

IMPACT REPORT

2023

# Letter

from the  
board

Project Suma (formerly Word Made Flesh Bolivia) was founded in 2001 with simple, but foundational commitments. We determined to not only start something, but to do it well. In 2023, we moved closer towards that goal, expanding local representation and influence, most notably with Doris Monasterios assuming national leadership.

Doris has been a trusted friend since our first days in Bolivia and a loyal, strategic leader in this community for over a decade. She embodies resilience, empathy and vision. Her passion and dedication challenge us all to strive for excellence. I have full confidence in her to lead Project Suma to even greater heights.

As I step away from organizational management, I remain actively involved in this work through continued guidance, advocacy and support. My commitment to see change in Bolivia remains unwavering.

Reflecting on this transition, it seems to parallel much of my own journey in motherhood – nurturing a dream, while evolving and adapting along the way. And now as my own children begin to launch into adulthood, much to my great pride, Project Suma also steps into solid maturity.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in this work. With your partnership, we look forward to an exciting new chapter in our journey. I hope you enjoy reading and celebrating all that you have been a part of.



*Andrea Baker*

Founder & Advocate



*Elizabeth Scarfe*

Board Member

2023 has been a year of beauty and evolution for Project Suma – within our team, our programming and most importantly, our voices.

Throughout history, every movement for justice began with a story that sparked a response. It was often one so jarring or impactful that the witness couldn't walk away. Listeners were compelled to act. As supporters of Project Suma, I know that we have all had those moments and they have drawn us in to this journey together.

A few decades ago, our education about human trafficking came from journalists and service providers who told of the horrors they had witnessed across the globe. They shared stories of tragedy, abuse and unthinkable violence against men, women and children. As our awareness has grown, brave new voices have emerged to educate us and tell their own stories. These stories tell not only of trauma, but also triumph, courage, hope and self-empowerment.

Together, we are writing a new narrative for the world – one that speaks of leadership, progress and fearlessness. This is the narrative we tell at Project Suma, where women are pursuing healing, launching businesses, making declarations of faith and chasing after their dreams in new ways. We are excited to share all that's happened this year and deeply grateful for the role you played in making it possible.

Thank you for believing in us.



0.21 ↓

Factor 8 Score  
2023

## Bolivia

REGION Latin America & Caribbean  
INCOME GROUP Lower Middle

GLOBAL RANKING 141 / 142

REGIONAL RANKING 31 / 32

INCOME RANKING 37 / 37 ↑

Factor 8 Score  
0.0 — 1.0

From the World Justice Project

# CONTEXT

Bolivia ranks second to last in a global study of **142** countries rating systems of criminal justice and is also one of the countries with the most violence against women in Latin America.<sup>1</sup> A weak judicial system creates serious consequences for those seeking justice and increases the vulnerability of Bolivian women and their families.

[See here for more info](#)



1. The 2023 Rule of Law Index is compiled annually by the World Justice Project to assess the judicial system of each country. It considers 8 parameters for evaluation.

# Vision

**ABUNDANT LIFE**  
FOR THOSE  
AFFECTED BY  
**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**  
IN BOLIVIA

## Connection

Presence and deep identification in brothels, on the streets and anywhere there's injustice and exploitation against women and their children

## Support

Immediate aid, working with mothers and children to protect the next generation from exploitation and violence

## Healing

Support, workshops, individual and group counseling, within a nurturing community to better overcome trauma and abuse

## Opportunity

Career and financial training, tutoring, mentoring and discipleship

Through a holistic program developed over two decades, Project Suma offers hope and lasting change to sexually exploited women and their families by breaking generational cycles of violence and poverty.



# Mission

WE REDUCE BARRIERS  
**CREATE OPPORTUNITIES**  
AND IMPACT CULTURE  
FOR FULL  
**TRANSFORMATION**

# GENERATIONAL CHANGE

90%

of the most-at-risk families that received emergency attention reduced vulnerability

50

families built a safe community for themselves free from violence and abuse

80%

of women from the Restoration Program advanced in their personal goals

31

families established a financial saving culture

13

families are now earning income from non-exploitative sources



# WOMEN'S PROGRAM

**We work for women to have a restored past, a redeemed present and a secure future.**

Regular street outreach helps plant seeds of hope. We have seen that connection, empathy and close accompaniment within a nurturing community leads to transformation. Hearts begin to heal and confidence grows.

***"I want my daughters to say  
'because my mom succeeded, I can too.'"***

*-Yara,\* Women's Program participant*

## Connection

**2896** women personally encouraged through street outreach

**158** women welcomed into our drop-in center, to build relationships and trust within a community of encouraging staff and fellow survivors

## Support

**152** women reduced their vulnerability through assistance in emergency situations

**40** women better equipped to prevent violence in their lives through workshops and therapeutic group activities

## Healing

**35** women better equipped to overcome trauma and its effects through individual therapy

**15** women rediscovered their dreams and passions and created a plan of action through financial training

## Opportunity

**13** women made their dream business come true through financial support

**6** women stepped into leadership roles to encourage other survivors in the process of healing

Yara persevered to open a new path for her family. In her own words: **“I want my daughters to say ‘because my mom succeeded, I can too.’”**

## YARA'S\* FAMILY

As a single mother at 22 and after managing vending jobs to support her family since childhood, Yara left an unsupportive and abusive partner. Wanting to take care of her daughter as much as she could and without any support, she turned to prostitution.

Ten years later, mothering two more children with a second partner and continuing in the same exploitative environment, Yara's eldest daughter also fell into sexual exploitation. Janna\* was struggling to relate to her peers and Barbara,\* the youngest, was unable to write and read her own name. Additionally, the loss of her second partner and the flooding of her home added another layer of hardship to their lives.

Yara joined Project Suma's Women's Program in 2018. Immersing herself in crafts, wood painting, baking and cooking, she found healing and support in a safe community, as well as inspiration for her business ventures; she left prostitution that very same year.

Still attending cooking classes and managing various street vending jobs, Yara was financially supported by the Economic Strengthening program and was able to sell lunches outside our drop-in center. Boosting her sales, she was able to renovate her home to livable conditions and pay the bills on time. Her oldest daughter also joined the Women's program and left prostitution. Janna and Barbara overcame their own personal challenges with the support of the Children's Program. They now dream of someday becoming teachers!

Yara and her youngest daughters live in a safe home built by Yara herself. The girls love to help their mom in her business ventures, providing ideas and support, all while pursuing their own dreams discovered during their time at *Casa Esperanza*.

During a recent family retreat, Yara chose baptism, signaling a new beginning. She continues to grow with plans to open a café someday.

**“I want to provide jobs for women that have experienced the same as me.”**

**Their resilience and determination make them an inspiration for all women.**

## THEY ARE SUMA!



# CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

**We work to ensure safety, stability and care for children impacted by sexual exploitation, to grow fully in mind, body and spirit.**

We provide a safe and trusted space for fun, learning and friendship, where children build relationships and learn to care for themselves and their peers. This is crucial for children in unstable environments, a place to heal and thrive. Here dreams flourish as kids can become all they were meant to be.

***"Casa Esperanza is the best place in the world!"***

*-Vincent,\* Children's Program participant*

## Connection

**218** children enjoyed a trusted space with fun activities, learning opportunities and nutritional support to grow to their full potential

## Support

**83** children trained to identify and prevent situations of abuse and trafficking  
**67** children prepared for academic success with brand new school supplies

## Healing

**55** children overcame difficulties in various school subjects through extra school support  
**19** children better equipped to overcome trauma and its effects through individual therapy

## Opportunity

**10** youth explored their career interests and developed applicable skills through financial training  
**1** teen was granted special admission into one of Bolivia's most prestigious universities, a distinction reserved solely for the region's top students

*Casa Esperanza (or the House of Hope), is the ministry center of Project Suma, named by the women we serve.*



# ADVOCACY

**We listen, support and celebrate when women and children speak up as leaders in this fight.**

With passion, faithfulness and integrity, we are a local and international community that advocates and works for change in Bolivia and beyond. Survivors lead us, working together for a future that they themselves design.

