

LIFE NEWS



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Inca Link: El Hormiguero (The Ant Hill)

Last week our Ecuador team shared about the ministries we partnered with while in Ecuador. One of the ministries we did not get to share much about is ***El Hormiguero*** or ***The Ant Hill***.

This ministry has three objectives:

1. To share the love of Christ and disciple young people (Christians and non-Christians) through service.
2. To deliver food and give student scholarships to vulnerable families to help them break cycles of poverty.
3. To share the gospel with our beneficiary families and connect them with local churches.

El Hormiguero is headed up by Jose Erazo. This ministry began by trying to find ways for people to get out of cycles of poverty. Originally, the plan was to be a recycling center and to help disenfranchised families make money through recycling. The problem which quickly presented itself was that this plan was not cost-effective. Without an efficient way to collect large quantities of bottles and boxes, the return was very small. So, the team decided to shift their focus.

El Hormiguero began raising funds to provide a well-balanced diet for families weekly. Every Saturday, bags of food are packaged and dispersed to families that are part of the program. During the school year, local teens volunteer to fulfill the need for packaging food. As they gather for service, Jose and his team work to disciple these teenagers. Along with food for the week, every person who comes to El Hormiguero is prayed for and is involved in a three-year discipleship process. The goal is that after these three years, they will begin to become more independent, both physically and spiritually.

El Hormiguero is trying to disciple people, feed them, and provide for other felt needs. Education is one of the biggest

needs of families in poverty in Ecuador. As part of their program, El Hormiguero works with families to find ways to further their education and the education of their children. They have helped students get scholarships to private schools and colleges. In this way, they can help whole families break the cycle of poverty.

Jose told us while in Ecuador that they face two major issues. First, when people do not have access to regular nutrition, they become desperate. Desperate people make poor choices, so, many of the families and individuals they work with have found themselves in difficult situations as a result of their desperation. El Hormiguero exists to relieve the desperation in the name of Christ.

Second, as we were preparing to pray for the beneficiaries of El Hormiguero, Jose told us that the other issue they are facing is that of funding. Presently there are eight families in their program receiving food and discipleship. For each family, it costs around 12 dollars a week to provide groceries – eggs, flour, potatoes, sugar, rice, beans, and oats – for one week. For each family, it costs roughly 50 dollars a month for them to be able to eat a balanced diet. The problem they have run into is that many people are willing to pray for their ministry, and many people will also help package the bags of food for beneficiaries, but not many people will give so that the ministry can expand to help more of those who are in cycles of poverty. As you have the opportunity, would you join me in praying for this ministry, for those who are serving and being made into disciples and for those who are receiving help? I have also included a URL so that those who wish to give can give directly to the work of El Hormiguero.

Get more info on El Hormiguero:

