

# 2025 Annual Report

*Association for Culture, Education, and Psychology of Infants and Adolescents - CEPIA*



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# A Message from our Directors

Much of the most important work we do at CEPIA does not always make it to social media headlines. It happens in quieter spaces: advocating for children's rights, providing safe refuge for survivors of violence, and bringing together diverse stakeholders to address the systemic roots of poverty in Guanacaste.

For 20 years, CEPIA has brought together educators, social science professionals, and community advocates to work toward a Costa Rica where every child has the opportunity to fully develop. These are the moments the public may never see, yet they are where true generational progress takes shape.

Over the years, this behind-the-scenes work has helped strengthen the broader social ecosystem of the region. Through its comprehensive programs, CEPIA has supported countless families and collaborated with grassroots organizations, schools, and volunteers, helping sustain momentum for social justice across the coast. Bridges have been built where none existed before, ensuring that the most vulnerable community members do not have to face crises alone. Each day, mothers seeking empowerment, students striving for a better future, and volunteers looking to give back turn to CEPIA for guidance and connection. These individual interactions, taken together, are what shape the future of the country.

This type of community-building work is often overlooked, yet it is essential. CEPIA serves as a key connector within the local social support system: managing resources transparently, directing assistance where it is most needed, and providing a trusted space since its founding. Long before Guanacaste experienced its current growth, people were already turning to CEPIA in search of safety, education, and a path forward.

As we reflect on these 2 decades of work, the focus is not only on visible milestones, but on the foundations that make everything else possible. For those who believe in building a future for Costa Rica that is compassionate, resilient, and lasting, this is an invitation to be part of it. Continued support ensures that this work goes on steady, often unseen, and deeply impactful.

*With gratitude,*

**Laetitia and María José**



**María José Cappa, Executive Director, and Laetitia Deweer, Director of Development and Strategy, holding the 2025 'Contributions to the Improvement of Quality of Life' Award, presented by Defensoría de los Habitantes of Costa Rica, the National Council of Rectors, and Costa Rica's Public Universities.**



*PROGRAMS*  
**REACH**

# Comprehensive Child Development and Daycare Center (CIDAI)

## Program Description

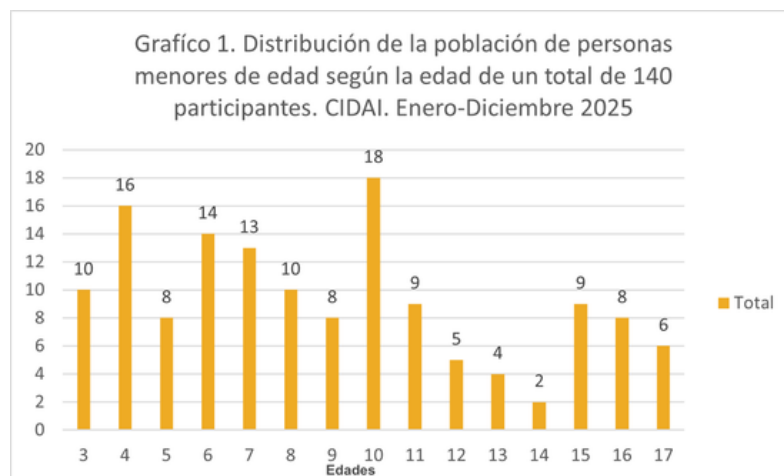
The Comprehensive Child Development and Daycare Center (CIDAI) has established itself as a vital space where the fundamental purpose is to ensure that children and adolescents living in vulnerable conditions can fully strengthen their overall well-being. This objective is achieved through a holistic intervention model that addresses the individual across all dimensions, transforming environments of risk into spaces of opportunity.

To achieve this vision of well-being, the program is structured around four strategic pillars. First, it prioritizes the strengthening of comprehensive health, safeguarding the physical and emotional development of each participant. This approach is complemented by targeted educational support designed to enhance academic performance, providing the tools necessary for education to become a driver of social mobility.

At the same time, CIDAI focuses on the development of life skills, fostering socio-emotional competencies that enable children and adolescents to act with autonomy and resilience. Finally, recognizing that child development is a shared process, the program actively engages families in each child's growth journey, strengthening the family unit as an essential foundation for achieving deep and sustainable impact in the lives of every participant.

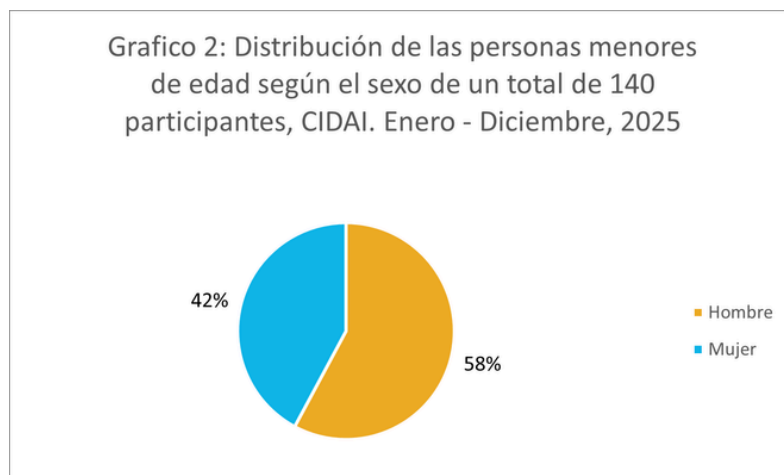
# Beneficiary Population

The CIDAI program worked with a total of **140 children and adolescents** during the January–December 2025 period, ranging in age from **2 to 17**. Graph 1 shows the distribution of participants for the year, with the highest representation among those aged 4 and 10.



**Age Distribution of Participating Minors**

During this period, the distribution by sex among the 140 children and adolescents was **58% male and 42% female**, as shown in Graph 2.



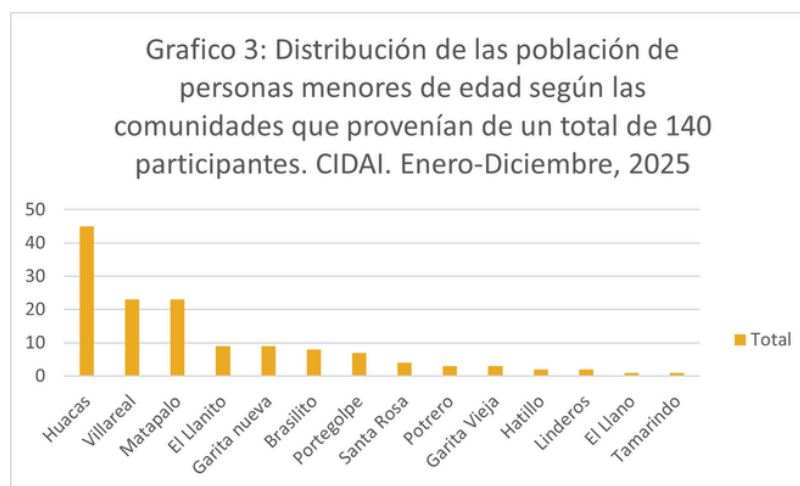
**Sex distribution of minors among a total of 140 participants**

Out of the total number of children and adolescents served in 2025, their nationalities are detailed in Table 1. As shown, 86 were Costa Rican, representing the largest group.

Table 1. Distribution of Children and Adolescents by Nationality (Total: 140 Participants). CIDAI, January–December 2025.

Costarican	Nicaraguan	Colombian	U.S. national
86	52	1	1

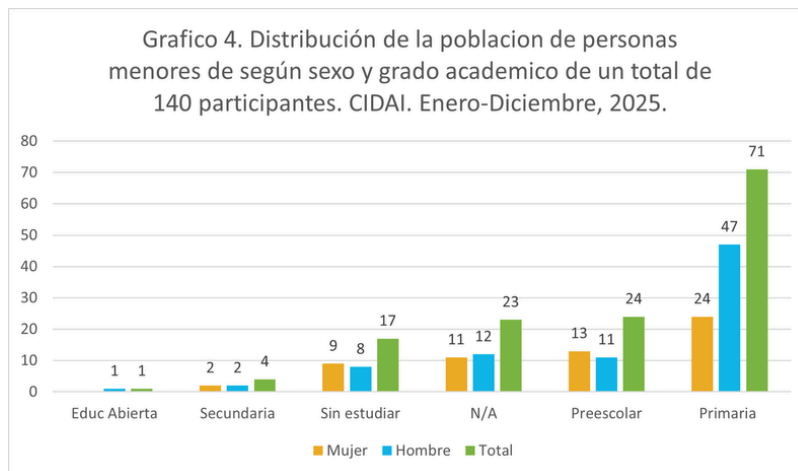
A core component of the CIDAI program is its commitment to serving the entire coastal population. Accordingly, the places of origin of participating children and adolescents are presented below. As illustrated in Graph 3, the majority come from the communities of **Huacas, Villarreal, and Matapalo**.



**Distribution of children and adolescents by community of origin (total: 140 participants)**

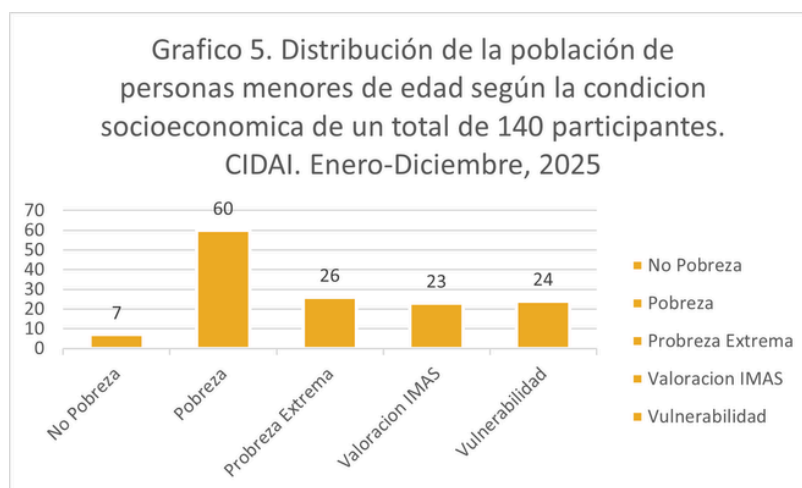
Regarding educational level and overall distribution, Graph 4 indicates that most participants were enrolled in primary education, with a total of 71 children, followed by 24 in preschool.

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that those categorized as “N/A” correspond to children who are not yet part of the formal education system due to their age.



**Distribution of children and adolescents by sex and educational level (total: 140 participants)**

Lastly, in terms of socioeconomic conditions, Graph 5 shows that **60 children were living in poverty, 26 in extreme poverty, and 24 in vulnerable situations.** The graph also indicates that **23 children** were referred to the program following an assessment by the Instituto Mixto de Ayuda Social (IMAS), due to conditions of high vulnerability.



**Distribution of children and adolescents by socioeconomic status (total: 140 participants)**

# Activities Implemented

During 2025, the CIDAI program maintained a diverse and enriching curriculum for all groups, operating **Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** **Activities included English classes, academic tutoring, sports, music, body expression, circus arts, computing, visual arts, and sound therapy.** We further strengthened the project-based learning approach and Atelier spaces across all groups, supported by the daily commitment and contributions of the teaching staff.



*Daily opening circle*

A range of complementary activities was also implemented throughout the year, as outlined below.

In January, all participants were given the opportunity to take part in **educational field trips** to *Centro de Rescate Las Pumas* and *Ponderosa Adventure Park*. This was made possible through the support of volunteers, teaching staff, and parents, as well as funding from the Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI). Additionally, **80 school supply kits** were distributed to children enrolled in formal education.

In April, students from the *Universidad Nacional* collaborated by delivering **literacy workshops**. During this period, Book Day was celebrated through the storytelling of Costa Rican tales, bringing to life traditional characters such as the ant and La Llorona on stage.

In May, the **swimming program** was launched, along with a sports day held in Huacas. These activities promoted interaction, play, and the holistic development of participants.

In June, the program took part in CEPIA's **Environmental Week**, fostering awareness around recycling, cleanliness, and the importance of environmental stewardship. Outdoor activities included the planting of native trees in Playa Tamarindo, in coordination with the *Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Tamarindo (ADIT)* and *SalveMonos*. These experiences enabled participants to learn about local biodiversity and strengthen their connection with the environment. Participants also engaged in volunteer activities at *Halfway Home*, a dog shelter, where care and compassion became meaningful learning experiences. Additionally, a visit to Coopeguanacaste provided insight into renewable energy initiatives.



**Visit to Coopeguanacaste facilities**

Furthermore, the first **Health Fair** was held, with 83 participants, including children and adults, who benefited from health promotion and prevention services. It is also important to note that *Beach Side Clinic* provided ongoing care throughout the year for children experiencing health crises.

In July, the first "**Museum for Families**" was held, where children and adolescents played a leading role by showcasing the progress achieved during the first half of the year, reflecting the joint efforts of participants and educators. Educational field trips were also organized by group: the early childhood group visited *Rancho Avellana* to learn about farm animals and goat milk production; the preschool group attended a screening at *Multicines Liberia*.

Primary Group 1 visited *La Boya Water Park*; Primary Group 2 toured an apiary at *Reserva Conchal*; and the youth group visited the community of *San Vicente*, where they learned about Costa Rican Indigenous culture through clay craftsmanship.

To conclude the month, the Annexation of the Partido de Nicoya was proudly celebrated. During this event, children showcased their talents through dance, music, and performances highlighting Guanacastecan culture, creating a meaningful cultural and educational experience.

In August, learning and recreational activities continued. With the support of Hotel *Margaritaville* in Flamingo, a group of participants enjoyed a day at the hotel, engaging in recreational activities and gaining insight into its operations.

In September, Children's Day was celebrated with the support of the regional PANI office, which provided a space for play and recreation. During this period, the **Parenting School** concluded successfully, equipping families with tools for positive discipline and strengthening family relationships.



***Children's Day Celebration***

The month closed with the commemoration of the 204th anniversary of Costa Rica's independence, emphasizing its historical and social significance among participants.

In October, the CIDAI program participated in the Cultural Encounter, where each group represented cultural elements from different continents. This activity included a symbolic journey through Australia's Great Barrier Reef, as well as experiences related to African gastronomy and music, and Asian dances and traditional utensils.

In November, health-related initiatives were further strengthened through the second Health Fair, aimed at both participants and their caregivers. This event promoted healthy habits and self-care. Medical check-ups were also conducted, while some adolescents took part in volunteer initiatives and activities focused on developing their life projects. The month concluded with the second “Museum for Families,” showcasing the achievements of the second semester.

Finally, in December, the graduation ceremony recognized 31 children and adolescents who completed their process within the program, marking the beginning of new opportunities and challenges within the community center, including their transition into secondary education or continued schooling.

## Results

During 2025, CIDAI implemented a multidimensional intervention strategy that was consolidated through four key areas of direct impact:

### 1. Holistic Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Strengthening both physical and mental well-being remained a central priority. In the area of mental health, **95 children and adolescents received individualized psychological care**, complemented by a comprehensive cycle of **48 workshops** delivered by the Psychology and Social Work departments, targeting both participants and their families.

Physical health was addressed through **107 medical referrals**, alongside an intensive sports component comprising **600 sessions in swimming, martial arts, and other disciplines**. Holistic practices were also integrated, including sound therapy and mindfulness classes (60 sessions), as well as workshops on sexual and emotional health.

## 2. Academic Excellence and Performance

The program successfully reduced educational gaps through personalized academic support. A total of **320 one-on-one Spanish tutoring sessions** were delivered, complemented by group classes focused on logical-mathematical skills. **Learning was further enhanced through a project-based methodology, resulting in the completion of 20 group projects that promoted research and teamwork.**

For adolescents in transitional stages, vocational guidance sessions were provided, including strategic visits to local businesses, effectively bridging the gap between education and the labor market.

