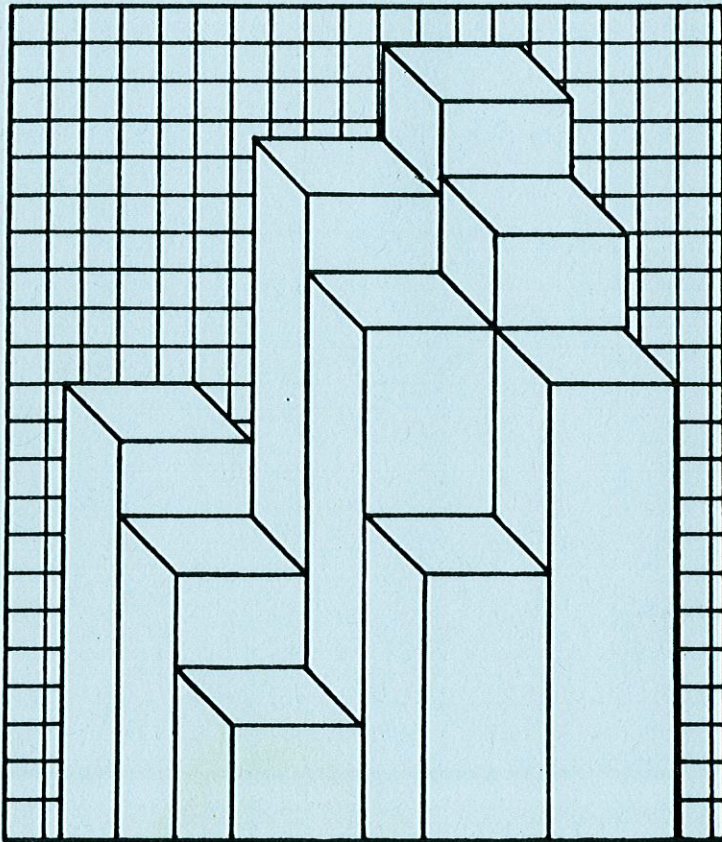


# The Colonias Factbook



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**A Survey of  
Living Conditions  
in Rural Areas  
of South and  
West Texas  
Border Counties**

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**JUNE 1988**

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**Texas Department of Human Services**

Resource ID#: 2848  
Colonias Factbook: A Survey of Living Conditions  
in Rural Areas of South and West Texas Border  
Counties





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# **The Colonias Factbook**

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## **A Survey of Living Conditions in Rural Areas of South Texas and West Texas Border Counties**

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June 1988

*Prepared by*

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*Presented by*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) conducted a needs assessment in the colonias (substandard rural subdivisions) of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and El Paso County from February through April of 1988.

The assessment's purpose was to gather information about the colonias and colonia residents for use in planning for future need for DHS resources.

A secondary purpose was to provide information to groups both inside and outside DHS for the development of plans to address the colonias' problems.

Survey results indicate that colonias are rural and unincorporated subdivisions characterized by substandard housing, inadequate plumbing and sewage disposal systems, and inadequate access to clean water. They are highly concentrated poverty pockets that are physically and legally isolated from neighboring cities.

Twelve hundred interviews were completed. Among major findings –

- 65% of colonia residents have no health insurance.
- 67% of those over 18 did not complete high school.
- Unemployment is 41% among those over 16 who are not in school.
- 26% of households report inadequate heating.
- 24% of homes are not connected to treated water.
- 44% report that flooding is a problem in their colonia.
- 15% of households report they do not usually have enough to eat.

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## PREFACE

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This report presents findings from a recent survey of colonias (substandard rural subdivisions) along the Texas-Mexico border. It was prompted by a desire on the part of the Texas Department of Human Services to determine the nature of the needs of this population group and to serve as a planning document for development of long-term strategies to address those needs.

Driving through the colonias I saw startling differences both within individual colonias and when compared with city neighborhoods. Conditions in many colonias defy description. Substandard housing lacking indoor plumbing and water and with inadequate or nonexistent waste disposal systems stand side by side with fairly standard-looking houses. This phenomenon was common in both South Texas and West Texas.

With an average annual household income of \$6,784 in South Texas, it is not difficult to see why these people live in colonias. It is only in these largely unregulated rural settings that they can lay claim to home ownership which, on the surface, appears to be affordable. But homes in the colonias are affordable only because these communities lack the basic necessities mainstream

Americans take for granted: water, sewer, paved streets, and fire and police protection.

In looking at the data in this report I see the interrelatedness and multiplicity of the problems in the colonias. Clearly, no single group, agency or governmental entity can adequately address all of the problems. Already some progress is being made to control the unchecked growth of colonias. Recent state legislation and vigorous enactment of regulations at the county level should serve to curb their growth. But this combination is the exception rather than the rule.

There are other immediate needs in the areas of health, adequate housing, and sewage disposal. Local medical providers and hospital administrators told me that they have been overburdened with demand for services by a population unable to pay. Sewage treatment and disposal, largely nonexistent, is both an engineering challenge and a costly project. Improvements needed to provide safe and sanitary housing carry a large price tag. The tax base in these communities cannot amortize the costs of these improvements without assistance from the private and public sector.

Community partnerships, bringing together the private sector and the



public sector in a comprehensive planned strategy supported by innovative solutions and appropriate funding, like the one being tested by the Department of Human Services in Hidalgo County, can begin to correct these problems. Initial steps can be directed at preventive strategies addressing education, training, economic development

and employment. At the same time development of longer-term strategies can begin to address the necessary upgrading of the infrastructure.

