

PLAN GUATEMALA TRAVEL SAFETY AND SECURITY ADVISORY



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& DIRECTORY



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November 2014

Up Date february 2018

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Guatemala in Central America

The **Republic of Guatemala** is located in the northwest border of Central America, with a broad indigenous culture of Mayan heritage plus the Spanish influence dating from the Colony .

Despite its relatively small territory, Guatemala has a wide variety of climates because of its mountainous terrain that ranges from sea level up to 4,220 meters above sea level ⁷. This causes the great variety of ecosystems in the country ranging from the mangrove wetlands of the Pacific to the cloud forests of high mountains. It borders to the west and north with Mexico; to the east with Belize and the Gulf of Honduras; with El Salvador to the south, and southeast with the Pacific Ocean. The country has an area of 108,889 km².

Its capital is Guatemala City, whose official name is New Guatemala of the Assumption. Its indigenous population consists of 40% of the total population. Spanish is the official language, and the country has 24 Mayan languages, plus the Xinca and Garifuna languages; the Garifuna language is spoken by the African descendant population in the Caribbean province of Izabal.



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Plan in Guatemala

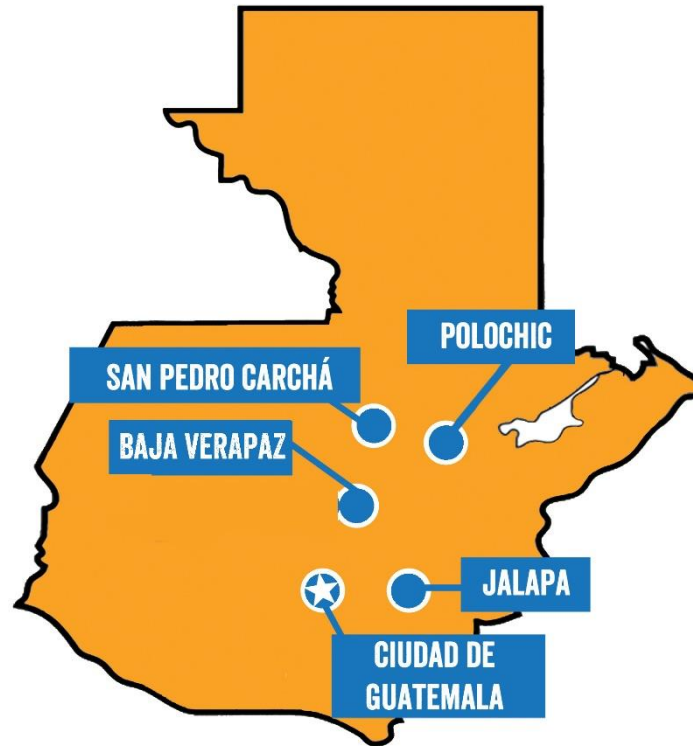
Plan began working in Guatemala in 1978. Today around 35,000 children and their families are sponsored by Plan in Guatemala in 497 communities where they and their families are part of sustainable community development.

In Guatemala, Plan has 4 Program Units in 3 departments: Jalapa, Alta and Baja Verapaz with culturally diverse populations comprising linguistic groups of Mayan descent and mestizo population.

The Plan programs, based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child, fully meet the needs of children, according to each stage in life.

Main programme areas:

- Learn
- Thrive
- Lead
- Decide



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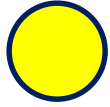


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Security considerations



Plan Guatemala is in Security Phase II, **Moderate phase**, where staff members and visitor movements are restricted, therefore, all international visits, without exception, must be approved in advance by the Country Director. She needs to approve terms of reference provided by the visitor in advance.

SAFETY FOR VISITORS

Security Information must be sent by Plan Guatemala to each visitor.

After reading the security information and complete the form, please sign it and send it to the person in charge of the visit with a copy to the Security Focus Point, prior to the visit dates.

International visitors, no exception, must receive a

security briefing in the country within 24 hours after arrival, by the Security Focus Point and/or his delegates in the Country Office. If the international visitors arrive directly to a PU, then, the Security Focus Point or member of the SRT will give the information.

