



March 2023

“It Takes a Village”

Project Report

Summary

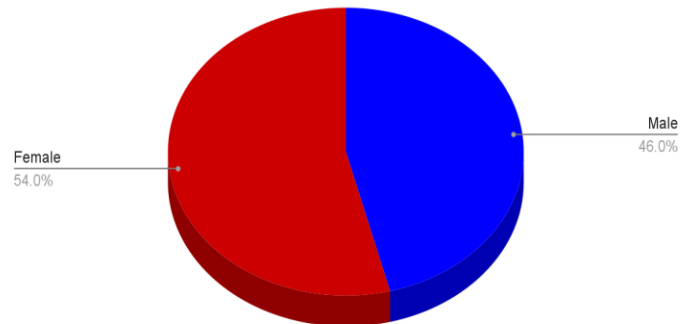
Venezuela has been severely affected by a decades-long economic, social and political crisis with a hyperinflation of double or even triple digits in the last few years. Even if the situation has improved lately, according to a research by [Bloomberg - Nov' 22](#), with a 156% rate, Venezuela is one of the top five countries with the highest inflation in the world. This has impacted dramatically those who rely only on national salaries and don't receive remittances from abroad. One of the many consequences of this crisis is the increase in food insecurity and malnutrition, impacting particularly children and the elderly reaching 26% in 2022 according to *Caritas*, an NGO running a large food programme in the country. Since 2019, Healing Venezuela has been supporting a communal food programme in a village in Venezuela, Guaraunos, in Sucre State, feeding 100 vulnerable children at risk of malnutrition. Volunteers from the community prepare three meals a day, five days a week, and their involvement has been crucial to the success of the programme. Our GlobalGiving fundraising campaign, “It Takes A Village”, has raised enough funds to guarantee the continuation of the programme throughout 2023, providing food security and adequate nutrition to the poorest children in the village.

How it works

As mentioned before, the programme is currently benefiting 100 children, of which 54% are female, and 46% are male (see picture 1). Approximately 20 volunteers work in the programme. Food is purchased locally and menus are planned on a weekly basis. Healing Venezuela sponsorship provides cash for food, and sometimes fuel, and every month invoices of purchases are sent electronically to be verified. Every three months, to track children's health, anthropometric measurements such as height and weight are recorded for each child. The premises where food is delivered is the home of one of the volunteers that has been refurbished to operate as a breakfast and lunch room. A healthy snack is given also to the children to take home.

Picture 1 – NUMBER OF CHILDREN BY GENDER

Total of Children According by Gender



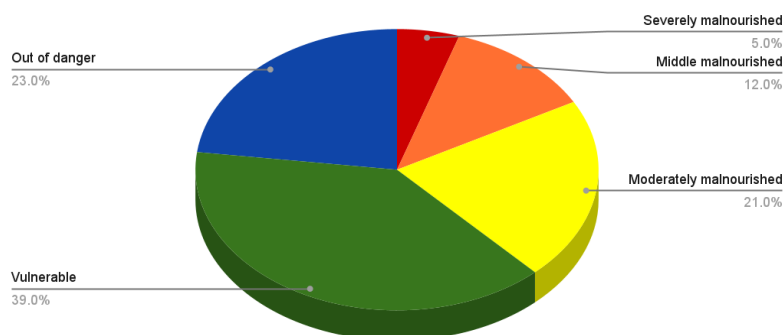
Anthropometric Measurements

Healing Venezuela food programme follows the World Health Organisation criteria on child growth standards, per sex and age. The WHO has five categories to identify if a child is at risk: *Severely Malnourished*, *Middle Malnourished*, *Moderately Malnourished*, *Vulnerable* and *Out of Danger*.

Picture 2 shows the percentage of Guaraunos children for each category calculated with the most recent measurements height, weight and arm's diameter.

Picture 2 - ANTHROPOMETRIC MEASUREMENTS

Anthropometric Measures Dec'22



The percentage of children *Severely Malnourished* during the last three months slightly increased to 5% (from 4%) because three children severely malnourished joined the programme during the last quarter of 2022.

Some children falling in the *Middle Malnourished* category didn't lose weight, but their height increased, impacting negatively their Z score calculator. These variations are normal, but these children are followed closely to prevent a longer term pattern.

It's reassuring to see that the percentage of *Moderately, Vulnerable and Out-of-Danger* are the largest category in Guaraunos which means that a larger proportion of children fall in the least risky categories which confirms the usefulness of the programme.

A measure of the success of the programme is the difference between the national average of severe malnutrition in children at 26% with the average in Guaraunos at 5%.

Costs

Even though 2022 hyperinflation reached triple-digits, the costs of three meals per day for 100 children at \$25 per child per month is still competitive compared to similar programmes around the world. The fund's monthly average of \$2330 includes the rental of the premises at \$30 per month, the purchase of food and, if needed, fuel too. This efficiency couldn't be possible if it was not because all those involved in the programme in the preparation of meals, the purchase of local food and the overall management.

Conclusions

GlobalGiving's fundraising campaign has provided food security to 100 children at risk of malnutrition in a very impoverished area of Venezuela at least until the end of 2023. An indirect benefit is the development of an organised community that has continued delivering meals, including during the pandemic, and has successfully managed the significant challenges of scarcity of fuel and food that still exist in Venezuela. Guaraunos's village has the potential to move from a strictly humanitarian project to a development one focused on self-sustained food production. This is the next phase we hope to implement in 2023-2024. It takes a village to raise a child, and certainly, Guaraunos has shown it has the potential to take care of its children and do much more. With the support of generous donors, this dream can come true.