

FROM
LOCAL
FLAVORS



TO
CORPORATE
TABLES

E MPOWERING CAÑO MARTÍN PEÑA THROUGH CONOMIC GROWTH FOR ITS RESTAURANTS

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HECHO
EN EL CAÑO
MARTÍN PEÑA



WPI

From Local Flavors to Corporate Tables: Empowering Caño Martín Peña through Economic Growth for its Restaurants

An Interactive Qualifying Project Report Submitted to the Faculty of WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Science by:

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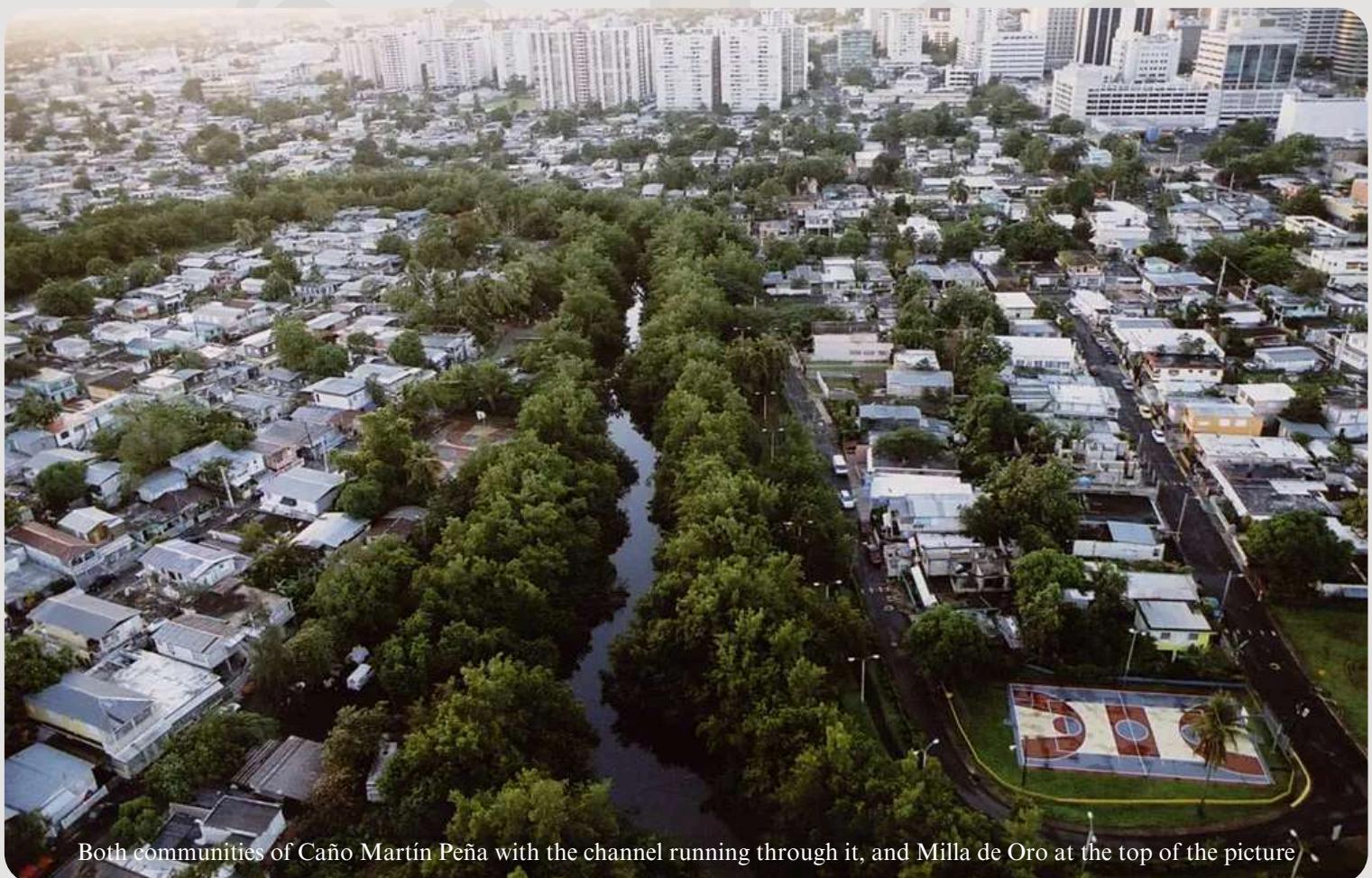
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Abstract

The Caño Martín Peña (CMP) community in San Juan, Puerto Rico possesses a rich cultural and culinary heritage, yet its local restaurants face challenges in reaching a broader customer base. This project, sponsored by Proyecto ENLACE del Caño Martín Peña, aimed to bridge the gap between CMP restaurants and the neighboring financial district, fostering economic growth through strategic partnerships. Our team employed a multi-method approach through a series of interviews with CMP restaurants coupled with interviews and surveys with companies in the financial district to understand their lunch preferences. We developed a scalable conceptual model for a food delivery system that provides a lunch-time delivery system of CMP restaurants for financial district employees.



Both communities of Caño Martín Peña with the channel running through it, and Milla de Oro at the top of the picture

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Executive Summary

Background & Project Goal

San Juan, Puerto Rico, grapples with severe economic inequality, with a Gini Index of 0.59, comparable to countries like South Africa and Brazil. This disparity is starkly visible between Milla de Oro (MdO), the financial hub known as the "Wall Street of the Caribbean," and the neighboring Caño Martín Peña (CMP) communities, where 63% of residents

live below the poverty line (Figure A). The CMP communities struggle with low graduation rates, high unemployment, and understaffed businesses, exacerbated by recent disasters including Hurricane Maria in 2017, COVID-19, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in 2025.



Figure A: Map of the Borders of the 8 communities of CMP, and Milla de Oro (earth.google.com, accessed 24 February 2025)

The Caño 3.7 is a local non-profit organization that supports the CMP community, and it consists of three community-led groups: the G-8, the Community Land Trust, and the ENLACE Corporation, collectively known as Caño 3.7. The ENLACE Corporation is a semi-independent public entity that works directly with the members of the community, and it contributes to the local economic growth through job training, financial literacy courses, and support for small business owners, promoting long-term stability and resilience in the area (Orensanz, 2021). Despite ENLACE's

revitalization efforts, a gap remains in connecting CMP with MdO. Our project's goal was to work directly with ENLACE to bridge this gap by building economic partnerships between the CMP restaurants and MdO customers. Specifically, we developed a conceptual model and business plan for a sustainable food delivery system designed to increase revenue streams for CMP restaurants, leverage digital platforms and local delivery networks, strengthen community ties, and promote equitable economic development.



Methods & Limitations

We adopted a learn-by-doing approach, which allowed us to explore the feasibility of a food delivery system through hands-on implementation rather than hypothetical analysis. This method involved familiarizing ourselves with the Caño Martín Peña (CMP) community and its unique challenges, followed by incremental steps to assess partnership opportunities with local restaurants and Milla de Oro (MdO) customers. Our research was guided by three key objectives, as illustrated in Figure B below. By actively testing and refining our ideas, we gained valuable insights into the program's potential and challenges, ensuring that our recommendations are grounded in practical experience.

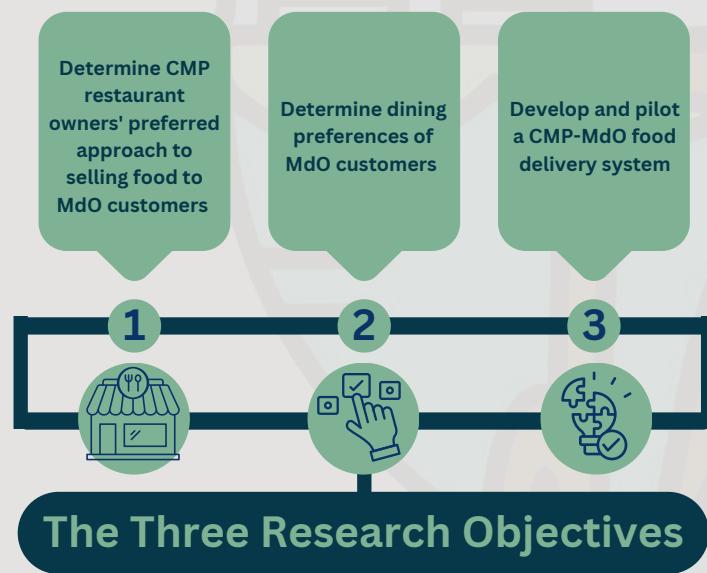


Figure B: The three research objectives

We conducted semi-structured interviews with four CMP food establishments (one home kitchen and three restaurants) to explore their operations, challenges, and willingness to expand to MdO (Figure D). Additionally, we surveyed 31 MdO individuals and interviewed four MdO employees to explore their interest in purchasing food from CMO restaurants and learn about their lunch preferences, budgets, and delivery expectations (Figure C). We also gave 150 pamphlets to MdO individuals that provided information about our project and the restaurants we were working with. After collecting and analyzing the data from interviews with both CMP restaurants and MdO employees, we developed a conceptual business model and made efforts to initiate a delivery system, Hecho Para Llevar, meaning "Made to Go," that delivers food from the CMP restaurants to MdO customers.



Figure C: The team's interviews in CMP and MdO

A key limitation of our study was the small sample size of four food establishments, representing only a fraction of the over 40 restaurants in CMP. While this focused approach allowed for in-depth analysis and stronger rapport with participants, it may not fully capture the diversity of challenges and opportunities across the broader restaurant community. Additionally, external disruptions, such as an ICE raid during our project timeline, created unforeseen challenges, impacting community engagement and highlighting the vulnerability of CMP residents. Despite these limitations, our findings provide a foundational understanding and actionable insights for scaling the initiative in the future.



Results

CMP Restaurants Insights

The findings from our study reveal significant insights into the challenges and opportunities for connecting CMP restaurants with MdO customers. CMP restaurants are primarily small, family-owned businesses that face operational challenges, such as limited staffing, financial constraints, and reliance on local customers. Despite these barriers, they expressed interest in expanding to MdO through a shared delivery system, provided they receive adequate support. The three key themes that emerged from our interviews are the strong family-oriented nature of these businesses, their deep commitment to serving the CMP community, and the diverse operational models they employ to adapt to their unique circumstances. (Figure D). These insights underscore the potential for collaboration while highlighting the need for tailored solutions to address their specific challenges.



Figure D: The three key themes of CMP Restaurants Interviews

MdO Dining Preferences

MdO customers demonstrated a clear preference for affordable, high-protein meals like creole cuisine, with a willingness to spend \$10–\$15 on lunch. Timely delivery is critical, with 42% of respondents willing to wait only 10-15 minutes. Social media and word-of-mouth are the primary ways MdO employees discover new restaurants, highlighting the importance of digital marketing and community-driven outreach. We were also able to observe three common themes from the four interviews we conducted (Figure E).

Three Identified Themes

First

Interest in Catering Partnerships through "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" website



Second

Patronizing the CMP restaurants individually



Third

Both the customers & corporations indicated the logistical necessities for successful partnerships.



Figure E: Three identified themes from MdO Interviews

Hecho Para Llevar: A Delivery System Benefiting Restaurants and MdO Corporations

The proposed Hecho Para Llevar delivery system connects CMP restaurants with MdO customers through a scalable and sustainable model, offering both individual lunch orders and catering services. The CMP restaurants and MdO customers would be connected through a delivery manager, who would coordinate lunch orders and deliver them between restaurants and clients. For individual orders, customers can place requests via the "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" website by 10:30 AM on weekdays, specifying a preferred delivery time between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Both the delivery manager and restaurants receive automatic notifications, ensuring efficient preparation and delivery. The delivery manager collects orders from CMP restaurants, attaches receipts, and delivers them to MdO via a 2.3-mile route that takes approximately 14 minutes. Catering orders follow the same procedure as individual orders, with the exception that the catering order must be placed three days in advance and that there is a specified minimum gratuity.



During payment, customers can round up payments to support Caño 3.7 community projects, while a feedback section on the website ensures continuous improvement and community engagement. This dual approach creates a flexible and scalable system that meets the needs of both CMP restaurants and MdO customers. We created a mockup website using Figma to simulate taking orders, which we presented to the developers of the “Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña” website (Figure F).

