



## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF PROGRAM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The Comprehensive Care Route for Early Childhood (RAPI) outlines the sequence of planned, continuous and permanent care that contributes to comprehensive care and the guarantee of the rights of each child. It states that the effective fulfillment of a child's rights is subject to certain care, which materializes in specific services provided by one or several institutions linked to care by stage of life.*

### EDUCATION RECREATION AND CULTURE

- The Cuidarte Program is a community and family-based approach to comprehensive early childhood care for rural areas and indigenous regions.
- The Cuidarte Program implemented in **two of the nine** districts of the **Arraiján District (Arraiján Cabecera and Veracruz)**, with funds from the Sus Buenos Vecinos Foundation, constitutes a challenge and at the same time an opportunity for children between 6 and 36 months of age who do not have access to early childhood education centers, to receive support through the modality of home visits, and every week receive activities that contribute to the development of skills: **motor, socio-emotional, adaptive, cognitive and language.**
- The Program started in February 2023, to date there are **20 months of continuous implementation.**
- According to the Population and Housing Census published in 2023, **5,480 children** between the ages of **0 and 48 months** reside in the districts of **Veracruz and Arraiján Cabecera** ; the Cuidarte Program, sponsored by Fundación sus Buenos Vecinos and implemented by Fondo Unido de Panamá, serves **300** children between **6 and 36 months of age**, representing **5.5%** of the population of these two districts, who did not receive any formal or informal educational services.
- Of the total number of children served by the Cuidarte Program, 151 are **boys (50.3%)** and **149 are girls (49.7%).**
- From May 2023 to October 2024, **20,359 home visits** have been made and support has been provided to mothers and caregivers of infants, which represents **88% of the goal** expected by the Program



Take care of yourself, **215** of the 300 beneficiaries have received between **85 and 100%** of the care.

- It is also important to highlight that the supervisors have carried out a total of **305** supervisions of community promoters during 20 months of implementation.
- In almost two years of the Cuidarte Project, **160** activities have been carried out **weekly meetings**, as well as the United Fund of Panama team constantly monitors and makes recommendations on the progress of the Cuidarte Program in order to meet the **26 Quality Standards** it requires.

## LIFE AND HEALTH

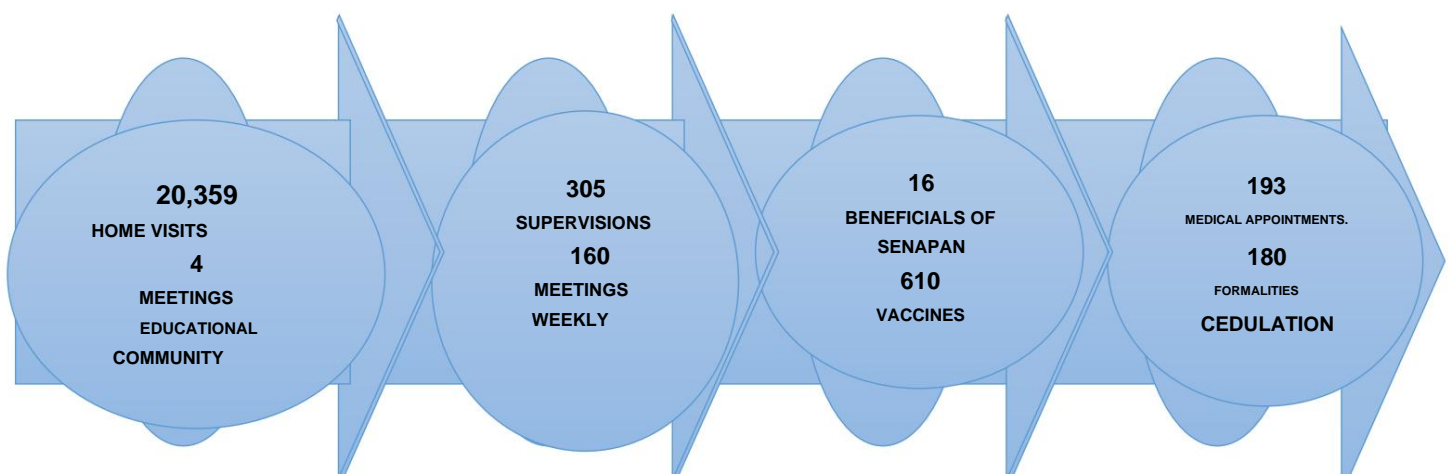
- The Cuidarte program contributes to the attention of the **Red Flags** (**Red Flags**) which are warning signs that through the implementation of inter-institutional alliances of the Public Services Network are aim to address and counteract.
- There are still important challenges related to achieving the provision of health services , **combating poverty** and **malnutrition**, as well as **other needs** that have been identified during the reporting period, and which are being addressed with the commitment of the institutions involved in the Local Network.
- During the Second Community Educational Meeting held from September 25 to October 3, **610 vaccines were administered** (417 to the girls and boys participating in Cuidarte and 193 to mothers or caregivers)
- Through the inter-institutional action **of the Government of Western Panama, MINSA, the Social Security Fund and MEDUCA, 193 people** have been assisted beneficiaries of the Take Care of Yourself Program at the Generoso Guardia Polyclinic in La Chorrera.
- For this period we highlight that in close coordination with the **Ministry of Health**; the health and nutrition services required for child development have already been provided, with the support of MEDUCA and the Government of Western Panama.
- MIDES preselected a first group of 16 participating **mothers** Cuidarte Program that should receive the Secretariat **Program National Plan for Food and Nutritional Security (SENAPAN)**,



