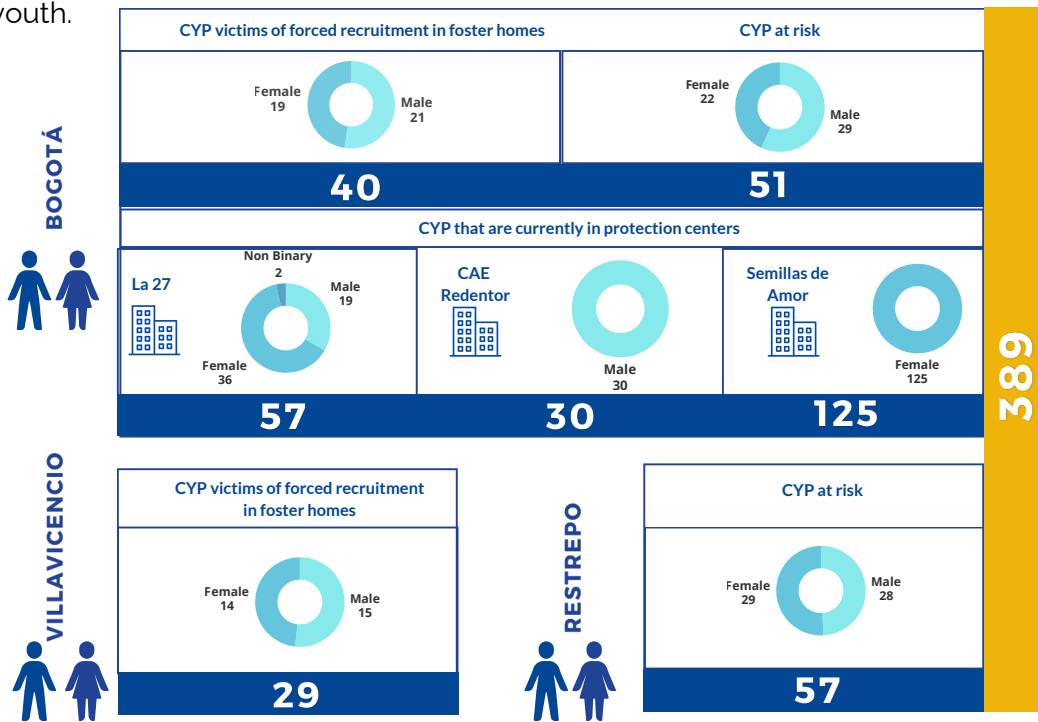
Youth Reintegration Into Society: A Community-based Approach Towards Mental Health

Partners: CRAN and Tiempo de Juego

Locations: Bogotá, Villavicencio and Restrepo

This project aims to provide a novel, community-based, narrative approach to psychosocial care, trauma, and reintegration, helping children and young people (CYP) at risk of joining gangs, and victims of forced recruitment by armed groups, to gain access to the resources and skills they need to deal with traumatic situations and stigmas. Over 389 children and young people (CYP) in Bogotá, Villavicencio, and Restrepo directly benefited during 2024, surpassing the initial goal by 70%. This innovative narrative-based initiative equipped participants with tools for resilience, self-reflection, and emotional healing. Activities like "Kintsugi," which used art to symbolize recovery, and leadership-building exercises fostered self-awareness and strengthened community bonds. Around 70% of participants reported improved mental health and well-being, while 75% enhanced their leadership abilities.

The project also engaged 187 parents and caregivers, 76% more than initially projected, in workshops that promoted emotional intelligence, self-care, and communication. Sessions such as My Inner Jewel and Let's Change the Story empowered families to build healthier dynamics and reduce the stigma around CYP at risk. Moreover, 51 staff members from partnering organizations participated, gaining valuable psychosocial skills to better support the youth.



Collaborative efforts with schools and protection centers further expanded the project's impact. Notable achievements included the integration of psychoactive substance education and the employment of a former participant as a community manager, showcasing the program's lasting impact. Challenges like participant mobility and varying institutional structures were met with adaptive strategies, ensuring consistent progress. The project continues to create transformative opportunities for vulnerable youth, empowering them to build positive futures and strengthen protective environments.