***“Until all women are free, none of us are.”***  
*- Lorena Burgos, Advocacy Coordinator*

- **100** key allies brought together at the “Restorative Justice for Trafficking Victims” event hosted by Project Suma, strengthening our efforts to combat this issue
- **1200** volunteer hours across all of Project Suma’s activities
- **15** survivors engaged in workshops dedicated to eradicating exploitation, focusing on leadership strategies and human rights
- **15** international and local events where Project Suma showcased its fight against sexual exploitation
- **1** survivor consultancy on a new program measurement tool to help other trafficking victims on their freedom journey

***“Restorative justice means that each and every member of society reflects on how we engage...”***

*-Alika Kinan, Sex trafficking survivor and advocate  
Restorative Justice for Trafficking Victims, 2023*



# Don't Be Part of the DEMAND



In October 2023, we launched the first edition of the 'Don't Be Part of the Demand' local campaign, working exclusively with men to raise awareness about the consumption of pornography and prostitution. Addressing the issue of human trafficking and sexual exploitation by shifting the focus from victims to the demand, this local campaign was the first and only of its kind in the region.

In collaboration with A21, the campaign kicked off with the Walk for Freedom, a global march in support of 27.6 million trafficking victims worldwide. The campaign continued with a gathering exclusively for men, encouraging participants to reflect upon pornography use and their involvement in the fight against sexual exploitation. It concluded with a benefit concert featuring local artist Matamba, who was the first Bolivian celebrity to speak publicly about these issues.

Joel Astorga, Project Suma volunteer and campaign ambassador, performed a study on pornographic consumption and the internalization of its message in adolescents. He shared his findings during the men's gathering.

## IN HIS WORDS:

"Pornography is a product created to objectify women sexually. It is one more tool in a system that sees women as objects and not human beings. It establishes the idea of women's inferiority compared to men."

-Joel Astorga

[Read the blog](#)

Project Suma aims to bring awareness with more initiatives in disrupting demand, this coming year.



# Inspiring Leadership

*"I want to start my business just like Google."*



**Edward,\*** an aspiring entrepreneur from our Economic Strengthening program, founded an online sales business that delivers products directly to customers' doors. Motivated by a deep desire to support his mother, he envisions his venture following the trajectory of Google – starting small and in a garage, but growing into a large enterprise.

*"I want to help my mom start her sewing business."*



**Jacinta,\*** always stood out for her school performance as one of the best students in her high school. Last year, she graduated top of her class and was granted special admission into one of Bolivia's most prestigious universities, reserved only for the region's top-performing students. Enrolled as a finance major, she hopes to help her mom start her own sewing business one day.

*Survivors are raising their voices!*



**Fiona,\*** SutiSana artisan and leader of our 2021 "The Freedom Climb" campaign, traveled to Mexico to consult on a new program measurement tool to help other trafficking victims on their freedom journey. She also represented Bolivia in the Global Freedom from Slavery Forum in the Dominican Republic.

**Delia** shared her experience of a system that takes advantage of women's vulnerabilities and why being accompanied is so important when leaving prostitution, in the first edition of the Abundant Life Podcast.