from the payment of conditional monetary transfers to be made in September 2024, who have met the eligibility requirements and there is a second group of **10 mothers** who are in the process of completing the requirements demanded by SENAPAN.

## PROTECTION AND INCLUSION

- **171 children (57%)** are from the **Guna ethnic group**, **72 children (24%)** are **Latino**, **36 children (12%)** are from another indigenous group (**Ngäbe-Buglé** and **Emberá-Wounaan**); and **23 children (8%)** are **Afro-descendants**; in other words, 7 out of 10 children enrolled in the Cuidarte Program come from indigenous Panamanian families who have moved from the regional areas to the semi-urban centers of Arraiján.
- During the Second Community Educational Meeting, the Electoral Court carried out **180 procedures to update birth records, requests for new ID cards and replacement of expired ID cards** or issue new ones, among others.
- On average, **187 mothers or caregivers** have been trained during the Community Educational Meetings in approximately 16 hours in the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P: The Power of Positive Parenting, Raising Successful Boys and Girls and Raising Resilient Boys and Girls), in addition to training in topics of Nutrition, Health, Vaccination, Right to Identity, the Conditional Cash Transfer Programs of MIDES (Red de Oportunidades, Ángel Guardián, 120 a los 65, SENAPAN); the Labor Insertion Programs of MITRADEL, the AMPYME Programs and CONAPREDES training to Prevent Sexual Violence.
- More than **50 community promoters** have been trained and participated in the Cuidarte Program in the two districts of Arraiján Cabecera and Veracruz.





## MONITORING AND MANAGING PROGRAM QUALITY

### TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

- The information system allows the following to be carried out:

processes: •

The **socio-family characterization** carried out in the preparation phase of the Cuidarte Program and applied to all children at the time of enrollment.

- **Monitoring of parenting practices and home environment** through the Home Environment Quality Survey (HOME Survey), conducted in the first quarter at the start of Cuidarte's operation and upon completion of the first year of implementation or graduation from the Program.

- **Monitoring of family and group early childhood education benefits** , through weekly home visits for 42 weeks.

- **Child-by-child monitoring** of all health, early education, and identity services • **Administrative and financial information** on the implementation

of

Take care of yourself.

- In the pre- versus post-implementation evaluation of the Cuidarte Program on the development of the skills that children must acquire before reaching 36 months of age at the ***cognitive, sensory, motor, socio-affective and language levels***, significant improvements are shown; since most children already carry out the activities alone, as mothers play more frequently with their children (5 to 7 days per week).

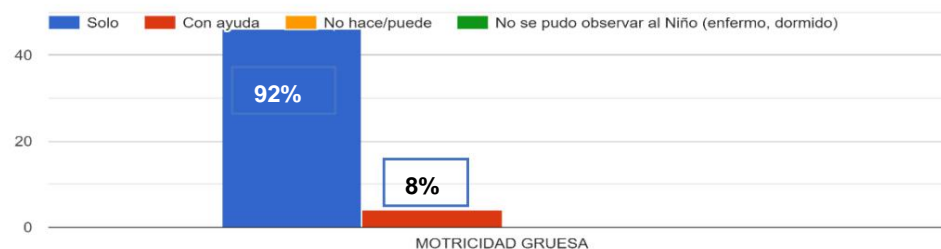
- At the beginning of the Cuidarte Program, **41.7%** of mothers, fathers or caregivers said they played with their children 5 to 7 days a week; after 29 weeks in the Program, **64.3%** said they play with their children with a frequency of 5 to 7 days; which directly supports children to develop on their own the activities that help their comprehensive development, as can be observed in this evaluation.



## EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES BETWEEN 6 AND 36 MONTHS OF AGE

- In October 2024, after receiving care for 20 months, an evaluation was carried out on a representative sample (**n=50**), **17%** of the total number of children participating in the Cuidarte Program (n=300).
- Of these children evaluated, n=22 (44%) are from the Veracruz Node, n=15 (30%) are from the Cristal Node and n=13 (26%) are from the Arraiján Cabecera Node.
- This assessment describes how children from 6 to 36 months whether or not they achieved **developmental milestones** according to their age in the dimensions: **Gross Motor Skills, Fine Motor Skills, Language – Communication, Cognitive, Socioemotional**.
- In the assessment of **Gross Motor** development milestones , expected according to their age , **n=46 (92%)** of the children assessed were able to perform them **alone**, and n=4 (8%) achieved them with the help of their mothers or caregivers. (All children can achieve Gross Motor milestones)

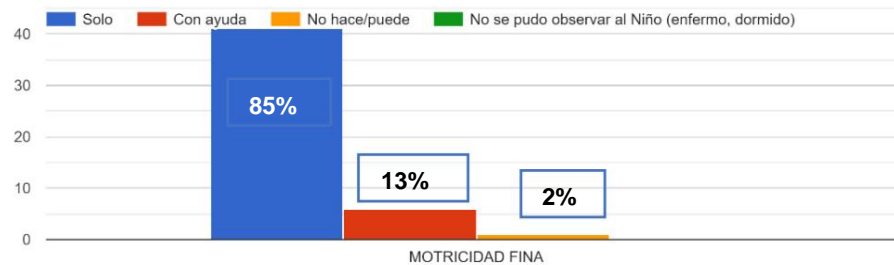
HITO DE DESARROLLO (MARQUE SOLO UNA CASILLA CON UN GANCHO PARA CADA ÁREA DE DESARROLLO SEGÚN SU EDAD)





- In the evaluation of the **Fine Motor** development milestones , expected according to their age , **n=41 (85%)** of the children evaluated managed to do them **Alone**, and **n=6 (13%)** achieved them **With Help** from their mothers or caregivers, and only **n=1 (2%)** could not achieve them.

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- In the evaluation of the Language-Communication development milestones , expected according to their age, **n=24 (49%)** of the children evaluated managed to do them **alone**, and **n=20 (41%)** achieved them **with the help** of their mothers or caregivers, and **n=5 (10%)** could not achieve them.

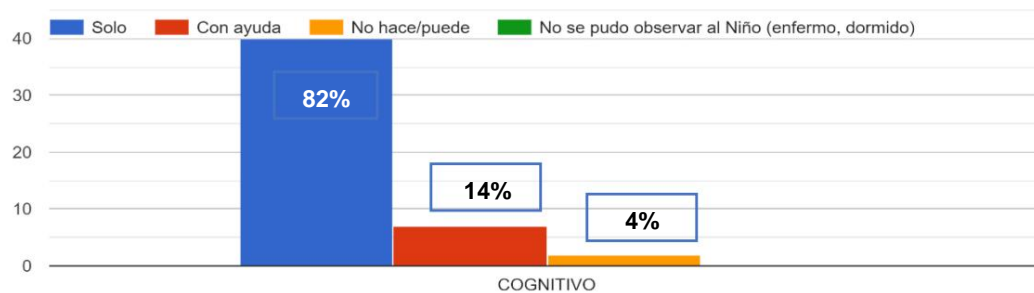
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- In the evaluation of the **Cognitive** development milestones , expected according to their age , **n=40 (82%)** of the children evaluated managed to do them **Alone**, and **n=7 (14%)** achieved them **With Help** from their mothers or caregivers, and **n=2 (4%)** were unable to achieve them.

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- In the assessment of the milestones of **Socio-emotional development**, expected according to their age **n=46 (94%)** of the children evaluated managed to do them **Alone**, and **n=3 (6%)** achieved them **With the help** of their mothers or caregivers. (All children can achieve the Socioemotional milestones)