2

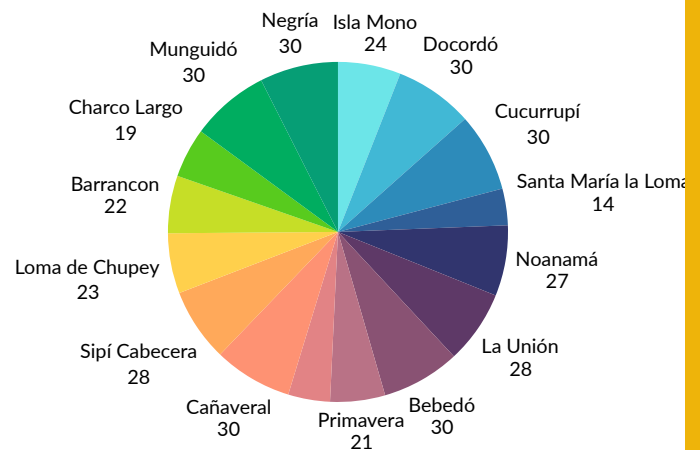
Football for Peace Acadesan

Partner: Acadesan

Locations: Communities along San Juan River

The Football for Peace project, implemented in partnership with Acadesan, aims to prevent the forced recruitment of children in the rural communities of Chocó by fostering socio-emotional skills through sports. The initiative directly benefited 402 children, more than doubling its target, across 18 communities. Two soccer teams were formed, and 60 participants received equipment to support their training. Teachers and community leaders were also trained in the Sports with Principles (SwP) methodology, with 20 participants becoming certified trainers.

Key activities included workshops on SwP principles, enhancing skills like teamwork and fair play, and a sports festival to promote coordination and inclusivity. Improvements were made to two soccer fields which benefitted 96 families. The initiative demonstrated the transformative power of sports by ensuring safe spaces for continued sports activities.



18 Communities

The Football for Peace project, originally launched in 2023 to improve socio-emotional skills and prevent forced recruitment and sexual violence among children in Chocó, has been relocated to Tumaco due to an ongoing humanitarian crisis in the original region. Chocó has been severely affected by armed conflict and relentless rainfall, causing widespread flooding, landslides, and destruction of homes, crops, schools, and livelihoods. With over 180,000 people impacted and fragile infrastructure exacerbating the crisis, implementing the project in Chocó would pose significant risks to the safety of participants and team members. While Children Change Colombia focuses on emergency relief in Chocó, the decision to relocate the project ensures its mission to protect vulnerable children through football continues uninterrupted.

Tumaco, another Pacific coast region, faces similar challenges of armed conflict, violence, and social inequality, making it an ideal location for the project's continued implementation.

Running from December 2024 to December 2025, the initiative will directly involve 60 girls and indirectly benefit their families and the wider community. It aims to empower young women by combining psychosocial support, sports training, and peacebuilding education, addressing critical issues such as gender-based violence, limited access to education, and entrenched social inequalities. The focus on girls and young women underscores a commitment to gender equality and holistic community transformation.

By relocating to Tumaco, Football for Peace ensures its sustainability while adapting to the needs of another vulnerable community. The project continues to use football as a transformative tool, creating opportunities for girls to thrive and empowering them to lead change in their communities. This commitment to resilience, equality, and peace-building exemplifies the project's overarching goal of delivering a lasting positive impact, even in the face of challenges.



4

Reducing conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation against children and young people