All visitors must agree to abide by the safety SOP's of Plan International Guatemala and the Child Protection Policy.

Visitors must carry at all times their Plan's identity card, a Plan business card, or a copy of the passport. Communication during their stay will be discussed as part of the safety briefing in the country. It is important that arrangements for regular communications between visitors and the relevant staff be agreed to and established during the visit in the country.



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Security Phases

PHASE	CONDITIONS	GENERAL ACTIONS
NORMAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All utilities are working, as are police, the military, and communications. Crime is within normal limits and a justice system is in operation. No impediment to daily life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard operating conditions, unrestricted Delivery of full Programs Standard operating procedures in place
LOW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAUTION The politics and security environment is calm The events that occurred or could occur, could endanger personnel, Plan's facilities, or similar international organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essentially a caution / preparedness phase Security Team in place SOPs are reviewed and reinforced Full implementation of Programmes, but more awareness is required, and presentation of a Security Report Designated Security Focus Point Visits of persons to the PU must be registered
MODERATED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RESTRICTED MOVEMENT Deterioration of security conditions Police and the justice system are not effective or are not working The crime rate is high Foreign Embassies issue precautionary warnings Regional threats evolving which may affect Plan's operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security Review Team meets every month (at least) SOPs and emergency plans are reviewed and reinforced Restrictions on movements of personnel and families Safety information for international visitors Benefit programs as measures against risk for personnel safety. ☑ Monitoring personnel movement Restricted program, only essential personnel Entry and movement of people into the country must be approved by the CD prior to the visit. Updated list of personnel, in case of emergency
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RESTRICTED OPERATIONS Threats received by Plan's staff, and operations, offices or employees of international organizations. Substantial deterioration of the emergency security situation or declared by law High level of threats against staff members and welfare of Plan and assets Terrorist activities and/ or indicators of other types of violence to other NGOs Combat against the military or insurgents occurring within 20 km of the Office Prolonged strikes or civil disorder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SOPs are reviewed and reinforced Priority given to staff safety; staff members authorized to work from home every day Daily assessment of staff; be prepared for temporary suspension of operations Considering transfer abroad of international personnel and families International staff members prepared to evacuate the region /country, and national personnel at risk prepare to move to a safe site Negotiation with the Regional Office on the reduction and suspension of the burden of work and departures 24/7 monitoring by designated staff. PU's must call CO on a daily basis, and CO to RO with a daily report of the situation Select and prepare National Management Team Employ a Security Director.
EXTREME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SUSPENSION of OPERATIONS Complete breakdown of law and order Open war on a broad scale Other Agencies leaving the country Inability to implement Programmes or maintain offices open due to security concerns in the country Direct threats or actions against operational personnel of Plan Evacuation of personnel of foreign Embassies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office/s Closing Down Relocation or evacuation of expat staff members Moving national staff to the place of origin or refuge Hand office work over to National Team All Plan assets are insured Payment of social assistance to national staff members Destruction or removal of confidential documents from the country Report to RO every hour on regular evacuation progress.



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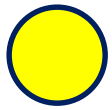
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Safety considerations

The security situation in Guatemala may be subject to sudden and unexpected changes. It is therefore important to have reliable and updated sources of information.

The main threats of national security are armed robbery, assault, kidnapping, phone extortion, traffic accidents, rape and sexual violence, among others.