## 3. Life Skills and Civic Engagement

CIDAI goes beyond academic instruction to foster resilient and engaged citizens. A total of 105 participants successfully internalized the program's routines and standards of coexistence. Socio-emotional development was strengthened through:

- **Values Education:** Workshops on human rights, core values, and environmental sustainability, with **70 children** participating in reforestation and community clean-up activities.
- **Culture and Recreation:** A total of **19 educational field trips and 7 major cultural and artistic events** were held, celebrating national identity and promoting reading.
- **Self-Care:** A cycle of 25 sessions focused on hygiene and health habits ensured that self-care became a consistent and conscious daily practice.

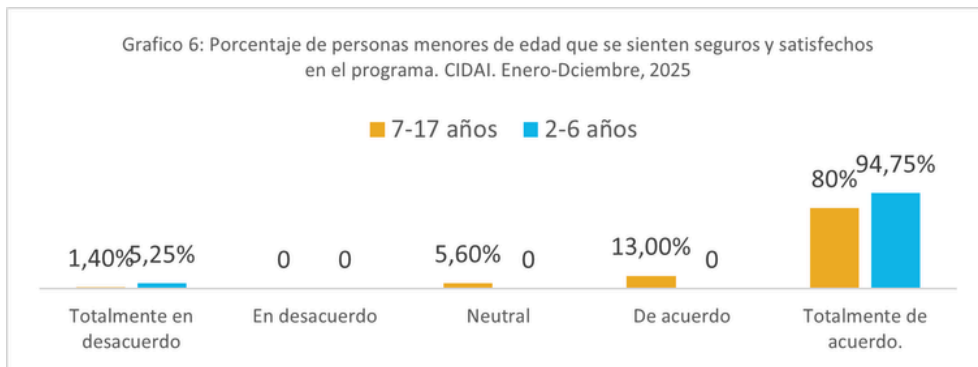
## 4. Family–Community Partnership

Recognizing the home as the primary environment for protection and development, CIDAI actively engaged more than **80 families**. This pillar was strengthened through **83 family therapy sessions and 8 “Parenting Academy” workshops**, implemented in strategic partnership with the PANI mobile unit.

The participation of **70 parents** and caregivers in training processes and regular meetings, combined with recreational initiatives such as the “Family Museums,” reflects a strong commitment from families to the holistic development of their children. This coordinated effort among professionals, families, and the broader community ensures that the program's impact extends beyond the center and into the home environment.

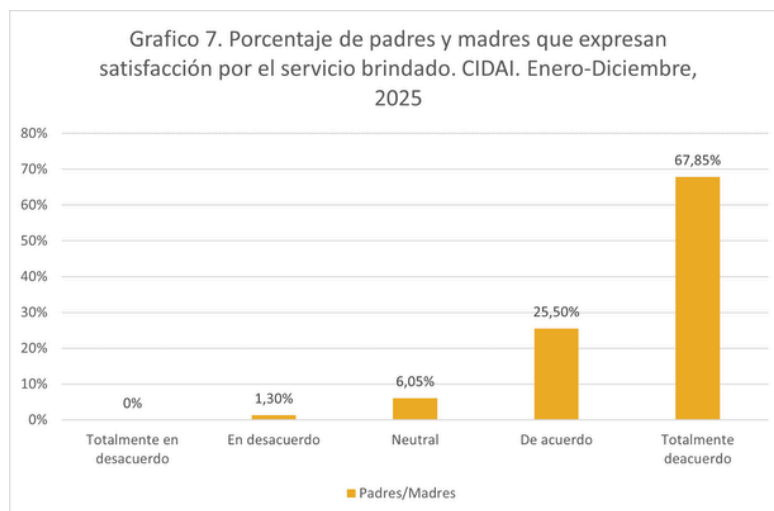
During 2025, CIDAI achieved 100% compliance with the essential quality standards established by PANI for service provision. Evaluation processes further revealed high levels of satisfaction:

In terms of satisfaction, 94.75% of children aged 2–6 report feeling safe and satisfied within the program, while 93% of those aged 7–17 indicate that they feel safe within the CIDAI program.



**Percentage of children and adolescents who feel safe and satisfied within the CIDAI program (January–December 2025)**

In terms of service satisfaction among parents and caregivers, 93.35% reported being satisfied with the services provided by CIDAI during 2025.



**Percentage of parents who feel safe and satisfied within the CIDAI program (January–December 2025)**

Beyond metrics and technical indicators, the true essence of CIDAI lies in the transformation of family dynamics and the emotional wellbeing of each child who walks through its doors.

One case highlights a young girl who, after experiencing challenges in previous educational settings that impacted her self-esteem, found in CIDAI a safe and supportive environment. Her family reports a remarkable transformation: sadness and withdrawal have given way to a more vibrant and outgoing personality. At the same time, her brother—who previously struggled with hyperactivity affecting his social integration—has learned to channel his energy through guided play and positive interaction, showing significant improvement in his ability to express himself and relate to others.

Another student returns home each day eager to share what she has learned, even motivating her mother to engage in shared learning processes. This reflects how CIDAI's methodology not only imparts knowledge but also fosters a genuine enthusiasm for learning that extends to the family unit, strengthening emotional bonds through education.



# After-School Program

## Program Description

### Goal

The general goal of the Afterschool Program is to improve the quality of life of children and adolescents.

### Objetives

The program is designed to ensure that children and adolescents:

1. *Develop healthy lifestyles*
2. *Strengthen artistic skills*
3. *Enhance academic competencies*
4. *Build essential life skills*
5. *Receive comprehensive, holistic support.*

### Activities and Results

To achieve these objectives, throughout 2025 the program delivered weekly sessions in sports, arts, music, dance, English, academic tutoring, as well as “Successful Boys Circles” and “Successful Girls Circles.” In addition, environmental activities, a socio-educational workshop, family interventions, and referrals to both CEPIA internal services and external support systems were carried out.

The program primarily served school-aged children between 7 and 12 years old. Exceptions included the intermediate *Surf for Youth* group, the Matapalo skate group, the adolescent music group in Brasilito, and the Huacas swimming group, which worked with youth aged 12 to 17. Participants came from **25 communities** across the region.

1	Villareal
2	Brasilito
3	Huacas
4	La Garita Nueva
5	Portegolpe
6	Matapalo
7	Trapiche
8	Veintisiete de Abril
9	Linderos
10	Paso Hondo
11	Lorena
12	Cartagena
13	El Llano
14	Hernández
15	Garita Vieja
16	Tempate
17	Potrero
18	El Llanito
19	San José de Pinilla
20	Paraíso
21	Santa Rosa
22	Hatillo
23	San Pedro
24	Chircó
25	Lagunilla

During the first half of 2025, a total of 745 participants were enrolled across all activities, with 721 remaining active. In the second half of the year, enrollment increased to 1,065 participants, with 928 active participants by the end of the period.

***Participation of Children and Adolescents in CEPIA's After-School Program During 2025***

Semester	Enrolled	Active
First Semester	745	721
Second Semester	1065	928

On average, 60 different classes were offered weekly, spanning sports, arts, academics, and life skills development.

A key element of the program's success has been its **transportation** component, which ensures accessibility for participants. Through its own minibus and contracted private transport, the program enabled children and youth not only to attend classes but also to interact with peers from different communities, broaden their perspectives, and experience new environments.

In total, **547 children and adolescents** benefited from transportation services during the year.

The following section outlines which classes utilized transportation services, their destinations, and the number of participants who benefited from this support.

After-School Classes with Transportation	Destination	Number of beneficiaries
Playa Grande Music School	CEPIA, Huacas	12
Skate 27 de Abril and Hernández	Skatepark Villarreal	12
Jiu-jitsu Lorena	Hero Academy, Tamarindo	12
Hatillo and Garita Nueva Music School	CEPIA, Huacas	8
Playa Grande Swimming Lessons	Piscina privada en Playa Grande	20
Huacas Swimming Lessons	Piscina CRIA Academy	10
Muay Thai Youth Group CIDAI	Hero Academy, Tamarindo	12
Jiu-jitsu 27 de abril and Trapiche	Hero Academy, Tamarindo	12
Skate Matapalo	Skatepark Villarreal	8
Antigravity La Garita Vieja	Not a Regular Studio, Flamingo	20
Playa Grande Surf	Hotel el Manglar	8
Matapalo and Hernández Intermediate Skate	Skatepark Villarreal	12
Intermediate <i>Surf for Youth</i> (Brasilito, Lajas, Matapalo, Portegolpe, Santa Rosa, El Llanito and Villarreal)	Witch's Rock, Tamarindo	11
Jiu-jitsu Cartagena	Hero Academy, Tamarindo	12
Villareal Music School	CEPIA, Huacas	12
Tennis Huacas, Brasilito, Potrero	Las Catalinas	16
Boys and Girls Circles' Fieldtrips	Multiple	350
<b>Total number of beneficiaries</b>		<b>547</b>

## Playa Grande School Strengthening Project

The student population served consisted of **30 children** enrolled from second to sixth grade of primary education.

Sports activities included **swimming** and **surf** lessons, which not only provided recreational and physical exercise opportunities but also equipped participants with essential water safety skills.



*Students from Playa Grande School participating in surf lessons*

In the area of arts, weekly **music** classes were held, culminating in the formation of an Experimental Group that integrated choir, percussion, piano, and electric bass. Students were transported from Playa Grande to CEPIA's facilities in Huacas, ensuring access to an appropriate learning environment.



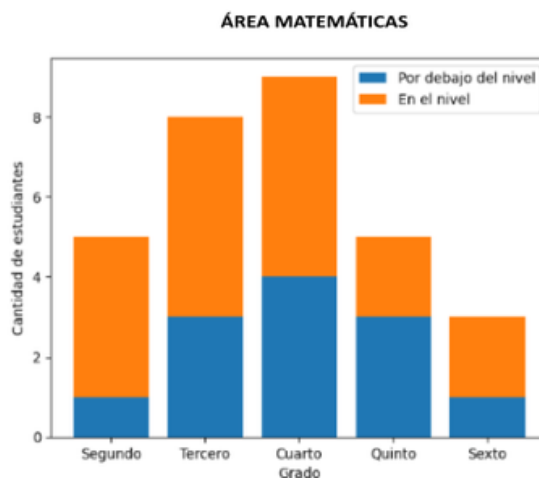
*Playa Grande Experimental Group performing at the end-of-year recital*

From an academic perspective, two **English** groups were established, alongside the support of a primary school teacher who provided academic **tutoring** during school hours in coordination with the local school administration. The Academic Support service evolved throughout the year—from group-based instruction (in response to the absence of a Ministry-appointed teacher), to individualized support once the teacher was assigned, and finally to targeted small-group sessions.

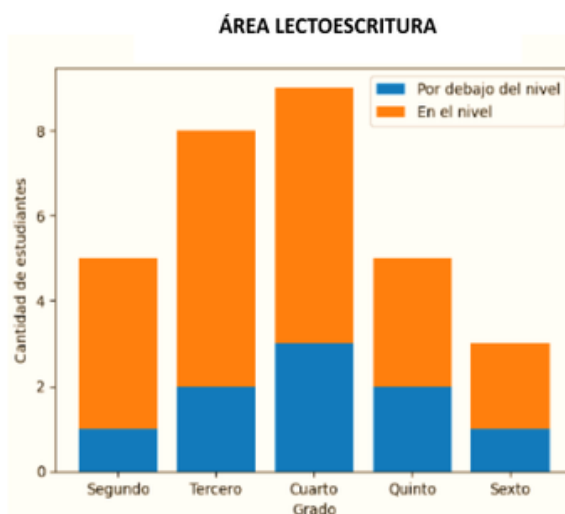
At the end of the year, an assessment of the academic level of participating students was conducted. The analysis of the *Learning Profiles* indicates meaningful progress among a segment of the student population, particularly those who received consistent support and demonstrated a strong disposition toward learning.

However, the findings also highlight ongoing challenges. Of the 28 students served by the Playa Grande Academic Support Project, **16 remain in the learning process, while at least 7 present significant learning gaps, particularly in mathematics and in more advanced literacy skills.** These results underscore the diversity of learning needs within the group and the importance of sustained, targeted interventions.

Overall, these results reinforce the need to continue strengthening academic tutoring as a long-term pedagogical strategy, with a strong emphasis on individualized attention, continuous monitoring of learning progress, and the reinforcement of foundational skills in literacy and mathematics.



*For the mathematics results, the blue color represents the number of students performing below the expected level for their grade, while the orange color represents the number of students achieving the expected level.*



*For the literacy results, the blue color indicates the number of students performing below the expected level for their grade, while the orange color indicates those achieving the expected level.*

## Playa Brasilito Cultural and Educational Project

A total of **74 children** participated in CEPIA's after-school program in Brasilito.

Sports development was promoted through weekly **soccer** training during the first semester, fostering healthy lifestyles. Throughout the year, **art** classes encouraged creativity and environmental awareness, often drawing inspiration from local landscapes.



*Art classes in Brasilito are centered on natural landscapes from the community, promoting environmental awareness through artistic expression.*

Starting in October, a crafts club was introduced to support children who were not attending school during that time. In addition to strengthening creative and fine motor skills, this activity provided a valuable recreational space and an opportunity for social interaction for those who had completed their academic term early.

*Brasilito Crafts Club preparing to celebrate Christmas*



The CEPIA Music School introduced a violin and piano ensemble in the community of Brasilito at the beginning of the year for school-aged students. The group received lessons every Monday afternoon, a process that concluded successfully with two performances, both within and outside their community.



*Piano and Violin Ensemble rehearsal in preparation for the end-of-year recital*

In the academic area, weekly **English** classes were offered to school-aged children from January to May, and again in September and October, during which time volunteer instructors were available to deliver the lessons.

Additionally, from March through September, seven weekly **academic tutoring** sessions of 40 minutes each were provided by a professional teacher. During this period, CEPIA's tutoring program supported a total of 23 students, ranging from 2nd to 6th grade. The sessions were conducted in small groups, allowing for more personalized attention, adaptation of teaching strategies to the specific needs of each student, and support for both their academic and emotional development.

In the second semester, the program expanded its offerings with new classes that generated strong interest among children and adolescents in Brasilito. An Adolescent Music class was introduced, structured as a string ensemble with a focus on ukulele performance.

**Breakdance and circus** classes were also offered, contributing to participants' physical, cognitive, and social development by combining motor activities with playful, artistic, and collaborative experiences.

## San José de Pinilla Project

A total of **57 children** participated in the program. The initiative continued to build on the surf program launched in January 2024. Each week, children and adolescents were transported using CEPIA's transportation services to Playa Avellanas to train. This ongoing process has allowed participants to progressively develop their technical skills.



*Surf lessons for San José de Pinilla participants at Playa Avellanas*

In May, the program expanded its local offerings by introducing new classes in **circus arts, English, and visual arts**. The circus classes were designed as an alternative recreational activity, combining physical exercise with creativity. Through acrobatics and functional movement, participants strengthened gross motor skills, coordination, and body awareness, while also developing teamwork and communication skills in a collaborative environment.

English classes provided beneficiaries with the opportunity to acquire a second language, broadening their perspectives. Meanwhile, art classes offered a dedicated space for creativity and personal expression through drawing and painting.



*English and Art classes at the San José de Pinilla Community Center*

## Successful Boys and Successful Girls Circles

The Successful Boys and Successful Girls Circles project contributed to improving the quality of life of **365 children** across coastal communities in Santa Cruz by strengthening life skills and creating safe spaces for reflection, dialogue, and learning. These circles are designed as structured group processes where participants engage in guided discussions and activities that promote self-awareness, emotional expression, and respectful interaction.