Efforts to improve the quality of life in the colonias must be long-term. It will take considerable time and resources to correct decades of inattention.

*Exiquio Salinas*  
*Study Director*

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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A study of this type would not have been possible without collaboration and support from a number of people. The single most important contribution to this effort was made by the survey respondents from the colonias. It is their responses that provided the data which are the basis for this report.

While it is not possible to name each respondent, it is possible to list the names of individuals who contributed to the success of this project. Also not listed individually, but certainly worth mentioning, was a small army of interviewers that trekked through selected colonias conducting face-to-face interviews. And lastly, special mention to David C. Trejo, Deputy Commissioner for Families and Children, who funded the study. To them and to all of the persons listed, we say "Thank you!"

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Irma Bermea, DHS, Edinburg

Ruth Cañamar, PAU, Edinburg

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Romulo Solis, PAU, Edinburg

Becky Spiars, DHS, Austin

Christine Suehs, DHS, Austin

Joe Tarir, DHS, El Paso

Mauricio Valles, DHS, Edinburg

Don Warren, DHS, Austin

George Valbarra, DHS, El Paso

Earl Young, DHS, Austin

Baldemar Zuniga, DHS, Edinburg





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**Chapter 1**

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**BACKGROUND  
AND  
METHODOLOGY**

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Definition: Colonias Are Rural Slums . . . . .	1-3
Location and Population of Survey Area . . . . .	1-3
Sampling Methods . . . . .	1-4
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**Definition: Colonias Are Rural Slums**

The term "colonia" is used to describe rural and unincorporated subdivisions of U.S. cities located along the Texas-Mexico international boundary.

Colonias are characterized by substandard housing, inadequate plumbing and sewage disposal systems, and inadequate access to clean water. They are highly concentrated poverty pockets that are physically and legally isolated from neighboring cities.

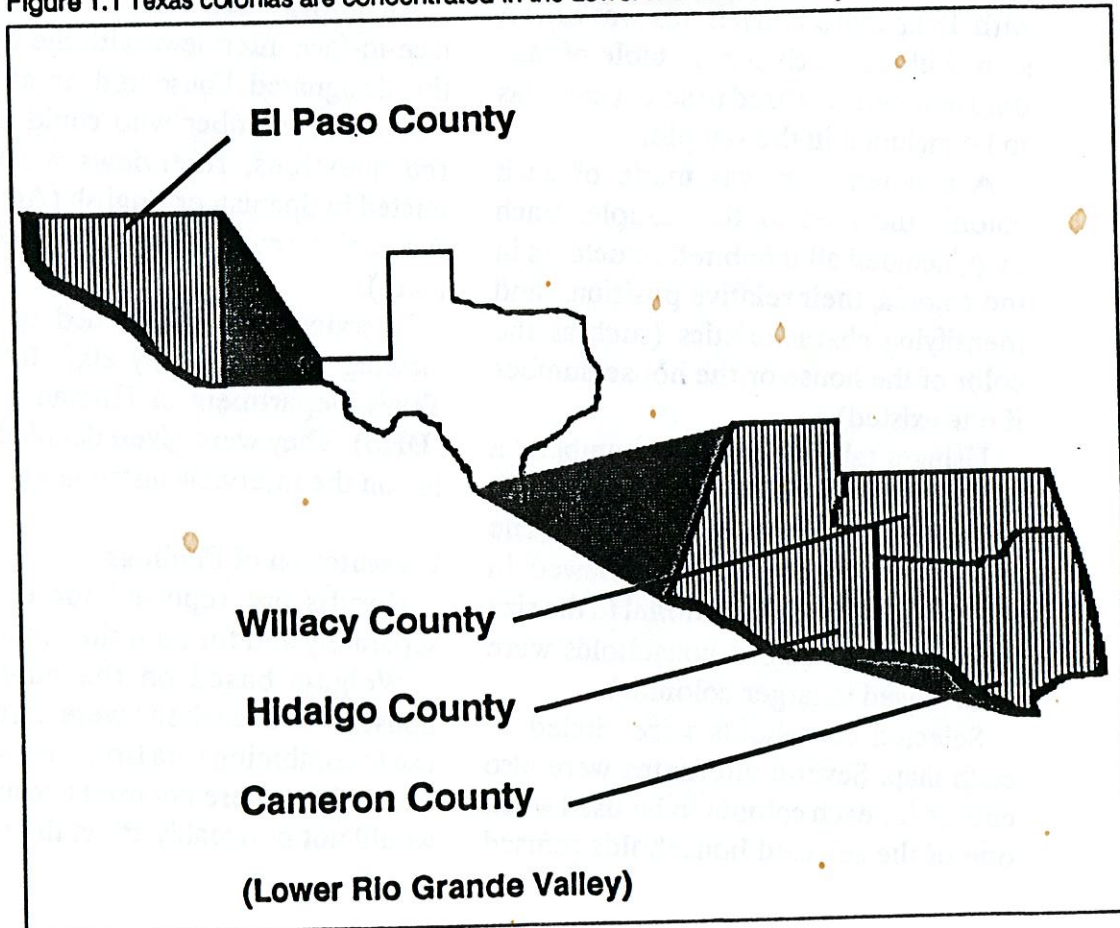
In a June 8, 1987, *Newsweek* article the colonias were referred to as "rural slums". The article reported the following conditions in the colonias: (1) unemployment as high as 50 percent, (2) fouled water supplies, (3) rampant chronic diseases, (4) none or inadequate health insurance, (5) ignorance about Medicaid, (6) fertility rates twice the na-

tional average, (7) poor prenatal care, and (8) school dropout rates of close to 50 percent.