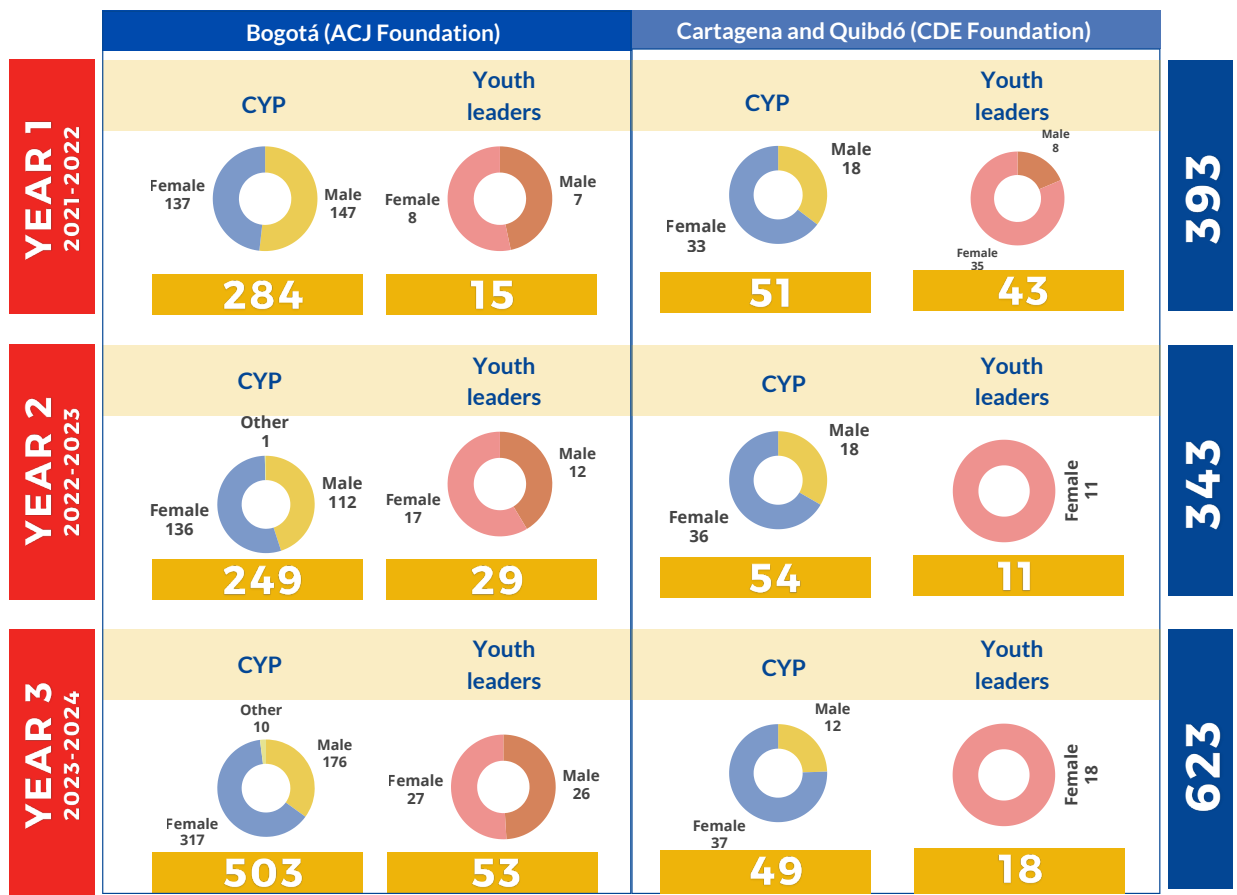
Partners: ACJ and CDE

Locations: Bogotá, Quibdó and Cartagena



The three-year project to reduce conflict-related sexual violence and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in Bogotá, Cartagena, and Quibdó came to an end this year. This project exceeded its goals, reaching over **1,400** direct beneficiaries, including children, caregivers, and community leaders. In Bogotá, **82%** of youth and family members at risk of CSEC strengthened their life plans, contributing to violence prevention. Through **20** study circles (dialogue workshops) and **169** training sessions, participants learned to identify and address risks, promote self-care, and understand human rights. Youth-led initiatives, such as the Somos Jóvenes Festival and advocacy events, engaged **360** participants, amplifying their voices against gender-based violence

Psychosocial activities played a vital role in improving emotional well-being and conflict resolution, with participants highlighting the value of artistic and cultural expressions. In Quibdó and Cartagena, over **20** arts-oriented sessions supported by community leaders created safe spaces for creativity and healing. Additionally, the "Sexuality, Sex, and Gender" sessions taught **95%** of children and young people self-protection practices, helping them navigate risks in their communities. Families, too, embraced transformative practices, with **50%** developing "Family Life Projects" to strengthen their dynamics and future goals.



The project also equipped educators and community members with skills to address violence and foster protective environments. By its conclusion, **99%** of teachers, community leaders, and public officials participated in advocacy activities. These efforts solidified networks between stakeholders, ensuring the sustainability of the protective frameworks established. This impactful initiative has left a lasting legacy of resilience, empowerment, and collective action among children, families, and communities.

New project

5.