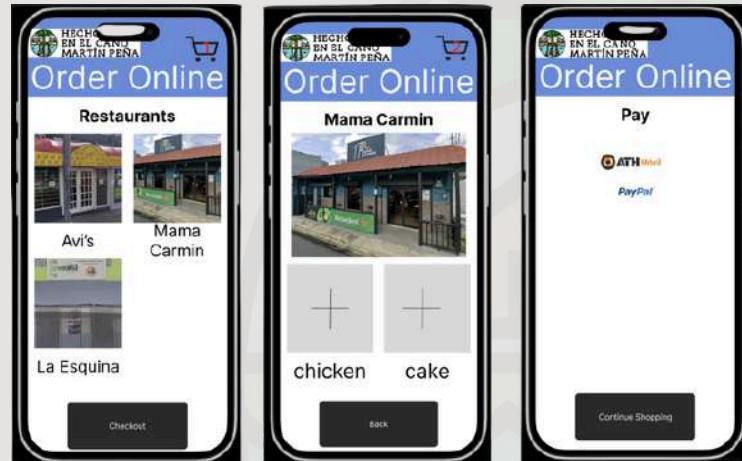


Figure F: The Figma Mockup Page, Our Team Created. It Shows the Customer Homepage, Menu Page, and the Payment Page

Economic Projections

Economic projections for the Hecho Para Llevar program demonstrate its potential to generate a promising income source for CMP restaurants and the delivery manager. Based on the survey results and the proposed delivery system, we estimate that each restaurant could receive an average of five to 15 individual orders per day from MdO customers, with an average order value of \$12. Under conservative estimates, each restaurant could receive five individual orders daily, generating \$53 per day (\$1,103 monthly), while an optimistic scenario with 15 orders daily could yield \$158 per day (\$3,308 monthly). The delivery manager’s earnings, including delivery fees, service fees, and tips, could total \$26 daily (\$536 monthly) in the conservative scenario and \$77 daily (\$1,607 monthly) in the optimistic scenario. Catering orders further enhance revenue, with restaurants earning an additional \$1,438 monthly and the delivery manager \$692 monthly from two weekly orders. Combined, the system could generate \$2,540–\$4,745 monthly for restaurants and \$1,225–\$2,296 for the delivery manager, depending on order volume. Factoring in gas expenses of approximately \$9.50 monthly, the delivery manager’s

annual earnings are projected to exceed the average income in CMP (\$11,964), highlighting the program’s economic viability and potential to support community growth. Implementing the Hecho Para Llevar system presented several challenges that highlighted the complexities of bridging CMP and MdO. Finding a reliable delivery manager was a significant hurdle, as the role required someone with access to a vehicle, familiarity with the area, and the ability to manage logistics efficiently. Additionally, identifying restaurants with both the capacity and interest to participate proved difficult, as many CMP businesses operate with limited staff and resources. While some restaurants expressed enthusiasm, others were hesitant due to concerns about increased workload and operational costs. Furthermore, uncertainty remains about whether MdO employees will consistently place orders, as initial interest does not always translate into sustained participation. These challenges underscore the importance of ongoing support, clear communication, and adaptive strategies to ensure the system’s success and scalability.

Recommendations and Conclusion

To enhance the scalability, sustainability, and impact of the Hecho Para Llevar program, we recommend expanding participation to more CMP restaurants and launching a robust marketing campaign. ENLACE should identify and onboard additional restaurants, prioritizing those offering diverse cuisines to reduce competition. Collaborating with local health authorities to ensure compliance with safety standards and hosting workshops for restaurant owners will further support their integration into the system. As order volumes grow, hiring additional delivery personnel will be essential to maintain timely and reliable service, creating employment opportunities within the community.

A strategic marketing campaign leveraging social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook, along with in-person outreach and flier distribution in MdO, will drive awareness and engagement. ENLACE should also provide digital marketing workshops to CMP restaurant owners, equipping them with the skills to manage their online presence and attract customers. To build trust with MdO



corporations, a phased confidence-building strategy is recommended, starting with individual lunch orders and offering incentives like discounts or complimentary items for initial catering orders. Showcasing success stories through testimonials and social media will further encourage corporate participation. These measures will strengthen the connection between CMP and MdO, fostering economic growth and community resilience.

While the Hecho Para Llevar initiative has shown promise in bridging the economic gap between Milla de Oro and Caño Martín Peña, the implementation process was not without its challenges. One significant hurdle was gaining the trust of CMP's local businesses, who were initially hesitant to join the platform due to concerns about reliability and profitability. Additionally, logistical issues such as ensuring timely deliveries and maintaining food quality require continuous adjustments and improvements. Despite these obstacles, the project provides valuable insights into the importance of community engagement and adaptability. By actively listening to the needs and feedback of both restaurant owners and consumers, that will build a more resilient and responsive delivery system. These experiences underscored the necessity of fostering strong relationships and maintaining flexibility in the face of unforeseen challenges, ultimately contributing to the program's success and sustainability.

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Acknowledgment

Throughout our journey in this project for the past four months, we have learned a lot of precious information about new cultures, norms, and communities, and we would like to start by thanking all those who were part of our journey for their unwavering support.

First, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to our advisors, Professor Jessica Santos López and Professor John-Michael Davis from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, for their invaluable guidance, support, and expertise throughout this project. Their mentorship has been instrumental in shaping the direction and success of this paper.

We are also profoundly thankful to our sponsors, Mr. José K. Bauzá Mora and Mr. Xavier Huertas from Corporación del Proyecto ENLACE, for their steadfast support and commitment to this initiative. Their vision and dedication to bridging the Communities of Caño Martín Peña (CMP) and Milla de Oro (MdO) have been an indispensable driving force behind this project.

Additionally, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to all the participants and members from the CMP and MdO communities who generously shared their time, insights, and resources. This project would not have been possible without their collaboration and trust.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge Worcester Polytechnic Institute for providing us with this incredible opportunity to contribute to such a meaningful and impactful project in the real world and implement the skills and knowledge we gained on campus.

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Authorship



Colin Chandonnet

Colin split responsibility of the Economic Revitalization in Lower-Income Communities section, focusing on Community Involvement and Business Incubators, Infrastructure Improvements, and Objective 1. He was the primary author of the Insight into CMP restaurants in the Results section, and the Conclusion. Along with creating the informational pamphlets, Colin also contributed to both other objectives and limitations in the Methods section, while splitting the Group Business Models section in the background.



Iain Spearance

Iain was the primary author of the following sections: Introduction, Milla de Oro Customers' Willingness to Partner with CMP Restaurants, and Milla de Oro's CMP Cravings. He co-authored the Community Branding section, provided editing and performed clerical duties throughout the paper, and held primary responsibility for building the reference page. He worked in unison with the rest of the team to create revenue projections for the implementation of the delivery system.



Mena Youssif

Mena was the primary author for the Background information about the CMP community and the Sponsor (Caño3.7). Also, Mena is the primary author of Objective 3 (Crafting a Sustainable CMP-MdO Connection) in the Methods section and contributed to the findings section by explaining everything related to the delivery system and the steps the team took to accomplish them. Additionally, he was the main author of the Recommendation & Conclusion section. Finally, Mena is the primary designer of this paper.



Myrrh Khan

Myrrh split responsibility of the Economic Revitalization in Lower-Income Communities section, focusing on Community Involvement and a portion of Group Business Models, as well as Community Branding. He also wrote Limitations and co-authored Objective 1. Additionally, he designed a prototype website in Figma, which he later presented to a team of web developers in charge of the Hecho en el Caño website. Finally, he created a spreadsheet of estimated revenue the delivery system.



Introduction & Background



San Juan, Puerto Rico, has a high level of economic inequality, as reflected by its Gini Index of 0.59. This is one of the lowest indices, similar to other countries with high inequality levels, such as Colombia (0.51), Brazil (0.53), South Africa (0.63), and Namibia (0.59). This dichotomy is vividly illustrated by the proximity of San Juan's bustling financial district, "Milla de Oro" (Spanish for "Golden Mile"), to the neighboring communities of Caño Martín Peña (CMP), where 63% of residents live below the poverty line. Milla de Oro (MdO) is the financial center of Puerto Rico with major banks, financial institutions, and corporate headquarters—known in Central America as the "Wall Street of the Caribbean" (Moving to Puerto Rico?, n.d.).

Compared to Puerto Rico-wide averages, the CMP communities have below average economic indicators. The aforementioned poverty rate is greater than the Puerto Rican average 41.6%, the CMP graduation rate of 63.4% lags Puerto Rican averages of 80.4%, and the CMP occupation rate of 69% trails the 79% Puerto Rican average. The population is disproportionately impoverished and uneducated when compared to the Puerto Rican average, encouraging those who manage to find success to leave the area. Business development emerges as a solution to the economic development task at hand by offering income entered within the community, cutting poverty while making it worthwhile to remain a citizen. CMP restaurants have struggles to overcome. Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic took a heavy toll on Puerto Rico, causing restaurants to downscale and in some cases completely dissolve. In addition to these disasters, Puerto Rico has an impactful immigrant community, with many Dominicans living and working in San Juan. However, not all who live on the island are documented, making the area a target for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in late January of 2025. The raids decreased the workforce by removing workers and sending others, both documented and undocumented, into hiding. (Figure 2) There have also been cases of documented residents, Puerto Rican and Dominican, being taken by ICE, creating more apprehension. These raids



Figure 1: An explanation of Gini Index (Investopedia, 2024)



have caused businesses to be understaffed and incapable of maintaining their normal hours and economic output.



Figure 2: ICE agents raid Barrio Obrero in search of undocumented migrants (The San Juan Daily Star, 2025)

Over the past two decades, significant progress has been made to improve CMP, driven by local efforts from the government, non-profit organizations, and resident volunteers. Proyecto ENLACE was founded in 2004 to clear the canal and boost the economy. This semi-independent entity has worked towards these goals by developing plans to dredge the canal, creating legislation that acknowledges community participation in the CMP district, developing programs to fight health issues caused by the poor condition of the canal, allowing residents to own both housing and land, and developing numerous other development plans. Presently, ENLACE has programs in place to train business owners through a year-long business incubator program. Additionally, major universities and organizations in the United States have begun participating in its revitalization. Despite previous efforts to improve CMP economically and environmentally, a gap remains in the potential for inter-community connection with MdO. The goal of our project is to connect the restaurants in CMP with MdO customers to economically revitalize the CMP neighborhoods by gathering information from both communities regarding interest in food-related business partnerships and developing infrastructure to facilitate these relationships through an online delivery ordering platform.

This report will present background information relevant to the revitalization of impoverished and underrepresented communities, display the methods we used to gather data to inform our actions towards completing the goal of CMP revitalization, discuss

the results and findings of these research methods, and conclude with our recommendations for the community and its benefactors in the future.

Economic Revitalization in Lower-Income Communities

The literature on community economic revitalization discusses four main strategies to support low-income communities: community branding, community involvement and business incubators, infrastructure improvements, and group business models (Figure 3). Surrounding regions and districts may view economically disadvantaged areas with a negative perception, making it difficult for businesses to produce revenue and maintain customer interaction (Mugnano et al., 2022). Implementing attractive branding strategies for these areas has proven to turn them into more welcoming tourist attractions. Infrastructure improvements make a low-income community more appealing by creating easier access for residents and new customers alike. Additionally, by encouraging active citizen participation, cities can increase the likelihood that all key stakeholders benefit from economic revitalization. Group business models enable businesses to share resources and target specific demographics more efficiently, creating better products for customers while allowing businesses to expand with less costs.



Figure 3: The four found tenets to revitalizing a community



Community Branding

Different community rebrands can change perceptions around a neighborhood and attract new business. Often, many have negative perceptions towards low-income neighborhoods, which limits business opportunities (Kamphuis et al., 2010). This makes it difficult for communities and their members to break into markets and generate a strong economy. A rebrand attempts to change who a neighborhood targets, from young professionals (Mugnano et al., 2022) to a more family-friendly neighborhood (Willer, 2022).

For example, the Elmwood neighborhood in Buffalo rebranded itself to attract more families. Elmwood previously had a central business district known as Elmwood Strip, which lacked walkable infrastructure. When Elmwood created more mixed-use development and walkable infrastructure in the area, it rebranded its main business district from “Elmwood Strip” to “Elmwood Village” (Willer, 2022, p. 1351), a change that increased emphasis towards its newly-built residential areas, rather than its businesses, attracting more families (Willer, 2022).

Milan, meanwhile, named a previously unnamed neighborhood “NoLo” (Mugnano et al., 2022, p. 107), a name modeled after New York City’s SoHo neighborhood. Mugnano et al.’s study details how citizens perceived this Milanese neighborhood as working-class but also had increased feelings of fear, danger, and insecurity. The new name changed that perception to one of a trendier neighborhood, attracting young students, artists, and hipsters (Mugnano et al., 2022). The same study also details the Tomtom Kaptan neighborhood in Istanbul, which shortened its name to Tomtom. The neighborhood takes its name from the Tomtom Kaptan Mosque, built in 1952 by an architect of the same name. Its new name still emphasizes the neighborhood’s historical background, cultural richness, and its status as a point of attraction. However, renaming the neighborhood also signifies change, a choice the stakeholders made to strengthen the idea that the neighborhood is making a comeback (Mugnano et al., 2022).

However, a rebranding must ensure that existing residents do not feel ostracized and should not cause displacement. Cunningham (1976) discusses how

rebranding can impact working-class residents (like NoLo’s existing residents), detailing disenfranchisement among longtime residents in the Abbot Kinney Boulevard area in Venice, California. The neighborhood has been rebranded to become an upscale commercial area composed of small, independently owned businesses and shops, in stark contrast to its previous working-class background. Longtime residents characterize this rebranding as “bohemian” and “inauthentic” (Cunningham, 1976; Lipton, 1962; Maynard, 1991). The study’s authors note a change in the neighborhood’s makeup, from an economic and racial mixing ground to an increasingly homogeneous social space.

Another study focuses on Buffalo’s city-wide rebrand and its impact on current residents. It details how much of Buffalo’s branding has generated feel-good stories about disadvantaged community members, many of them immigrants, and refugees, that create global appeal while allowing white stakeholders and politicians to evade racism directed at these groups and ignore the inequalities that these members experience, while framing the stakeholders as saviors (Rabii, 2023, p. 1213).

Community Involvement and Business Incubators

Community involvement is another critical component in ensuring equitable revitalization, as having inclusive development strategies ensures that there is widespread long-term viability and mutual benefits. Communities seeking economic revitalization face the challenges of attracting external investments while also maintaining control over how these resources are utilized. In the CMP, the role of the Community Land Trust is important in these situations. The Community Land Trust gives the residents the right to stay on the land without the fear of having a developer buy their property and evict them. This legal structure protects residents, their families, and generations to come. To achieve sustainable growth, community members must define their own goals and align external partnerships with those priorities. Top-down development approaches, led exclusively by external stakeholders, often fail to address the nuanced cultural, social, and economic realities of target communities (Cucchiara, 2008, p. 3).