**Location and Population of Survey Area**

While there is evidence to support the existence of "colonias" in virtually every county along the border, their presence has been difficult to quantify because the term colonia has taken on a derogatory connotation. Local officials refer to them as rural communities or rural subdivisions. In Texas, 80 percent of the identified colonias are concentrated in El Paso, Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy counties (see figure 1.1). Almost 140,000 people live in the colonias of these counties (see table 1a).

Figure 1.1 Texas colonias are concentrated in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and El Paso County





**Table 1a. Characteristics of colonias in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and El Paso County**

	<u>RGV<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>El Paso<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Combined</u>
Number of people	71,478	68,395	139,873
No. of households	14,643	12,045	26,688
No. of colonias	435	537	972
No. of colonias with 15 or more households	277	162	439

<sup>1</sup>Texas Water Development Board, January, 1987. RGV stands for Lower Rio Grande Valley.

<sup>2</sup>Water & Wastewater Management Plan, El Paso County, Parkhill, Smith & Cooper, Inc.

### **Sampling Methods**

A representative sample was drawn from each site (the Lower Rio Grande Valley and El Paso County).

A simple random sample of approximately 10 percent of all colonias with 15 or more households was drawn separately for each site. A table of random numbers was used to select colonias to be included in the sample.

A detailed map was made of each colonia included in the sample. Each map included all inhabited structures in the colonia, their relative positions, and identifying characteristics (such as the color of the house or the house number if one existed).

Using a table of random numbers, a random sample of households from each colonia was selected for interviews. The number of households interviewed in each colonia was proportional to the size of the colonia (more households were interviewed in larger colonias).

Selected households were circled on each map. Several alternates were also chosen for each colonia to be used when one of the selected households refused

to be interviewed or when the selected household structure was vacant.

### **Interview Techniques**

Face-to-face interviews were conducted in 1,200 households.

All information was gathered using face-to-face interviews with the head of the designated household or an adult household member who could answer the questions. Interviews were conducted in Spanish or English (Appendix A contains a copy of the interview instrument).

Interviewers were trained on interviewing techniques by staff from the Texas Department of Human Services (DHS). They were given detailed training on the interview instrument.

### **Presentation of Findings**

Results are reported for each site separately and for both sites combined.

Weights based on the number of households in each site were derived for use in combining data from the two sites. The weights were not used because they would not noticeably affect the results.



When the results for individuals in the two samples were combined, it was determined that weighting was not needed because the average number of individuals per household for each site was so similar that the weights would not have noticeably affected the results.

The information presented in this factbook is limited to the most useful statistical results.

Information about the extent of missing values was excluded because the percentage of missing values for questions included in this factbook was small. Information about missing values for specific questions is available upon request.

Additional analyses are available upon request.





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**Chapter 2**

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**A PROFILE OF  
COLONIA  
RESIDENTS**

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Colonia Residents Are Young And Poor . . . . .	2-3
Most Colonia Residents Are Hispanic . . . . .	2-3
Two-thirds of Colonia Residents Were Born in the U.S.A. . . . .	2-4
Spanish is the Primary Language for Two-thirds . . . . .	2-5
Many Colonia Residents Are Not Proficient in English . . . . .	2-5

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## Colonia Residents Are Young and Poor

*Table 2a. Characteristics of colonia residents*

	<u>RGV</u>	<u>El Paso</u>	<u>Combined</u>
Average age	18.5	26.3	21.8
Average number in household	4.8	4.3	4.5
Average annual household income	\$6,784	\$11,497	\$9,137

## Most Colonia Residents Are Hispanic

*Table 2b. Ethnicity of colonia residents*

	<u>RGV</u>	<u>El Paso</u>	<u>Combined</u>
Hispanic	98.8%	95.8%	97.3%
Anglo	1.2%	2.7%	2.0%
Black	0.0%	0.7%	0.3%