Security situation

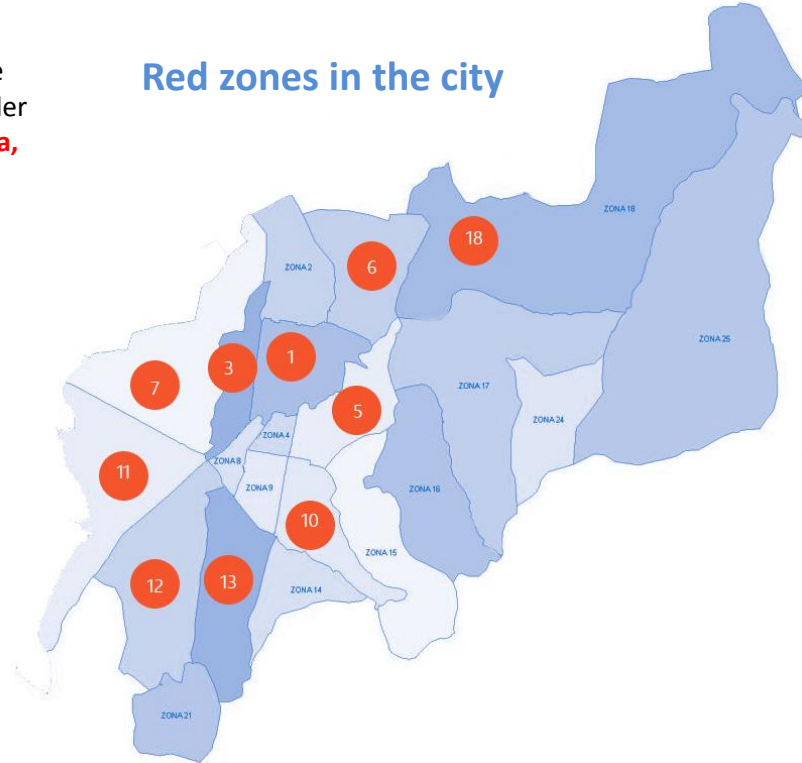
Crime in Guatemala continues to remain high. High numbers of violent deaths and kidnappings are recorded nationwide each year.

In urban areas, violence related to crime is part of everyday life. In rural areas, this problem is less prevalent but growing. Some of the rural areas where Plan Guatemala works are transit routes for organized crime, especially for drug dealers and human trafficking.

The government is working over it but organized crime is one of the main problems in Guatemala.

The departments with the highest incidence of murder are: **Guatemala, Escuintla, Izabal, Jutiapa and Chimaltenango.**

Red zones in the city



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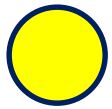
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Safety recommendations

- Avoid showing your wallet; be cautious.
- Avoid the use of your mobile phone in public spaces, and do not leave it charging in your bedroom.
- Be careful when changing money with a stranger in the street.
- If you walk down the street, it is better to be accompanied by another person, and walk through busy streets.
- Do not attract thieves! Avoid using flashy clothing or expensive jewelry.

- Do not carry important documents with you (passport, airline ticket, etc.), computers and other technology.
- If taking a taxi be sure that is a reliable cab company recommended by Plan's personnel, or a taxi from your hotel.
- Do not resist a robbery; doing so is when victims are injured most of the time.

ATM/ Card Skimming:
Use ATMs located inside malls and hotels. In some hotels you may find leaflets issued by Asistur (Tourist Police) which give information on which

ATMs have repeated problems of the theft of card information, which is then used to drain your account. Do not use ATMs or credit /debit cards in places where thieves are capable of altering ATMs.



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Security phone numbers

If you travel to Guatemala, please print this card with the main phone numbers in case of emergency.



Plan Guatemala

PBX: (502) 2323 0202

Diagonal 6, 12-42 Zona 10

Edificio Design Center

Torre I, Nivel 11

Guatemala City

Contry Director | John Lundine Tel.:

(502) 2313-7373

Security Focal Point | Vivianne Olivares

Tel.: **(502) 2313-7373**

Cel: **(502) 4044-3528**

Teléfonos de Emergencia

Call one of this numbers from a local phone:

Police 110 | 120

Firefighter 122 | 123

Social Security Ambulance(IGSS) 128

Red Cross 125

No prefixes are needed when calling an emergency telephone number

Calls to Guatemala from outside the country

International Calls to Guatemala

Dial 00 + 502 + Home or mobile phone number (8 digits).

Example: If you need to call from abroad to phone number 2235-5763 in Guatemala City, you must dial 00 + 502 + 2235-5763.

Local Calls in Guatemala

When making phone calls within the country to home or mobile phone numbers, you do not need to use prefixes.