165). Instead, collaborative approaches, which integrate local voices into planning and execution, create pathways for community ownership, long-term viability, and mutual benefits.

Collaborative approaches, which rely on involvement and the voices of the community, have had more success in the past. The Bridgend Farmhouse in Edinburgh (Figure 4) is an example of community-driven transformation. Once a derelict 18th-century building facing demolition, locals worked together to revitalize it through consultations, ensuring it reflected their needs (Home - Scottish Land Commission, n.d.). In 2018, the community secured ownership under Scotland's Community Right to Buy program, a major win for local activism (Home - Scottish Land Commission, n.d.). Now, the farmhouse hosts a café, garden, workshops, and event spaces, offering training, creative activities, and environmental projects. The initiative exemplifies how collective action can breathe life into neglected spaces and create lasting benefits (Home - Scottish Land Commission, n.d.).



Figure 4: Bridgend Farmhouse, Edinburgh (Bridgend Farmhouse – My Place, n.d.)

There are numerous cautionary tales in the literature of community development projects that failed to reflect community interests. One such example is Niagara Falls, New York's urban renewal efforts, which looked to modernize the city but instead led to economic challenges. Federal funding and large-scale development ambitions fueled the demolition of much of the historic downtown, including Falls Street (Figure 5), which had once been a hub for local businesses. In its place, the city constructed projects like the Rainbow Centre Factory Outlet and the Niagara Falls Convention and Civic Center (Davis, 2017). These additions disrupted the city and isolated

the downtown from surrounding neighborhoods, cutting off foot traffic and leading to a decline in small businesses (Nielsen, 2018).



Figure 5: Comparison between Downtown Niagara Falls in the past and today (Nielsen, 2018)

Similarly, another study analyzes content by investors and developers advertising downtown Detroit and contrasts it with a local publication for older adults in Detroit (Berglund et al., 2022). It finds that the developers' content targets younger audiences by depicting younger adults being active in communities, while neglecting older, existing residents and their economic contributions, despite them being at larger risk of displacement. The study's authors recommend that developers include older residents as key stakeholders in the community, accommodate their needs better, and promote how they accommodate these needs so that they are not displaced.

The Fresh Access Bucks (FAB) program in Florida exemplifies how community-driven initiatives can address economic and social challenges through strategic partnerships. FAB incentivizes Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients to purchase fresh, local produce by doubling SNAP dollars spent on eligible items, making healthy food more accessible while simultaneously supporting local farmers and businesses (Fresh Access Bucks at Florida Farmers Markets, 2020). The program's success is found in its strong community engagement, which involves farmers, market managers, local governments, and SNAP beneficiaries to make sure it meets local needs. Evaluations and feedback help refine pricing, distribution, and outreach efforts, allowing the program to expand through mobile markets and online ordering. By strengthening rural to urban economic connections, stabilizing vendor income, and reducing food insecurity, FAB shows how inclusive development strategies can generate widespread and sustainable benefits (Smith et al., 2021).



Infrastructure Improvements

Infrastructure improvements play a crucial role in creating long-term economic growth and improving the quality of life for community members. By upgrading essential services, transportation networks, and public amenities, communities can create a more functional and attractive environment for businesses, tourists, and new opportunities. Well-planned infrastructure investments can revitalize low-income areas, making them more accessible and appealing while supporting sustainable development. By making these areas more appealing it is possible to create a new perception of these areas for the better. However, these changes must be implemented responsibly to ensure they benefit existing residents rather than leading to displacement (Rodríguez, 2014).

Infrastructure improvements can transform communities. For example, they were the cornerstone of the Coastal Alabama ecotourism plan. The construction of an ecolodge at Live Oak Landing and the enhancement of Africatown Blueway facilities demonstrate thoughtful planning aimed at improving accessibility while preserving the region's delicate ecosystems (Beyond Green Travel, 2022; Hoar et al., 2024). These provide a much-improved visitor experience and opportunities for local entrepreneurs to engage in ecotourism ventures. The creation of a regional wayfinding system further strengthens these efforts by connecting attractions and collaboration across the region. This approach reinforces the idea that sustainable development requires comprehensive, interconnected planning that considers physical infrastructure and social dynamics. In Willer (2022)'s study examining Buffalo's Elmwood neighborhood, a key reason why its rebranding worked was because it happened in tandem with its infrastructure improvements. As the neighborhood marketed its business district to be more family-friendly, it also improved the infrastructure around it to be more walkable and safer for children, a change that helped accentuate its rebranding campaign.

Group Business Models

Group business models offer strategic advantages by promoting collaboration, sharing resources, and diversifying revenue streams. These models allow businesses to manage market fluctuations, enhance operational efficiency, and reach broader customer bases. Small businesses can benefit from these approaches by pooling resources, leveraging economies of scale, and gaining a competitive edge. Additionally, they can provide a more streamlined experience for customers, further attracting customers to businesses. The food industry has numerous examples of successful collaborations, where multi-brand strategies and partnerships create sustainable growth and resilience. Two such cases, the Feast Together Group and Elevate Meal Plan, demonstrate how different models leverage shared resources and targeted strategies to thrive in competitive markets.

Feast Together Group, a Taiwanese food and beverage conglomerate, exemplifies a multi-brand approach by operating a diverse portfolio of restaurant concepts. Its brands include high-end buffets (Hi-Lai Harbour), all-you-can-eat restaurants (Eatogther), Japanese yakiniku (Yakiyan), and vegetarian eateries (Sufood) (饗食天堂 自助美饌 | EATOGETHER | 首頁, n.d.). By offering a variety of dining options, the company captures multiple market segments, maximizing revenue and reducing reliance on a single restaurant concept. This structure also creates financial and operational advantages, as shared supply chains, centralized logistics, and streamlined management improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Burr, 2024). Additionally, the diversification strategy helps mitigate risks associated with shifting consumer trends. If one brand sees a decline in demand, others can sustain overall business stability. Through this approach, Feast Together Group has positioned itself as a dominant player in Taiwan's competitive restaurant industry.

The Elevate Meal Plan, on the other hand, targets a specific demographic, college students, by connecting them with local restaurants. Originally launched by students at the University of Virginia, Elevate operates at several universities, including Rutgers University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and



the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. The plan allows students to purchase meal credits, each valued at around \$10, which can be redeemed at participating restaurants in full or fractional amounts. Unlike traditional campus dining plans, Elevate provides flexibility, exclusive discounts, and a broader array of options. Because Elevate operates in towns with large student populations, and because Elevate offers convenient options for students, restaurants can more easily target a significant

customer demographic. With over 1,500,000 meals served and partnerships with 68 restaurants in Charlottesville, VA alone, the model has been successful, as shown in its 4.7-star rating on Apple's App Store. By creating stronger ties between students and local restaurants, the Elevate Meal Plan demonstrates how targeted collaborations can create mutual benefits for businesses and consumers (Figure 6).

How Elevate works

1.5M+ meals served across top universities

It's simple!

1. Purchase credits

Buy a pack of credits to use on the Elevate app

2. Order and pick up

Use the Elevate app to order in advance and pick up on your schedule

3. Save money

Claim exclusive student deals and discounts

4. Rollover credits

Save hundreds of dollars by rolling over credits until you graduate



68 Charlottesville restaurants, all on one meal plan

[Sign up](#)

Featured restaurants



[Advance Order](#)

[View Menu →](#)

Littlejohn's Deli

0.5 free meal credit for new customers



[Advance Order](#)

[View Menu →](#)

Thyme & Co

0.25 free meal credit for new customers

Use 10 meals get 1 free



[View Menu →](#)

Roots Natural Kitchen

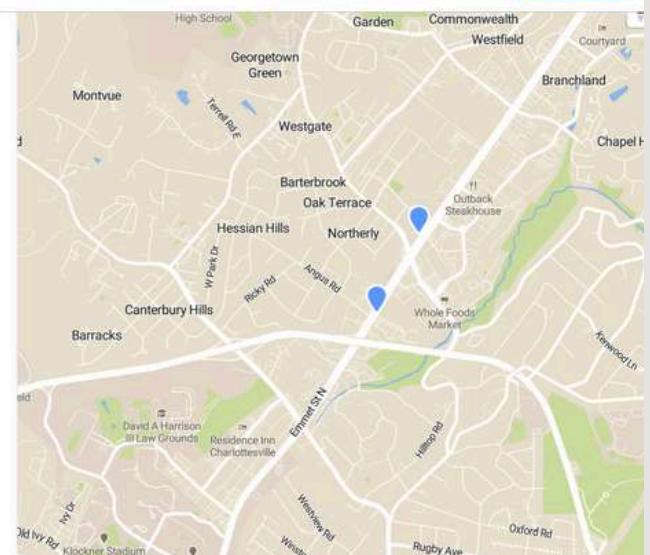


Figure 6: Overview of the Elevate website and how it works((elevatemealplan.com, accessed February 2025))



HECHO PARA LIEVAR | 6

Caño Martín Peña: From Natural Habitat to Urban Struggle

El Caño Martín Peña (CMP) is a 3.75-mile tidal channel located within the San Juan Bay National Estuary in Puerto Rico (Figure 7). Historically, CMP was a thriving natural habitat, with dense mangrove forests extending west into Punta Cataño, but over the past century, it has become home to a network of vibrant yet economically disadvantaged communities (Seguinot-Barbosa, 1983).

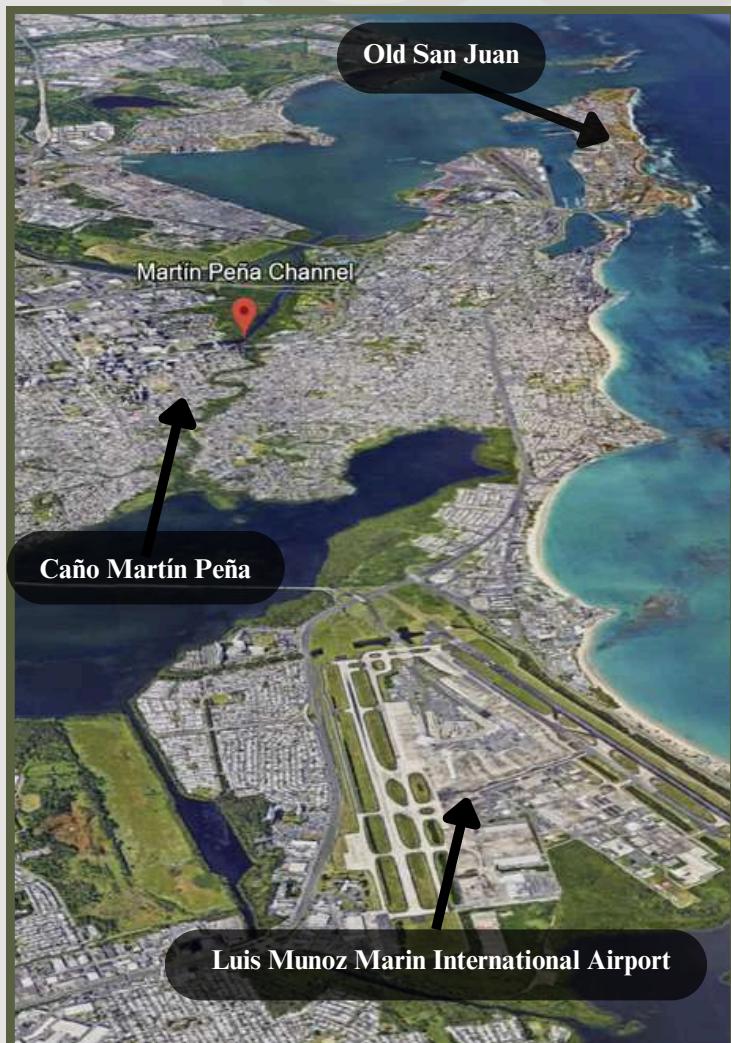


Figure 7: The location of Caño Martín Peña in San Juan (earth.google.com, accessed 24 February 2025)

During the early 20th century, economic shifts and industrialization drove thousands of rural Puerto Ricans to migrate to San Juan in search of work.

Many settled informally around CMP, establishing neighborhoods that grew without proper infrastructure or economic support. Today, the area is home to approximately 12,000 residents across eight communities, many of whom operate small businesses—particularly in the food and service industries (Census Reporter, 2022; Rodríguez, 2014). However, these businesses face significant economic challenges due to limited access to higher-income customers, inadequate marketing opportunities, and geographic isolation despite CMP's proximity to San Juan's financial district (Milla de Oro) (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Map of the borders of the 8 communities of CMP, and Milla de Oro (earth.google.com, accessed 24 February 2025)

While CMP has a strong cultural identity and a tradition of entrepreneurship, economic disparity remains a pressing issue. More than 60.1% of residents live below the poverty line, and nearly half (47.4%) of adults aged 25 or older have not completed high school, limiting income opportunities (Census Reporter, 2022). Despite these challenges, local businesses—especially restaurants—play a crucial role in the community's economic resilience. Many restaurants offer authentic Puerto Rican cuisine and family-owned operations with deep-rooted traditions, yet they struggle to reach a broader customer base.

Given CMP's strategic location near San Juan's financial and commercial hubs, there is an opportunity to bridge the gap between these small businesses and the wealthier customer base just beyond the channel. Strengthening the connection between CMP's restaurants and the financial district could create sustainable economic growth, increase visibility for local businesses, and integrate the area more effectively into the broader urban economy.