*Participants of the Successful Girls Circle in El Llanito*

The primary objective of the project is the prevention of gender-based violence and the empowerment of children and adolescents. Through a total of 45 sessions, participants worked toward:

- Recognizing different forms of violence
- Strengthening healthy relationships among peers
- Breaking the silence when they or others in their environment are victims of violence
- Recognizing gender socialization
- Increasing their knowledge of human rights

During the first semester of 2025, the Successful **Boys** Circles in Cartagena, Portegolpe, Paraíso, and Veintisiete de Abril—initiated in 2024—were completed. This marked a significant milestone, as it represents the first generation of boys to complete the program in CEPIA's history. Throughout the year, additional cycles were completed in communities including Portegolpe, Cartagena, Veintisiete de Abril, San José de Pinilla, Paraíso, Brasilito, Huacas, Villarreal, and Potrero.

Similarly, the Successful **Girls** Circles initiated in 2024 in La Garita, Tempate, Linderos, El Llanito, and Portegolpe also concluded successfully. New groups were also established during the year in Huacas, Portegolpe, Villarreal, Brasilito, Paso Hondo, Chircó, Lagunilla, San Pedro, Hernández, and Hatillo, expanding the program's reach.

The impact measurement shows that, by the end of the project, 100% of the girls and only 47% of the boys were able to recognize different forms of violence. 100% of the girls and 64% of the boys build healthy relationships among themselves. A total of 2 girls and 4 boys broke the silence when they were victims of violence during the project. 100% of the girls and 50% of the boys have a positive self-image. 100% of the girls and 58% of the boys recognized gender socialization. 100% of the girls and 50% of the boys increased their knowledge of human rights.

Results reflect 10 years of experience working with girls in a mature program. By contrast, the boys' groups have operated for only 1 year and need time to develop stronger outcomes. Work with male populations in rural communities remains challenging, and these initial steps are significant and celebrated.

This measurement does not fully capture the observed changes. Over the 45-week program, boys showed qualitative improvements not reflected in the evaluation, including greater confidence in group expression, reduced physical aggression and negative language, increased collaboration, and more reporting of unhealthy peer behaviors. These changes are illustrated in this [video](#).



*Yoga session with participants from the Successful Boys Circle in Veintisiete de Abril*

## Music School

CEPIA's Music School provided weekly classes to **73 children and adolescents** from various communities, organized into 10 groups. In addition, individualized "Special Talent" lessons were offered to students who demonstrated outstanding musical ability. Through this project, participants were given the opportunity to explore their musical talents by learning to play different instruments and even composing their own pieces.

Classes were delivered directly within the communities; however, transportation was also provided to CEPIA facilities for groups lacking adequate infrastructure.

The Music School showcased students' talents through **two recitals**, as well as performances at community events such as fairs and festivals.



*Music class for school-aged children held at CEPIA facilities*

The program achieved notable success and had a multidimensional impact on participants. According to a survey completed by 40% of participating families, there was a high level of satisfaction, with all respondents indicating they were satisfied or very satisfied with the program. Additionally, 100% of surveyed families reported that children and youth enjoyed attending music classes and observed positive changes, including improved public performance skills, discipline, concentration, and interpersonal relationships.

These results are particularly significant given that most participants had no prior experience with music education or instruments before joining the program, underscoring the project's importance in expanding access to opportunities.

Recitals were especially meaningful moments for both participants and their families, reflecting clear progress in learning processes and growth in musical, expressive, and teamwork skills. Throughout the year, several musical groups were formed, including piano and violin chamber ensembles, a Latin band, a rock band, guitar ensembles, ukulele ensembles, a classical guitar duo, a mixed cimarrona band, and experimental groups.



***San José de Pinilla String Ensemble performing at the end-of-year recital***

A particularly noteworthy achievement was that one student from the Music School successfully auditioned for and was admitted to the Basic Music Program at the *University of Costa Rica*, marking a significant milestone in her artistic development.

## Sunflower Group

The Girasol Group provides recreational and educational activities to 31 children and adolescents with special needs, including diagnoses such as autism and Down syndrome. Activities include music and art classes, beach and pool days, outings, and social events for adolescents.

In 2025, volunteer physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and visiting specialists supported the group. **Music** classes (18 sessions) fostered expression and creativity while strengthening fine and gross motor skills.

Additionally, 4 **art** sessions—led in collaboration with local artists—explored painting, beach glass, and nature-based techniques, promoting creativity, motor development, and environmental awareness through recycled and natural materials.

**Adolescents** participated in 6 social activities, including movie nights, restaurant outings, and a dance event, fostering opportunities for socialization for both participants and their families.

9 **beach and pool outings** were organized, including a special adaptive surf event in collaboration with an international surf association. A total of 13 children and their families also took part in a Christmas celebration with food, gifts, music, and swimming.

CEPIA further hosted a Mother’s Day event, creating a space for mothers to relax and connect through recreational activities, with on-site childcare provided.

Comprehensive support was provided through legal assistance to 1 family, 3 family support packages, and referrals to specialists. Two children received intensive occupational and physical therapy from visiting volunteer professionals.



*Volunteers providing occupational therapy and physical support to children in the group.*

## Arts and Dance

In addition to regular classes, participants engaged in diverse artistic experiences. These included a marine-themed art workshop using recycled materials by *Connect Ocean* at La Marina Flamingo, as well as painting workshops, storytelling, and dance presentations during the Environmental Festival.

On the dance side, the folkloric dance group in Hernández continued to strengthen cultural identity and local heritage among youth, with 18 participants performing across the province.

Through partnerships with *Transportes YMCJ* and *Elevate Movement Studio*, **12 children and youth** received high-quality dance instruction. Additionally, **20 students** from La Garita Vieja were transported weekly to Flamingo to participate in antigravity classes, which support both physical strength and cognitive development through coordination and movement. *Breakdance* groups were also established in Brasilito and San José de Pinilla, sparking interest in new artistic disciplines.



*Antigravity class with students from La Garita Nueva*

## Martial Arts

Through a partnership with *Hero Academy*, the Jiu-Jitsu program engaged **60 children and youth** across 3 groups from multiple communities. Participants also benefited from Muay Thai classes. These disciplines promote physical fitness, flexibility, and coordination, while also fostering discipline, respect, and self-awareness.

Belt promotion ceremonies recognized participants' commitment and progress, and the year concluded with a celebration bringing together 55 participants from 8 communities.



*Jiu-Jitsu end-of-year celebration held through the collaboration between CEPIA and Hero Academy*

## Skate

The skate program, in collaboration with *Happy Feet*, provided two weekly classes to **27 participants** from Matapalo and Hernández, led by national champion Steven Villarreal. In June, participants celebrated World Skate Day at the Civic Center for Peace in Santa Cruz.

In the second half of the year, the program expanded to include new participants and opened an intermediate-level team of 15 youth from additional communities.



*World Skate Day celebration in Santa Cruz*

## Surf for Youth

The *Surf for Youth* project operated across three levels: *beginner groups, an intermediate team, and an elite team.*

During 2025, beginner classes reached **20 participants** from Playa Grande and San José de Pinilla, including youth with little or no prior exposure to the ocean, enabling them to develop fundamental safety and surfing skills. A clear technical progression was documented, as participants advanced from foam boards to soft-top and hard boards, as well as to smaller-sized equipment.

The intermediate team included **11 surfers** between the ages of 12 and 17 from the communities of Villarreal, Huacas, Brasilito, Portegolpe, Santa Rosa, Matapalo, and Paraíso. Participants engaged in weekly training sessions with highly qualified coaches and, through CEPIA's transportation support—which ensured each participant could travel safely from their community to Tamarindo for training—access to consistent participation was made possible.

In July, the team also traveled to Nosara to participate in a friendly competition, where one athlete achieved a podium finish.

The elite team, composed of **4 athletes**, competed in national and international circuits with CEPIA's economic support. Notably, athlete Lía Díaz became national champion in women's longboard and secured second place at the Pan American Surf Championship in Guatemala 2025.

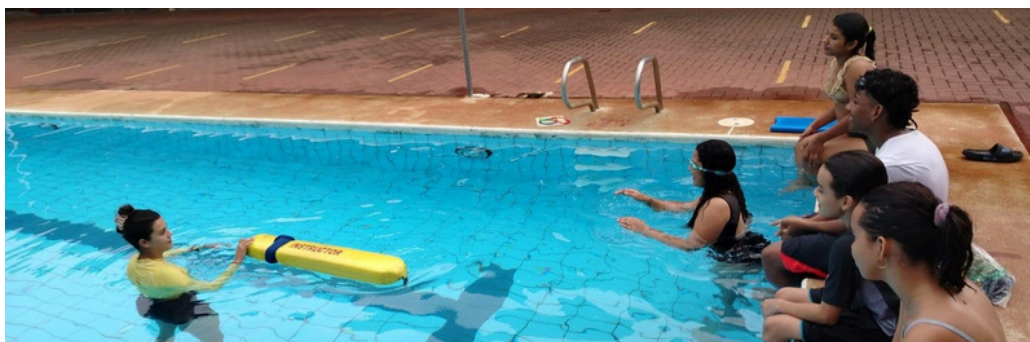
Additional activities included an International Surf Day event with *Iguana Surf*, offering introductory lessons to 12 adolescents from Huacas, Cartagena and Portegolpe.



***Participante del programa fortaleciendo habilidades y confianza a través del deporte***

## Swimming

The swimming program aims to reduce access barriers and provide essential water safety skills. Twenty-four children from Playa Grande attended 2 weekly classes, and a new adolescent group was launched in partnership with *Connect Ocean*, growing from four to ten participants by the end of the year.



*Swimming lessons for adolescents at the CRIA private school pool*

## Tennis

At the end of 2025, two tennis sessions (new class) were held in Las Catalinas, engaging **16 children** from Portegolpe, La Garita Nueva, La Garita Vieja, Matapalo, Huacas, Brasilito y Potrero. Through interactive and playful activities, participants learned by doing, combining physical and cognitive engagement in an inclusive environment.



*Children experiencing a new sport*

## Soccer

Through partnerships with 3 established community soccer schools, more than **100 children** from Veintisiete de Abril, Santa Rosa y Trapiche soccer schools participated in regular training and tournaments. The program also provided equipment to support local teams.



Players from the program during a friendly match

## Socio-Educational Workshop

Thanks to the impact of the Girls' Circle in the community of La Garita Nueva, in May, the school requested that the After-School program team facilitate a workshop for parents, legal guardians, and caregivers of the Ricardo Angulo Vallejos School. As a result, the workshop titled **“Informed Parenting: Healthy Sexuality and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse”** was delivered to 10 mothers and fathers from the community, equipping these families with tools to support their children more healthily and openly throughout their developmental processes.

## Testimonials

The following testimonials reflect the experiences of participating children and adolescents, their families, and facilitators, highlighting the impact of CEPIA's Extracurricular Programs:

**Why do you think CEPIA's extracurricular classes are important?  
What do you like most about them?**

**Stacy, 12 years old – Skate Classes:** *“What I like about skateboarding are the ramps and the way Steven teaches. These classes are very important to me because I love skateboarding—it has become my passion.”*

**Karissa, 16 years old – Surf for Youth Intermediate Team:** *“Surf for Youth has been like a second home for me, a place that makes me feel good. There, they teach me things that go beyond the ocean, like values and a different way of seeing life. Every time I arrive at training, I feel calm and at peace. Not only do I learn more about the ocean and surfing, which I’m so passionate about, but I also clear my mind, enjoy myself, and grow. I am truly grateful for all the support they have given me.”*

**Hellen, Mother – Adolescent Swimming Group:** *“I found the program to be excellent. They learn to swim and have fun in the water. The instructor teaches them safe and effective techniques so they can enjoy the water with confidence. In these classes, they enjoy themselves, they learn, and they relax—they are very good. My son really likes it, which is why he participates, enjoys it, and learns in that environment. Thank you for that.”*

**Sara, Mother – Music School Brasilito:** *“I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to CEPIA for its invaluable support and commitment to children, especially to my son. Thank you for your dedication and for creating such a positive impact on our lives as a family. Your work in support and education has been fundamental to his development. I feel very honored to have your support.*

*Thank you for your constant encouragement and for believing in each of the young people who, day by day, have one more reason to learn. I truly appreciate everything—for your effort and dedication. May God bless you always.”*

**Herlyn, Father – Boys’ Circle:** *“Hello teacher, good evening—how are you? I want to thank you for your patience, effort, and dedication to this project that concluded today. Thank you very much because I know this will help them greatly in their growth and in their development as good children and as individuals. I am truly very grateful to you personally—thank you for your dedication. I know it wasn’t easy, but in the end you achieved the objective. The boys were fascinated, proud of themselves. Thank you again for guiding them, and to CEPIA for the project.”*

**Steven Villarreal, Skate Instructor:** *“I feel honored to have the opportunity to teach skateboarding to the youth of CEPIA. It is a pleasure to see their enthusiasm and motivation to learn and improve in this sport.*

*Through my experience, I have seen how skateboarding can have a positive impact on young people. It teaches them to overcome obstacles, to persevere through mistakes, and to develop a growth mindset. It also allows them to develop physical and coordination skills, as well as to work as a team and support one another. Overall, I am grateful to be able to share my passion for skateboarding with CEPIA’s youth and to see how this sport can positively influence their lives.”*

**Sugey Álvarez, Mentor – Girls’ Circle:** *“During the Girls’ Circle sessions, in the activity titled ‘Sexual abuse is out of bounds,’ one girl found the courage to break her silence and share a situation of abuse she had experienced years earlier. Thanks to the environment of trust created with her peers and mentor, she felt safe enough to express what she had gone through and to ask for help.*

*When speaking with her mother, she confirmed that a report had been filed at the time and that the girl had received psychological support. However, she acknowledged that the process has not yet been fully overcome, and therefore made the decision to resume therapeutic support to provide her daughter with the care she still needs.”*

# Psychology and Holistic Health

## Program Description

The program is aligned with Costa Rica's National Mental Health Policy 2024–2034 and is implemented through a Comprehensive Mental Health Care Model. Its primary goal is to **strengthen the mental and emotional well-being of children, adolescents, and adults living in conditions of high vulnerability and psychosocial risk in the coastal communities of Santa Cruz.**

The program is further informed by cross-cutting approaches grounded in human rights, youth development, gender equity, and inclusion, ensuring that the rights of children and adolescents, migrants, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and women are both recognized and protected.

Its core objectives are to promote mental and emotional well-being and to empower individuals in vulnerable situations through individual, family, and group therapeutic care, holistic therapies, psychoeducational workshops, and inter-institutional coordination.

Under this comprehensive model, activities carried out between January and December 2025 spanned four levels of intervention: *a) health and mental health promotion, b) prevention, protection, and care, c) primary and secondary care, and d) social inclusion.*

## Psychology Workshops within CIDAI

Within CEPIA's Comprehensive Child Development and Daycare Center (CIDAI), the Psychology and Holistic Health Program delivered **28 psychoeducational workshops** focused on prevention and the promotion of overall well-being.

These sessions addressed key topics aimed at strengthening **life skills, including decision-making, assertive communication, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and the development of personal life projects among participants.**

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Health. National Mental Health Policy 2024–2034 and Action Plan 2025–2029. San José, Costa Rica: Ministry of Health, 2024.



*CIDAI beneficiaries participating in a psychoeducational workshop.*

In coordination with the **Costa Rican Institute on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (IAFA)**, two psychoeducational modules (comprising **9 sessions in total**) were delivered to both parents and youth groups. These focused on substance use prevention, strengthening protective factors, and fostering healthy family environments, promoting active and shared responsibility among families in prevention processes.

Additionally, **3 workshops** were conducted for CIDAI teachers on the application of **positive discipline** techniques, reinforcing respectful, preventive, and socioemotionally aligned educational practices.

A **specialized training** was also delivered to **mentors of boys' and girls' circles and CIDAI teaching staff** on the correct application of **protocols for responding to sexual abuse, violence, and parental neglect, as well as crisis intervention protocols for behavioral situations**. This ensured safer environments, timely responses, and the protection of children's rights.