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	PU Adreess	Teléfono
PU Jalapa	5 avenida 2-60 zona 1, Barrio La Democracia, Jalapa.	7922-4448 7922-3814
PU Carchá	5 Calle Lote 4ª zona 7, Residenciales Imperial, Cobán Alta Verapaz.	7951-0107 7951-0194
PU Polochic	Barrio Las Palmas, a la par de Escuela Oficial No. 2, La Tinta, Alta Verapaz.	4043-4729 4086-7346
PU Baja Verapaz	8 Avenida 3-30 zona 1, Barrio El Centro, Salamá, Baja Verapaz	7940-0798 7940-0799

Miembros del equipo de Seguridad

SRT. (Equipo de Revisión de Seguridad)

Plan Guatemala staff has been trained on emergency management and response and receive regularly updated information . Plan has established alliances with experts who will advise on the security incidents and risks.

Any Security actions and decisions are approved by the Security Review Team (SRT). Plan encourage you to report all incidents and security issues to the officer in charge of your visit or security Focus point.

John Lundine	Country Director
Vivianne Olivares	Managing Director / Country Security Focus Point
Joel Fonseca	Finance Manager
Raul Corado	IT Manager
Hugo Arana	HR Manager
Rolando Lopez	Management Risks Advisor
Maria Jose Dufourq	Development Education Officer



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Natural disasters and climate

Procedures in the event of Seismic Motion

Keep calm

If you are indoors, take cover under a table or desk, or near a column

Do not go near windows or glass doors, until the earthquake is over

Stay away from bookcases and items that may fall

Do not run

Do not leave until the earthquake has stopped
Wait for the signal of the commission to evacuate the building to the designated

meeting point.

Proceed with an orderly evacuation.

Do not use elevators, they will probably get stuck

If you are in a hallway, get down on your knees against an interior wall and stay clear of windows, tilt your head on your knees with bent body, elbows and forearms and protect your head and neck with clasped hands on the lower and upper neck (Back of the neck)

If you are outdoors, stay away from buildings, trees, and power lines.

If you are on the road, go to a place away from bridges or overpasses, try to park and remain inside the vehicle.

Stay away from river banks or streams, and seek shelter in a site with little slope, because there may be landslides, dam failures, and avalanches.



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Floods and volcanic eruptions

Precautionary Measures during a Flood

Keep calm

Contact the Security Focus Point for updates on the situation.

If you are in a building, and the lower floors are threatened, move to higher floors of the buildings, following instructions from the disaster safety officer

Do not touch electrical equipment; utilities such as electricity or propane gas may cause accidents or injury.

Water and electricity must be turned off

If you are in route to a site and a flood is imminent, stop in a safe place, do not continue your journey

Do not drive into flooded areas
If your vehicle becomes stranded in flood water, leave it and move

to higher ground, as a safety and protective measure

Do not seek shelter under sewages or bridges.

If in the midst of a storm, stay inside the building and away from open doors and windows, as glass may break and cause injury.

Wait for instructions from authorized personnel.

What to do during a Volcanic Eruption

Keep calm

If you are in the disaster area, follow the instructions of authorities and emergency Focus points

Do not drive or walk in areas with strong currents of lava

Seek shelter in safe areas, away from the path of lava current, as it carries mud, rocks, trees, etc.

Keep in mind that earthquakes of less or great intensity can occur after a volcanic eruption; do not be alarmed

Do not eat foods from plants or animals or anything that has been in contact with volcanic eruption materials

Stay away from the disaster area because there may be toxic gases caused by ash, which produce skin burns, prevent breathing, and cause eye irritation; protect yourself from health damage

Remember we are not rescuers, if you find injured people or buried bodies, help by reporting your finding to the authorities
Watch for all the news on the radio to follow instructions of the authorities



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Travel and accommodation

Air Travel

When travelling by air, it is advised to consider the following information:

Boarding: Airline staff will request the following documents:

- Boarding Pass
- Passport or valid ID
- Visa, if necessary

Baggage: Baggage is included in the cost of your airline ticket up to a specified limit. Each airline has its own policy regarding weight and quantity. A passenger can bring one small carry-on bag with certain specific items. Never leave your luggage unattended or in the custody of strangers.

Hotels: Plan Guatemala uses only carefully selected hotels providing adequate security. However, it is always recommended not to leave valuables or important documents outdoors or in sight.

If the room does not have its own safe deposit box, we suggest use the Hotel's safety deposit box.

