

5 Facts About Poverty and Guatemala:

1. Count to 60, 13 children under the age of 5 have died due to poverty-related diseases around the world.
2. Guatemala has one of the highest malnutrition rates in the world.
3. A child born to a mother who can read is 50% more likely to live past age 5.
4. A child is five times more likely to die before their fifth birthday in Guatemala than in the United States.
5. 53% of secondary school aged children in Guatemala are not enrolled in school.



5 Facts About Living in La Limonada:

1. The Guatemalan government considers it a “Red Zone,” indicating the highest level of danger.
2. La Limonada forms a border between Zona 1 and Zona 5 and consists of ten barrios (districts or neighborhoods) ruled by rival gangs.
3. Simply having a La Limonada address can prevent the people from obtaining honest work or basic services.
4. Many of the children are experiencing ongoing physical, verbal, or sexual abuse.
5. Public schools are overcrowded, and this limited education is only made available to children for a half a day through sixth grade.



5 Facts About Child Sponsorship in La Limonada:

1. Sponsorship enables the children of La Limonada to attend the academies where students grow physically as they are fed, taught proper hygiene, and given vitamins; intellectually as they are educated; socially as they play with their friends; and spiritually as they are loved, valued, and taught the way of Jesus.
2. Sponsorship ushers the children into academies with teachers who love them, who will embody the love of Jesus, help with their homework, supplement what they are not learning in a half day of public school, and teach them critical thinking, basic life skills, and important values.
3. Sponsorship is a bridge between two cultures – expanding the children’s view of the world through letter writing, gifts, and visits. As they are supported and loved from a distance, they feel like they have a confidant and a true friend.
4. The academies offer a safe alternative to the streets, allowing mothers to find work instead of worrying about their kids being raised by the gangs. A stark contrast to the tense streets and dark homes where kids grow up fast, our academies are filled with hope, laughter, and light – both literal and metaphorical. Kids can be kids here.
5. Children know they can expect one hot meal at the academies, five days a week. Rather than remaining preoccupied with anxiety over when they will eat next, they know a healthy and consistent meal will be available each day. These meals enable the children to focus on learning as they grow and begin to think clearly, with strengthened immune systems.



5 Basics for Sponsoring Through Lemonade International:

1. Lemonade International exists to act as a conduit for generosity and love in partnership with the local leaders of Vidas Plenas as they break the cycles of poverty, violence, and injustice through education, gang prevention, and community relief for the people of La Limonada in Guatemala City.
2. Vidas Plenas has been working in La Limonada since 1995. Lemonade International was founded in 2008 to get behind what God was doing in this special community.
3. Sponsors can sign up for a partial sponsorship for \$40/month or full sponsorship for \$80/month.
4. Change happens through relationship. Sponsors receive a photo and story of the child and are encouraged to write and build a relationship with the child and their family.
5. It is simple to begin sponsoring a child:
www.lemonadeinternational.org/sponsor



Impact: Mauricio's Story

Miriam's sons, Mauricio and Dempsey, were among the first to be registered in Limon, the first academy in the community. Miriam was amazed to see their minds expand, character strengthen, respect for their elders develop, and trust in God grow. They also loved receiving letters, gifts, and pictures from their sponsors. These relationships brought encouragement and confidence beyond words as they felt valued and known.

The scholarship program enabled both sons to continue studying past the sixth grade. After graduating from a vocational program, Mauricio now has a job as a bookkeeper for a motorcycle company. He is newly married and proud to be able to support his family with honest work. Dempsey also has a steady job as a marketing promoter and is married with a son.

"The academies kept my sons safe from the contamination of violence in the community," Miriam said earnestly. *"Instead of being vulnerable or bored, they were safe here with education, good values, Bible studies, and people who taught them to respect their elders. The teachers kept their minds busy here on good things, and not the bad things on the streets. If you help kids now, [then] tomorrow, we won't have these gangs."*

She looks to the future with hope for her younger daughter, two sons, and their families. And so do we. That's why we do what we do. And stories like these encourage us not to give up hope.



Impact: Samuel's Story

Samuel started attending the academies when he was 4 years old. His mom was delighted to see him learning about God, having a consistent breakfast each day, receiving help with his studies, and especially having something that was just for him. It was time with his peers, with special lessons geared just for children. *"It was a huge blessing for us. We appreciated the opportunity,"* she said.

Samuel began to struggle when a family member went to prison. He fell behind in school and lost motivation. *"But the teachers in the academy kept encouraging me,"* he said. *"They would help motivate me to not focus on the sadness, but to continue studying and working hard each day."*

The teachers also called and checked on his mom, encouraging her to keep prioritizing Samuel's education. He began to start thinking about high school with a dream of becoming a veterinarian. And now, with the assistance of the Scholars program, he has been able to continue studying.

But having received so much love and support, Samuel wanted to give back. He became a youth volunteer at the Limon academy, where he helps in the classrooms with whatever is needed. Acting as a teacher's aide, he is able to spend mornings when he is not in high school back in the academy where he is received like family.

"I love everything about the academy," Samuel said, *"And I want to help the younger kids the way I was helped."*

"Personally I am so thankful first to God but also to his sponsor," Samuel's mom said. *"It is a long distance and we don't know her, but we are thankful for her love and prayers."*