Preventing sexual and gender-based violence in Bogotá, Barranquilla, Santa Marta, and Cartagena, Colombia

Partners: ACJ Bogotá, Corporación Universitaria Reformada (CUR), Universidad del Sinú (Seccional Cartagena)

Locations: Bogotá, Barranquilla, Santa Marta and Cartagena



This three-year project (from 2024 to 2027) aims to empower 1,310 children and young people (CYP) at risk of sexual and gender-based violence each year, strengthen their communities, and establish care pathways for survivors while fostering protective environments. It focuses on prevention, mitigation, and awareness through activities that teach CYP socio-emotional skills and self-protection mechanisms, alongside counselling and workshops to equip them with coping tools. Artistic youth groups will also be created to support these efforts.

The project involves workshops, artistic activities, and leadership development to empower young community leaders to advocate for rights and raise awareness about prevention. Parents, carers, and teachers are integral to the initiative, receiving training to enhance parenting skills and promote a safety culture. The "Teach Love" Nourishing Touch program is a key component, which builds nurturing relationships through early childhood interventions. The project also supports survivors and vulnerable families in developing life plans and alternative livelihoods, reducing exposure to exploitation.

By 2027, the project aims to empower over 5,000 participants with knowledge, skills, and resources to prevent violence and foster community resilience. Through partnerships with schools, universities, and public institutions, it aspires to ensure sustainability and systemic change in combating sexual and gender-based violence.

6.

Education, Livelihoods, and Young Entrepreneurship in the Caribbean

Partners: Misión Gaia

Locations: Minca, Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, Magdalena

This project seeks to educate both students and teachers from educational institutions on the Caribbean Coast to develop professional and personal skills that will allow them to improve their academic and professional performance, break the cycles of poverty, and improve their livelihood. The project involves the design and implementation of extracurricular activities of applied formation, entrepreneurial project development, and livelihood improvement.

By October 15, 2024, **359** primary school students (**91%** of the target) attended over **70%** of activities, with **82%** improving skills in reading, writing, English, and technology. Additionally, **93%** developed cross-curricular skills, such as school gardens and solid waste management, fostering healthier habits and environmental awareness. Students expressed heightened motivation and confidence, especially in foreign language interactions.

In secondary education, extracurricular clubs surpassed expectations, engaging **281** students—nearly triple the target. Clubs in English, entrepreneurship, birdwatching, eco-guidance, and arts and crafts developed **12** projects, far exceeding the goal of four. Specialized activities like biodiversity mapping and entrepreneurship fairs further enriched the program. Teachers also embraced participatory methods, with **15** actively involved in classroom projects and leveraging school gardens for dynamic learning.

The psychosocial component included workshops benefiting **904** children (**151%** of target) and **118** parents and teachers. Activities strengthened emotional well-being, reduced conflicts, and built school cohesion. Two girl-led research groups completed impactful projects, presenting results at school fairs, inspiring peers, and reinforcing the program's transformative potential.



CYP participated



improvement in reading, writing, English, and technology skills



of students developed cross-curricular projects, such as school gardens and solid waste management



7.

“Sé” (Be) project. Library and Cultural Center

Partners: Oro Molido Foundation

Locations: Minca, Magdalena

This project is based in Minca, Magdalena, and aims to provide a multipurpose center that the community needs and can use for educational purposes. Construction of this center was completed in early 2024; it now serves as a library and also hosts cultural sessions, community meetings, and other activities. The library is multifunctional, not only used to store books but it provides a quiet and inspiring space where students can continue their education through artistic, literary, and scientific activities.

The project has benefited over **1,750** individuals directly, including **120** students from a rural school (**70** in a boarding program), approximately **1,200** residents across the Minca region, **160** university students annually from the University of Magdalena, and **200** participants in training programs led by the Magdalena Coffee Committee. Moreover, **Keiner, one of the beneficiaries of our scholarship program, is currently working at the library teaching music to children in the community.**

Key achievements include environmental education, coffee production training, and cultural programs such as music, dance, and arts workshops. Other accomplishments include primary school teacher training in reading promotion, partnerships with academic institutions for arts programs, and entrepreneurship fairs, all aimed at fostering community development and cultural enrichment.





Education in Antioquia

Partners: Oro Molido Foundation

Locations: Fredonia y Montebello, Santa Bárbara y La Pintada, Antioquia

This project includes educational initiatives in the department of Antioquia focused on research, music, and formal education. Research projects conducted by young investigators are based on the needs and questions arising from the rural sector in southwestern Antioquia. These projects are led by primary and secondary school students, as well as scholarship recipients supported by the Foundation, who complete their social work internships to address social issues within the region.

