

Women



Protecting Nature

Dear **Population Connection** family,

We are proud to share key achievements by Women for Conservation over this year, made possible through the support of donors like **Population Connection**. This year began with international recognition for our Founder and President, Sara Lara, who received the **Top 10 Leaders in Latin America** award at the International Congress of Startups in Seville, Spain, as part of the Top 100 Innovative Leaders Ranking. This recognition highlights Women for Conservation's growing role in advancing conservation, social innovation, and women's leadership.



In Colombia, Women for Conservation has continued strengthening spaces where conservation, culture, education, and women-led enterprise intersect. **ISAVIBE Café Cultura Arte**, located in the historic center of Santa Marta, has been established as a collective cultural and conservation hub. The space connects the public with the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta through locally grown coffee, art, music, environmental dialogue, and handcrafted pieces from the **Endémica Collection**, created by rural women artisans and community associations supported by the projects. It serves as a welcoming platform for conservation engagement, cultural movements, and women's economic empowerment.

We also launched the 2026 **Women in Science and Conservation Fellowships** in partnership with **ACHerpetología**, awarding five grants to young women scientists studying amphibians and reptiles in Colombia. These fellowships address a critical funding gap while supporting research that integrates community education, bioacoustics, habitat restoration, and field-based conservation of threatened herpetofauna.



Beyond our field programs, we are expanding our efforts to inspire a broader cultural shift through **education and storytelling**. Sara Lara has recently completed a new book on **positive parenting, empathy, and caring for life**. The book shares the vision that every child raised with love, respect, and compassion can become a guardian of nature and their community.

Drawing on decades of experience working with rural families, women, and children, it reinforces the powerful connection between nurturing **future generations, advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights,** and building communities that are better equipped to protect **biodiversity**.

We reached **250 more women** through family planning services and outreach, including our first events on the Pacific coast of Colombia and one event held by our international partners in Bonla, Liberia.

Providing access to this essential health care means that over 250 women are equipped to take control of their reproduction, giving them greater opportunities in their education, career, and finances.



Another key accomplishment is our outreach to the **Indigenous communities** of the Sierra Nevadas de Santa Marta. The communities we connected with live in remote, isolated villages with little to no access to reproductive health services; we provided transportation and care to **50 Indigenous women**, breaking barriers and helping these women take control over their reproductive schedule.



Together, these efforts demonstrate Women for Conservation's core approach: **protecting biodiversity** while expanding **women's leadership**, advancing **reproductive health** and **rights**, creating **sustainable livelihoods**, strengthening **environmental education**, and building **resilient communities**.

From safeguarding endangered glass frogs to creating cultural and educational spaces in Santa Marta, we continue to **redefine** what **conservation can look like**—one that places women, families, and communities at the heart of lasting **environmental change**.

With much **love** and heartfelt **gratitude** for **Population Connection's** unwavering support, partnership, and shared vision, **thank you** for believing in this journey and in the **women** and **communities** we serve.

Sara Lara and Isabella Cortes
Founders of Women For Conservation