## Psychology and Holistic Health for Minors and Adults in Coastal Communities

CEPIA provided **individual and group psychotherapeutic support** to children, adolescents, and adults, addressing specific emotional and psychosocial needs. Interventions were delivered through evidence-based approaches, including systemic family therapy, EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing), crisis intervention, and play therapy.

The program reached a total of **245 individuals**, including 95 children and adolescents from CIDAI and 150 external beneficiaries (116 minors and 34 adults). Gender distribution was balanced, with 122 males and 123 females.

A total of **1,737 individual therapy sessions** and **15 group therapy sessions** were conducted.



**Adolescent in an individual counseling session in Brasilito.**

The predominant nationalities of the population served were **177 Costa Rican, 59 Nicaraguan, 4 Venezuelan, 3 Colombian, and 2 unspecified.**

The majority of participants receiving services came from the communities of Villarreal, Brasilito, Huacas, La Garita Nueva, and Matapalo. Additional participants were reached from El Llanito, Santa Rosa, Portegolpe, Veintisiete de Abril, and El Llano, reflecting the program's broad territorial coverage across coastal communities.

Community	Number of participants
Villareal	39
Brasilito	37
Huacas	36
La Garita Nueva	25
Matapalo	19

The most common **reasons for consultation** included emotional symptoms, behavioral disorders, depressive symptoms, gender-based violence, family conflict, and grief.

The program implemented **two therapeutic groups**. The first consisted of a positive discipline group for mothers, with a total of **5 participants** over 7 sessions. This process focused on strengthening parenting skills, promoting respectful communication between parents and children, and supporting positive behavior management strategies within the home.

The second group focused on anxiety management for adolescents, with **6 participants** over 8 sessions. Within this space, participants developed key life skills such as self-awareness, resilience, adaptability, empathy, and creativity. The process supported the development of emotional regulation strategies, stress management, and healthier coping mechanisms, all within a safe and respectful environment for young people.



*Closing of the therapeutic group, yoga session, and breathing techniques with Marian Paniagua.*

At the community level, the program facilitated a **sexual abuse prevention session** in Tamarindo, in coordination with the Ministry of Public Security's Sports Leagues. This activity enabled timely access to information for 30 adolescents, both male and female, and strengthened collaboration with this partner, resulting in 5 external referrals to the program.



*Group of adolescents with tools for the prevention of sexual abuse.*

In terms of institutional coordination, the Psychology Program made **17 external referrals to the Ministry of Health and the Costa Rican Social Security Fund (CCSS)** due to cases involving suicide risk. Additionally, **2 psychological care reports** were submitted to the National Child Welfare Agency (PANI), and two formal complaints were filed in response to violations of the rights of minors.

Additionally, 4 visits were conducted to educational centers to verify the academic and family situations of children receiving therapeutic support, ensuring a more comprehensive and contextualized approach to care.

## Victims of Human Trafficking

14 victims of human trafficking were referred to CEPIA by *The Warnath Group* for comprehensive care, recovery, and reintegration. All victims were women from different communities in Guanacaste, including Liberia, Nicoya, Santa Cruz, among others. To achieve this objective, the following actions were carried out between November 2024 and September 2025 in Guanacaste, Costa Rica.

- **Psychological Care** : 11 of the 14 victims received psychological care through appropriate, sensitive, and trauma-informed support. A total of 66 psychotherapy sessions were conducted, both in person and online. In addition, 8 sessions were recorded as no-shows. 2 victims received psychiatric medication after being referred to the public healthcare system through the CCSS.
- **Social Assistance and Material Support** all victims received financial aid following sessions with the social worker (case manager), during which their life plans, personal goals, and personal and professional needs were explored. A total of 77 sessions were carried out at the community center, by phone, or at the victims' homes. All 14 victims received financial support to cover personal and household needs, including phone expenses and food, due to their economic vulnerability. 1 pregnant victim received medical follow-up and baby supplies.
- **Legal Assistance:** 10 victims required legal support, and a total of 36 sessions were conducted. The remaining victims did not request or require legal intervention. 2 visits to the courts were carried out to obtain legal information and accompany victims through the process. An analysis was conducted to better understand the legal processes in place, or lack thereof, in each case. 2 victims were referred to the Ministry of Justice, and at the same time, the process of official accreditation as victims of human trafficking was initiated through the government via the IRE, to ensure priority access to government services and ongoing follow-up and guidance from a social worker. The process is currently under the responsibility of the San José prosecutor. 2 victims of labor trafficking received comprehensive legal guidance regarding their rights. In one case, the employer modified their behavior and treatment, ultimately respecting the woman's rights. In the other case, the victim left her job. Both cases of labor trafficking were formally reported by CEPIA to the Ministry of Labor, which initiated an investigation process.
- **Education, Training, and Economic Empowerment:** 8 victims participated in informational sessions on educational opportunities, including school enrollment, reintegration into the education system, vocational training, life skills development, and tutoring. A total of 23 individual and group sessions were conducted. 3 victims received intensive guidance over several weeks to apply for a scholarship from the Office of the First Lady of Costa Rica. 3 victims were awarded the scholarship, although only 2 accepted it, as it covers 50% of university costs. 2 women received 12 online English classes. 3 women received mentorship to develop their businesses. 13 women received financial support for small business initiatives or educational needs. 1 woman received guidance in preparation for a job interview.

Throughout the project, 20 coordination meetings were held with public institutions and organizations, including Fundación Acción Joven, IMAS, CEN-CINAI, ASEMBIS, the Ministry of Labor, ASONIPED, and The Warnath Group. These meetings aimed to ensure effective coordination of intervention strategies and to facilitate referrals to additional support services.

Participants attended two group gatherings that foster connection, healing, and social interaction. The first, held on June 5 at the CEPIA community center, welcomed a young mother and her newborn, while the second, on August 14, marked Mother's Day.

During both sessions, participants engaged in group discussions and received sound healing and Access Bars therapy.



***Beneficiaries participating in a sound healing session at the CEPIA community center in Huacas***

## Holistic Health

From a holistic approach, weekly group yoga sessions were offered to the community. In addition, 10 individuals benefited from individual therapeutic yoga sessions, and 12 individuals received individual Access Bars sessions.

Furthermore, 1 eye care campaign was carried out in partnership with Ojos del Mar at the school in La Garita Nueva, benefiting 16 teachers and 59 children, of whom 5 required corrective lenses to improve their vision.



***Beneficiary of the campaigns organized by CEPIA and Ojos del Mar Clinic.***

## Testimonials

Through the therapeutic support provided to a 6-year-old boy who had been a victim of sexual abuse, it was possible not only to reduce the sexualized behaviors he had been displaying toward his classmates, but also to achieve a significant improvement in his mood and behavior both at home and in the school environment. The therapeutic process also enabled the development of protective tools to prevent potential risk situations or recurrence of sexual abuse. In addition, the emotional support helped the child face the judicial process with greater calm, understanding, and realism.

Furthermore, individual therapeutic support proved highly beneficial for a 15-year-old adolescent who lost his mother at the beginning of the year. His process focused on emotional expression and validation related to grief, strengthening life skills, establishing self-care routines, reducing risk situations, and building a life project based on his strengths, interests, and personal circumstances.

# Training and Employability

## Program Description

The Training and Employability Program strengthens the socioeconomic inclusion capacities of adults in vulnerable situations.

The program's specific objectives are to ensure that adults in vulnerable conditions complete vocational training, that graduates improve their employment situation within 4 months of completing their courses, and that unemployed participants are able to secure jobs. Additionally, the program seeks to strengthen the teaching capacities and instructional skills of trainers.

## Activities Implemented and Results

During 2025, this program delivered a diversified academic offering designed to respond to the demands of the technical labor market and strengthen the competitive profile of its participants. This effort was structured around 3 main pillars: specialized technical training, inter-institutional partnerships, and employability support.

During this period, **424 individuals** enrolled in the program, representing a 4.69% increase compared to 2024. By the end of 2025, 315 participants had completed their cycle in the program, either through graduation or withdrawal, while 109 remain active and are expected to complete in 2026.

Of the 315 individuals who completed the program, 199 were men, representing 63%, and 117 were women, representing 37%. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 59 years old. Out of those who completed the cycle, 273 individuals, equivalent to 86.7%, successfully graduated, while 42 participants withdrew before completing their training.

The technical training offer focused on high-demand areas within the service and construction sectors. The program delivered 4 technical courses in **Electrical Installations and Plumbing**, reaching a total of 64 students through a small-group model designed to ensure quality learning outcomes.

During this cycle, technical specialization courses demonstrated strong retention. The **Electrical Installations** course was completed in 2 phases: the first in January with 13 graduates, and the second in September with all 12 participants certified. The **Plumbing course for residential and hotel settings** graduated 12 participants in January, while a second cohort that began in September is currently in its practical training phase and is expected to complete in January 2026. Overall, these training processes achieved a 77% success rate, certifying 37 new technicians prepared to enter the labor market.



*Graduation ceremony of the Electrical Installations course, March 2025*

The success of technical training is further confirmed through employment outcomes. A follow-up survey conducted with 54 graduates from vocational courses between 2021 and 2024 revealed that **89% are currently employed**, while only 11% are actively seeking employment. This employability indicator is reinforced by the program's personalized support approach. During the year, 28 individuals received guidance in developing their CVs and strengthening their job interview skills.

The program was further strengthened through volunteer collaboration, enabling 32 additional individuals to access **specialized training in electric micromobility repair, digital tools for income generation, and professional massage**. The electric micromobility repair course has already graduated its first 3 participants, while the programs in digital tools for generating income from home, with 11 participants, and professional massage, with 12 participants, will continue into 2026.

As an innovative initiative to expand community access, a self-funded **Basic English** course was implemented in partnership with the Lexis language school. Under this co-responsibility model, where students cover instructional costs and CEPIA provides infrastructure, 9 participants successfully certified at the A1 level, demonstrating the viability of shared investment models for language learning.

Likewise, the strategic partnership with the **National Training Institute (INA)** was essential in expanding the program's reach, allowing for the implementation of 19 high-value courses. Highlights include **computing** courses with 21 certified participants and an intensive English for Culinary Arts program in which 28 students completed their training, demonstrating a high level of commitment, while 52 additional participants continue progressing in this process. The **Customer Service** course achieved an 80% success rate from an initial group of 25 participants, and the **Food Handling** course reached a 100% completion rate with 21 graduates.

In the maritime sector, the **Basic Seamanship** course has completed 8 out of its 9 modules, including critical training in First Aid, Fire Prevention and Firefighting, and Personal Safety and Social Responsibility.



*First Aid module of the Basic Seamanship course*

The program implemented a comprehensive Employability Strengthening and Job Placement strategy, providing integrated support to ensure that training translates into real employment opportunities. Workshops were conducted focusing on CV optimization and career goal setting, reinforcing participants' commitment to their own development. In parallel, between May and December, individualized support was provided to 28 individuals for CV development and interview preparation.

Lastly, active participation in **PROCOMER's Talent CR job fair** facilitated the establishment of partnerships with local companies, enabling the identification of job vacancies and strengthening direct networks for beneficiary placement.

## Testimonials

One graduate of the self-funded Basic English course represents the spirit of perseverance that drives the program. Motivated by the desire to strengthen her professional profile, she took on the challenge of learning a second language as a strategic tool for her career development.

After successfully completing her training, she launched her own fast-food business through a food truck located in the tourist area of Playa Potrero. In this context, English has evolved from an academic goal into a critical asset for serving international clients and enhancing the competitiveness of her business.

Beyond technical training, she highlights that the course was the catalyst that sparked her commitment to continuous learning. With a clear vision for the future, she is now preparing to advance to higher levels of English proficiency, demonstrating how CEPIA's technical training programs transform individual potential into drivers of local economic development.

# Women's Empowerment

## Women Entrepreneurs

### Program Description

#### Goal

The program strengthens the technical, administrative, personal, and material capacities of women entrepreneurs in vulnerable situations, promoting increased income and business sustainability. The women participating in this program demonstrate high levels of resilience, willingness to learn, and commitment, yet face structural barriers related to access to financing, formalization, administrative tools, and technical support.

The program responds to these needs through comprehensive processes of training, mentorship, and personal development, aimed at improving economic autonomy and the sustainability of their businesses.

#### Objectives

The main objective of the support process is to strengthen participants' businesses in a comprehensive manner. First, the program sought to enhance technical entrepreneurial skills by providing practical tools to improve the quality, sustainability, and growth potential of their initiatives. Complementarily, it focused on strengthening administrative capacities to improve resource management and decision-making.

The program also incorporated the development of life skills and improvements in business conditions by facilitating access to inputs, equipment, and necessary operational adjustments. Finally, it promoted business formalization, encouraging compliance with legal and administrative requirements as a key strategy for growth, sustainability, and access to new opportunities.

## Implemented Activities

The process began with **17 individual interviews** that enabled the identification of needs, the development of initial diagnostics, and the creation of personalized work plans. Additionally, **2 in-person entrepreneurship workshops** were conducted, focusing on strengthening technical skills, identifying market opportunities, improving products, and developing basic commercialization strategies, while promoting practical learning and peer exchange. These workshops also included life skills components aimed at strengthening self-esteem, communication, resilience, and personal well-being as a foundation for sustainable entrepreneurship.



**Workshop with volunteer Katia Bermúdez**

Specialized support was provided through **home visits to 14 entrepreneurs**, allowing for a deeper understanding of their production contexts and individual challenges. This process was complemented by **151 personalized mentorship sessions** conducted on a biweekly basis through digital platforms such as *Google Meet* and *WhatsApp*. These sessions focused on developing critical capacities including strategic planning, decision-making, and life skills.

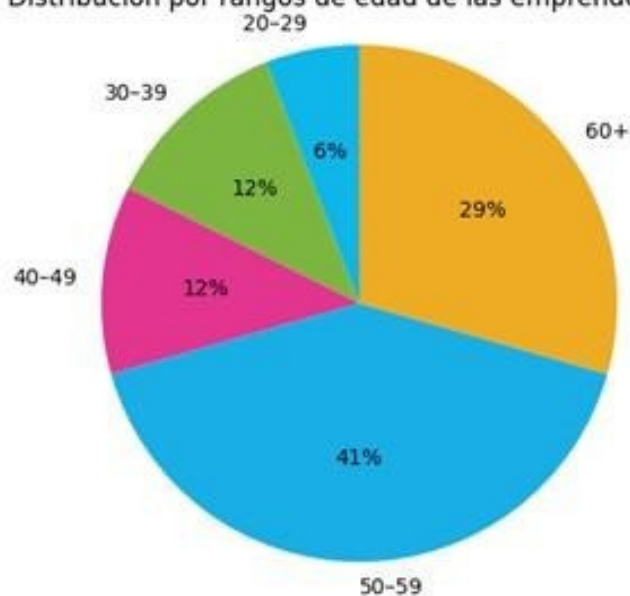
The training cycle concluded with the **development of business plans** and accounting sessions for the 17 participants, equipping them with key tools for financial and professional management.

## Beneficiary Population

During 2025, the program included **17 women** leading small businesses, most of them informal or subsistence-based, with the goal of generating income and improving their quality of life. Throughout the year, participants implemented various entrepreneurial strategies, adapting to economic and seasonal conditions while facing challenges such as transportation limitations, financial constraints, fluctuating demand, and health-related issues.

The group included Costa Rican, Nicaraguan, and Colombian women, some with refugee status and others already naturalized.