The Oro Molido Foundation also promotes music and education as pathways to peace and community development. These sessions include music theory classes and instrument training, offering opportunities for students to participate in ensembles where they showcase their interpretive skills in various musical styles, covering traditional genres and classical music repertoires.

This year, the project supported **1,438** children (**744** girls and **694** boys) and **103** teachers and parents (**53** women and **50** men). Additionally, **27** students were granted scholarships by the FOM and in partnership with other organizations (Fundación Aureliano Llano, Fraternidad de Medellín, Fundación Julio C. Hernández para el Fomento de la Educación). A total of 238 children and adolescents participated in research workshops, and **145** benefited from the FOM's football schools.

The Fundación Oro Molido is also planning to launch the Colegio Nueva Paideia in La Pintada, Antioquia, aiming to enroll **23** students, one from each municipality in the Suroeste region, for the 2025 academic year.





This project aims to enhance the socioeconomic opportunities of youth in rural Santander, Colombia, focusing on entrepreneurship, employability, and bilingual education. By targeting high school students from three rural schools in Betulia, Girón, and Lebrija, it addresses challenges such as low literacy rates, limited access to technology, and restricted job opportunities.

Key components include:

Bilingualism: Weekly English courses and immersive training for 500 youth to improve employability and access to global opportunities.

Financial Literacy: Workshops teaching budgeting, saving, and responsible financial decision-making for 315 students.

Entrepreneurship and Employability Training: Courses to foster entrepreneurial skills in 100 students and soft skills for 215 students, with seed funding for 10 startups annually.

Integration with Local Economy: Focus on ecotourism, sustainable agriculture, and cultural enterprises leveraging regional assets like the Topocoro Reservoir.

The project incorporates technology, teacher training, and community engagement to promote sustainable economic development, reduce rural-urban migration, and empower local youth.



10.

CCC Scholarships programme

Locations: Minca, Magdalena

New project

Children Change Colombia is committed to supporting rural education. We have worked in this area for the last five years in Chocó and la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. We are delighted to announce that this year we have decided to go even further and extend our programmes to the University level. According to the OECD, in Colombia you need 11 generations (330 years) to get out of poverty, in the United Kingdom it takes 51. The best way to break the cycles of poverty is to equip young people with the knowledge they need to access better-paid jobs, and this is now one of the educational goals of Children Change Colombia.

This year we've reached our goal of **16 Angels** to support rural students in earning bachelor's degrees. Thanks to partnerships with Politécnico Grancolombiano and Fundación Universitaria del Área Andina, these students are receiving full scholarships, personal computers, internet allowances, travel funds, and psychosocial support for their five-year studies. **Angels have joined online sessions with scholars and received progress reports. Keiner (Law) and Gizeth (Psychology) excelled in their first semester, while María and Andrés began their studies in August. Denis, an outstanding student, will start in January 2025.**



Sponsor a student!



If you'd like to help transform a rural or Indigenous student's future, email us at info@childrenchange colombia.org.

Access to Education



11.

Paz A la Mochila

Locations: Across all our project's locations



The "Paz A La Mochila" project aims to foster peacebuilding and gender equality among children, adolescents, and youth (NNAJ) in various cities in Colombia. The initiative seeks to create a transformative educational experience through pedagogical tools and artistic activities such as music and dance by addressing challenges like violence, displacement, and limited educational access. The project emphasizes disseminating findings from the Commission of Truth's report, "No es un mal menor", to build critical thinking and life skills among participants.



The initiative aligns with Colombia's peacebuilding agenda and involves Afro-Colombian communities, incorporating their ancestral knowledge into educational and artistic practices. Through its sustainable approach, "Paz A La Mochila" aims to equip communities with lasting capacities for education and peace promotion. It establishes a replicable model for integrating cultural heritage and modern pedagogy to address social challenges, bridging gaps in education, and fostering a culture of peace and equity in conflict-affected areas

The "Paz a la Mochila" kit has successfully traveled to more than **9** cities, serving as a vital tool for peace education and capacity-building to **291** children. CCC has delivered **22** "mochilas" which **192** teachers and community leaders have benefited from. Through workshops and interactive sessions, it has facilitated the sharing of its carefully designed materials with teachers and students, equipping them with the knowledge and resources to promote conflict resolution, gender equality, and critical thinking. Additionally, the project targets to engage **2,000** children in workshops and artistic programs that promote empathy, conflict resolution, and the recognition of gender equality.



Explore more
about the project





We are delighted to share the successful completion of the first year of the 'Colombia Colores' project. This initiative, aimed at bringing children from the Colombian diaspora closer to their Colombian roots, culture, traditions, and biodiversity, has been a journey filled with rich experiences, heartwarming stories, and meaningful connections. As we reach the project's conclusion, we want to reflect on our achievements, express our gratitude, and outline some final thoughts. **This project benefited 126 children in London.**

This final cycle emphasized Colombian culture, complementing the previous focus on arts and nature. These workshops began with an exploration of the Wayuu, Muisca, and Arhuaco cultures. Initially, children delved into these cultures' creation myths, followed by lessons exploring their different languages and means of communication like ceremonial masks - serving as inspiration for the children to create their own. Continuing this cultural journey, the children explored the tales and classic Colombian legends of La Patasola, El Mohán, Madremonte, and El Hombre Caimán.



They then delved into the beloved fables of Rafael Pombo, such as "Mirringa Mirronga, la gata candonga," setting the stage for the elements of magical realism and the enchanting yellow butterflies of Gabriel García Márquez's works. As part of our process to involve more children, we partnered with Saint Gabriel's College, engaging a wider community interested in learning about Colombian and Latin American culture

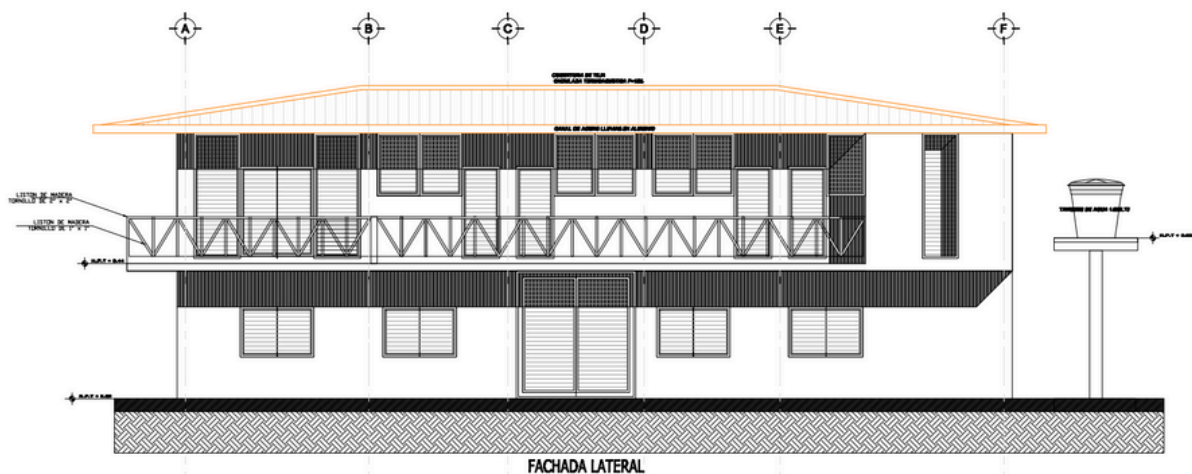


13.

Emergency project
Locations: Istmina, Chocó

In Chocó, Colombia, armed conflict has caused a severe humanitarian crisis, displacing families and threatening their safety. CCC, in partnership with ACADESAN, is building a multipurpose shelter to support **72** Afro-Colombian communities. The shelter will include family bedrooms and bathrooms on the second floor for displaced families, and a communal kitchen and hall on the first floor for transitional rest and community activities. Construction began in May and is on track for completion by year-end.

Meanwhile, CCC has supported **250** families in emergencies, delivering food and hygiene kits to displaced and environmentally affected communities. Finally, by the end of the year and despite weather-related challenges, the project has completed key phases, including formwork installation, concrete pouring, and structure stabilization, with a dedicated team ensuring high safety and quality standards. The next steps in 2025 will focus on roofing and utility installations, with the initiative remaining on track to deliver a safe and welcoming space for the community, providing much-needed refuge and fostering resilience.