*Breaking the Silence*

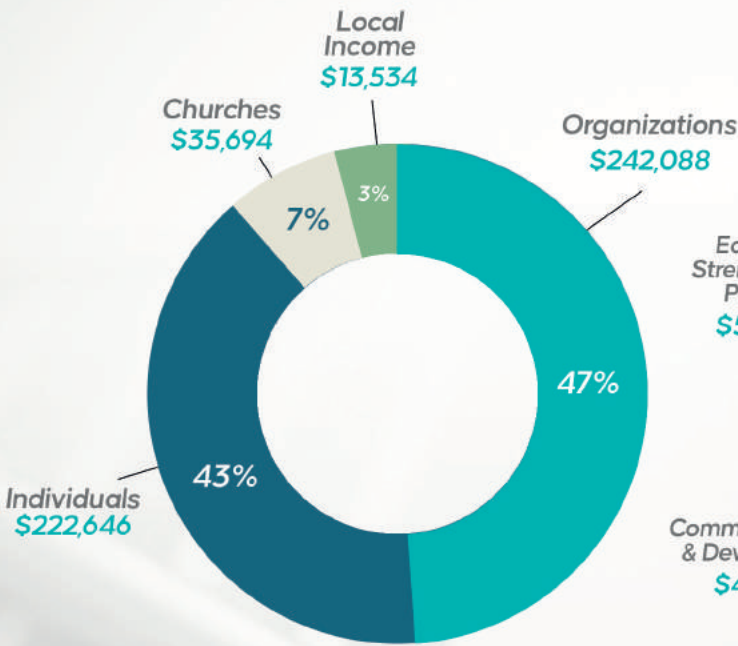


Last year, with the help of Project Suma's social workers, two mothers reported Child and Adolescent Rape and achieved justice for their children. Additionally, six women reported the absence of child support and restored rights and economic sustainability for their families. These women are leading the fight for justice and motivating others around them to do the same.

*Read these and more Suma experiences on our blog.*

# FINANCIALS

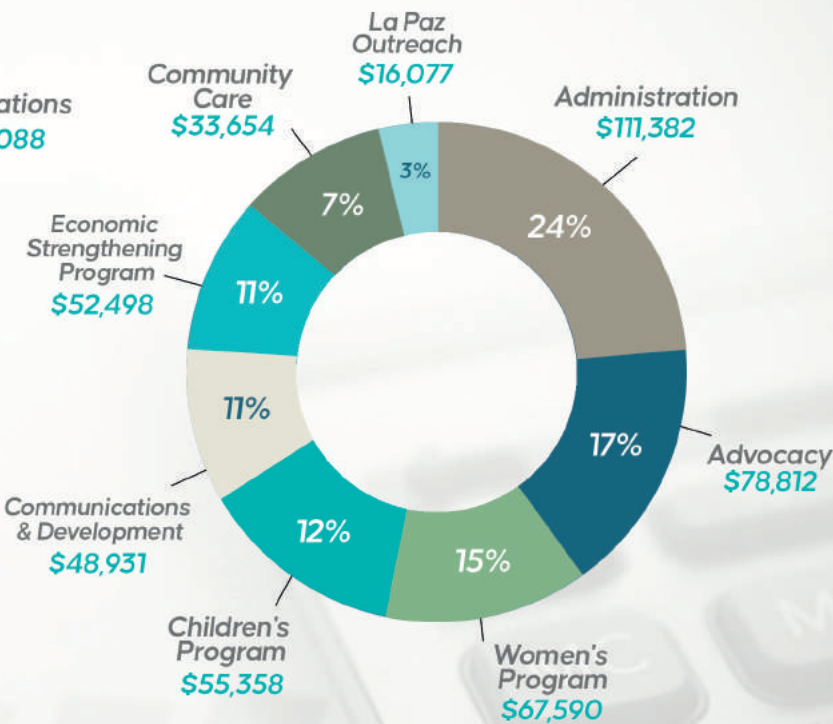
## Income



TOTAL

**\$513,962**

## Expenses



TOTAL

**\$464,302**

Thank you to all who generously and faithfully give year after year. Our community of supporters anchors our work and helps us reach new heights, supporting even more families as they transform from victims to survivors to thrivers.

# You're needed



## GET INVOLVED

Your gifts, talents and passions are needed in the fight against trafficking. From prayer partners to youth activities, to outreach and giving, we deeply value the presence, support and hard work of those who graciously provide their time and resources to extend Abundant Life to prostituted women and their children.

***"I have been honored to serve with many different organizations all over the world, but there is none more impactful than Project Suma!"***

*- Shelby Van Maanen, Project Suma advocate and volunteer*



[Read the blog](#)

**\*Names and details have been altered to respect privacy, but their words and stories have been shared with expressed permission.**

**Support the growth and leadership of strong and resilient families.  
You can pray, become a monthly partner or sponsor a child!  
Find more information online at the links below.**

**Stay Connected**



**Give Today**




**LEARN MORE**



 [www.projectsuma.org](http://www.projectsuma.org)

 [hello@projectsuma.org](mailto:hello@projectsuma.org)

 (205) 655-1575