# Two-thirds of Colonia Residents Were Born in the U.S.A.

Figure 2.1. Percentage of residents born in U. S. and Mexico

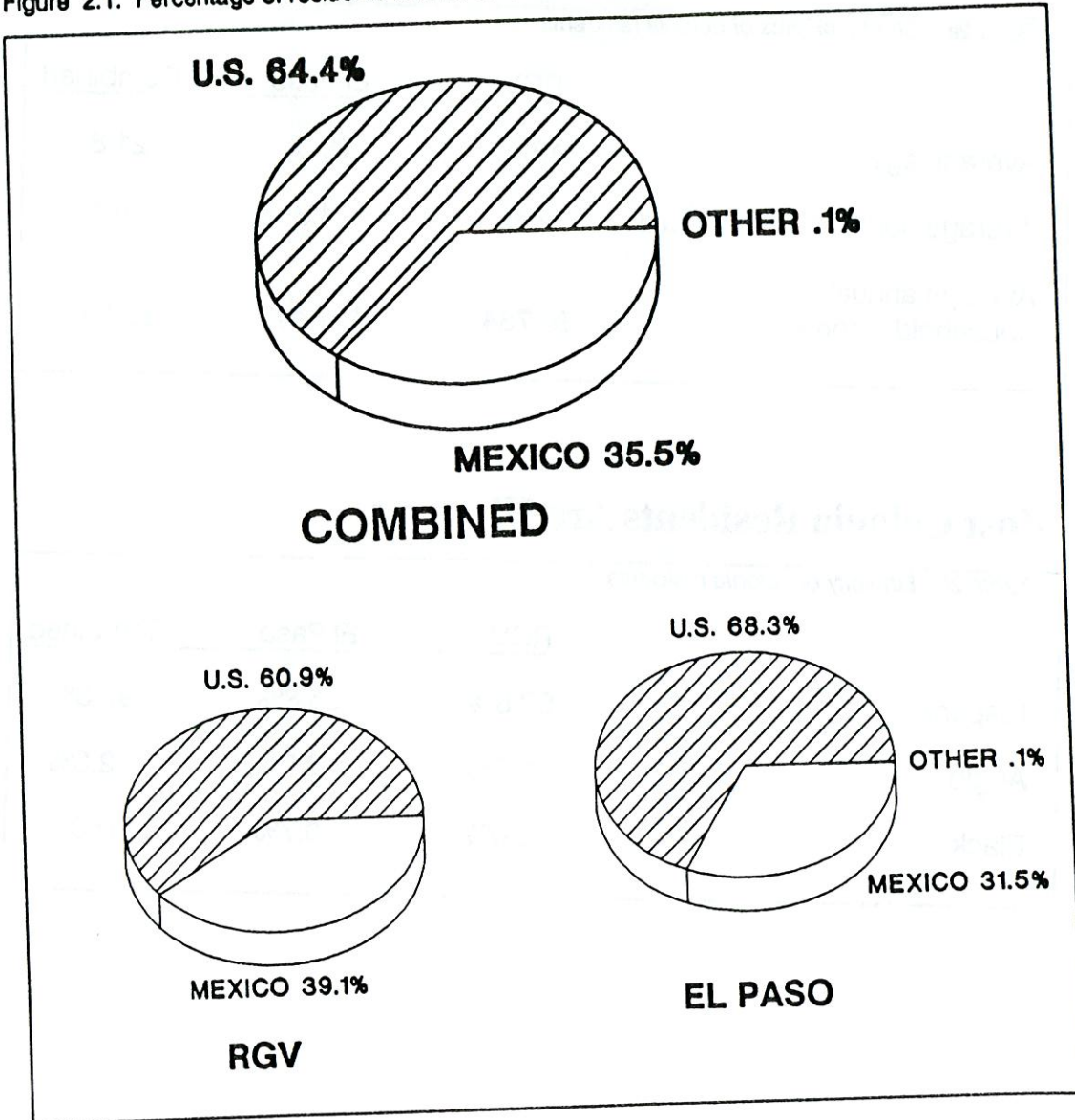


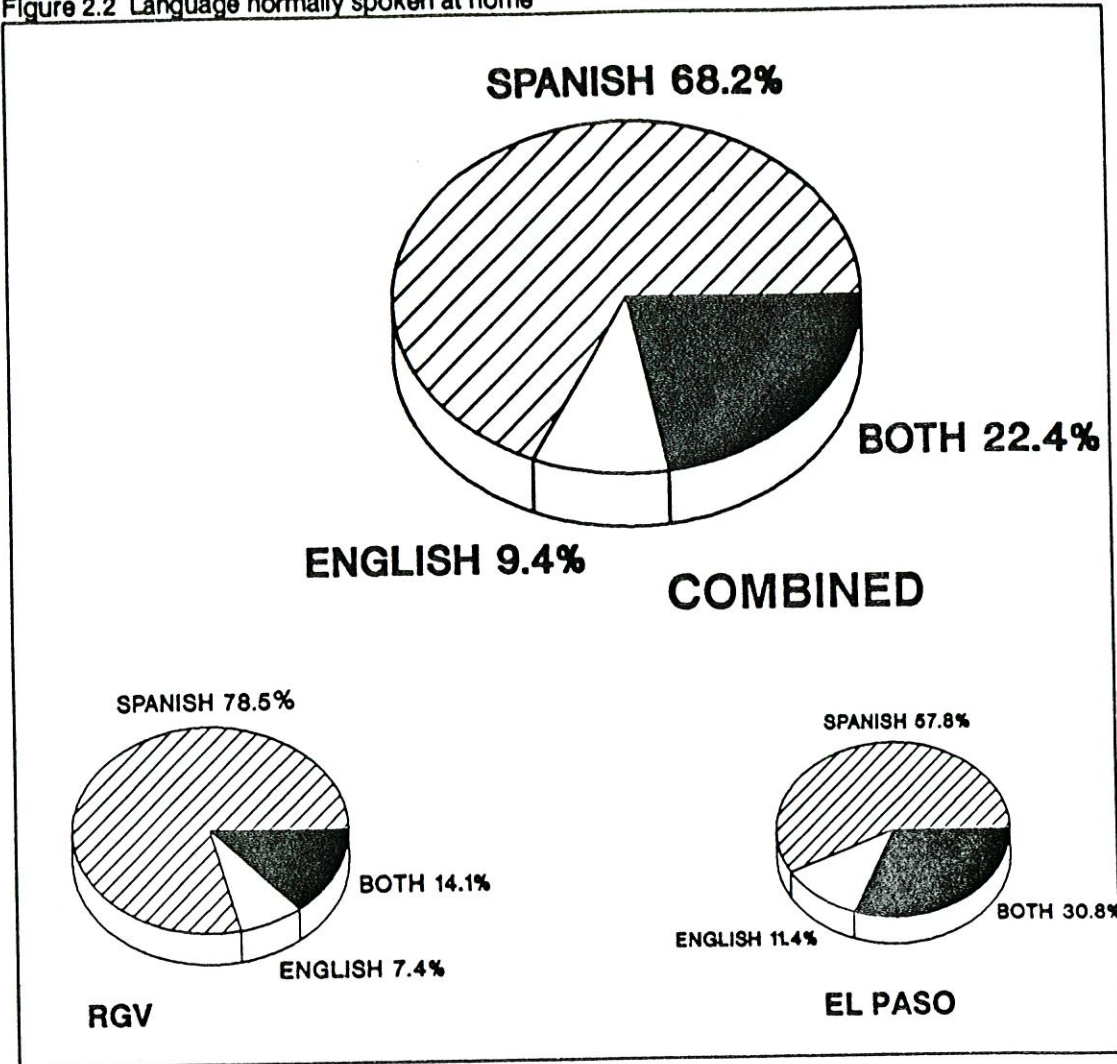
Table 2c. Percentage of specific groups of colonia residents born in the U.S.