Caño 3.7: Innovative Community Development in CMP

Over time, the CMP channel has become severely clogged due to waste disposal by residents, as the area was developed informally and lacked an organized recycling or trash disposal system. In 2002, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funded Caño 3.7 (Orensanz, 2021), an initiative aimed at social justice and environmental improvement by clearing the channel and boosting the local economy. The Caño 3.7 consists of three community-led groups: the G-8, the Community Land Trust, and the ENLACE Corporation, collectively known as Caño 3.7 (Figure 9). This semi-independent entity bridges the community and public sectors, enabling versatile operations (Hoar et al., 2024).



Figure 9: The three branches that comprise Caño 3.7

The G-8 is a group that unites leaders from eight communities along the CMP to support civic and recreational initiatives, ensuring community continuity through relocation processes and legislation that acknowledges community participation (El Caño, n.d.). The Community Land Trust manages about 200 acres of public land, allowing residents to own their housing units while collectively owning the land, which prevents displacement by market forces and promotes sustainable development near the Milla de Oro (Algoed & Hernández Torrales, 2019; El Caño, n.d.). The ENLACE Corporation is a semi-independent public entity that works directly with the members of the community (Figure 10), and bridges the community and government, focusing on community economic development, urbanism, environmental

issues, and housing. It contributes to local economic growth through job training, financial literacy courses, and support for small business owners, promoting long-term stability and resilience in the area (Orensanz, 2021).



Figure 10: One of ENLACE's workshops directly with members of the CMP community (Google Reviews, 2020)

Over the past 20 years, these three entities created The Comprehensive Development Plan, outlining Caño 3.7's environmental and socio-economic goals, emphasizing community empowerment and involvement. The plan aims to guide long-term recovery and stability for the communities. One of ENLACE's business development initiatives is the "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" website. This website is a community-focused platform dedicated to supporting local businesses and fostering economic development in the Caño Martín Peña area. It features a business directory where local enterprises can register and promote their services, making it easier for residents to find what they need within their community. The site also provides news and updates about community events, educational opportunities, and other relevant information. Additionally, it offers resources and guidance for entrepreneurs looking to start or formalize their businesses. Emphasizing citizen participation, the website promotes cooperation between governmental, private, and community sectors to enhance community engagement and decision-making processes. Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña epitomizes Caño 3.7's business development and economic revitalization efforts, along with job training, financial literacy courses, and support for small business owners (Orensanz, 2021). These initiatives have fostered local economic growth and stability, setting the stage for further development projects, including those focusing on the restaurant industry.



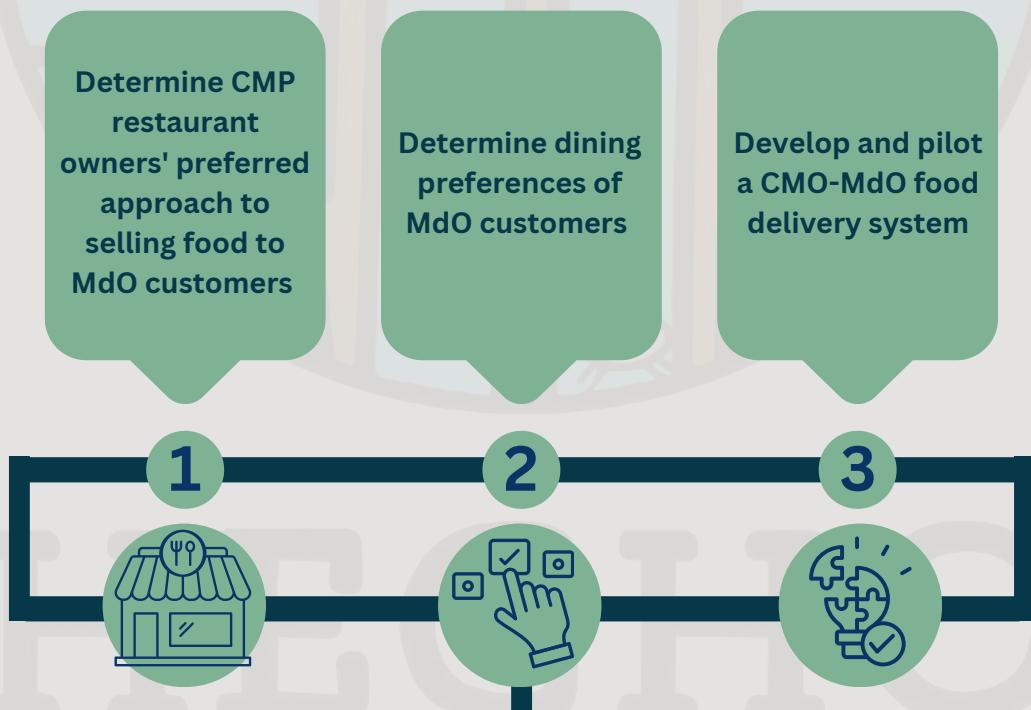
Methods



Avenida Muñoz Rivera, Milla de Oro, San Juan

The goal of our project was to build economic partnerships between the Caño Martín Peña (CMP) restaurants and Milla de Oro (MdO) customers.

To achieve this goal, we developed three research objectives (Figure 11).



The Three Research Objectives

Figure 11: Our three research objective

In this chapter, we describe the methods we used to gather and analyze input from the CMP restaurants and MdO customers to accomplish our objectives. We conducted semi-structured interviews with CMP restaurants to learn about their unique aspects and determine their willingness to expand to Milla de

Oro. We then sent surveys to Milla de Oro companies and conducted semi-structured interviews with employees in charge of catering to determine their dining preferences. We finally used these insights to create a delivery system that would work for both parties.



Objective 1: CMP Restaurant Engagement

To explore partnership opportunities between CMP restaurants and MdO in a sustainable way, we first explored the unique challenges and aspirations of local restaurant owners, as well as the broader community context. Our research process began by familiarizing ourselves with the CMP community, ensuring that our approach was informed and respectful. With the guidance of our sponsor, ENLACE, we conducted two tours (car tour and bike tour) of the CMP community to gain firsthand insight into the area's history, living conditions, and ongoing development projects (Figure 12).



Figure 12: Our tours around Caño Martín Peña

Additionally, we spent an entire day at an artisanal market organized by ENLACE, held in one of the green spaces at CMP (El Triángulo). This experience allowed us to engage directly with local entrepreneurs and small business owners, gaining deeper insights into the community's economic landscape and cultural fabric and fostering a greater sense of connection and involvement (Figure 13).

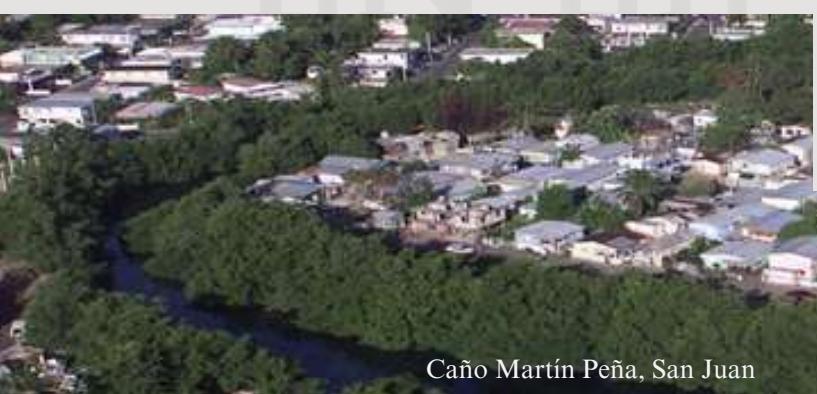


Figure 13: The flyer of the Triángulo event, some of the event activities, and our conversation with one of the local businesses.

Out of the 44 restaurants we were able to find on Google maps, we interviewed four food establishments in the community that had existing connections to ENLACE. These four establishments were Ana's Limber (a home-based business), Avi's Pollo, La Esquina Sport Bar., and Mama Carmin Cafe & Bar (Figure 14). These four restaurants represented a cross-section of CMP's restaurant industry and had the potential for meaningful collaboration with MdO.



Figure 14: The four interviewed food establishments' logos



Caño Martín Peña, San Juan



We conducted semi-structured, recorded interviews with the owners of these four establishments, each lasting 25-40 minutes, with variations due to language barriers. These interviews allowed us to gather their perspectives and thoughts about our project and assess their potential for partnership. Our discussions during the interviews focused on several key themes: restaurant operations, business management, future growth aspirations, and interactions with MdO customers (see Appendix A). We gathered background information about the restaurants, including details about their menus, pricing structures, and customer service offerings like delivery and booking systems. We learned about their business management structures, whether they are individually or group-owned, and their relationships with neighboring restaurants, including potential collaborations or conflicts. Additionally, we discussed their future plans and strategies for business improvement, such as marketing initiatives, opportunities for expansion, potential collaborations, and enhancements to delivery services. Afterward, we explored the restaurants' perspectives and interactions with MdO and its customers. Finally, we sought their opinions on the differences between restaurants in MdO and CMP, gaining insights into their unique characteristics (Figure 15).



Figure 15: Our interviews with the food establishments

To further deepen our knowledge and strengthen our connection with the restaurant owners, we revisited several of the establishments to experience their offerings from a customer's perspective (Figure 16). These return visits allowed us to fully immerse ourselves in the dining experience, observing the ambiance, service quality, and customer interactions firsthand. By engaging with the restaurants in this way, we not only gained valuable insights into their operations but also built a stronger rapport with the owners. This approach reinforced our commitment to collaboration and demonstrated our genuine interest in supporting their businesses within the community.



Figure 16: Revisiting the food establishments to try their food



Objective 2: MdO

Customers'

Willingness to Patronize CMP Restaurants

Before going to Milla de Oro, we received information and MdO contacts from ENLACE's Director of Citizen Participation. Using these connections, we created a strategy for interviewing MdO customers based on the most marketable aspects of the CMP restaurants and the Director's existing knowledge of businesses in MdO. We conducted semi-structured interviews (See Appendix C&D) with four businesses, starting with Fundación Banco Popular (Figure 17).



Figure 17: Fundación del Banco Popular (Google Review, 2022)

If the organization provided lunch for their employees, we interviewed those responsible for catering decisions, as they had access to a large customer base. If the organization didn't provide lunch, we had our survey disseminated throughout their workplace via email (Figure 18). When interviewing those responsible for catering, we asked how they select restaurants and what their priorities were, informing us of our advertising strategies. We also asked about their opinions on current offerings in MdO and other areas they considered for food orders. For companies that did not cater food, we surveyed their employees to understand their dining priorities and how CMP restaurants could meet their needs. We asked about their lunch budgets, dining habits, and preferences for ordering food. This

information helped us determine if MdO customers were likely to buy from CMP and if advertising CMP restaurants as a lower-cost alternative was viable. We also asked how employees ordered food and their opinions on current offerings in MdO, as well as what restaurants they would like to see and how far they were willing to travel for lunch.



Figure 18: Our visits to Milla de Oro (Hato Rey) to interview, survey, and share pamphlets

We also created a double-sided pamphlet that we presented to businesses (Figure 19). One side shows the three restaurants that we interviewed, and a QR code for their social media website or their menus. On the other side of the pamphlet, we explained the goal of our project briefly and showed the theme of our project, "Hecho Para Llevar," which translates to "Made To Go." El Proyecto ENLACE del Caño Martín Peña already has their "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" website, and any online portion of our solution to connect the restaurants (such as an online ordering system) would be a new section of the website. As such, our sponsor proposed "Hecho Para Llevar" as a sub-theme of the larger "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" theme. We printed 150 pamphlets (Figure 20) and gave them to MdO businesses, further disseminating information to the working community. Engaging with MdO stakeholders caused MdO customers to feel like part of a movement to enhance business growth in CMP, encouraging them to maintain these partnerships and patronage.

We analyzed the interviews with MdO customers and the result of these initial marketing plans by reviewing interviews, surveys, and recordings. We coded our data to reveal the most common themes and made note of the most impactful information we received, such as preferences related to delivery time, price, and



a restaurant's distance from the place of work. We also used these preferences to identify gaps in the Milla de Oro market and uncovered opportunities for CMP restaurants to better meet their needs.

By combining these insights with data from Objective 1 (CMP Restaurant Engagement), we were able to make stronger recommendations for Objective 3 (Crafting a Sustainable CMP-MdO Connection). These included marketing ideas and potential partnerships aimed at serving MdO customers better and building a closer connection between CMP restaurants and the Milla de Oro community.



Figure 19: Both Sides of the Restaurants' Pamphlet showing the restaurant's details, our project theme and goals



Figure 20: Our Team Printing and Preparing the Pamphlets

Objective 3: Crafting a Sustainable CMP-MdO Connection

Our goal in this objective was to create a delivery system between CMP restaurants and MdO. Implementing this goal was what we declared to be Phase One of the system, with Phases Two and Three being recommendations. To develop a CMP-MdO food delivery system, we explored the possibility of collaborating with existing delivery services in the area, as this would allow for business expansion through increased order volumes. The decision to partner with an established service, rather than creating a new one, was driven by the need for a more reliable and expedient launch of the program. After several days of continued collaboration with our sponsor, we identified a CMP resident who assists his daughter in her home-based meal preparation business by delivering meals using his van to various members of the community. We engaged in a brief conversation with him and introduced our project and goals to him and how he can be part of it as the delivery manager (Figure 21).



