



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

## What is the crisis?

The regions of Cauca and Valle de Cauca are currently described as High Alert levels, and five communities are permanently restricted.

Despite the government's efforts to achieve peace, illegal groups and criminal gangs continue to impact life in Colombia. Violations of human rights and breaches of international humanitarian law, including assassinations of social leaders, forced displacement, threats against individuals and associations, and forced recruitment—including minors, have been reported. The search for peace continues to be a priority for the current government.



Despite the difficult situation that my community is going through due to the presence of illegal armed groups that prevent aid and programmes, Plan made it possible to receive school kits and materials to rebuild our park.

– Maria, Community Volunteer



(Maria, Community Volunteer, 45 years old)

## Overview of current situation

Of the 35 sponsorship communities, five have permanent security restrictions and seven had intermittent restrictions in the last six months. Incidents such as car bombings, clashes between groups, and forced recruitment affect the civilian population. In May 2024, events led to damage to homes, schools, and police stations, causing some families to be displaced. Families that continue to live in the area face challenges such as potential recruitment of children and adolescents by armed groups, extortion, restricted mobility within their territory, and occasional power outages that leave communities without power for days.

Families of Sponsored Children affected:

2,965

## 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



Flooding and 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. Displaced families received humanitarian aid, and Plan is also providing schools with teaching materials.

Within the framework of the project Lidero com Voz (Lead with Voice), members of community social organisations were engaged in the workshop "Developing our sense of belonging". This workshop helped community leaders strengthen ties, encouraging effective cooperation to overcome challenges and enhance teamwork.

## 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. In areas Plan staff cannot access, this exercise was carried out through the temporary hiring of civil society organizations and community workers who live in the area.



We have learned that it is essential to gain knowledge to overcome the situations that arise from the current climate in the country with greater strength and more security. Within the project, I met people with exceptional values and who became very special to me. As an association, we desire to continue to learn from their knowledge and put it into practice. Thank you very much to the whole team of Lead with Voice.

- Heimy (44) Project Participant



(Heimy, Project Participant, 44 years old)

## How is Plan helping?



Delivery of priority food supplements to **50** children



Creation of **10** savings groups



Delivery of school kits to sponsored children



Engaging **428** children and adults in the Rights Fair



Clothing provided to **122** children