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Household head	38.3	47.4	42.8
Residents 18 and under	80.3	90.8	84.7



## Spanish is the Primary Language for Two-thirds

Figure 2.2 Language normally spoken at home



## Many Colonia Residents Are Not Proficient in English

Table 2d. Percentage of residents who speak/read English "not well" or "not at all"

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
<u>Cannot Speak English</u>			
Residents 9 years or older	42.2	31.7	37.1
Household heads only	70.6	48.3	59.5
<u>Cannot Read English</u>			
Residents 9 years or older	43.0	31.7	37.6
Household heads only	71.7	49.3	60.6





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**Chapter 3**

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**HEALTH  
CONDITIONS  
IN THE COLONIAS**

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<b>65% of Colonia Residents Have No Health Insurance</b>	<b>. . . . . 3-3</b>
<b>Many Residents Receive Medical Care in Mexico</b>	<b>. . . . . 3-3</b>
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<b>Untreated Dental Problems Exist in 19% of Colonia Households</b>	<b>. . . . . 3-5</b>

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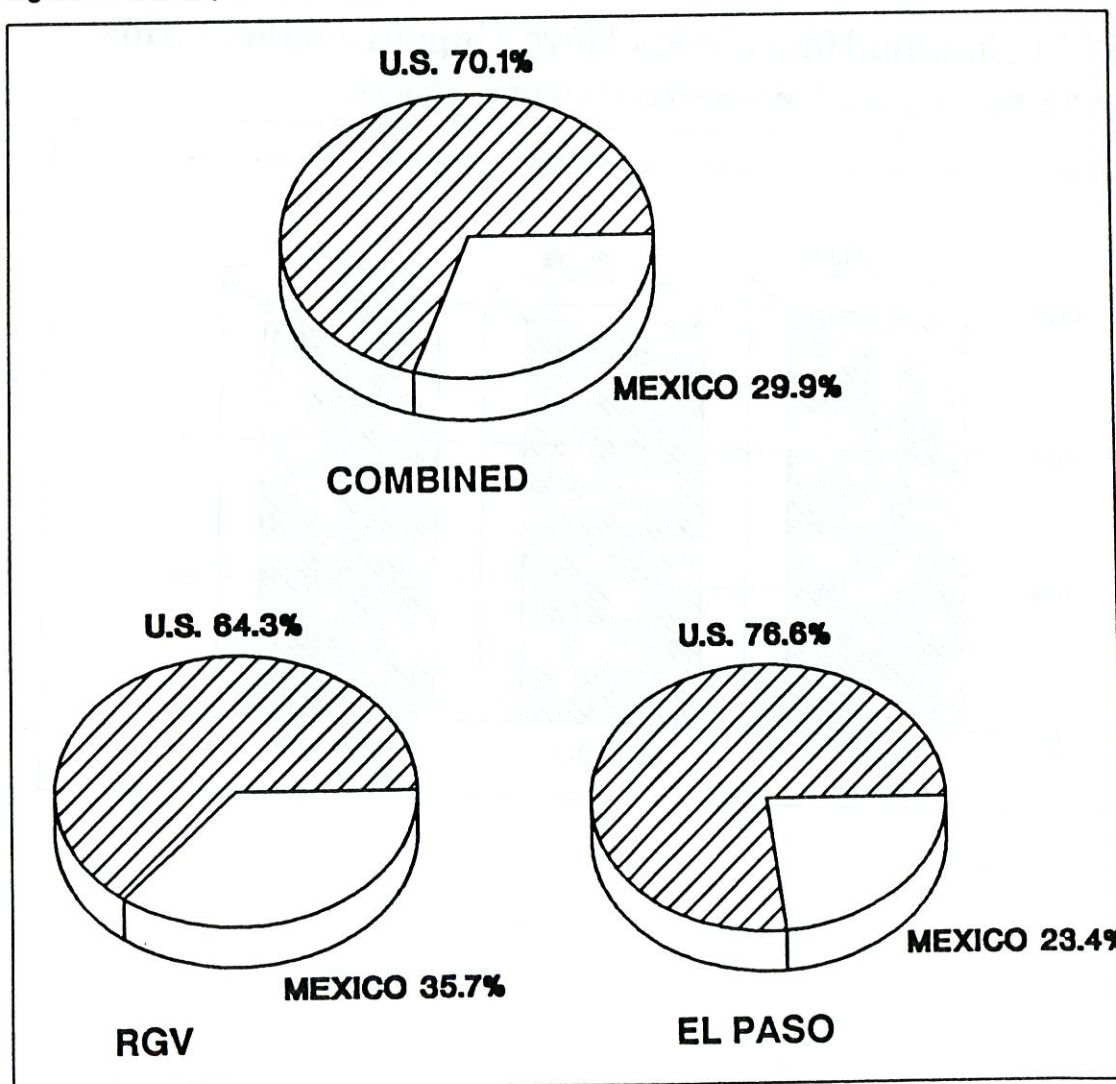
## 65% of Colonia Residents Have No Health Insurance