Health Insurance: Make sure your health insurance has international coverage, and carry a copy of the insurance policy in case of an emergency.

Food: You should drink only bottled water and avoid raw or undercooked food. Avoid eating at kiosks or informal carts out in the street because hygiene is inadequate.

Tipping: There are no formal guidelines to giving tips; customarily 10% is tendered in addition to the price of the service provided. It is not customary to tip taxi drivers.

Electricity: Electric current in Guatemala is 110 volts. If you are using appliances that do not accept 110 volts at 60 Hertz, you will need a voltage converter.

Ground Transportation

Guatemala City is the largest city of Central America, and is the department and national capital of Guatemala. The city is located in a valley in the south-central part of the country. Most 4-5 star hotels are in Guatemala City and Antigua, and offer free airport-hotel-airport transportation service on fixed schedules. Visitors are encouraged to use only clearly marked vehicles such as hotel shuttle bus (identified with hotel logos). Do not take taxis on the street at any time of the day or night. There are a number of unregistered /unlicensed/ stolen taxis that are circulating. It is advised that you contact Plan Guatemala's office for a list of recommended taxis (hotels) available in the area for your safety.

Remarks: No overnight trips are allowed.



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Travel and Customs

A passport is required to travel to Guatemala. Usually, no visa or tourist card is required, but travelers are urged to seek information on visa requirements before traveling.

There are restrictions on the contents of your carry-on luggage such as certain size containers with liquids, aerosols and gels, plus certain items such as scissors and the like, which are applied to passengers traveling on international flights.

IDENTIFICATION

A passport to travel to Guatemala is required. Usually no visa or tourist card is required, but travelers are urged to seek information on the visa requirements before traveling. Before traveling by air, look for information on airport security measures, especially for flights from Guatemala to the USA and /or Canada. You may experience a delay at the airport and/or restrictions

with carry-on luggage.

In some cases, depending on the country of origin, it is necessary to submit a card or document certifying that you were given a Yellow Fever vaccine.

We do recommend carrying a photocopy of your passport with the date of entry in Guatemala and visa (if required) at all times, in addition to copies of other documents deemed important.



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Health attention

A full range of medical care is available in Guatemala City, but medical care outside the city is limited. Public hospitals in Guatemala often experience severe shortages of basic medicines and equipment.

Care in private hospitals is generally adequate for most common diseases and injuries; however, specific medicines such as retroviral drugs may be hard to find.

Please note that some clinics ask for a down payment before providing medical assistance, even in emergency situations. Visitors should take medical precautions and seek medical advice before traveling.

An international health insurance policy is highly recommended. If you are taking any medication for any reason, carry the medicine with you at all times, and inform Plan of your needs.

Private medical services (clinics and hospitals) in Guatemala City possibly meet international health care standards; however, this is not true in other regions covered by Plan.

It is also recommended to always carry insect repellent and sunscreen protector if you are conducting field trips.

Dengue Clásico y Hemorrágico

Dengue epidemic increases during the rainy season. Dengue belongs to a group of infectious and contagious diseases that need a biological medium for transmission, the Aedes Aegypti mosquito.

La Malaria

This is one of the most common infectious diseases. In humans, transmission occurs through the bite by the female Anopheles mosquito. It is recommended that you shut windows down at night, sleeping with mosquito nets, covering your body as much as possible, and applying repellent to exposed areas.

Diarrhea

May be accompanied by abdominal pain, fever, nausea, vomiting, weakness or loss of appetite, and you are advised not to eat raw food or in unsuitable places, drink only bottled water, and follow basic hygiene measures (hand washing).

Flu (AH1N1)

A hand sanitizer is recommended, and taking all known methods of prevention to reduce the risk of contracting the pandemic.