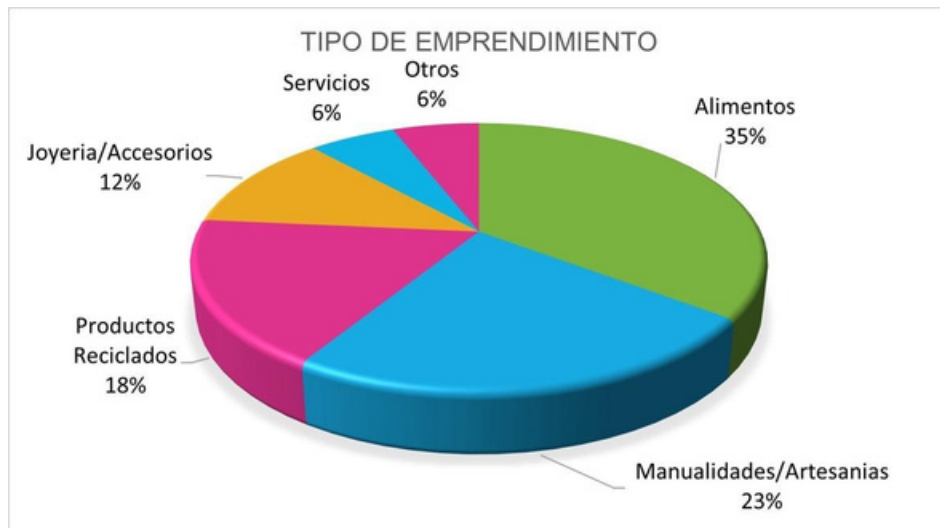
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*This graph shows that the majority of participants are concentrated between 50 and 59 years old, followed by a significant group of women aged 60 and above*



Currently, the program includes women from 8 communities in the canton of Santa Cruz. Most participants have not completed secondary education, although many have training in their areas of specialization, including cooking, sewing, massage, and crafts. Several have also participated in programs offered by INA and IMAS to strengthen administrative skills, and 2 participants have basic university-level education.



Most businesses are related to food sales, many of them based on traditional Guanacastecan cuisine. The group also includes artisans, jewelry designers, and service-based businesses. In terms of business stage, **53%** are in an **initial phase** without clear organizational structures, **35%** are in a **development phase requiring strengthened management and financial systems**, and **12%** are in **early-stage formation**. Additionally, 73% of participants have more than 3 years of experience.

## Results

**Skills and Confidence:** 100% of participants improved their entrepreneurial competencies and applied business plans, while 91% reported feeling more confident in managing and growing their businesses. All participants indicated they would recommend the program to other entrepreneurs. Mentorship strengthened financial discipline, assertive communication, creativity in promotion, and consistency in business management.

**Commercial Management and marketing:** 35% of participants implemented WhatsApp Business as a sales channel. Participants developed skills in product photography, Canva design, and basic marketing strategies, improving visual presentation and market differentiation.

**Financial Management:** 47% of participants, representing 8 entrepreneurs, reported income increases ranging from 27% to over 180%. Another 12%, representing 2 participants, maintained stable income, which is a relevant outcome in contexts of high vulnerability characterized by seasonality and structural limitations. An additional 12%, representing 2 participants, experienced a decrease in income, primarily due to external factors such as health conditions, demand variability, and mobility restrictions, rather than a decline in capacity or commitment. It is important to note that 19%, representing 5 participants, did not provide financial data for impact measurement, despite maintaining active sales, indicating either discomfort in sharing this information or a lack of consistent record-keeping practices.

**Formalization and growth planning:** 12% of participants advanced in formalization processes, and all entrepreneurs developed a plan for sustainable business growth.

**Satisfaction and Program Value:** mentorship sessions received 100% positive feedback, and workshops achieved an average rating of 4.7 out of 5, highlighting their contribution to confidence, practical application of knowledge, and economic autonomy.

These indicators of growth are reflected in tangible achievements among participants. The business **Zab-Isaac Souvenirs** successfully expanded by opening a physical sales point at the Tamarindo Artisan Market. Similarly, **Carolina** is in an advanced expansion phase, planning to relocate her massage and aesthetic services to her own premises in the coastal area.

**Yaobet** developed her digital catalog, defining pricing and improving client communication, which enabled her to achieve her first sales in 2025 and sustain increased monthly income.

Formalization has also been a key pillar. The business **Ventanita la Gata** successfully completed legal and financial requirements to access seed capital from IMAS, with plans to open a small restaurant in 2026. Likewise, the business identity of family initiatives such as **Hermanas Contreras** has been strengthened through branding processes, including logo development, and they are advancing in the planning of their fast-food business with institutional support.



***Entrepreneurs with their 2025 certificates***

# Vida Mujer Project

## Program Description

The Vida Mujer Project ensures that women in vulnerable situations can fully exercise their **sexual and reproductive rights**. To achieve this, the program provides **gynecological care, clear and accessible sexual education, facilitates access to long-term contraceptive methods such as intrauterine devices (IUDs), and ensures medical follow-up** after consultations and outreach campaigns.

During the initial months, the operational model was reviewed and refined, leading to the development of a medical and administrative **protocol** for the project. This protocol establishes guidelines for medical care, campaign logistics, and patient follow-up. **Communication** strategies were strengthened through the updating of the Facebook page, the creation of an Instagram account with educational content, and the design of printed materials and infographics. In addition, the digital **registration** form was optimized to improve data collection and monitoring.

Starting in October 2025, the project benefited from a **mixed healthcare model** through the national public health system (CCSS), strengthening its service capacity. As part of its comprehensive approach, the program provided clinical follow-up to patients with high-risk HPV results. With the support of volunteer specialist physicians, it was possible to perform colposcopies<sup>3</sup> and biopsies for women who required them, enabling timely diagnostic evaluation and early detection of precancerous lesions.

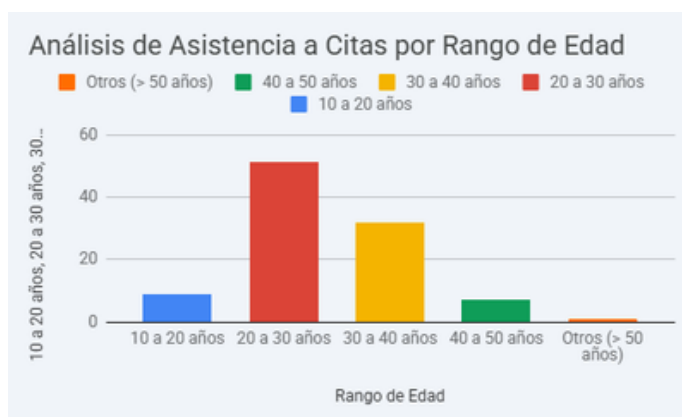
This specialized support enhanced the program's capacity to resolve cases and reduced barriers to accessing studies that are typically unavailable to women in vulnerable conditions. Clear referral pathways to the public health system were also established for cases requiring further management.

<sup>3</sup> An outpatient medical procedure used to closely examine the cervix, vagina, and vulva using a lighted magnifying instrument called a colposcope.

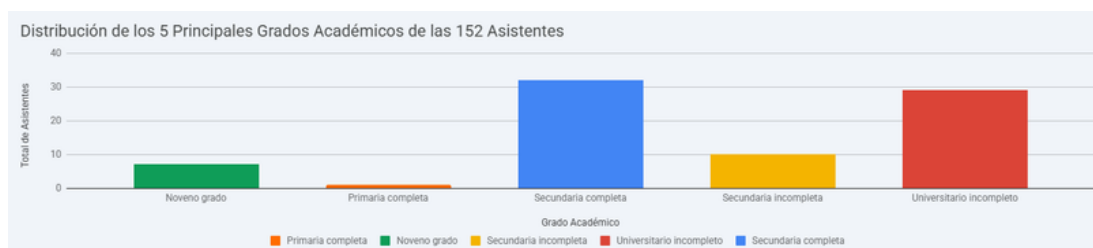
## Beneficiary Population

The program served **152 women between the ages of 15 and 49**, all biologically capable of conception and sexually active. Many were adolescent mothers, migrants, or women in situations of social risk. They face limited access to healthcare due to economic, geographic, or administrative barriers, and most do not have health insurance.

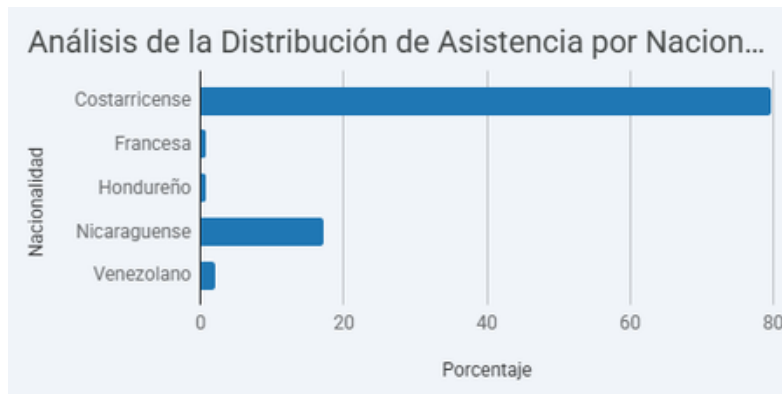
Demographic analysis shows that the highest participation was among women aged 20 to 40. The **20 to 30 age group represented 53.95%** (82 women), followed by the **30 to 40 group with 30.26%** (46 women), confirming that the program is reaching women in their most active reproductive years.



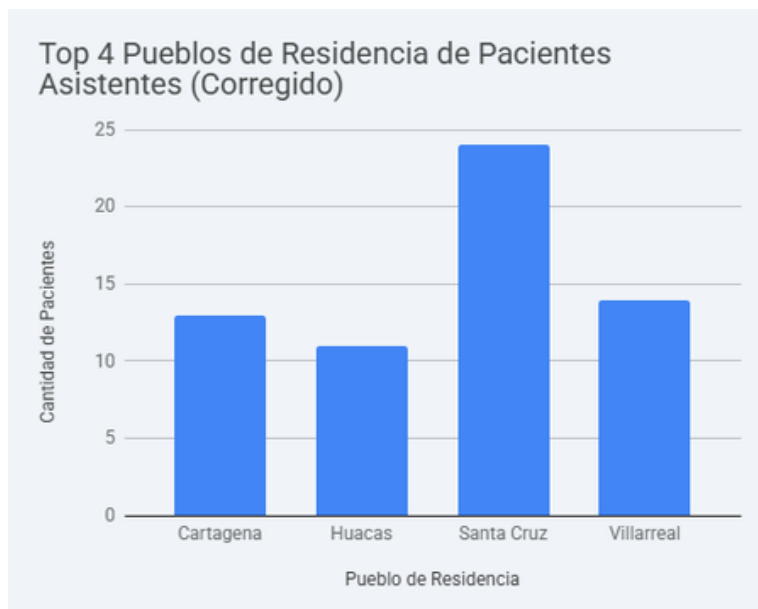
In terms of educational background, the most common levels were completed secondary education and incomplete university studies. Among the 79 participants included in the five most frequent educational categories, the majority had **completed high school or initiated higher education**, which helps inform more effective health communication and education strategies.



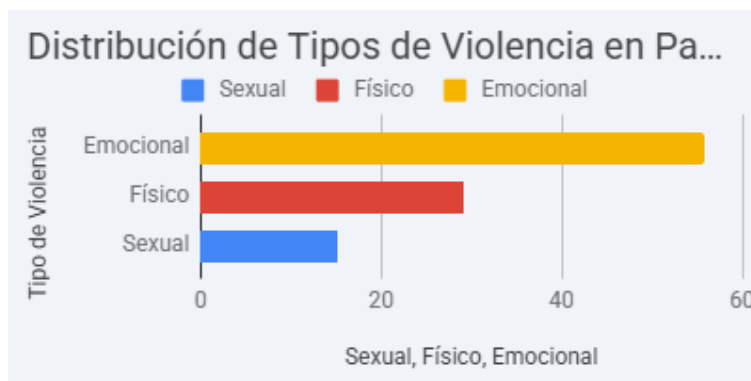
Regarding nationality, most participants were **Costa Rican (79.61%)**, followed by **Nicaraguan women (17.11%)**, reflecting the program's reach among highly vulnerable migrant populations.



Geographically, the 152 patients came from **41 different communities** across the cantons of Santa Cruz, Nicoya, and Liberia, demonstrating broad territorial coverage. The highest concentration of participants came from the Santa Cruz canton, particularly Santa Cruz center.



A significant social finding is that approximately 36% of patients reported a **history of violence, predominantly emotional violence (55.2%), followed by physical (28.7%) and sexual (14.9%)**. This reinforces the need for a comprehensive and sensitive care approach.



*Dr. Mariana Trejos with a survivor of human trafficking.*

## Results

During the period, **355 women** registered through the digital form, reflecting high demand for the service. Of these, 324 patients (91.27%) were successfully scheduled, demonstrating strong operational efficiency, while 31 patients (8.73%) were not scheduled due mainly to geographic limitations and contact difficulties.

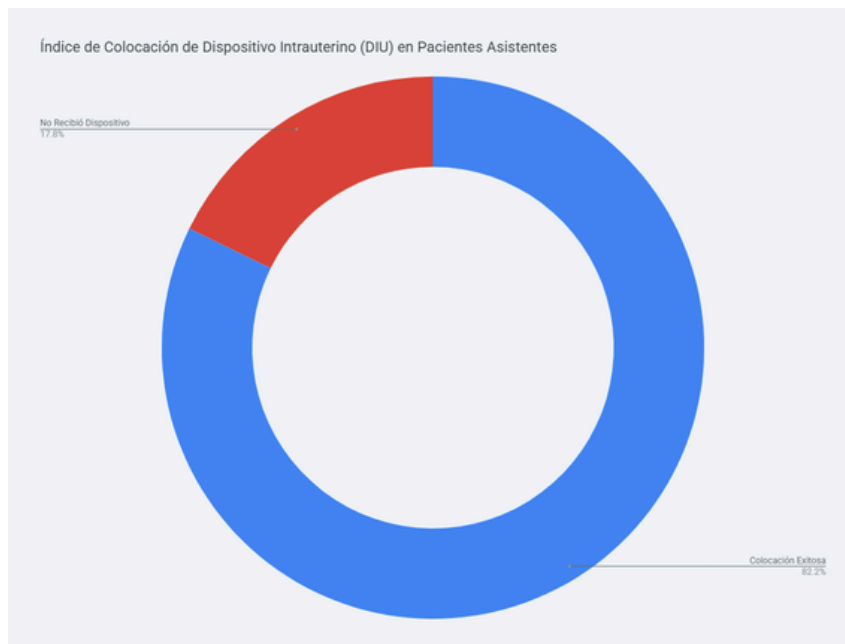


Attendance remains a key challenge. Of the **324 scheduled patients, only 152 (46.91%) attended their appointment, while 172 (53.09%) did not.** This gap between intent and actual service utilization directly impacts resource efficiency.

### Assistance of Scheduled Patients

Assistance Status	Number of Patients
Shown up	152
Did not show up	172
<b>Total of Scheduled Patients</b>	<b>324</b>

In terms of clinical care, 125 intrauterine devices were placed, representing 82.24% of attending patients. In 27 cases (17.76%), insertion was not performed due to medical, anatomical, or patient-informed decisions, reflecting a safe, ethical, and individualized clinical practice.



Specific Reasons for Non-Placement of the IUD	Number	Percentage of Subtotal (27)
Narrowing (no children)	6	22.22%
Removal	4	14.81%
Patient declined procedure	4	14.81%
Current IUD	3	11.11%
Pregnant	2	7.41%
C-Section	2	7.41%
Less Common Reasons	6	22.22%

Regarding prevention, **40 Pap smears (26.32%)** and **21 HPV tests (13.82%)** were conducted, strengthening early detection efforts for cervical cancer. Additionally, 8 patients (5.26%) received timely treatment for sexually transmitted infections.

It is important to highlight that **100% of patients received follow-up phone calls**, ensuring continuity of care. A total of **85.5% resolved their needs in a single visit, while 14.5% required additional in-person follow-up** not related to complications from the procedure. The program also strengthened its diagnostic capacity through volunteer gynecology specialists who facilitated access to ultrasounds, colposcopies, and biopsies.