Figure 21: Our conversation about initiating a delivery system

We presented a pamphlet outlining how the proposed delivery system could enhance his existing delivery operations. The pamphlet included statistical data derived from the MdO surveys to demonstrate the



potential benefits, estimating that he could earn approximately \$1,800 per month by participating in the system (Figure 22). The delivery driver expressed interest in the project and was open to discuss and finalize the logistics of the delivery system.

After his approval, we started working on different scenarios for the operation of this delivery system. Those included businesses growth methods, payment methods, and an electronic ordering system. Simultaneously, we designed a mockup page (Figure 23) using the 'Figma' website to demonstrate how MdO customers can order food through CMP's delivery service. We chose Figma as it was a standard site for UI/UX designers to use. Despite only making a mockup, we could still add sophisticated functionality: we could simulate the mockup as if it were a real website or app, and have users test it on a phone for ease of use. This mockup page, along with a document that included all the necessary details for how the website should look like, was then sent to the developer of the "Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña" website to incorporate the new food ordering section.



Figure 22: A pamphlet that shows an estimate of how much the delivery system could earn

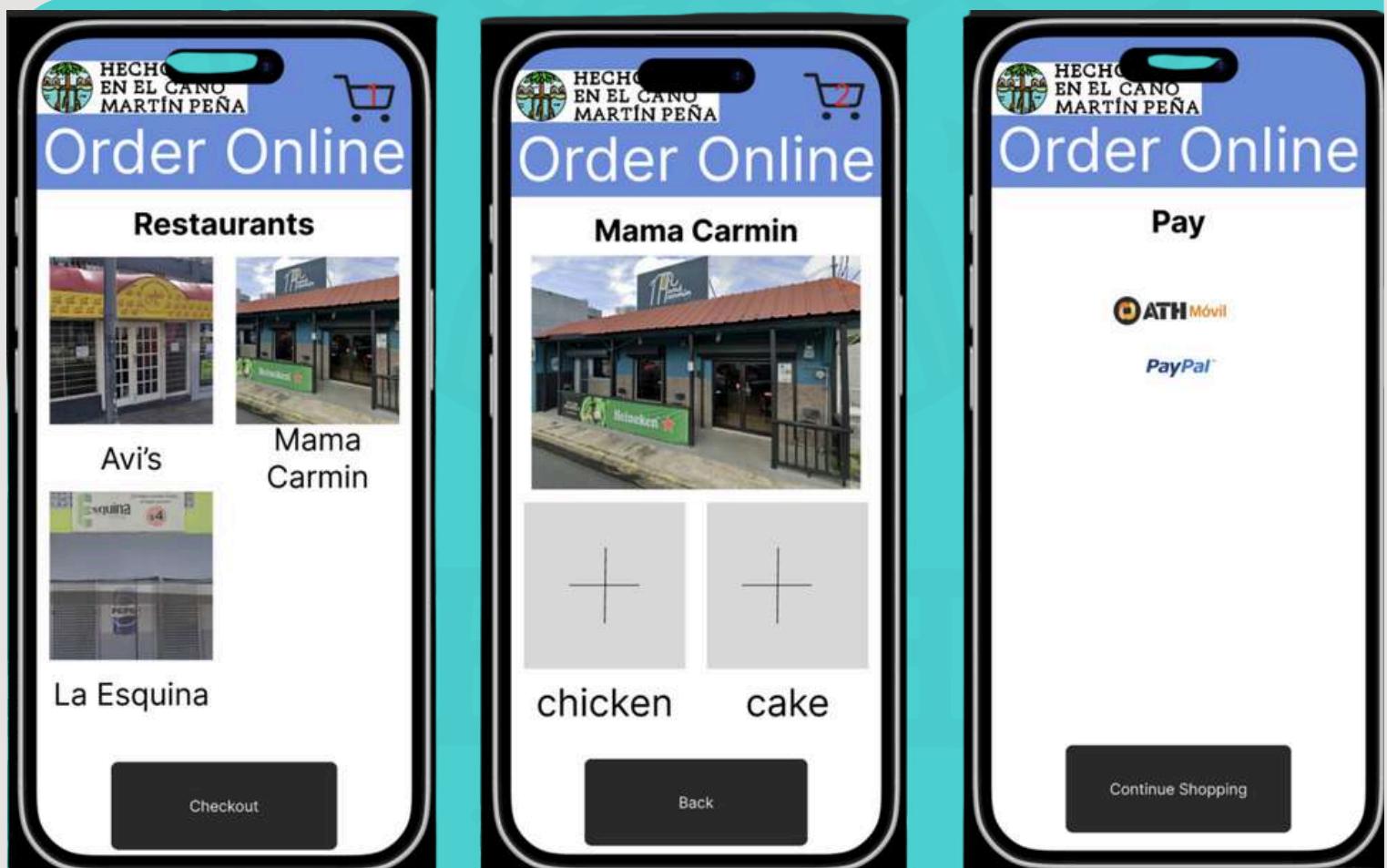


Figure 23: The Figma mockup page, our team created. It shows the customer homepage, menu page, and the payment page



Our last goal was to connect the limber business with the restaurants in the CMP community. We accomplished that by sharing Ana's contact information with multiple restaurants as well as offering them some limber samples and encouraging them to have a sample in their restaurants as a first step.

For the future phases, we developed multiple plans for a delivery service for the restaurants. We looked at how the operation could be implemented as a permanent, lucrative business model in the area. Furthermore, we have created a list of advertising strategies that can be implemented in the future to increase the customers base beyond MdO. Moreover, we created a road map of how the delivery service could grow and expand into all eight communities of CMP, and how it could deliver other services than food. Additionally, after the organizations in MdO build trust with the delivery service, there would be possibility to build individual permanent partnerships between a MdO organization and a CMP restaurant.

By following this structured and action-oriented approach, we aimed to lay the foundation for sustainable success while achieving measurable progress in the short term. Towards the end of the project, we evaluated the effectiveness of phase one and determined how successful similar strategies could be, applying any necessary adjustments to future phases. The project timeline was structured to efficiently complete key tasks within a seven-week period. These tasks included interviewing restaurants and MdO customers, analyzing collected data, and developing advertising and business strategies.

Limitations

While working on accomplishing our objectives, several limitations were considered (Figure 24). Since most of our work was in the CMP area, where residents mainly speak Spanish with very limited English proficiency, we anticipated that communication challenges may arise, potentially leading to misunderstandings or incomplete data collection. To reduce inaccuracies in our data, we relied on translators from ENLACE, rather than using an online or third-party translator. Our translators were thus people who knew vital context behind the region and could convey our questions

well. Additionally, differences in cultural norms and practices between the CMP community and MdO employees may have affected the willingness to participate and the quality of the interactions. Various biases could also have influenced the data collected, including social desirability bias: our project is to help a lower-income area like the CMP, so Milla de Oro companies may express more positive opinions about the project to ensure we perceive them as more charitable, even if they may not end up having interest in contributing the project later on. They may provide responses they believe are expected rather than their true opinions. In our interviews, we asked more open-ended questions rather than leading, straightforward questions, and follow-up questions on anything the interviewees mentioned in passing. Although social desirability bias is unfortunately inevitable, these were our steps in limiting the effect it had. By acknowledging these limitations, we can take steps to mitigate their impact and ensure the integrity and usefulness of our findings.

During our interview collection process, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency (ICE), under President Donald Trump, raided one of Caño Martín Peña's communities, Barrio Obrero, as the community is known to have a high Dominican population, undocumented or in the process of getting their documents in order. As such, many in the community remained in their homes for fear of their safety. Numerous restaurants had staff who stopped going to work, and thus, restaurant owners had to reduce their opening hours while working more time. The only restaurants we could interview were those who still had time to interview despite the raids and were still able and looking to expand their business. Our results thus do not include restaurants whom the raids most impacted. The raid exacerbated an already existing environment of distrust and skepticism within the community, particularly when it comes to proposing new projects or ideas that require time, effort, or financial investment. Our sponsor highlighted that this sentiment has been prevalent for years, sharing their own experiences of facing resistance when presenting previous initiatives. The raid intensified these feelings, significantly impacting our project. Scheduling the final group meeting with ENLACE also proved challenging, as individuals frequently changed their availability or expressed reluctance to commit. These setbacks underscored the broader challenges of fostering trust and collaboration in a community grappling with uncertainty and fear (Figure 25).



Expected Limitation



1



Language Barrier between us and individuals who only speak Spanish in CMP and MdO may have led to misunderstanding

2



Differences in cultural norms and practices may have affected the willingness to participate and interactions' quality

3



Personal biases and social desirability bias could have influenced the data collected

Unexpected Limitation



1



During our interview (ICE) raided one of Caño Martín Peña's communities, which made a lot of the restaurants owners not interested in our project anymore

2



From our experience as well as our sponsor, there has been a lot of untrust and doubt in the community when it comes to proposing new ideas that requires time or effort.

Figure 24: Some of the limitations that we expected to face before starting our project

Figure 25: Some of the unexpected limitations, we face before during our project



HECHO
EN EL CAÑO
MARTÍN PEÑA



Findings and Discussion

Caño Martín Peña, San Juan (taken by our team)

This section discusses our findings related to the three core objectives of our study. We first examine CMP restaurant owners' preferred strategies for engaging MdO customers, detailing the challenges and solutions they have adopted. Next, we analyze the dining preferences of MdO customers, identifying key

factors that influence their food choices and service expectations. Finally, we present a sustainable partnership model, integrating targeted marketing and communication strategies that aim to foster robust economic ties between CMP restaurants and the MdO community.

Insights from Interviews with CMP Food Establishments

Our interviews with the four food establishments in the CMP provided valuable insights into their operations, challenges, and potential for participating in a delivery system. These businesses are deeply connected to their communities but face significant barriers, such as limited staffing, financial constraints, and reliance on local customer bases.

Despite these challenges, they expressed openness to collaboration and adaptation, provided they receive adequate support. The following sections explore these findings in greater detail, focusing on their operational models, community ties, and the feasibility of integrating a delivery system into their businesses (Figure 26).



Figure 26: The three key themes of CMP Restaurants Interviews



Family-owned Businesses

CMP restaurants are small, family-owned businesses, which directly impacts their ability to expand and participate in a food delivery system. For instance, Ana's Limber and Avi's Pollo, started as part-time operations or informal partnerships before evolving into full-time family enterprises. Unlike Ana's Limber, which operates from a home, most of these businesses rent their locations, adding financial pressure to maintain operations. Their shared experiences with economic disruptions, such as Hurricane Maria (2017) (Figure 27) and COVID-19, have influenced their cautious approach to investment and growth. These factors shape their ability and willingness to adapt to new service models, such as food delivery.



Figure 27: The effect of Hurricane Maria on the CMP Community

A major concern among CMP restaurants is hiring and retaining employees, which affects their capacity to handle increased demand through a delivery system. Limited staffing, often consisting of family members or a few employees, creates constraints, making it difficult to prepare orders efficiently while managing customer service. For example, Avi's Pollo is run solely by the owner and her husband (Figure 28), while La Esquina operates with only three employees. Mama Carmin's, the only restaurant with sufficient staffing, has successfully integrated delivery, highlighting how additional resources improve operations. Without extra staff, other CMP restaurants may struggle to meet the logistics of a delivery service unless support is provided.



Figure 28: The obvious shortage of employees at Avi's Pollo



Serving Community

CMP restaurants are deeply embedded in their neighborhoods, which influences how they might engage with a food delivery system. Their customer base consists primarily of residents, with limited exposure to outside areas. While some restaurants have occasional visitors through word-of-mouth or tourism, their core operations are community driven. This loyalty is an asset for developing a delivery system, as it suggests a built-in customer base that could support the transition.

Many owners express a strong commitment to remaining in the CMP area, even when considering expansion. This local focus could shape a food delivery model that prioritizes local logistics rather than widespread distribution, as it would take time to expand their customer base to the MdO.

Additionally, CMP restaurants rely on grassroots marketing, including word-of-mouth and digital platforms like Google Maps, to maintain visibility. Using these existing strategies could help integrate food delivery into their business without requiring additional investment in advertising. However, these restaurants' devotion to the CMP may reduce their motivation to expand to MdO. They may not view expansion to MdO as a top priority, even if they do not need to put much work into expanding.

Operational Models

We observed that most CMP restaurants shared similar operational structures, with all three businesses offering dine-in and pickup services. However, Mama Carmín stood out by providing delivery, a service the other restaurants avoided due to the high commission fees charged by platforms like DoorDash and UberEats, which range from 15% to 30% per order. For small, family-owned businesses operating on tight margins, these fees make third-party delivery financially unfeasible unless an alternative system were to offer lower costs and logistical support. Additionally, most restaurants we interviewed accepted only cash and ATH Móvil (a Puerto Rican equivalent to PayPal) to avoid the high processing fees associated with credit card payments. These fees include a 2.3% charge per transaction, a \$0.10 additional charge, and equipment costs ranging from

\$150 to \$850, making it impractical for smaller establishments. Any proposed MdO food delivery system must account for these financial constraints to be viable for these businesses.

Overall, the restaurants showed interest in expanding, particularly through a shared MdO food delivery system, but emphasized the need to maintain their quality and ensure its feasibility. Their primary obstacles were limited resources and staff availability, making it difficult to handle increased order volumes without additional support. Through our interviews, we identified potential solutions that restaurant owners believe could make a shared delivery system successful. One key insight was the potential for collaboration to streamline operations and reduce burdens. Businesses showed openness to partnering with other restaurants, local organizations, and vendors to diversify offerings and attract new customers. For instance, there was interest in integrating Ana's Limber into other restaurant menus as a dessert option, and some establishments, like Mama Carmín's, already worked with suppliers for pastries, flan, and coffee. A couple of businesses already serve customers in the Milla de Oro (MdO) area and expressed interest in expanding their presence through a shared delivery service.

