

A Community We Support: Las Cañas

Location Statistics

The most recent INEGI census (2010) reported a Las Cañas population of 779 men, women, and children, residing in 182 households. Children ages 0 to 12 made up 68% of the population.

The poverty level in the village is quite high. Only 189 members of the adult population had some income and one-third of the homes did not have all services: electricity, water, and drainage.

Only 20% of the adults had some form of income.

The illiteracy rate was 9%, with the average level of schooling completed was 5 years.

The Weekly Support and Supply Cycle

Our 36 school kitchens are visited each week by our kitchen supervisors who use an inventory par stock system to prepare the “shopping list” for the following week. This list is divided into dry goods and supplies, and perishables.

On **Saturdays**, volunteers pack the individual dry goods and supplies from bulk purchase stored in our center.

On **Mondays**, our vendors deliver fresh produce and perishables which are then cleaned and packed to order by another group of volunteers.

On **Tuesdays**, a third group of volunteers pick up the “shopping list” order for “their school” and delivers it using their own vehicles.

Our volunteer driver is **Chip Swab**.

Population statistics source: 2010 INEGI Census (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática)



The Feed the Hungry kitchen in Las Cañas has been in operation since 2004 and now serves 157 meals to children every school day at the Francisco Villa elementary and the Pascual Ortiz Rubio preschool. There is one paid cook, assisted by volunteer moms.

The community of Las Cañas is located 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) from the Feed the Hungry Center.

Nutrition Report

For the latest Nutrition Report (June 2018), staff nutritionist Irving E. Ayala Zúñiga assessed 89 students in primaria (elementary school) through height, weight, and body fat measurements.

Underweight Children

17% light underweight; 26% moderate to severe underweight

This community of Las Cañas has a current diagnosis of light to moderate underweight with satisfactory and positive evolution. We no longer observe signs of vitamin deficiencies (spots on the face and arms and dry skin). This community underwent a great change with the increase in the number of children who entered primaria.

Condition	Percentage
Obese	19%
Overweight	3%
Normal	35%
Light underweight	17%
Moderate underweight	10%
Severe underweight	16%

The participation of the mothers has been positive, except in some cases where they still have to work on correcting the bad eating habits that are deeply rooted in daily life, such as consumption of junk food and skipping breakfast or dinner. These bad habits can only be changed with constant diligence.

Obese and Overweight Children

22% obese or overweight

The percentage of overweight children increased because of the entry of many new students to primaria. In addition, these children come from other areas of San Miguel where junk food is a bigger problem. The causes of malnutrition in this community are closely related to the junk food commonly found in the small shops around the village that sell highly sweetened soft drinks, processed snacks, and churros. Another problem is a lack of physical activity by overweight children. Some of them claim, “It is more tiring to run” because they are heavy. They prefer to rest rather than play, resulting in a gradual increase in weight. A vicious cycle.

Fortunately, the children have seen the problems that junk food causes, and better nutrition has been widely discussed with their mothers.

General Observation

The achievements that have been made with the children of this community remain constant and satisfactory. The participation and understanding of the children and mothers is very active. The nutrition program receives a notable positive response, and it will be important to continue with the work to eradicate bad eating habits.