Table 3a. Percentage of colonia residents without health insurance

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
All residents	71.8	56.8	64.9
Head of household only	64.6	47.9	56.4
Working 30 hours/week or more	58.3	43.2	49.9
Under 17	71.2	60.0	66.5

## Many Residents Receive Medical Care in Mexico

Figure 3.1 Country in which medical care is usually received



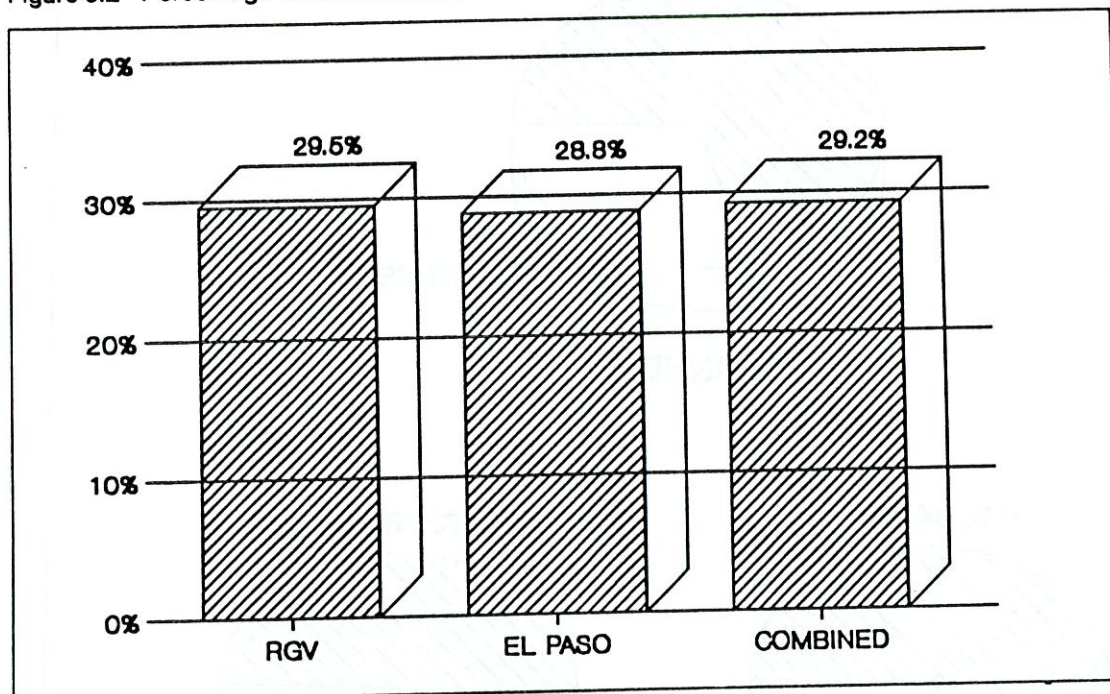
## Third-World Diseases Still Survive

Table 3b. Incidence of TB and Hepatitis

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
<u>Incidence of TB</u>			
Percentage who have had TB	6.1	1.2	3.9
Average age of TB victims	22.7	22.5	22.7
<u>Incidence of Hepatitis</u>			
Percentage who have had hepatitis	9.6	2.1	6.2
Average age of hepatitis victims	21.8	19.0	21.3