Milla de Oro's Dining Preferences

We identified three main topics that represented MdO businesses lunch preferences and interest in patronizing CMP restaurants (Figure 29). The MdO corporations we met showed an interest in catering partnerships through the Hecho Para Llevar program, MdO customers were interested in patronizing the CMP restaurants individually, and both the customers as well as corporations indicated the logistical necessities for successful partnerships.



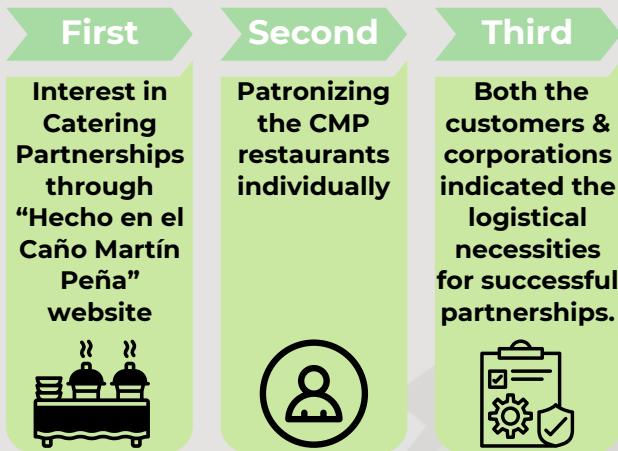


Figure 29: Three identified themes from MdO Interviews

All five of the MdO corporations that we interviewed were interested in participating in the Hecho Para Llevar program. Two of the five corporations had prior contact with Proyecto ENLACE, supporting past initiatives, and indicated this as reason for their interest in the Hecho Para Llevar program as an avenue to further support the CMP community. MassMutual and the G8 expressed immediate interest in catering. MassMutual hosts three large catering events for 60 people yearly and monthly catering events for 20 people. The G8 correspondent participates in biweekly board meetings with roughly 20 people that they indicated as a catering opportunity. However, Fundacion Banco Popular and MassMutual shared how catering orders needed to be secured from verified caterers (Figure 30). Fundacion Banco Popular only works with organizations in their verified network of caterers which has a months-long vetting process. The person responsible for MassMutual's catering orders did not mention having a similar type of vetting process, but did say they would need to personally try any potential caterer's food before placing a large order with company funds.



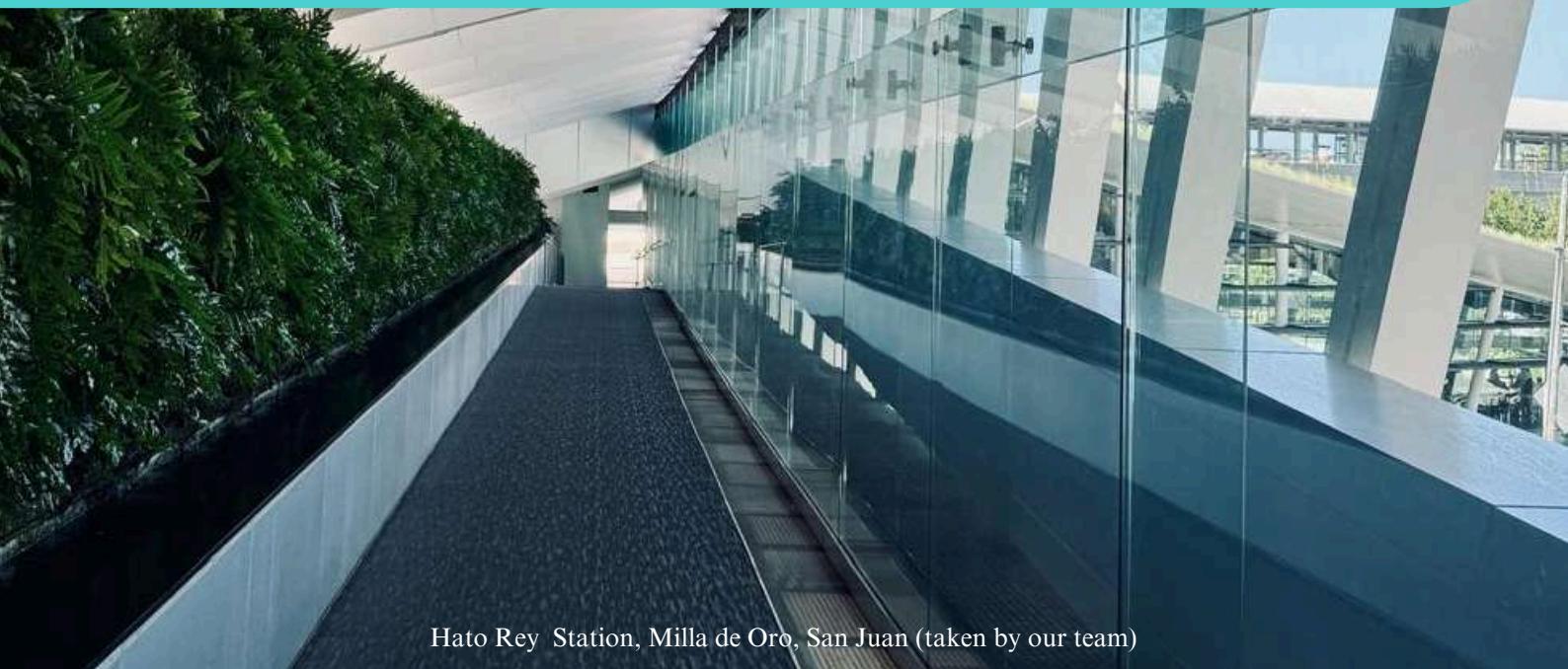
Figure 30: Our initial meeting with Fundación del Banco Popular

MdO employees expressed interest in patronizing the CMP restaurants through individual lunch orders. MdO employees were specifically interested in the price, food options, and timely delivery that could be offered by CMP restaurants. MdO employees currently spend between \$10-15 for their lunch meals, with 84% of survey responses showing a lunch budget of under \$15 and 44% under \$10. MdO employees also mentioned the prices of food around their workplaces being too expensive, limiting their options. As for their food preferences, 80% of respondents either directly mention needing a large protein and carbohydrate serving or referencing foods that fit this description (creole, chicken and rice, etc.). Among MdO employees, convenient delivery was highly valued. 42% of survey respondents would only wait 10-15 minutes for their food to be delivered, while nobody would consider waiting longer than 30 minutes for delivery. The CMP restaurants are well positioned to take advantage of these preferences with an average meal price around \$10 – some closer to \$5 – and large portions of protein and carbohydrates as the CMP restaurants primarily offer creole cuisine. Orders from individual MdO customers were largely placed with a 15% tip, while the larger catering orders were placed with an 18-20% tip, showing catering to offer large-but-infrequent supplementary cashflow to the consistency of daily individual orders. An important note is the method by which corporations and individuals pay, with 88% of individuals making their purchases through ATH Movil, 52% of individuals and all corporations making their purchases with card, and only 28% of individuals using cash to purchase their orders. This limits potential orders to CMP restaurants with the appropriate infrastructure to accept these payment methods.

The responses from both MdO corporations and individuals informed marketing for the CMP restaurants. MdO employees learn about potential restaurants primarily by word of mouth and secondarily through social media. All four interviewees told us that their preferred method for discovering restaurants was word of mouth, as it gave them a trusted evaluation of the restaurant, while their second favorite way to discover restaurants was via social media, as it was the easiest way to find an accessible overview, including offerings, location, price, and reviews.



Hecho para Llevar: The CMP-MdO Food Delivery System



Hato Rey Station, Milla de Oro, San Juan (taken by our team)

Based on the findings from the interviews and surveys conducted in both communities, it was determined that the most practical and feasible approach to fostering a connection between the two is through the establishment of a consistent delivery system.

This system would involve the daily delivery of small meals to individual customers in Milla de Oro, as well as catering services for corporate clients and large-scale events.

CMP-MdO Food Delivery Logistics

For individual orders from MdO customers, orders can be placed during lunchtime through the “Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña” website. Orders must be submitted prior to 10:30 AM to allow restaurants sufficient time for preparation. Additionally, customers will have the option to specify a preferred delivery time sometime between 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Both the delivery manager and the specified restaurants will receive an automatic notification via a printer, which will generate a sticker containing the order details, including the customer’s name, delivery location, and preferred delivery time. During lunch hours, the delivery manager will collect the orders from each restaurant, attach the corresponding receipt to each bag, and deliver them to MdO. We shared with the delivery manager a visualization of the proposed delivery route, which begins at the restaurants in CMP and extends to MdO. The route is estimated to take 14 minutes to complete, covering a distance of 2.3 miles (3.7 km) (Figure 31).

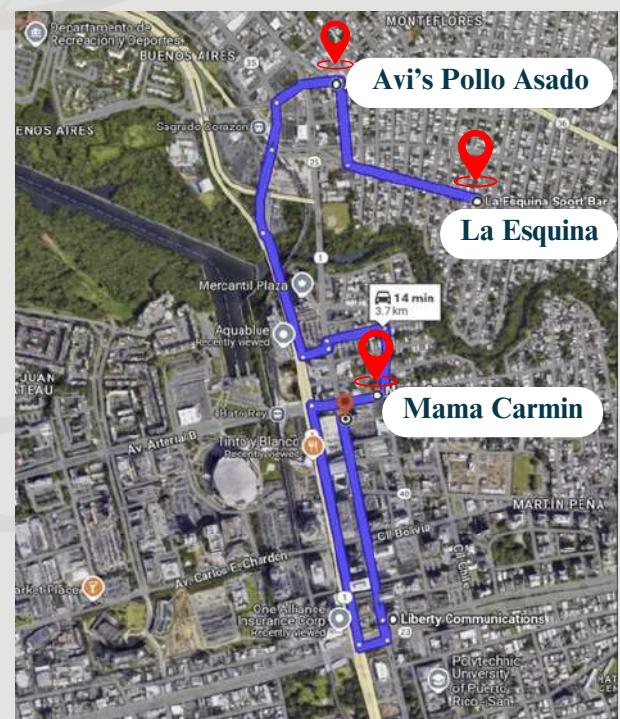


Figure 31: Suggested Delivery Route in MdO (Google Maps)



The delivery manager will generate revenue through a delivery fee equivalent to 15% of the order subtotal. Additionally, the delivery manager will receive a service fee from the restaurant, earning \$0.50 for every \$5 order. Finally, he will be able to collect tips provided by customers. On the website, customers will be prompted to select a tip amount from the following options: 15%, 18%, 20%, or a custom amount. Alternatively, customers may choose to tip in person if they prefer. This structure ensures that the delivery manager is compensated for his services while providing flexibility for customers to express their appreciation.

In addition to individual orders, the delivery system will also accommodate catering services for larger events (Figure 32). The process for catering orders will operate similarly, with a few key differences. Catering orders must be placed at least three days in advance to allow sufficient time for preparation and coordination. Customers will place their orders through the “Hecho en el Caño Martín Peña” website, specifying the event details, menu preferences, and delivery location.

The delivery manager and the specified restaurant(s) will receive the order details and coordinate with each other to ensure timely preparation and delivery. The same delivery and service fee as for individual orders will be applied to the catering orders in addition to 18% minimum gratuity.

During payment, customers will be asked if they would like their payment to be rounded up to the nearest dollar, so those extra cents can be donated to Caño 3.7 to support various community development projects in the CMP community. After paying online and automatically allocating the payments to the restaurant owners and the delivery manager, customers will receive a message thanking them for supporting local CMP restaurants and emphasizing the significant impact their orders have on the community. Additionally, the website will feature a dedicated section for customers to provide feedback or recommendations about the delivery system, ensuring continuous improvement and engagement. This approach not only fosters a sense of community but also encourages ongoing support for local initiatives.

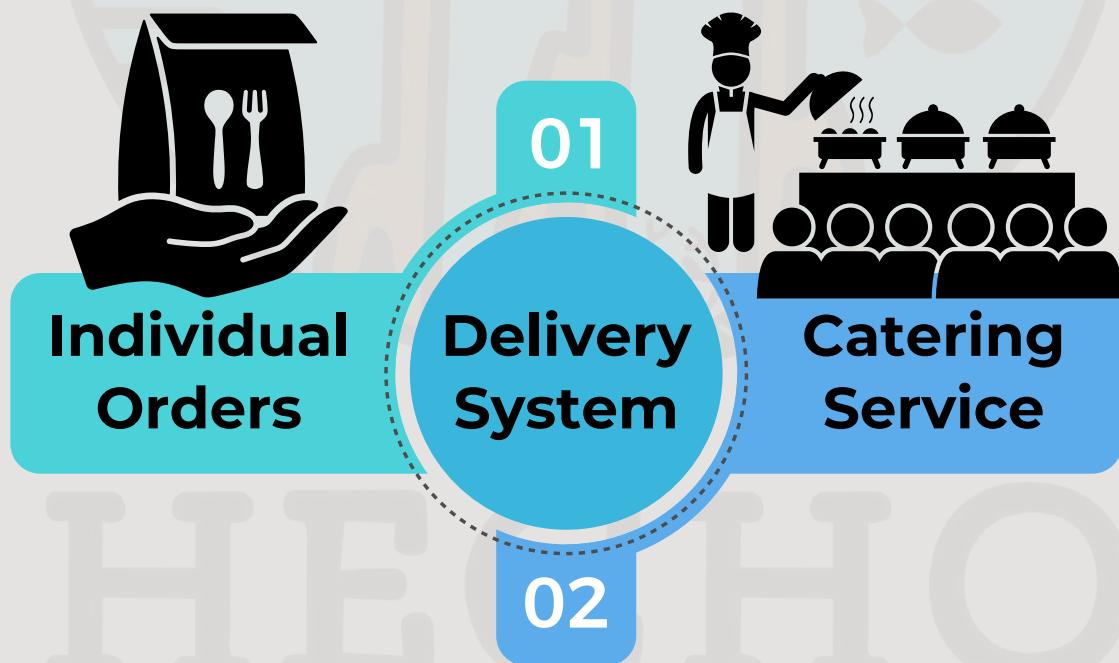


Figure 32: The two main parts of the delivery system

Economic Projections for the Hecho Para Llevar program

To illustrate the economic potential of the Hecho para Llevar program, we developed three hypothetical projections for both the restaurants and the delivery business under conservative and

optimistic scenarios throughout a period of one day (Table 1) and a period of one month (Table 2). Another projection was also developed for the catering orders (Table 3).