Architectural plans



Capacity Building

Media for Change Workshop

Our first capacity-building workshop of the year was our Media for Change Workshop, which took place on February 20th at the Universidad Politécnico Grancolombiano in Bogotá. This workshop brought together directors, project coordinators, and communication experts from across the country. Throughout the day, we delved into various topics, from strategic communication for foundations to the effective use of digital tools and the integration of artificial intelligence into our communication processes. All participants left inspired, equipped with new ideas, and with the design of a marketing campaign for their respective foundations.



Teamwork workshop in Minca::

On October 30th, 10 members of the CCC team and our partner Mision Gaia, met in Minca for two days to work on strengthening teamwork. The program included activities focused on strengthening teamwork, improving effective communication, and developing competencies in emotional management, emotional intelligence, stress management, and empathy.



Blossom & Berry Workshop:

From December 12th to 14th, Bogotá hosted the practical phase of the "Nourishing Touch" training, facilitated by Blossom and Berry for CCC and its partners. This in-person session complemented a virtual training program that began two months ago. Starting in 2025, participants will receive ongoing support to implement workshops with families, ensuring the practical application of the skills and knowledge gained during the training.



Events

Pizaton:

On April 21st, we hosted a Pizza Party fundraising event in London, with the help of the Heroica Lounge. We welcomed friends, families, supporters, and members of the local Colombian community. There were activities for all: salsa classes, face painting, language exchanges, and of course pizza!



Trip to Colombia:

In May, Angela Carreño - our Executive Director - visited Colombia in order to meet with the Colombian team and visit our project across the country. During her time there, Angela was able to visit projects in Cartageña, Minca, and throughout Antioquia. She attended a strategy meeting alongside staff and beneficiaries in Santa Marta, and met with both project beneficiaries and new project partners!



'Women Changing the World' Award:

Our Executive Director, Angela Carreño, was announced as one of the winners of the 'Women Changing the World' award on May 25th. This award came under the category of 'People's Choice Women Changing the World: Non-Profit'. The awards were presented by Sarah, Duchess of York and Dr. Tererai Trent, and aimed to recognise women achieving outstanding success in areas such as sustainability, education, and advocacy. We are so proud of Angela - her win comes as a testament to her leadership and to CCC's work!



Colombian Changemakers Awards

We hosted our first edition of the 'Colombian Changemakers Awards' on June 4th at the Hippodrome in London. The event was designed to highlight the remarkable work of Colombians in the UK, with an emphasis on the arts, academia, entrepreneurship, and corporate leadership. We welcomed members of our Board of Trustees, supporters, and outstanding members of the Colombian community in the UK for a night of celebration, inspiration, and fun.



Thames Walk:

We were delighted to host our annual Thames Walk in London on June 29th. The 10-mile walk along the Thames was a great way to embrace the summer weather and connect with our friends and supporters. After the walk we were able to unwind to the sounds of Colombian music, reward ourselves with traditional Colombian food, and show off our dance moves! This year proved yet again how special the Thames Walk is, and we are already looking forward to next year's!



Closure of Colombia Colores

Earlier this year, we saw the completion of the first year of the London-based project 'Colombia Colores'. This project, aimed at bringing children from the Colombian diaspora closer to their Colombian roots, culture, traditions, and biodiversity, was a unifying, heartwarming, and meaningful experience for the staff, children, and parents and families involved. We closed the project with a party to celebrate Colombia's Independence Day on July 20th!



Charity Gala

On September 28th, we hosted our Fundraising Charity Gala at the beautiful St. John's Church. The event included breathtaking performances of ballet, opera, and traditional dance, led by our sponsor Fernando Montaña and soprano Julieth Lozano, alongside the 'Talentos' and 'Los Rumberos' dance groups. Sergey Rybin, Associate of the Royal Academy of Music, accompanied on the piano. Gourmet canapés, cocktails, and Colombian treats were served, and a Silent Auction was also held throughout the evening. It was ultimately an unforgettable evening for all, and a truly vibrant celebration.



Away Day:

The Children Change Colombia (CCC) team in Colombia gathered for a day of integration and bonding in Bogotá. The team took the opportunity to visit the Botanical Garden, where they explored its diverse flora and enjoyed the tranquility of the green spaces. In addition to this, they toured several other tourist attractions in the city, fostering a sense of unity and shared experiences among the group. The day was key to create stronger connections and reinforcing the team's commitment to their shared mission.





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