

# PIEDRA PAPEL TIJERA (ROCK PAPER SCISSORS)

Engaging employees and business partners to impact communities at scale across Latin America

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complex geo-political environment of AT&T's Latin American operations combined with the vast vulnerable and distant communities in the region gave impetus to the Piedra Papel Tijera (PPT) program. It helped align AT&T's regional community engagement efforts with post disaster relief actions across multiple countries, stakeholders and partners across Latin America. This program provides an opportunity for the company to grow and leverage itself as a better community member and a leader in volunteerism and community engagement.

### ORGANIZATION



### SECTOR

Telecommunications,  
Media & Technology

### HEADQUARTERS

Dallas, Texas, USA

### SDGs IMPACTED BY THE CASE STUDY



## IMPACTING THE MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The initiative was inspired, quite simply, by the TV Show “Extreme Makeover Home Edition”. Given the high levels of vulnerability and poverty in Latin America, the company aimed to address and service the most vulnerable, forgotten, distant and dangerous locations in the region by activating its most important resource: AT&T Employees. The program kick-started in 2009 with a project that endeavored to meet the needs of a Senior Citizen Center in Zarate, Argentina. Their simple request for a basic programming decoder for their entertainment quickly resulted in AT&T volunteers infusing new life into the residents with actions that transformed their home. From that one project initiated by DirectTV in 2009, the program has expanded to 267 projects in 13 countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico, Peru, Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela. There is an average of one Piedra Papel Tijera project underway in the Americas every 15 days.

The success of the Piedra Papel Tijera program hinges on AT&T employees. Since its inception, over 14,000 AT&T, DIRECTV and SKY volunteers (not counting volunteers from the program’s partners) have participated in Piedra Papel Tijera activities—out of a total Latin America employee base of 34,000. This Force for Good has benefited over 250 institutions by:

- Rebuilding community centers that service abandoned children, the disabled, and terminally ill seniors
- Reconstructing schools, libraries and training facilities
- Rebuilding of community farms and community vegetable gardens



# PARTNERSHIPS: BETTER TOGETHER

Since the inception of Piedra Papel Tijera, the company has used its respected reputation in the Latin America region, high visibility, influence, and communication reach as a broadcaster, to seek partner companies at a local, national and regional level to participate in the projects, bringing their own unique skill sets. Given the company's entertainment DNA, the activities of each project are captured in production and edited to reflect a genuine reality TV series: Piedra Papel Tijera. This original TV series also enables the ability to recruit more companies for partnership and collaboration, while gaining positive reputational exposure for the company and its partners via the broadcast.

**“The heart that beats in any organization or corporation is the same heart that can make ANY community engagement activity successful. At AT&T Latin America, we have executed projects with as little as USD 2,000 and as large as USD 250,000—however, the most valuable element is the volunteers that execute the program whatever the budget. The human spirit and creativity is what maximizes and expand those investments.”**

**- SANDRO MESQUITA,**  
AVP, CSR & Environmental Sustainability Latin America,  
AT&T

# KEY OUTCOMES AND LEARNINGS

The Piedra Papel Tijera program has empowered AT&T employees, its partners and communities across Latin America. Contributing factors to the program's success include:

**GRASSROOTS EFFORTS WORK** — This is true within a Corporation and it is certainly true within the communities serviced.

**THERE ARE NO SUBSTITUTES FOR PEOPLE (VOLUNTEERS)** — The indomitable spirit and creativity of the company's employee volunteers are core to the success of this program. They are what maximizes and expands the impact (not a check book).

**A GENUINE AND FEARLESS SPIRIT** — The projects take place in some of the most vulnerable, distant, and impoverished communities, fueling volunteers to make a true impact and generate memories that will last a lifetime.

**FOCUS ON MISSION** — Each project's goals are clearly set and must come to a conclusion within the period of up to 7-days of volunteer action.

**PARTNER BEFORE APPLAUSE** — Brand recognition for all partner organizations participating takes a back seat to building true relationships.



Some of the program's positive impact includes:

## SNAP SHOT

AT&T Latin America having witnessed a rise in its Great Place to Work score in every operational unit over the past five years with community engagement gaining significant importance and influence in the survey results.

Employee driven communication of Piedra Papel Tijera projects inspire the workforce with each of the 25 to 35 project calls-to-action annually receiving 100 responses for every one volunteer place available.