Table 1: Economic Projection for the Individual Delivery Program for One Operating Day

# Orders (avg \$12 pre-tax)	Service Fee (\$0.50/\$5 order) Total	Delivery Fee (15%) Total	Minimum Expected Tip (15%)	Delivery Manager Revenue	Restaurant Revenue
5 (\$60)	\$7.50	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$25.50	\$52.50
10 (\$120)	\$15.00	\$18.00	\$18.00	\$42.00	\$105.00
15 (\$180)	\$22.50	\$27.00	\$27.00	\$76.50	\$157.50

Table 2: Economic Projection for the Individual Delivery Program for One Month (21 Operating Day)

# Orders (avg \$12 pre-tax)	Service Fee (\$0.50/\$5 order) Total	Delivery Fee (15%) Total	Expected Tip (15%)	Delivery Manager Revenue	Restaurant Revenue
105 (\$1260)	\$157.50	\$189.00	\$189.00	\$535.50	\$1,102.50
210 (\$2520)	\$315.00	\$378.00	\$378.00	\$1,071.00	\$2,205.00
315 (\$3780)	\$472.50	\$567.00	\$567.00	\$1,606.50	\$3,307.50

Table 3: Economic Projection for the Catering Delivery Program

Catering Amount	Service Fee (\$0.50/\$5 order) Total	Delivery Fee (15%) Total	Minimum Gratuity (18%)	Delivery Manager Revenue	Restaurant Revenue
\$200	\$20.50	\$30.00	\$36.00	\$86.50	\$179.50
\$400	\$40.50	\$60.00	\$72.00	\$172.50	\$359.50



Based on the survey results and the proposed delivery system, we estimate that each restaurant could receive an average of five to 15 individual orders per day from MdO customers, with an average order value of \$12. Under a conservative scenario, assuming five orders per day, each restaurant could generate approximately \$52.50 in daily revenue, totaling \$1,102.50 per month. In an optimistic scenario, with 15 orders per day, daily revenue could reach \$157.50 a day, amounting to \$3,307.50 per month.

For the delivery business, the delivery manager's earnings would come from delivery fees, service fees, and customer tips. Assuming an average tip of 15% on a \$12 order, the delivery manager would earn \$1.80 delivery fee, \$1.50 service fee, and \$1.80 expected tips, totaling \$5.10 per order. Under the conservative scenario (5 orders per day), this would result in \$25.50 daily or \$535.50 per month. In the optimistic scenario (15 orders per day), daily earnings could reach \$76.50, totaling \$1,606.50 monthly.

Additionally, catering orders present a significant opportunity for increased revenue. Assuming an average catering order value of \$200 and a minimum of 2 catering orders per week, each restaurant could generate an additional \$1,438 per month. For the delivery manager, the 15% delivery fee on a \$200 order would amount to \$30 per order, plus \$20.50 service fee, plus minimum gratuity of 18% tip (\$36), totaling \$86.50 per catering order. With 2 catering orders per week, the delivery manager could earn an additional \$692 monthly. Combining individual and catering orders, the delivery business could generate between \$2,540 and \$4,745 monthly for the restaurants, and between \$1,225 and \$2,296 for the delivery manager depending on the scenario.

Considering that the cost of gas in Puerto Rico is approximately \$2.80 per gallon, and a typical van consumes an average of 15.5 miles per gallon, it will cost the delivery manager \$0.18 to drive one mile (Puerto Rico Gasoline Prices, n.d.; What Gas Mileage Do Camper Vans Get?, 2024). Estimating that the delivery manager will drive around 2.5 miles per day (52.5 miles per working month), his monthly gas expense will be approximately \$9.48. While the delivery manager is expected to spend a maximum of half a working day (4 hours) daily operating the delivery system, he is projected to earn a minimum of \$14,500 annually, excluding the cost of van maintenance. This annual income is still higher than the average income in Caño Martín Peña, which is around \$11,964 (Census Reporter, 2022).

These projections, based on initial interest, highlight the economic potential of collaboration, demonstrating how the delivery system could provide a sustainable income stream for both the restaurants and the delivery business. With the potential to scale, this initiative not only supports local businesses but also fosters community growth.

The results outlined above represent the first phase of the CMP-MdO food delivery system which is establishing initial connections, and a scalable system that is grounded in a daily noon-time lunch order for individual employees coupled with potential catering opportunities. The following section provides recommendations for actions and strategies that could be implemented in 2025 to solidify the foundation of the delivery system and explore growth opportunities.

Tamarindo Beach, Culebra Island, Puerto Rico (taken by our team)



Recommendations & Conclusion



Old San Juan (taken by our team)

The following recommendations are designed to enhance the scalability, sustainability, and impact of the CMP-MdO food delivery system. These strategies aim to expand participation to more restaurants within Caño Martín Peña (CMP), improve delivery efficiency, launch a robust marketing campaign, establish corporate partnerships, and develop a

feedback mechanism to ensure continuous improvement. By implementing these measures, ENLACE can strengthen the connection between CMP restaurants and MdO employees, foster economic growth for local businesses, and create a sustainable model that benefits the entire community.

Expand Participation to More Restaurants in CMP & Hire Additional Delivery Personnel

If there is initial success during phase one of the program with a high market demand from MdO employees, there should be an aim to include more restaurants from the eight communities within Caño Martín Peña (CMP). To facilitate this, we provided ENLACE with a detailed roadmap outlining the steps for onboarding new restaurants, including the identification of 44 restaurants that are in the 8 communities that shape CMP, in which they are considered a potential participant from the initial pool of restaurants we engaged with during the project or found on Google Maps (table 4).

To maintain quality and safety standards, restaurants interested in joining the system must have the capacity to timely prepare orders for pick-up, and they must meet specific health and food safety qualifications. ENLACE could collaborate with local health authorities to conduct inspections and provide certifications, ensuring that all participating

restaurants comply with regulatory requirements, as well as hosting food and health safety workshops for the restaurants' owners. Finally, ENLACE is encouraged to target restaurants that offer different kinds of food first to reduce competition between all the restaurants that are participating.

As the delivery system grows, the delivery manager may need to hire an assistant to manage the increasing order volume. This assistant should have access to a motorcycle or car to improve delivery efficiency, particularly for larger catering orders or during peak hours. Expanding the delivery team will not only alleviate the delivery manager's workload but also ensure timely and reliable service, which is critical for customer satisfaction. ENLACE could support this effort by identifying and training potential candidates from the community, thereby creating additional employment opportunities while strengthening the program's operational capacity.



Table 4: Potential Restaurants in CMP that could be part of Hecho Para Llevar Program in the future

#	Community	Restaurant	Address On Google Maps	Phone Number
1	PARADA 27	Mama Carmin Cafe & Bar	15 C. Prudencio Rivera Martínez	17876487652
2	PARADA 27	Dulce Capricho restaurant	calle Ochoa, Av. Arterial B	17874745200
3	PARADA 27	EI HP Cocina & Sportsbar	CWHR+XX Caño Martin Peña	19393380421
4	LAS MONJAS	Café Don Rey	CWJW+43 Caño Martin Peña	-
5	LAS MONJAS	Hamburguesas	CWHW+Q3 Caño Martin Peña	-
6	LAS MONJAS	Alcapurrias de Tata	115 CII Luna, Caño Martin Peña	-
7	LAS MONJAS	EI Taconazo	CWHV+286, Av. Quisqueya	17873817677
8	LAS MONJAS	Chinchorreando En Hato Rey	67 CII Bolivia, San Juan, 00917	17879465444
9	LAS MONJAS	EI Food Joint	CWGV+QR9, San Juan, 00917	17874122111
10	LAS MONJAS	EI Gato de Lavapies	259 CII Chile, San Juan, 00917	17879980327
11	LAS MONJAS	dPaellas @ Sigma	251 CII Chile, San Juan, 00917	17872355959
12	LAS MONJAS	Flaky Hot Dog	237-271 CII Uruguay, San Juan, 00917	-
13	LAS MONJAS	Palo Palito Restaurant	255 Av. de la Constitución, San Juan, 00917	19392045458
14	LAS MONJAS	Es te burgers	269-279 C. México, San Juan, 00917	17879461094
15	BUENA VISTA HATO REY	Lito's Sport Bar	258 Calle C, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan	-
16	BUENA VISTA HATO REY	Oficinas Centrales Denny's	Esquina Trinidad, Edificio 188, Av.	17872731043
17	BUENA VISTA HATO REY	Palacio Asia	CWFX+XM9, CII América, San Juan, 00917	17877656665
18	BUENA VISTA HATO REY	Crazy Tasty	Ave. Roosevelt Marginal #142, Hato Rey	19392265706
19	BUENA VISTA HATO REY	Marco's Pizza	142 Marginal F.D. Roosevelt, Local 1	17876650007
20	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Risitas Sport Bar	CXG5+Q2H Caño Martin Peña, Callejón 7	14074379320
21	ISRAEL BITUMUL	La Casita de Sandy	208-187 CII Laguna, Caño Martin Peña	17879221251
22	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Goodbye Sportbar	195 -5 Calle Francia, San Juan, 00917	17872827226
23	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Metropolitan Food Center	Bda.Israel #194 &, Av. Barbosa, San Juan	-
24	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Pawcakes	CXF5+HP3, CII Villalba, San Juan, 00923	-
25	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Pinchos Y Algo Mas	338 C. Alcañiz, San Juan, 00927	19394399539
26	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Genesis Sport Bar	330 C. Alcañiz #344, San Juan, 00923	-
27	ISRAEL BITUMUL	Hayo rey	344 C. Alcañiz #330, San Juan, 00923	-
28	MARINA	Hot Dog Hot Dog	Calle San Antonio Esq, Avenida Rexach	19397753051
29	MARINA	La Terraza Lounge	1903 Av. Juan Ponce de León	17874166180
30	MARINA	Burgers by Yoachin	330 Av. A, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan	17875689274
31	MARINA	Manjar de dio	CWPV+3C9, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan	14018376251
32	BARRIO OBRERO OESTE	Coffe and fruit Marisol	CWPW+8J2, Av. A &, C. 14	17873198356
33	BARRIO OBRERO OESTE	FF mínimarket	2012 Av. Borinquen, Caño Martin Peña	19393364147
34	BARRIO OBRERO OESTE	EI Fogón de Chary	2015 Av. Borinquen, San Juan, 00915	17873881243
35	BARRIO OBRERO OESTE	Restaurante El Gustazo	CWQW+2CF, Av. C, San Juan, 00915	-
36	BARRIO OBRERO OESTE	BaKno Terraza	518 CII 12, San Juan, 00915	17873937415
37	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	Estilo Mexicano achopai	618 CII Buenos Aires, Caño Martin Peña	-
38	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	Soila Restandbar	#2267 AVE BORINQUEN BO, San Juan	19394008871
39	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	Yolanda's café	2267 Av. Borinquen, San Juan, 00915	19394917411
40	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	Sabor en tu paladar	654 C. Tavárez, San Juan, 00926	19392248096
41	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	Freddy Mofongo	2275-2279, Av. Borinquen, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan	17876450774
42	BARRIO OBRERO SAN CIPRIÁN	EI K-minante	2308 Av. Borinquen, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan 00915	17879294928
43	BUENA VISTA SANTUCE	Tres Fuegos	718 Calle Haydee Rexach, Caño Martin Peña, San Juan	19393363622
44	BUENA VISTA SANTUCE	Pa'l Moncheo	731-727 Av. Barbosa, San Juan, 00915	-



Launch a Marketing Campaign for the CMP-MdO Delivery System

To ensure the success and scalability of the Hecho para Llevar program, ENLACE should implement a strategic marketing campaign that builds on initial outreach efforts and evolves as the program grows. During phase one, the program can rely on direct engagement with MdO employees and restaurant owners to establish a foundation. However, as the program gains traction, a comprehensive marketing strategy will be critical to driving awareness, engagement, and sustained participation.

Drawing from surveys and interviews with MdO employees, it is clear that many learn about local restaurants through social media and word of mouth. This insight should guide the marketing approach. ENLACE should leverage platforms like Instagram and Facebook to promote the Hecho para Llevar program, highlighting the convenience of the delivery system, showcasing restaurant offerings, and sharing special promotions. Additionally, fliers could be distributed at MdO, and in-person outreach sessions could be conducted to encourage participation. The delivery manager could play a central role in driving this campaign, as his incentives align with generating more business. To ensure the campaign's success and scalability, ENLACE could collaborate with community volunteers or hire a part-time marketing coordinator.