Por la niñez en Guatemala



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Recommended Hospitals

CIUDAD	NOMBRE CLINICA	DIRECCION	TELEFONO
Ciudad de Guatemala	Sanatorio Nuestra Señora del Pilar	3ra. calle 10-71 zona 15, Colonia Tecun Uman	2420-0000
	Hospital Centro Medico	6ª. Avenida 3-47 zona 10	2279-4949
	Hospital Herrera Llerandi	6ª. Avenida 8-71 zona 10	2384-5959
PU Jalapa	Centro Médico Millenium	Calzada Justo Rufino Barrios zona 7	7922-0607
	Sanatorio Santa Marta	1ª. Avenida 0-74 zona 6, Barrio Chipilapa	7922-8175
	Centro Médico Jalapaneco	3ra. Avenida 1-42 zona 1, Barrio La Esperanza	7922-4689
PU Carcha	Policlinica Galeno	3ra. Avenida 1-47 zona 3. Cobán, Alta Verapaz	7951-2913
	Hospital Nuestra Señora del Carmen	6ta. Calle 4-49 zona 11. Cobán, Alta Verapaz.	7951-0769
	Sanatorio de Especialidades Verapaz	2da. Calle 2-20 zona 4. Cobán Alta Verapaz.	7951-4616 7951-1712
	Hospital Privado Maria de Nazareth	2da. Calle 7-22 zona 1, Cobán, Alta Verapaz.	7951-3270
PU Polochic	Ver clínicas de UP Carcha	Ver clínicas de UP Carcha	-----
PU Baja Verapaz	Clínica Medica y Sanatorio Cristiano Adonái	7a. Avenida "A" 3-68 zona 2 Barrio San José, Salamá Baja Verapaz.	7959-3143 5801-6433 5205-9279
	Hospital Privado El Valle	7a. Calle 3-72 zona 2 Barrio San José, Salamá Baja Verapaz.	7940-0403 7940-1545
	Sanatorio Lourdes	3ra. Calle 6-97 zona 1 Barrio El Centro, Salamá Baja Verapaz.	7940-0653
	Centro Medio de Especialidades y Hospital de Día	7a. Calle 3-72 zona 2 Barrio San José, Salamá Baja Verapaz.	7940-2041 7940-0173 5482-1569



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General Information

Holidays

There are national and public holidays in the country, and during these days administrative and banking services, among others, may not be available. Listed below are the major holidays in Guatemala.

January 1st: New Year's day

April: Easter Week

May 1st: Labor Day

June 30th: Army Day

August 15: Asumption Virgen Day (only Guatemala City)

September 15th: Independence Day

October 20th: Revolution Day

November 1st: All Saints' Day

December 24/25th: Christmas

BANKING

The currency of legal tender in Guatemala is the Quetzal (GTQ). Foreign exchange services and ATMs are available at local banks and shopping malls. Hotels also offer foreign exchange services. The rate of exchange fluctuates, and is presently at approximately GTQ 7.50 per US Dollar. Some significant differences regarding the rate are common, depending on the bank. Do not exchange money on the streets and be extremely careful when using debit / credit cards.

Most of the major international credit cards (VISA, Master Card and American Express) are accepted in most businesses, but always use cash when visiting remote villages or the communities covered by Plan Guatemala. ATMs are not common in small towns; therefore, access to these services is limited.



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Final Statement

Plan International Guatemala has community programs in different regions of the country; therefore, the level of contact with children is high. Consequently, all visitors are requested to follow the corporate Plan guidelines on adequate behavior according to the Child Protection Policy during your stay in the country.

John Lundine
Country Director

I do hereby confirm that I have read and understood the security measures and Child Protection Policy, and agree to abide by and follow its principles during the time I will stay in the country.

Signature

Date

Prior to your visit, please email or fax this document to Plan Guatemala. Upon arrival, please provide a signed copy. We hope your visit to Guatemala is pleasant and safe.

Disclaimer: Plan Guatemala assumes no legal liability or responsibility for any event in which visitors may suffer from harm. We strongly recommend taking into consideration the travel warnings issued by your Embassy as well as information from the U.S. State Department, available at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1129.html

I confirm that I received the security briefing in Guatemala on:

Signature

Date



Por la niñez en Guatemala

The Child Protection Policy that must be signed by each visitor requires from the visitor:

1. Never to abuse and/or exploit a child or perform an act or behave in such a manner as to place a child at risk of damage.
2. Report any child abuse and protection problems according to the procedures of the applicable local Office.

A visitor must not:

1. Disclose information identifying sponsored children or families to be made available to the general public without the specific consent of Plan.



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