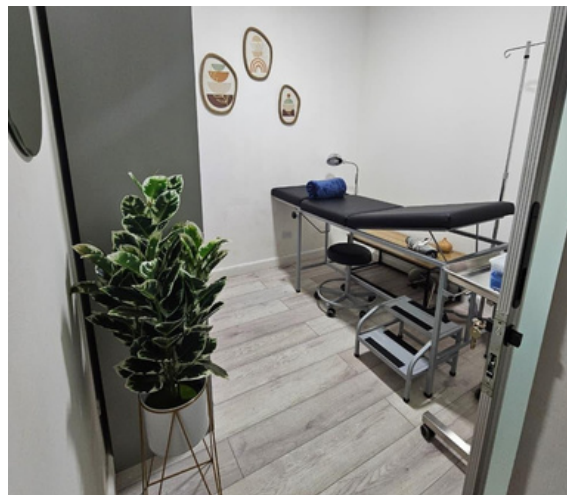


**No immediate or post-procedure complications were reported** during the evaluation period, including IUD insertions. This reflects high technical quality, strict adherence to clinical protocols, and a safe, individualized approach to patient care.

The program evolved from a model focused solely on contraceptive insertion to a comprehensive gynecological care approach. **Each consultation now lasts approximately 30 to 45 minutes**, allowing for in-depth, personalized, and educational care. Sessions include education on female anatomy, understanding the IUD, identification of STI warning signs, and prevention strategies through Pap smears and HPV testing. Topics such as mammography after age 40, consent, female pleasure, condom use, and sexual and reproductive rights are also addressed, promoting informed decision-making.

This approach has had a significant impact on patients' emotional well-being. Satisfaction surveys show that 97% rated the care as excellent and the remainder as good, with no negative feedback. Patients consistently highlight the human-centered approach, clarity of information, and ongoing support.

The project also participated in educational talks within CEPIA's Women's Circle, at the Santa Cruz Civic Center, and in health fairs organized by the nursing program of Universidad Latina.

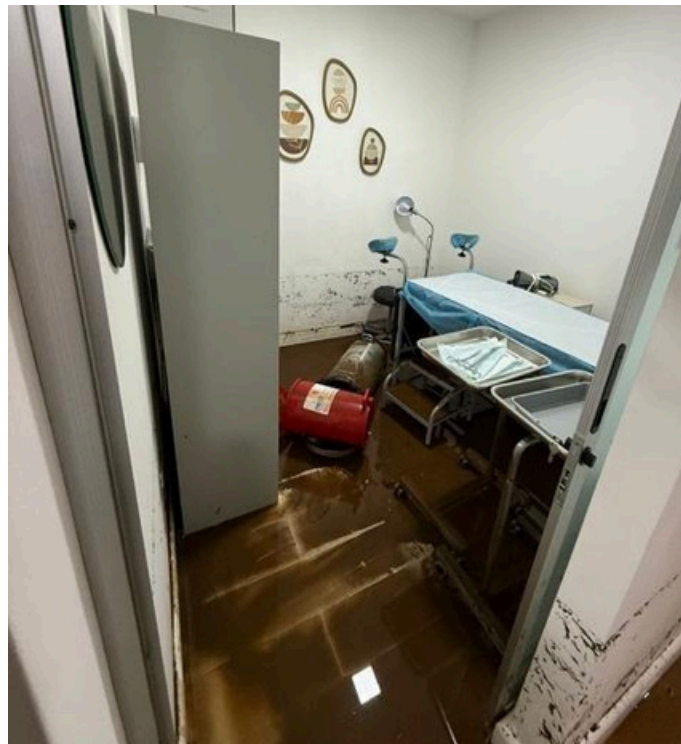


***Clinical office of the Women's Life Project within North Pacific Dental Clinic.***

The main challenge identified is low attendance at scheduled appointments. Despite confirmations, reminders, and occasional transportation support, 53.09% of scheduled patients did not attend. Reported reasons include fear of the procedure, family organization changes, work schedule shifts in the tourism sector, and illness.

Budget limitations persist for complementary tests such as Pap smears, HPV testing, and STI screening, as well as the lack of an in-house ultrasound machine, restricting comprehensive follow-up care.

In October, the clinic experienced flooding caused by Hurricane Melissa. Thanks to the support of volunteers, friends, and family members, services were able to continue.



***Impact of Hurricane Melissa on the Women’s Life Project clinic***

## Testimonials

As part of additional observations, multiple positive messages were received from beneficiaries, directly reflecting the real impact of the project on women's lives. These testimonies highlight not only improvements in physical health but also in emotional well-being, autonomy, and informed decision-making.

*"I have a 7-year-old son, and I want to finish my studies. I chose to get the copper T because I didn't want injections anymore—they were very painful and my body was rejecting them. Thanks to the program, I've been able to achieve my goals. My menstruation is now controlled and regular. At first, I hesitated because my mother didn't allow me, but I decided to go ahead anyway. Months later, I explained everything to her, and she ended up supporting me because I don't want more children, and the public system won't perform surgery on me because I'm too young." – Nandy*

*"Vida Mujer is an opportunity for many women. In my case, it has been a blessing. I have 2 children and chose the long-term solution offered by the IUD to responsibly avoid having more. It has also improved my health significantly—I suffer from anxiety, and not taking hormones has improved my emotional state and quality of life. I am deeply grateful to be included in this project and hope it continues to benefit many more women." – Kendy*

*"I am completely grateful and satisfied with the program. The IUD is one of the safest contraceptive methods I have tried, and the best part is that it is non-hormonal. I recommend it 100%." – Keylin*

# Women's Circle

## Program Description

The Women's Circle is conceived as a platform for personal and collective transformation, with the **primary objective of promoting the holistic well-being of adult women in vulnerable conditions in the coastal areas of Santa Cruz. It does so through participatory spaces that strengthen mindfulness, physical and emotional health, and sisterhood.**

Within this environment, each woman is encouraged to recognize her potential as an agent of change in her own life and community. The Circle offers a space where women are heard, can share emotions, and improve both their physical and emotional well-being.

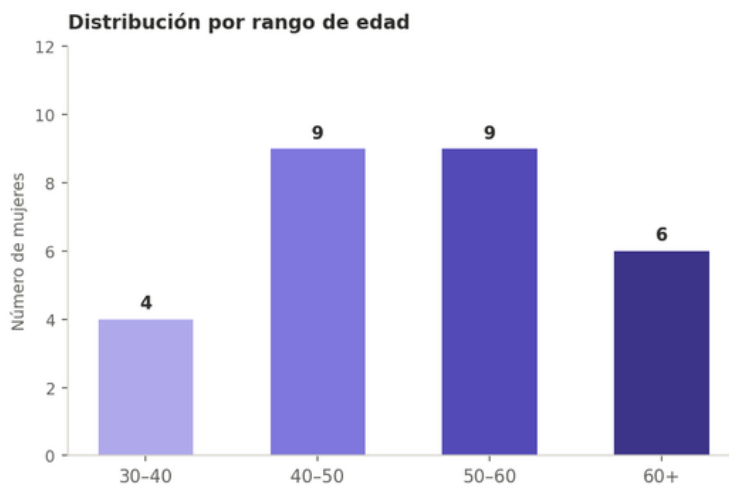
The project is structured around key pillars of support and growth. The first is the creation of a safe space grounded in respect and absolute confidentiality, allowing participants to express themselves freely. From this foundation, a **supportive network of emotional care** is built, where women find in mutual support the tools to navigate their personal processes.

The Circle also works on **strengthening women's identity** through a human rights perspective, promoting self-recognition and dignity. It acts as a catalyst for dreams and life projects, **encouraging women to pursue their goals** with confidence and autonomy.

Beneficiaries are women in vulnerable conditions from coastal communities in Santa Cruz. Now in its 6th year, many participants join through referrals from other members or CEPIA's Psychology Program. Some seek connection, while others are navigating depression or anxiety.

Most participants are dedicated to caregiving and household responsibilities. Many suffer from chronic illnesses linked to poor nutrition and lack of physical activity. Others depend on their children or care for ill partners, contributing to emotional challenges such as depression and anxiety.

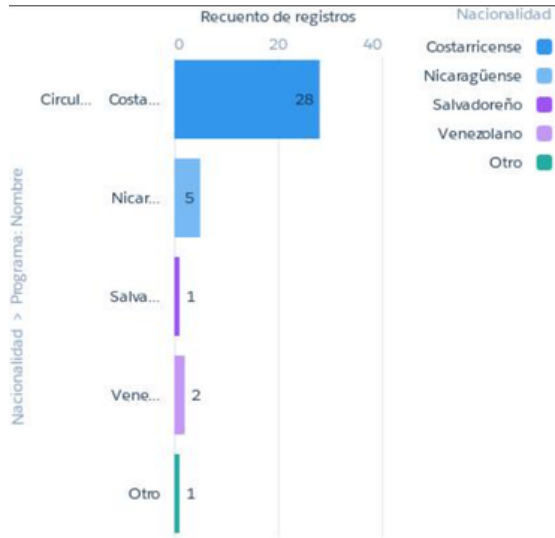
The Circle currently includes 30 women who attend biweekly sessions, of whom 20 are returning participants, and 10 are new. Participants range in age from 30 to 63.



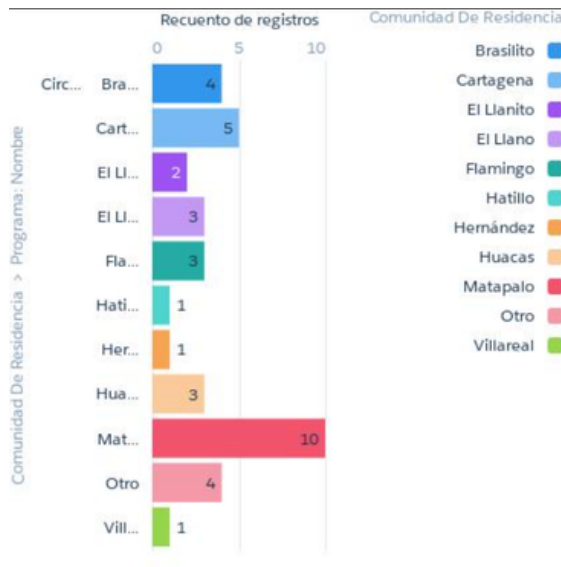
**Level of Education of the Participants**



The educational profile shows that 8 women completed primary school, 7 have incomplete university studies, and smaller number have incomplete or completed secondary education.



Most participants are Costa Rican, followed by women from Nicaragua, Venezuela, and El Salvador.



**Place of residence**

The largest number of participants come from Matapalo, followed by Cartagena and Brasilito, with equal representation from El Llano and Flamingo.

## Activities

In 2025, a total of **23 sessions** were conducted under the central theme “My Ancestors,” focusing on ancestral wisdom, Chorotega culture, family lineage, and inherited knowledge.

The group’s collective history was revisited, and a curriculum inspired by the book *Women Who Run With the Wolves* by Clarissa Pinkola Estés was developed for the full year.



### Compilation of work from previous years

Workshops emphasized **self-care**, including breathing techniques to reduce anxiety and manage automatic thoughts. Sessions included sound therapy, energy activation exercises based on gratitude, inner strength, self-love, and future vision, all viewed through the lens of female lineage.

Participants explored the idea of women as natural communicators, connected through mitochondrial DNA, carrying the living memory of their mothers and ancestors.

A collective mural was created to integrate these experiences.



**Mural creation session**

Another key process was the study of medicinal plants, including their properties, preparation methods, and uses. This led to the creation of a **medicinal plant manual** developed by the participants themselves, for personal and community use.

In the final quarter, sessions focused on **closure, recognition of achievements,** and identity-building. Each participant created a personal altar with meaningful objects representing their journey and accomplishments.

This was followed by a **creative writing session** titled “*Connecting with the Wisdom of Nature,*” where participants began creating a “life notebook” to document significant experiences, memories, and personal reflections through art and writing.

The objective was to continue documenting their changes and learnings in this life journal, contributing to a reduction in feelings of anxiety and depression, while improving clarity of thought, decision-making, and self-awareness.



**Creative writing session**

The year concluded with a group outing, offering a moment of recreation, connection, and shared joy.

## Results

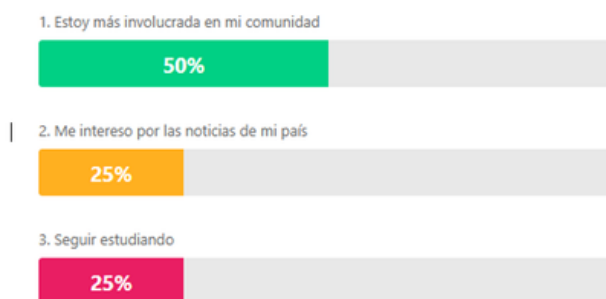
Out of 63 women who participated throughout the year, 16 maintained consistent attendance and demonstrated strong commitment. A group of 21 participated intermittently, while 26 attended fewer than 10 sessions and will be evaluated for continuation.

A qualitative evaluation conducted with **29 participants** showed that 64% are between 40 and 60 years old.



When asked why they continue attending, 12 participants stated that they seek to improve self-care. Others highlighted improved **emotional expression**, recognition of self-worth, and the ability to set boundaries. There is a clear improvement in emotional regulation, confidence in public expression, **self-esteem, and empowerment**.

### Área Social



The program's impact extends beyond the individual. A total of 50% of participants report **increased involvement in community activities** and greater openness to diverse cultures and global perspectives. Additionally, 25% expressed a **strong desire to continue their education**.

At its core, the Circle fosters a support network where shared experiences cultivate **strength and self-love**. The results confirm that the space not only provides emotional support but also empowers women to pursue new life opportunities with autonomy.

These outcomes are supported by an impact study conducted by Rosa Bruno, a Global Development student from Clermont Auvergne University of Pavia, Italy, who based her master's thesis on the Women's Circle. Her research examined empowerment, future vision, and key variables such as aspirations, professional ambition, autonomy, and the breaking of vulnerability cycles.

The findings indicate that the Circle acts as a catalyst for **personal agency**, facilitating empowerment through mutual recognition and self-expression. Participants perceive the space as extending beyond individual well-being toward community development (author, 2025)

As reflected in testimonies gathered during the research, women channel their growth not only into personal development but also into professional aspirations, with the shared vision of improving future generations' life opportunities.

As shown in the graphic, challenges remain. One of the most significant is anxiety management, which continues to be a key area requiring targeted intervention strategies.



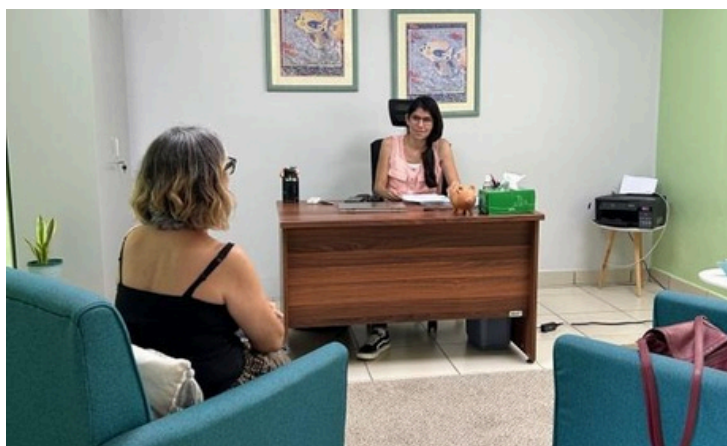
This graph highlights the importance of continuing to work on techniques that support anxiety management, which remains one of the main challenges identified within the group.

# Legal Guidance

## Program Description and Results

The Legal Guidance program provides legal advice and accompaniment to vulnerable populations facing situations of violence in all its forms, in order to inform them about their fundamental rights, legal processes, and procedures, and to facilitate access to justice.