To further support the program's growth, ENLACE should organize workshops tailored to the needs of restaurant owners. Many small businesses in CMP may lack the knowledge or resources to effectively market themselves online, which limits their ability to fully participate in and benefit from the Hecho para Llevar program. Workshops could focus on building digital marketing skills, such as creating and managing Instagram pages, posting engaging content, and running promotions to attract customers. ENLACE could also provide templates or tools for creating digital menus and promotional materials, simplifying the process for small businesses and enabling them to compete more effectively in the digital space. These workshops would not only empower restaurant owners but also strengthen the overall ecosystem of the Hecho para Llevar program by ensuring that participating businesses are well-equipped to market their offerings and attract MdO employees. It also fosters and strengthens trust between ENLACE, the CMP, and the community.

By combining a robust marketing campaign with targeted workshops, this initiative will foster greater engagement with MdO employees, empower local businesses, and create a sustainable and scalable model for the Hecho para Llevar program.



Milla De Oro, San Juan



Expand Catering Options Through Corporate Partnerships and Confidence-Building Strategies

To create a steady revenue stream for Caño Martín Peña (CMP) restaurants, ENLACE should focus on expanding catering opportunities by facilitating partnerships with corporations in Milla de Oro (MdO). Based on our research findings, MdO employees expressed interest in diverse lunch options and catering services for corporate events. By connecting CMP restaurants with MdO corporations, ENLACE can establish regular catering orders for employee lunches, meetings, or events, providing a reliable income source for participating restaurants.

To build trust and encourage MdO corporations to adopt catering services, ENLACE should implement a phased confidence-building strategy. First, MdO employees could be encouraged to try CMP restaurants on a smaller scale through individual lunch orders via the existing delivery system. This allows employees to sample the food and experience the quality and service firsthand, reducing perceived risks for larger catering commitments. Our survey data revealed that 65% of MdO employees are willing to try new lunch options if they are affordable and convenient, highlighting the potential for this approach.

Next, ENLACE should incentivize corporations to take the first step by offering discounts or complimentary items for initial catering orders. For example, restaurants could provide a 10% discount on the first corporate order or include free appetizers or desserts. These incentives, managed directly by the restaurants, align with our interview findings, which indicated that corporations are more likely to engage with new vendors when initial risks are minimized.

Finally, ENLACE should showcase success stories from early catering partnerships through testimonials, case studies, or social media posts. Highlighting positive experiences-such as seamless delivery, high-quality food, and excellent service-will demonstrate the reliability of CMP restaurants and encourage more corporations to participate. This strategy not only expands catering options but also strengthens the relationship between CMP and MdO, fostering long-term collaboration and community growth.

To further incentivize corporations to take the first step, participating restaurants could offer discounts or complimentary items for initial catering orders.



The economic disparity between San Juan's MdO and the CMP community is still a pressing issue, with limited resources and opportunities hindering CMP's growth. This study explores potential ways to close that gap, focusing on collaborative efforts that could boost economic development and strengthen connections between the two communities. The Hecho Para Llevar delivery system shows how local, strategic initiatives can help address deep-rooted issues like poverty and a lack of resources. By connecting CMP's restaurants with MdO customers through a local network, this initiative doesn't just improve access to food and markets, it also provides exposure for small businesses, helping them grow while building a stronger, more resilient community.

At its core, this concept isn't just about food, rather, it's about bringing people together. It serves as a bridge between Milla de Oro and the CMP, using the joy of food to spark cultural exchange and deeper understanding. By giving MdO employees a chance to explore and enjoy CMP's local restaurants, the program creates a real sense of connection between the two communities. It's also not just about relationships, it's about impact. CMP residents, whether they're restaurant owners, staff, or delivery workers, see direct benefits, from increased business to new job opportunities. This mix of cultural and economic growth makes Hecho Para Llevar more than just a service. It's a framework for breaking down barriers and supporting local entrepreneurs. By strengthening the bonds between these neighborhoods, this initiative is helping build a more inclusive, resilient future, proving that small, community-driven ideas can lead to big, meaningful change.

HECHO EN EL CAÑO MARTÍN PEÑA



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Appendix A: Interviews with CMP Restaurants' Owners

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Caño Martín Peña Community, San Juan (taken by our team)

Investigators: Colin Chandonnet, Iain Spearance, Mena Youssif, Myrrh Khan

Contact Information: gr-pr_c25_cmp@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Connecting CMP Restaurants with Milla de Oro Customers

Sponsor: ENLACE

Introduction: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study: Building economic partnerships between the Caño Martín Peña restaurants and Milla de Oro customers

Procedures to be followed: We will conduct semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be around 30 minutes to an hour depending on the conversation content.

Risks to study participants: No risks.

Benefits to research participants and others: Impact on the economic growth of the CMP businesses

Record keeping and confidentiality: If participants consent, interviews will be recorded. If not, records will be kept through note-taking. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor, or its designee, and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.



For more information about this research or the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, the team can be contacted through the email provided at the top of this form, or contact:

Manager (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu)

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits. The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

Date: _____

Study Participant Signature

Study Participant Name (Please print)

Date: _____

Signature of the Person who Explained this Study



1. Can you tell me a little bit about your restaurant and what makes it special in the area? (follow with more questions based on their answer)
2. How can people find or know about your restaurant? (e.g. online, social media, word of mouth etc.)
 - a. Have you noticed any changes in how people find your restaurant?
3. What type of services does your restaurant offer? (e.g. delivery, booking space, pick up, dine-in)
4. How can people pay for your food? (e.g. Cash, Card, Apple Pay, ATH Movil)
5. Have you thought of expanding your business? How?
6. Do you have any business connections with Milla de Oro, or do you have customers from this area? How did they start, and how have you sustained them?
7. Would you want to expand your customer base to include Milla de Oro customers? *
 - a. How do you envision doing this?
8. Would you be comfortable partnering with other restaurants?
 - a. If so, is there a restaurant in CMP that you'd recommend for this partnership? Why? *
9. Would you be comfortable partnering with a business in Milla de Oro? *
10. What kinds of marketing can you do/have you done? How are things going? Any failed marketing attempts?

*may not be asked depending on previous responses



Appendix B: Interviews with Ana's Limber



Ana's Limber (taken by our team)



Investigators: Colin Chandonnet, Iain Spearance, Mena Youssif, Myrrh Khan

Contact Information: gr-pr_c25_cmp@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Connecting CMP Restaurants with Milla de Oro Customers

Sponsor: ENLACE

Introduction: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study: Building economic partnerships between the Caño Martín Peña restaurants and Milla de Oro customers

Procedures to be followed: We will conduct semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be around 30 minutes to an hour depending on the conversation content.

Risks to study participants: No risks.

Benefits to research participants and others: Impact on the economic growth of the CMP businesses

Record keeping and confidentiality: If participants consent, interviews will be recorded. If not, records will be kept through note-taking. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor, or its designee, and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

For more information about this research or the rights of research participants, or in case of research-related injury, the team can be contacted through the email provided at the top of this form, or contact:

Manager (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu)

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits. The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

Date: _____

Study Participant Signature

Study Participant Name (Please print)

Date: _____

Signature of the Person who Explained this Study



1. Can you tell us a little bit about how you started selling limber? (follow with more questions based on their answer)

a. Has that taken over your main income?

2. How can people find or know that you sell limber? (e.g. online, social media, word of mouth etc.) - we know it's word of mouth, just need it documented

a. Have you noticed any changes in how people come across your operation?

3. How can people pay for your food? (e.g. Cash, Card, Apple Pay, ATH Movil)

a. How much does it cost?

4. Have you thought of implementing a delivery system? Why or why not?

5. Do you have any connections with Milla de Oro, or have employees from this area visited you? How have these connections started, and how have you sustained them?

6. Would you be comfortable partnering with other CMP restaurants to deliver to Milla de Oro? How much could she make per week if then it was given to restaurants, with them responsible for selling it to customers?

a. If so, is there a restaurant in CMP that you'd recommend for this partnership? Why?

7. Would you be comfortable partnering with a business in Milla de Oro? *

a. If so, how much limber could you make in a week to meet the needs of a workplace? (to get an idea of logistical possibilities)

b. What hours are good for pickup?

8. What kinds of marketing can you do/have you done? How are things going? Any failed marketing attempts?

9. Any ideas you've had before that we may not have touched on?

10. Could we take pictures of her limber for marketing purposes/flier?

*may not be asked depending on previous responses



Appendix C: Interviews with Milla de Oro Individual Employers



Milla de Oro, San Juan

Investigators: Colin Chandonnet, Iain Spearance, Mena Youssif, Myrrh Khan

Contact Information: gr-pr_c25_cmp@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Connecting CMP Restaurants with Milla de Oro Customers

Sponsor: ENLACE

Introduction: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study: Building economic partnerships between the Caño Martín Peña restaurants and Milla de Oro customers

Procedures to be followed: We will conduct semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be around 30 minutes to an hour depending on the conversation content.

Risks to study participants: No risks.

Benefits to research participants and others: Impact on the economic growth of the CMP businesses

Record keeping and confidentiality: If participants consent, interviews will be recorded. If not, records will be kept through note-taking. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor, or its designee, and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

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Manager (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu)

Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will not result in any penalty to you or any loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. You may decide to stop participating in the research at any time without penalty or loss of other benefits. The project investigators retain the right to cancel or postpone the experimental procedures at any time they see fit.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

Date: _____

Study Participant Signature

Study Participant Name (Please print)

Date: _____

Signature of the Person who Explained this Study



1. How do you/other employees here typically have lunch? (give options: order out, make their own lunch, dine out etc.)

a. If you order, what time do you usually do so? *

i. What is your ideal wait time after ordering?

2. What do you typically eat for lunch? (creole, burger, mexican, asian, salad, etc.)

a. If you like “X” type of food, have you heard of *name our restaurants*? *

b. What’s your usual budget? What do you consider to be a good price for lunch? Do you feel comfortable sharing your usual tip?

c. What is/are your preferred payment method(s)? (ATH Movil, cash, card, Apple Pay)

3. If you or other employees find food on their own:

a. How do they find food? (word of mouth, google, social media, other advertisements) *

b. How do you/other employees feel about restaurant offerings in the area? What are some options you wish you had here? (potentially bring up our restaurants again)

c. What is your top priority when you order food? (quality, speed, price)

4. What are you looking for when it comes to food delivery? What are its most important qualities?

5. Would you rather eat in the office or travel somewhere else? How far would you want to travel?

*may not be asked depending on previous responses



Appendix D: Interviews with Milla De Oro employees who Order Catering



Investigators: Colin Chandonnet, Iain Spearance, Mena Youssif, Myrrh Khan

Contact Information: gr-pr_c25_cmp@wpi.edu

Title of Research Study: Connecting CMP Restaurants with Milla de Oro Customers

Sponsor: ENLACE

Introduction: You are being asked to participate in a research study. Before you agree, however, you must be fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures to be followed, and any benefits, risks or discomfort that you may experience as a result of your participation. This form presents information about the study so that you may make a fully informed decision regarding your participation.

Purpose of the study: Building economic partnerships between the Caño Martín Peña restaurants and Milla de Oro customers

Procedures to be followed: We will conduct semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be around 30 minutes to an hour depending on the conversation content.

Risks to study participants: No risks.

Benefits to research participants and others: Impact on the economic growth of the CMP businesses

Record keeping and confidentiality: If participants consent, interviews will be recorded. If not, records will be kept through note-taking. Records of your participation in this study will be held confidential so far as permitted by law. However, the study investigators, the sponsor, or its designee, and, under certain circumstances, the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Institutional Review Board (WPI IRB) will be able to inspect and have access to confidential data that identify you by name. Any publication or presentation of the data will not identify you.

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Manager (Ruth McKeogh, Tel. 508 831- 6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu)

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By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been informed about and consent to be a participant in the study described above. Make sure that your questions are answered to your satisfaction before signing. You are entitled to retain a copy of this consent agreement.

Date: _____

Study Participant Signature

Study Participant Name (Please print)

Date: _____

Signature of the Person who Explained this Study



1. How often do you order catering? (daily / few times a week / once a week / few times a month / once a month)
2. How many days in advance do you order catering? (Same day / a day before / 2 days / 3 days / a week before / week+)
3. What type of food do you usually order? (creole, burger, mexican, asian, salad, etc.)
 - a. If you order “X” food, have you heard of *name our restaurants*?
4. How many employees do you order for? (5-10, 10-20, 20-30, 30-50, 50<)
5. What’s your budget per person?
 - a. How do you pay when you order catering? (Card, ATH Movil, cash, Apple Pay)
6. (Optional) What percentage do you usually tip on catering? (15%, 18%, 20%, 22%, %25)
7. How do you find restaurants to order from? (word of mouth, flyers, social media, google)
8. Arrange your priorities for when you choose which restaurants to order from. (proximity, affordability, food quality, customer service)
9. Are you in a partnership with a catering company or a group of restaurants?
 - a. If so, how satisfied are you with this/these partnership(s)? (Rate 1 to 10)
10. If you’re not in a partnership or want a new partnership, how would you feel about entering a partnership with multiple restaurants in Caño Martín Peña? (plug our restaurants again, briefly explain our plans)*
11. Would you be interested in a big bulk order from our community of restaurants – do you want to be our pilot program?
12. Please provide your info so we can contact you for possible catering order or partnership (name, company, phone number, email)

*may not be asked depending on previous responses