## 3 of 10 Colonia Households Have Unpaid Medical Bills

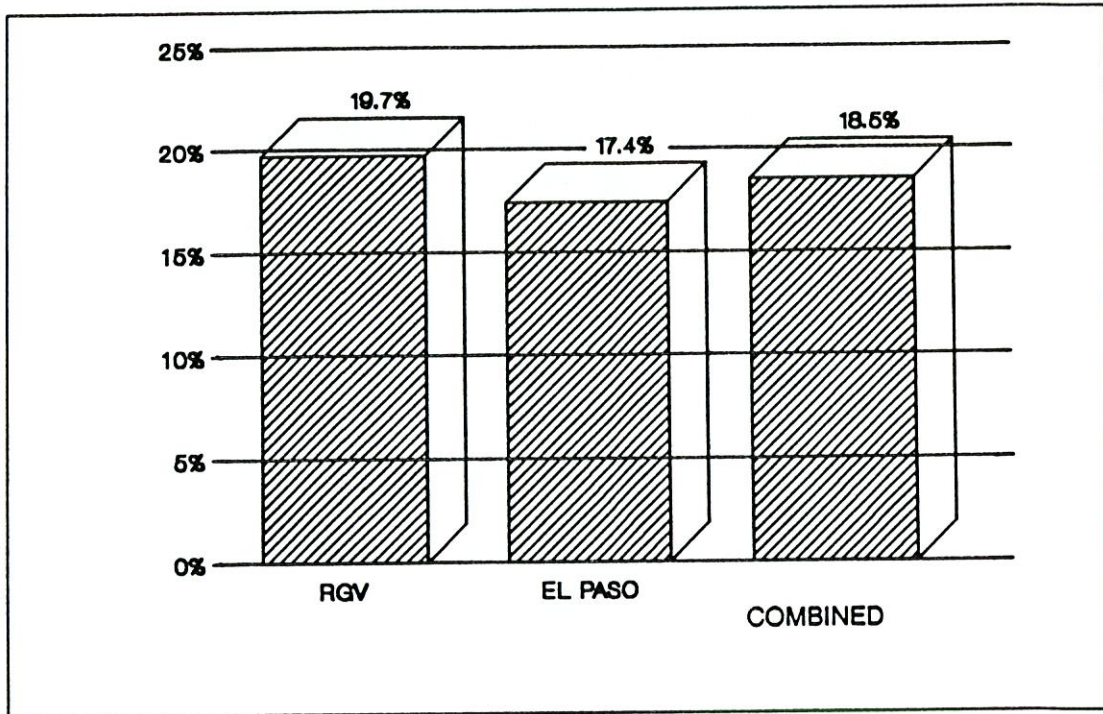
Figure 3.2 Percentage of colonia households with unpaid medical bills





# Untreated Dental Problems Exist in 19% of Colonia Households

Figure 3.3 Percentage of households with untreated dental problems



THE EFFECT OF TEMPERATURE ON THE  
GROWTH OF THE BACTERIA  
STREPTOCOCCUS LACTICUS





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**Chapter 4**

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**EDUCATION  
PROBLEMS**

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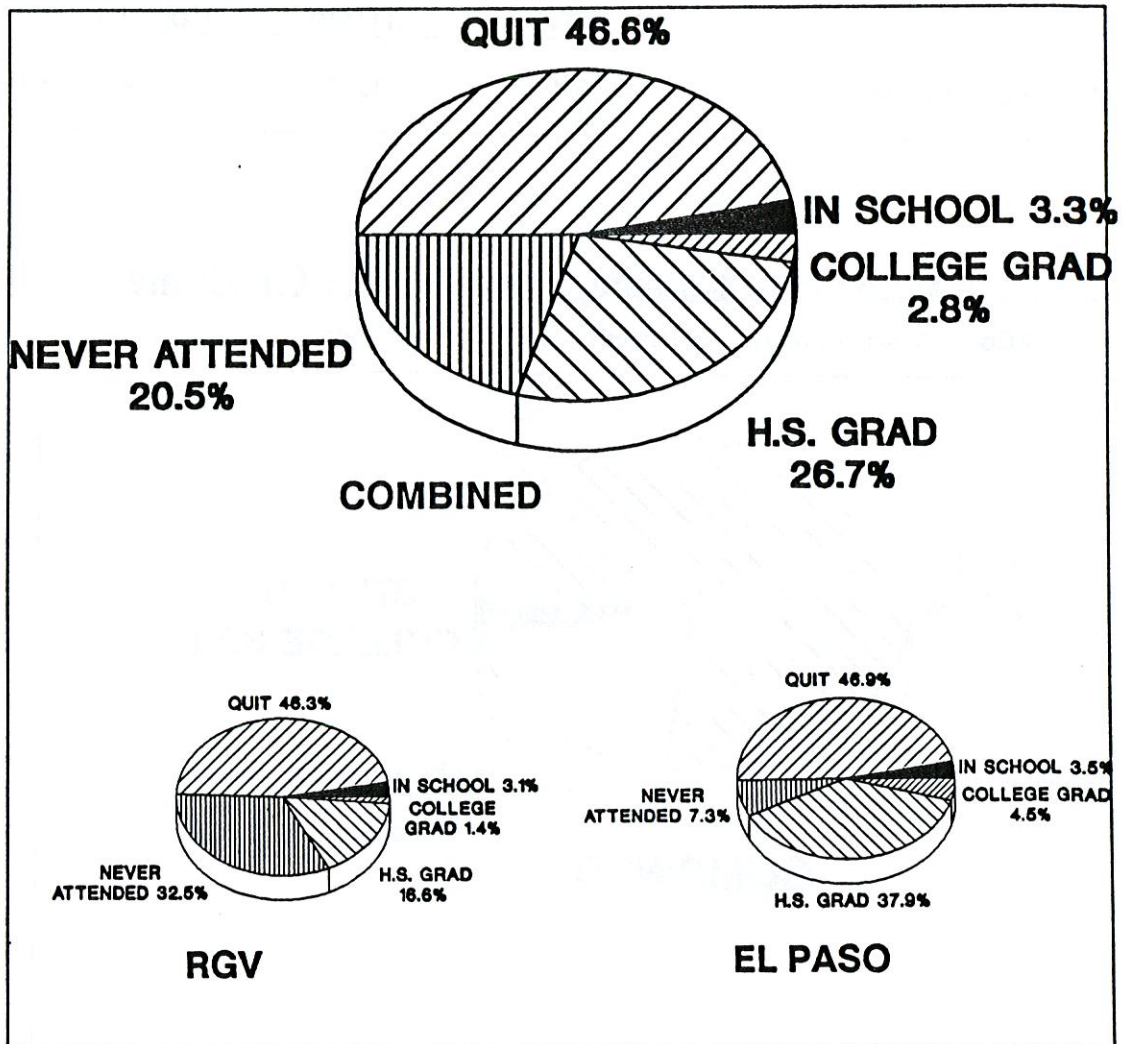
Two-thirds of Colonia Adults Did Not Finish High School . . . . .	4-3
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Only 9% of Colonia Residents Go to College . . . . .	4-4
Of Those Who Go to College, 3 of 4 Do Not Graduate . . . . .	4-4