Each case undergoes an initial assessment to determine whether the individual is a victim of violence, human trafficking, a migrant, or experiencing a situation involving human rights violations. Based on this evaluation, internal referrals are made to other CEPIA programs, as well as external referrals to government institutions. The program also participates in awareness campaigns related to rights and access to justice.

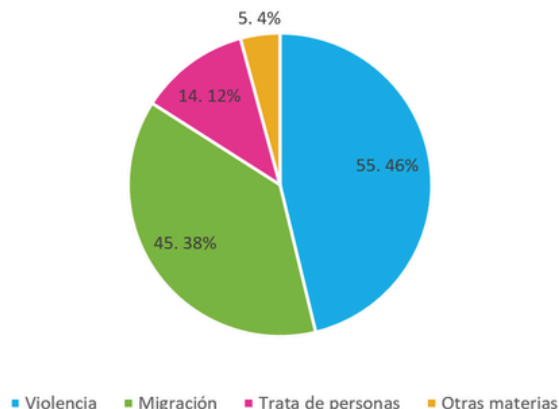


During the 2025 period, a total of **248 individuals**, including both adults and minors, received support through the program. Of these, 119 individuals accessed individual and private legal counseling. In total, **281 appointments** were conducted. Among these, 173 appointments addressed cases related to violence, 59 focused on trafficking in persons, 44 corresponded to migration-related procedures, and 5 addressed other legal matters.

Within the population served, **55 individuals were identified as victims of violence, 14 as victims of trafficking in persons, 45 sought assistance on migration issues, and 5 consulted on other matters.**

Of those who received individual attention, **32 were men and 82 were women.** In terms of **nationality**, 45 were Costa Rican, 62 Nicaraguan, 1 Argentinian, 1 Salvadoran, and 5 Venezuelan.

Personas asesoradas según el tipo de consulta en el período 2025



**Participants by Type of Case**

A total of **129 adults** also benefited from **group workshops and awareness campaigns**. These activities included:

- An informational booth organized by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which reached 15 individuals and contributed to strengthening coordination among participating institutions through the exchange of information on services provided.
- An anti-trafficking campaign was conducted at CEPIA in collaboration with the Social Work program and the Defensoría de los Habitantes de la República de Costa Rica (DHR), reaching 25 participants who received training on prevention, identification, and reporting mechanisms related to trafficking in persons.
- An informational workshop on refugee and stateless status was held with the participation of 33 individuals, including both adults and youth, accompanied by their parents, providing essential guidance on procedures required by the Immigration Office and supporting participants in scheduling their appointments for refugee applications.



### ***Anti-trafficking campaign***

One of the most significant achievements of the program lies in the accompaniment provided to beneficiaries. While legal counseling equips individuals with the information necessary to navigate legal procedures, accompaniment offers **emotional support and physical security**, ensuring that individuals do not face moments of vulnerability and fear alone.

The program also plays a key role in helping beneficiaries **understand legal terminology**, which is often used by public officials and can be difficult to interpret. By translating these technical concepts into accessible language, beneficiaries are better able to understand instructions and communicate their needs clearly, reducing misunderstandings and contributing to more efficient and effective processes.

A particularly notable case involved a woman facing high-risk **domestic violence**, compounded by the absence of support networks and her responsibility for dependent minors. In this situation, the request for protection measures was critical. Through accompaniment, it was ensured that authorities fully understood the severity of the case and the urgent need for intervention by the Victim Protection Office. As a result of these measures, along with the coordinated support of state institutions and CEPIA, the woman was able to relocate to a safe, violence-free environment, securing both her safety and that of the children.

The program also achieved improvements in the support provided to individuals seeking assistance with migration procedures. As part of this effort, external referrals were made to organizations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. Many individuals had previously reported a lack of response when attempting to navigate these processes independently. In this context, referrals facilitated by the program, combined with proper preparation and guidance on migration matters, proved essential in advancing and resolving these cases.

# Strengthening Families in Situations of Vulnerability

## Program Description

The Strengthening Families in Situations of Vulnerability Program works to strengthen the social inclusion capacities of families experiencing vulnerability.

The program is designed to provide a comprehensive support system for families accessing CEPIA's services, operating under the principles of efficiency, equity, and timeliness. Through this approach, Social Work acts as a facilitator of change processes, ensuring that both resource distribution and psychosocial support are delivered fairly. This allows families not only to address immediate crises but also to strengthen their capacities to achieve long-term, sustainable stability.

The program seeks to:

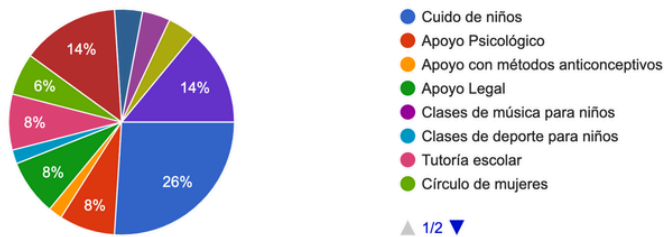
- Reintegrate children and adolescents experiencing educational exclusion into the school system.
- Provide housing-related supplies to families living in extreme poverty.
- Ensure access to the Costa Rican Social Security Fund for children and adolescents.
- Refer family members in vulnerable situations to psychological services when needed.
- Refer women in vulnerable situations to the Vida Mujer project (sexual and reproductive rights).
- Refer at-risk family members to legal services.
- Refer families in high social risk situations to public institutions.

## Activities Implemented

During 2025, Social Work managed **144 requests for social assistance** received through both digital forms (via the community center service window) and internal referrals from CEPIA and other organizations. All requests were assessed, and only priority cases were addressed. Priority cases included families with children, adolescents, or older adults at risk, families with unmet basic needs, and families presenting indicators of high vulnerability.

Graph 2 presents the risk situations addressed, categorized by type of intervention, in 2025.

Que tipo de ayuda cree que requiere de Cepia.  
50 respuestas

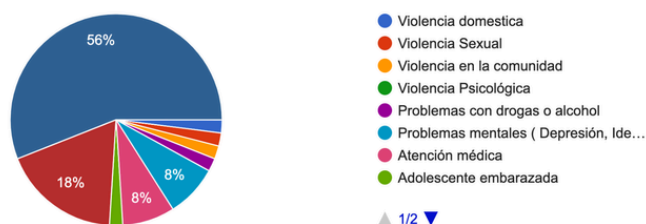


## Direct Intervention and Follow-up

A total of 45 interventions were carried out with families in situations of social risk, led by Social Work or another CEPIA program. Each process included an assessment of family dynamics to identify strengths, vulnerabilities, and specific needs. 12 families received an ongoing follow-up plan from Social Work to ensure the stability of their situation.

Graph 2 presents the risk situations addressed, categorized by type of intervention, in 2025.

Existe alguna situación urgente, por la que usted considera que necesita atención inmediata como:  
50 respuestas



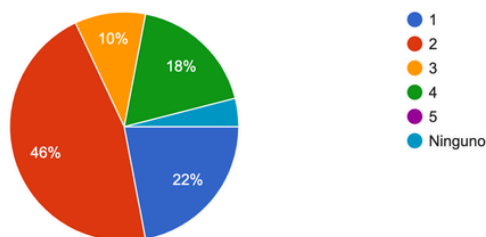
This methodology made it possible to design tailored strategies to address complex challenges such as:

- Violations of the rights of older adults.
- Situations of extreme poverty and physical incapacity within the family unit.
- Domestic violence.
- Neglect of children and adolescents.

Additionally, **33 home visits** were conducted, of which 27 were carried out as socioeconomic assessments for admission into the CIDAI program and 6 for evaluation of admission into the Women’s Volunteer Committee.

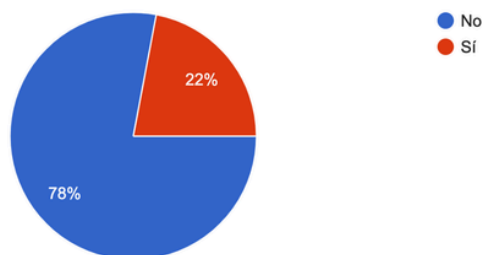
Graph 1 shows the number of children and adolescents within the families requesting assistance in 2025.

Cuántas personas menores de edad viven en la casa.  
50 respuestas

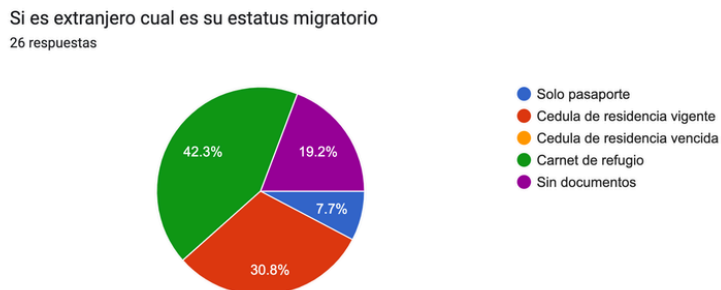


Graph 2 presents the percentage of families with at least one child or adolescent without access to education in 2025.

Hay algún niño que ya tenga la edad y no esté asistiendo a la escuela o al colegio:  
50 respuestas



Graph 3 reflects the sociodemographic diversity of the population, detailing migration status.



## Institutional Coordination and Referrals

A key function of Social Work is the screening and routing of requests through the institutional form to CEPIA’s various programs and to government entities:

- **Internal Referrals** (27 cases): Distributed across programs such as Psychology, Legal Assistance, Employability, CIDAI, and Vida Mujer, among others.
- **Interinstitutional Coordination:** Technical guidance was provided, and cases were referred to key institutions such as **IMAS** (4 referrals) and **CONAPAM** (1 referral), ensuring that users access the state protection system.

A total of **32 referrals** were completed, resulting in effective linkages to both CEPIA’s internal programs and external institutions within the social protection network.

## Material support for families

Families in need received the following items:

ITEM DELIVERED	QUANTITY
School Supply Packages	1317
Food and Vegetable Packages	276
Household Supplies	981
Flood Emergency Assistance	90



**Program beneficiary families**

## Social Work Internships

The partnership with the *Universidad Libre de Costa Rica* was strengthened, providing a supervised professional practice space for Social Work students. Students from Spain and Germany were also hosted. A total of 4 Social Work students completed their professional internships at CEPIA.



**Social Work intern conducting a field visit**

# Environmental Education

At CEPIA, environmental protection is integrated across all programs. In 2025, a strategy was strengthened to connect social well-being with the health of local ecosystems, encouraging more sustainable practices within the community.

## Environmental Education and Community Awareness

The **After-School Program** led significant awareness efforts through direct action. Girls' and Boys' Circles organized beach and school clean-up campaigns, combining the improvement of public spaces with ornamental reforestation. Notably, Jiu-jitsu teams contributed by collecting plastic caps used to build accessibility ramps, while the Music School and Visual Arts classes incorporated recovered materials, transforming waste into tools for artistic expression.



**Throughout the year, the After-School program implemented various environmental actions involving participants, families, and facilitators**

In June, to mark World Environment Day, CEPIA hosted its annual tree donation campaign in collaboration with the Nandamojo Association. A total of 150 trees were shared with volunteers, community members, staff, and children, encouraging collective action and care for the environment through planting.



***CIDAI garden***

Meanwhile, the **CIDAI** program implemented an experiential learning model. Through partnerships with *SINAC* and *Leatherback Trust*, children participated in conservation field trips and tree-planting activities for their homes. Operationally, the implementation of an organic garden stands out, supported by an institutional composting system that processes kitchen waste, closing the nutrient cycle while promoting food security education. The garden is managed by the children at the childcare center.

The Legal Orientation program, in collaboration with veterinary specialists and partner organizations such as *Salvemonos*, delivered workshops on animal protection and prevention of abuse. These sessions, aimed at adolescents from Liceo de Villarreal (53 tenth-grade students participated), are especially relevant in a coastal region with exceptionally rich biodiversity, ensuring that younger generations are equipped with the legal and ethical tools needed to protect local wildlife.

## **Circular Economy Strategy in Entrepreneurship**

Technical support provided to **Women Entrepreneurs** has positioned environmental sustainability as a key value proposition. Initiatives such as *MORPHO Artesanías* and *Zab-Isaac Souvenirs* demonstrate that income generation can be achieved through the use of recycled materials (paper and polystyrene) and sustainably sourced natural resources.

*Upcycling* practices have been led by *Alba Designs*, contributing to the reduction of the local fashion industry's carbon footprint. In the food sector, ventures such as *Ventanita la Gata* have formalized the management of critical waste streams through the recycling of cooking oil.



*Crafts made with recycled materials*

## Conscious Health and Waste Management

The transition toward sustainability has also extended to health and well-being services:

- **Holistic Health and Psychology:** The program adopted a digital management model, eliminating the use of physical formats for referrals and records. Additionally, as part of a public space improvement initiative, waste management stations were installed and restored in Huacas plaza, with participation from the local school community in their maintenance.
- **Vida Mujer Project:** Sustainable menstrual management was promoted through the donation of menstrual cups and training in their use, significantly reducing the generation of non-biodegradable sanitary waste.
- **Professional Training and Employability:** Students from the Electricity course led clean-up campaigns that included technical classification of solid waste.
- **Women's Circle:** Together with other community members, they led clean-up campaigns in the surroundings of Huacas. They also participated in a tree-planting campaign during the commemoration of World Environment Day and dedicated a significant part of the year to the study of medicinal plants.

# Fundraising and Communication

## Communication and Social Media

The Communications Department coordinates and strengthens communication between CEPIA and its broader social environment, ensuring clear and consistent messaging about its work. Through social media content, email campaigns, and graphic design support for different departments, the communications team helps increase the visibility of CEPIA's programs, projects, and initiatives, while reinforcing its institutional identity and connection with the community.

### Facebook



The Facebook page currently has 19,397 followers and, during the reporting period, reached more than 1.5 million views, 54,800 visits, and a growth of over 1,100 new followers.

During this period, **504 posts** were published, including reels, feed posts, and stories, with daily posting during periods of higher content availability, strengthening the page's reach and visibility.

The audience is primarily composed of women (76.7%), with the largest age groups between 25–34 and 35–44. More than 88% of users are based in Costa Rica, followed by the United States (5.3%) and Nicaragua (1.5%). The main locations of origin are Tempate (10.9%), Santa Cruz (9.2%), and Cartagena (6.4%).

Additionally, the Facebook group Amigos de CEPIA welcomed more than 1,000 new members in 2025, reaching a total community of 4,300 people. During this period, more than 20,000 users viewed the group’s content, consolidating it as an active space for outreach and community engagement.

## Instagram



The Instagram account, which currently has 3,443 followers, recorded a growth of 780 new followers, reached 368,343 views, and received 5,500 visits. The content strategy followed the same guidelines applied on Facebook, maintaining consistent and active management based on content availability, contributing to the account’s reach and visibility.

The audience is primarily composed of women (72.8%), while men represent 27.2%. In terms of geographic origin, Costa Rica accounts for 68.4%, followed by the United States (13.5%) and Canada (2.1%). At the city level, Tempate represents 26.1%, followed by San José (5.4%) and Veintisiete de Abril (4.3%).

## LinkedIn

The LinkedIn page has 381 followers, with an increase of 22 new followers. Geographically, the highest concentration is in the Greater Metropolitan Area of San José, Costa Rica (23.9%), followed by Greater Mendoza, Argentina (4.2%), and Cabo Velas, Costa Rica (2.4%). While overall engagement remains moderate, job posting announcements received strong responses, positioning LinkedIn as an effective channel for recruitment processes.

## Email Marketing

Tasa Apertura	Tasa Clicks	Tasa de desinscripción
45.37%	1.30%	0.33%

A total of 19 email campaigns were sent, including 10 fundraising campaigns, 8 newsletters, and 1 annual report. These campaigns achieved an open rate of 45.37%, a click-through rate of 1.30%, and an unsubscribe rate of just 0.33%.

