



Situation in **Cauca-Valle:** What you need to know about the crisis

What is the crisis?

After the social outbreak of the national strike in April 2021, the security situation in Colombia became more delicate, especially in departments of Cauca and Valle del Cauca. Despite several attempts at peace talks between illegal armed actors and the national government, the death of social leaders, terrorist attacks, and clashes continue to occur, affecting the civilian population.

Due to the territorial elections which took place in October, the Ombudsman's Office sent several alerts about the conflict hotspots, and violent acts increased.

Overview of current situation

Terrorist activities such as car bombings, forced recruitment, and clashes between groups outside the law have impacted the civilian population—especially children and youth. Many families have been forcibly displaced, seen their schools destroyed, and faced the loss of loved ones.

The few hospitals in the municipal capitals are functioning, but they do not have resources for complex situations. Access to clean water and sanitation is limited since many communities are rural and lack potable water and basic sanitation services.

“ The armed conflict in my community has left negative effects, the illegal armed groups have imposed an authoritarian and restrictive system to subdue the population. We have also suffered human losses.

– Elsa, Community Volunteer



(Elsa, Community Volunteer, 32 years old)

Families of Sponsored Children affected:

1,464

How is the sponsorship programme affected?



Access to sponsorship communities limited due to security reasons



Schools closed for safety reasons



Communication lines disrupted due to illegal roadblocks and robberies



Lack of water and sanitation



Displacement of families

What has been Plan's reaction?

Plan is working to positively impact the sponsored communities affected by the armed conflict, and to benefit children, adolescents, young people and the community in general. In most cases, activities are implemented by Plan staff individually or in partnership with other organisations.

In special cases like health issues or the death of a sponsored child, or that of their parents or guardians, Plan has supported the families with financial aid. In areas where the winter season has affected families, Plan has provided clothing and clean water.

In addition, the EmpoderArte project (Art for Peace Project) is a project to safeguard human rights, prevent gender-based violence and strengthen the social fabric in the community. Through this programme, 267 pupils implemented 11 initiatives aimed at coexistence, peace-building and caring for the environment.

Are sponsor letters reaching the affected areas?

Yes, with delays. Mail that corresponds to zones where Plan personnel can go, are being delivered and responses are being collected. The mail that corresponds to zones with permanent restrictions have been stored in the office and have been delivered gradually, according to work strategies that have been implemented in each zone.



I am the director of the community drama group. Most of the participants have shown improvement in school activities and show their interest in music. The staging has also improved vocabulary and speech. Despite the violent context that exists in our community, the children do not abandon the process. They continue to have this space to spend their free time doing good things that for a moment help them to forget the conflict situations that afflicts them. - Ana Mile



(Ana Mile, Project Participant, 37 years old)

How is Plan helping?



Clean water provided to 144 children



Creation of 20 savings groups



Delivery of school kits to sponsored children



Engaging 420 children in activities celebrating International Day of the Girl
Providing resources to rebuild



Clothing provided to 122 children