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***Puntos Solidarios: On Our Way to Sustainability***  
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## **PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

Child malnutrition causes conflict. Lack of places where kids can develop themselves causes disharmony. The mix of both, causes violence.

The *Puntos Solidarios* initiative seeks to promote and boost spaces where the most vulnerable communities can organize themselves to deal with the crisis through solidarity. We strive to face a temporary situation related to child malnutrition, providing a lasting solution, and promoting organization and citizen involvement to empower communities to address their problems to maintain peace.

We currently have four (4) *Puntos Solidarios* (Solidarity Hubs – as we call them in Spanish) in impoverished neighborhoods in the Baruta municipality, in Caracas, the capital city of Venezuela. These are very complicated and dangerous areas where children do not have the opportunity to grow and develop decently. Our goal is to secure life-changing facilities where kids can grow with love, solidarity, and educational support, thanks to our group of volunteers.

Leading mothers of each community direct these facilities and receive all the necessary equipment to cook every day for 150 children. Additionally, volunteers attend every week to help the children with academic support and recreational activities. These spots broke all the barriers of conflict and are an example of the restoration of nourishing and adequate communities for next generations of Venezuelans.

Despite all this effort, violence and poverty in these communities has deepened significantly. Due to a lack of public services and teachers, most public schools are closed. Meanwhile, due to the outbreak of the COVID-19, most private schools are teaching remotely. In these vulnerable sectors, families do not have access to the basic needs of homeschooling. As some of these kids are becoming poorer, an entire generation is growing without the opportunity to get an education.

Community leaders approached the *Puntos Solidarios* organization because they were worried about this situation. We started a program with Universidad Simón Bolívar, one of the leading academic institutions in the country, where undergraduate students volunteer by teaching our children the essential lessons that are taught in school. Though this solution is valuable, it does not address the problem.

That's why we want to extend our reach and empower our lines of work. With the help of a leading school, we will provide online classes that can be fully shared in some of our facilities. They will provide the academic content at a special rate, and we will train our volunteers as teachers. The next step is to find all the technical requirements to make this happen.

This is a basic and sustainable solution to one of our *Puntos Solidarios*. We will install adequate hardware to have a proper educational experience, as well as energy through solar panels to provide primary power, satellite internet, and other resources. The solar panels and the satellite internet will be provided by a private company donating 30% of its cost. Also, they are contributing the monthly

service for one year. With this savings, we will buy computers and purchase the online courses. *Puntos Solidarios* is committed to pay the monthly service (for solar panels and internet) after the first year.

In the short term, 40 children will start with the pilot plan for three months, free of charge. The cost associated with this pilot plan is explained in the budget section. In the long run, the costs associated with covering the academic material and teachers will be paid by parents, with a \$3 fee per student per course. The other logistical and maintenance cost will be covered by the NGO annual budget plan.

Additionally, *Puntos Solidarios* is part of a more extensive NGO network with more than 276 community kitchens all over the country. Our goal is to show this pilot project to prove that we can pull enough resources to overcome the most serious challenges that our children are facing. Later on, the NGO network can collaborate to find the resources to make a national plan and create more sustainable *Puntos Solidarios* in those 276 community kitchens.

#### **Goal:**

To develop our project during Summer 2022 (mid-June until mid-August, 8 weeks total). We will i) install all the technical equipment, ii) train students from Universidad Simón Bolívar, iii) select students with an assessment exam, iv) start pilot plan for 4 weeks. This pilot plan will start with the assessment exam, provide classes for 4 weeks to students and finish the course with a final exam to evaluate improvements on students. The online school course will be teaching to two groups of 20 students (40 in total). Those students will be children from 8 to 14 years old. At the end of the 4-weeks program, we will demonstrate success on children and the organization will continue the program for one more year. The long-run goal is to improve Spanish and Math average scores for their age. During summer, the project will be implemented by one member of the board.

#### **Activities:**

1. Installation of equipment: Four (4) weeks
2. Training: Four (4) weeks, three times per week
3. Students' selection: Four (4) weeks, includes assessment exam
4. Activities 1 to 3 happen at the same time.
5. Start of the online program (Pilot Plan): Week 5 until week 8.
6. Week 8: assessment final exam and closing ceremony

#### **Indicators of Success:**

- The solar equipment installed and functioning. *Goal: 100% of optimal installation by Week 4.*
- Computers, internet installed and functioning. *Goal: 100% of optimal installation by Week 4.*
- Training exam to the volunteers. *Goal: Complete the 12 training sessions by Week 4.*
- Start of online program. *Goal: Complete group (40) start on Week 5.*
- Initial program exam for students. *Goal: Complete group (40) present on Week 5.*
- End of program exam for students. *Goal: Complete group (40) present on Week 5.*
- Monthly meetings with different community leaders during the program. *Goal: 12 meetings during the pilot program.*