The open rate remains above industry averages, which typically range between 20% and 30%, reflecting a high level of interest and relevance in the content shared. Additionally, complaint rates remained very low, indicating strong acceptance of communications among subscribers.

## Fundraising Events

During 2025, CEPIA's Development and Strategy Department strengthened its resource mobilization model through initiatives that brought together the private sector, the local community, and community leaders. These efforts not only ensured the financial sustainability of several programs but also reinforced a shared commitment across the region.

### Black and White Gala



On February 8, the organization held its twelfth annual gala, a highly anticipated event that reflects strong community solidarity. The event brought together 325 participants committed to supporting the organization's mission. Funds raised supported one of CEPIA's core areas of intervention: access to education and academic strengthening. The event raised \$48,806.

This support ensured that 1,264 children and adolescents began the school year with backpacks and school supplies, and 603 uniforms were distributed. This distribution effort reached 36 schools and 3 high schools across the cantons of Santa Cruz and Carrillo.

These resources also financed a significant portion of the After-School program, providing a safe and enriching environment for children and adolescents outside school hours.

## Friendsgiving

Under the *Brasilito Impact* initiative, led by the *Do It Foundation*, this event marked an important milestone in public-private collaboration. The fund was designed to strengthen the social fabric of Brasilito through investment in infrastructure and human capital. The event successfully raised \$75,513, which was equally distributed between Asociación CEPIA and the Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Playa Brasilito (ADI Brasilito).

This investment has been directed toward the renovation of the Playa Brasilito Training Center. ADI Brasilito is currently working on the improvement of public spaces, including a playground and community hall, as well as strengthening its operational management. At the same time, CEPIA expanded its programmatic offerings in the area, funding academic tutoring as well as arts, dance, and circus skills groups, promoting local talent.

The success of this year's fundraising events reflects the trust and strong collaboration between Asociación CEPIA and its partners. These achievements allow the organization to expand its reach, while reinforcing the long-term commitment of those who support its work.

We extend our sincere gratitude to all recurring donors. Their continued commitment, demonstrated year after year, ensures the continuity and strength of the programs outlined in this report. Thanks to their ongoing support, CEPIA can plan with a long-term vision, sustain its professional team, and, most importantly, maintain its commitment to supporting families and communities in Guanacaste.

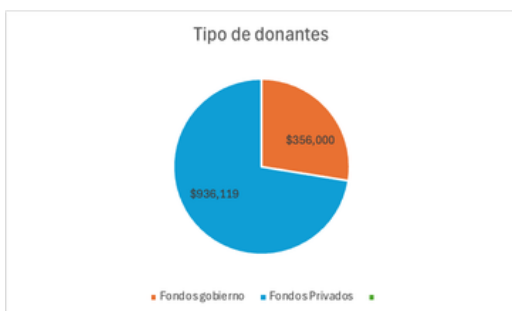
Transparency in management and the strength of results reflect this collaboration. Together, we continue building a future of greater opportunity and hope.

## Donors

None of our programs would be possible without the invaluable support of our donors. You can find a full list of donors on our website:

<https://cepiacostarica.org/es/donantes/>

In 2025, CEPIA benefited from both public and private funding, as shown in the chart below.



In 2025, CEPIA benefited from both public and private funding, as shown in the chart below.

The 2025 financial statements are available at the following link (and our website): [2025 CEPIA - Financial Statements](#)

## A Renewed Community Space in Huacas

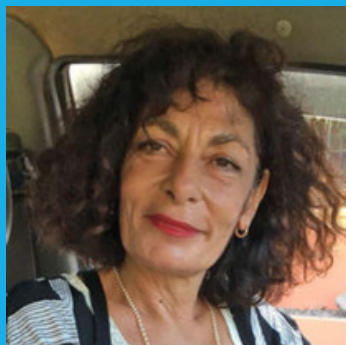
Between September and December 2025, the 10-year-old community center in Huacas underwent a complete renovation, made possible by the generous support of the Mr. and Dr. Leschly Family Fund and the Rotary Club of Oakville Trafalgar, with a total investment of \$121,000 USD.

The transformation included new ceilings, fans, flooring, furniture, tapestry, doors, curtains, as well as upgraded gutters, improved water drainage, a renovated kitchen, and fresh paint and decoration throughout.

The Center once again reflects the dignity, hope, and joy at the heart of CEPIA's mission—because at CEPIA, we believe that space itself is a powerful educator.

# 2025 CEPIA Team

## Board of Directors



**Simonetta Daniele**  
**President**



**Martin Salerno**  
**Vice President**



**Maureen Navarro Vallejos**  
**Secretary**



**Natalia Gallego Moreno**  
**Treasurer**



**Roberto Céspedes Chavarría**  
**Vocal 1**



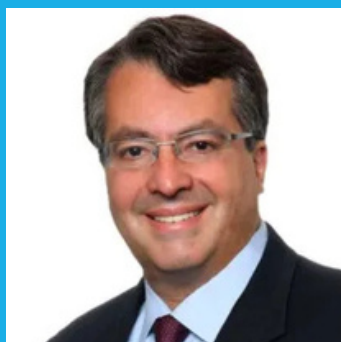
**Lidia Varela Ordoñez**  
**Vocal 2**



**Javier Castañeda Rodríguez**  
**Vocal 3**



**Dennise Palacios Araya**  
**Vocal 4**



**Jorge Alers**  
**Board Auditor**



## Administrative

María José Cappa, **Executive Director**  
Laetitia Deweer, **Director of Development and Strategy**  
Lucía Castro, **Development and Strategy Advisor**  
Grettel Chacón, **Administrative Coordinator**  
Darwin Silva, **Administrative/Accounting Assistant**  
Génesis Bustos, **Secretary**  
Rodolfo Monge, **Financial Advisor**  
Gina Malavassi, **Communication and Design**  
Juan José Labra, **Driver**  
Luis Villegas, **Driver**  
Felipe Villafuerte, **After-School Program Driver**  
Andrea Gómez, **Kitchen**  
Arleen Jiménez, **Kitchen**  
Lorena Cordero, **Kitchen**  
Elizabeth Arrieta, **Janitor**

## Coordinators

Priscilla Arias//Francis Valverde, **After-School Program**  
Karen Cerdas, **Strengthening Families in Situations of Vulnerability**  
Karla Marín, **CIDAI**  
Karen Monge, **Psychology & Holistic Health**  
Wendy Valverde//Vanessa Vasquéz, **Professional Training and Employability**  
Mariana Trejos, **Vida Mujer Project**  
Katherine Madrigal, **Legal Assistance**  
Tricia Araya//Maricela Salazar, **Women Entrepreneurs**

## CIDAI Teachers

*Maricela Pineda, Assistant*  
*Masiel Viales, Teacher*  
*Francinie Gutiérrez, Assistant*  
*Graciela Gómez, Teacher*  
*Yulieth Rodríguez, Assistant*  
*Sharon Dinarte, Teacher*  
*Kimberly Bonilla, Teacher*  
*Yessica Moraga, Teacher*  
*Jacqueline Bustos, Teacher*  
*Karina Rosales, Teacher*  
*Guadalupe Romero, Assistant*  
*Dimitris Kyriakoulis, English Teacher*  
*Paul López, docente Music*  
*Leonardo Almanza, Swimming*  
*Lucas Antonio, Atelier*

## Psychology & Holistic Health

*María Auxiliadora González, Psychologist*  
*Eleana Alcocer, CIDAI Psychologist*  
*Ana María Jiménez, Psychologist*  
*Gabriela Mora, Psychologist*  
*Montserrat Cordero, Psychologist*

## After-School Classes Facilitators

*Sugey Álvarez, Girls' Circles Mentor*  
*Sary Barrantes, Girls' Circles Mentor*  
*Jaison Bermúdez//Katherine Obando, Brasilito Tutoring Teacher*  
*Marisol Rosales, Playa Grande Tutoring Teacher*  
*Raymundo Pérez, Boys' Circles Mentor*  
*Efrain Ruíz, Boys' Circles Mentor*  
*Courtney Borquet, Sunflower Group*  
*Danny Chavarria, Music Teacher*

# 2025 Volunteers

## 127 Permanent Volunteers

*Adriana Flores*  
*Alberto Salas*  
*Alejandra Parody*  
*Alejandro Ugarte*  
*Alex Zepeda Hill*  
*Alexandra Mols*  
*Alexis Heller*  
*Álvaro Madrigal Ramírez*  
*Andrea Diaz*  
*Andrey Juarez Molina*  
*Angie Mora*  
*Anne Hipskind*  
*Anne Marie Hansen*  
*Belquis Rosales*  
*Bonnie Bradshaw*  
*Brenda Carey*  
*Camila Campos*  
*Camila Lopez*  
*Camille Bourlette*  
*Carolina Castillo*  
*Carolyn Herman*  
*Cathy Deweer*  
*Chelsea Ortega Monge*  
*Cindy Gutierrez*  
*Cindy Tablada*  
*Courtney Borquet*  
*Cristina Aguilar*  
*David Cothran*  
*Dennise Palacios Araya*  
*Deyanira Madrigal Chacón*  
*Douglas Anderson Quirós*  
*Dyalá Cerdas*  
*Elizabeth Daly*  
*Elly Hasay*  
*Ernst Van Der Poll*  
*Gabriel Valverde*  
*Gabriela Abarca*  
*Gabriela Valenzuela*  
*Geneva García*  
*Gipzy Ortiz Gutiérrez*  
*Giuliana Barrenechea*  
*Gustavo Santana Arrieta*  
*Hannia Gutiérrez*  
*Heather Lober*  
*Isabelle Vandavelde*  
*Ivonne Lizeth Valderrama*  
*James Arrieta Flores*  
*Javier Mezerville*  
*Jennifer Jiménez*  
*Jessica Barba*  
*Jodi Gallant*  
*Jonathan Ugalde Herrera*  
*Jorge Castillo*  
*Jorge Varela*  
*Juan Zúñiga*  
*Juliana Jimenez*  
*Kajal Shah*  
*Karen Ortiz Aparicio*  
*Karol Trejos*  
*Kathya Arrieta Arrieta*  
*Kattia Bermúdez*  
*Kattia Castro*  
*Kelle Rich*  
*Keri Schmeling*  
*Kimberly Fallaw*  
*Kryz Umaña Chacón*  
*Larissa Granda*  
*Lidia Varela*  
*Lili Boss*  
*Liliana Rodríguez*

Linsay Mendez  
Luciano Sousa  
Luisa Noemy Reyes  
Rosales  
Marcela Porras  
Maria Beltran  
María Del Mar Zumbado  
Maria Edith Arrieta Ortiz  
Maria Fernanda Murillo  
Maria Jose Fernandez  
Maria Perkins  
Maria Ximena Bepmale  
Marian Paniagua  
Marianela Brenes  
Maribel Rodriguez  
Rodriguez  
Maricela Salazar  
Melisa Umanzar  
Metzi Hovenga Barboza  
Monica Masis  
Monica Solis Worsfold  
Nico Elgart  
Nova Everson  
Óscar Vega  
Paul Oporta  
Paulina Ovares  
Raquel Aguilar  
Raúl Mora  
Richie Ramone  
Roberto Britto  
Ron Jarman (Hero)  
Roulan Jiménez Chavarría  
Roy Calderon  
Sara Laurin  
Sebastian Horton  
Sebastián Ugalde  
Sergio Mendoza  
Sophie Toyes  
Stefani Bonilla Jimenez  
Stephanie Lippens  
Steven Azofeifa  
Steven Villarreal  
Sue Kallis  
Tamara Ponce  
Tania Esquivel González  
Ulises Najul  
Valery Contreras Steller  
Velma Jimenez  
Vesna Todorovic  
Victoria Naranjo  
Vielka Urbina  
Viktorija Zenkova  
Vivian Lopez  
Wendy Abarca  
Ximena Bepmale  
Yaneli Aleman  
Yazmine Rosales  
Yorhany Pizarro Lopez  
Yuri Rodriguez Aleman

## 87 University Student Volunteers

<i>Sthefanny Massiel Vargas Reyes</i>	<i>María Del Mar Zumbado Sandstad</i>	<i>Keitty Sofía Guzmán Espinoza</i>
<i>Melisa Umanzar</i>	<i>María José Grillo Luna</i>	<i>Kathleen Ordoñez Fargas</i>
<i>Sasha Calvet</i>	<i>Nazareth Chaves Diaz</i>	<i>Brandon Briceño Céspedes</i>
<i>Norman Oviedo Rosales</i>	<i>Daniela Cantillo Ramírez</i>	<i>Merelin Lopez Piña</i>
<i>Jerry Parra Martinez</i>	<i>Jorge Arias Castillo</i>	<i>Yensly Vallejos Rocha</i>
<i>Valentina Gonzaga Morales</i>	<i>Wesly Lopez Corea</i>	<i>Alisson Rivas Gómez</i>
<i>Krisbell Fernandez Martinez</i>	<i>Katherine Aguilera Acuña</i>	<i>Fabricio Rodríguez Rivas</i>
<i>Dayanna Barboza Toruño</i>	<i>Milagros Villafuerte Angulo</i>	<i>María José Tijerino Montiel</i>
<i>Maria Bonilla Obregon</i>	<i>Rosibeth Mejías Hernández</i>	<i>Mariana Cerdas López</i>
<i>Michelle Cortez Nuñez</i>	<i>Anny Tatiana Matamoros Porras</i>	<i>Genesis Moreno Sanchez</i>
<i>Luisa Peralta Vargas</i>	<i>Marina Guevara Suárez</i>	<i>Darien Morales Matarrita</i>
<i>Nicole Ampie Lara</i>	<i>Daniela Estrada Zumbado</i>	<i>Mauren Perez Garcia</i>
<i>Gabriela Camacho Ugarte</i>	<i>Kristel Pastrana Álvarez</i>	<i>Krisly Moraga Gutierrez</i>
<i>Krissia Martinez Leiva</i>	<i>Suamy Víctor Lara</i>	<i>Maylin Garita Mora</i>
<i>Milagro Alcocer Matarrita</i>	<i>Ashly Valeria Balmaceda Sánchez</i>	<i>Yuri Mendez Mendez</i>
<i>Ninsi Chavarria Mairena</i>	<i>Kristel Sofía Torres García</i>	<i>Dalay Ávila Obregón</i>
<i>Mailyn Suceth Ortiz Alanis</i>	<i>Francini Gómez Villafuerte</i>	<i>Mariana Sánchez Castillo</i>
<i>Jefry Pavon Pichardo</i>	<i>Nathalie Francinie Rodríguez</i>	<i>Malkon Moraga Piña</i>
<i>Kiran Piñar Chavarría</i>	<i>Celia O'Hara</i>	<i>Valerie Carmona Grijalba</i>
<i>Jimena Ramírez Cascante</i>	<i>Kattia Castro</i>	<i>Sharolyn Espinoza Rodríguez</i>
<i>Allan Bustos Guadamuz</i>	<i>Laura Otazowie</i>	<i>Angie Ampie Araya</i>
<i>Samantha Lucas Arrieta</i>	<i>Martina Castel Solanellas</i>	<i>Christian Rodríguez Campos</i>
<i>Celeste Garcia Rodriguez</i>	<i>Maxima Von Der Goltz</i>	<i>Tatiana Mora Corea</i>
<i>Olga Rosales Miranda</i>	<i>Ashly Diaz Dinarte</i>	<i>Kimberly Jimenez Cortes</i>
<i>Dianne Torres Palma</i>	<i>Sol Gutiérrez Marchena</i>	<i>Fiona Sandkühler</i>
<i>Villegas Hernadez Jocily</i>	<i>Keiry Valeria Angulo Parra</i>	
<i>Serge Baratta</i>	<i>Valeria Salazar Godinez</i>	
<i>Rosa Bruno</i>	<i>Wady Mejías Sánchez</i>	
<i>Gypzi Ortiz Gutiérrez</i>	<i>Alexis Muñoz Herrera</i>	