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# Two-thirds of Colonia Adults Did Not Finish High School

Figure 4.1 Percentage of colonia residents over 18 at various educational levels



## 3 of 4 Family Heads Did Not Finish High School

Table 4a. Head of household only: percentage who did not complete high school

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Quit school	47.0	52.9	49.7
Never attended school	39.0	8.9	25.4
Total not completing high school	86.0	61.8	75.1

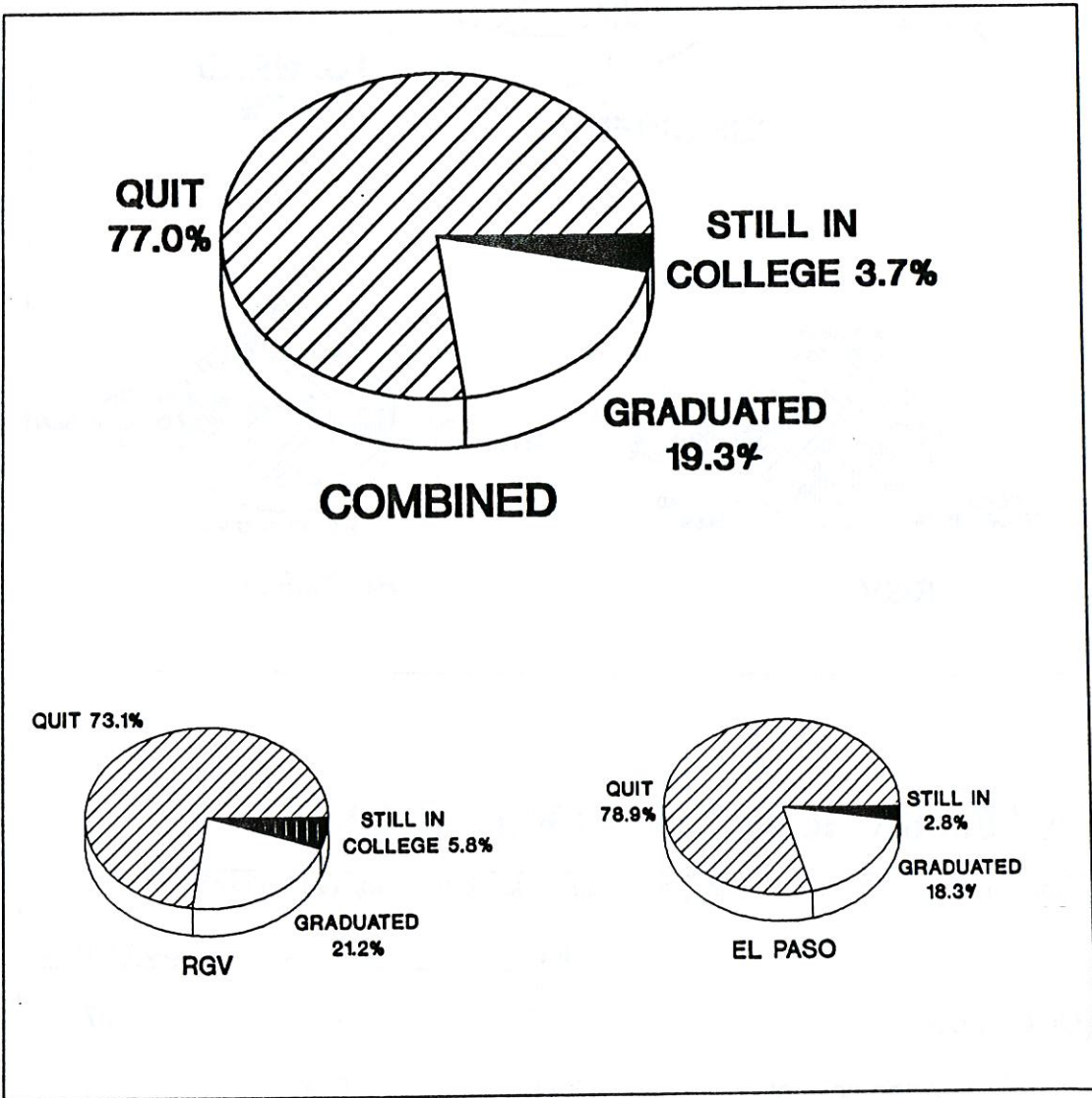
# Only 9% of Colonia Residents Go to College

*Table 4b. Percentage of colonia residents at least 17 years old who have attended college*

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Attended college	5.1	12.8	8.8

## Of Those Who Go to College, 3 of 4 Do Not Graduate

Figure 4.2 Colonia residents who have attended college: completion rate





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**Chapter 5**

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**EMPLOYMENT  
PROFILE**

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Unemployment in the Colonias Exceeds 40%	5-3
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38% Work for Minimum Wage or Less	5-4
12% of Colonia Residents Receive Vocational Training	5-5
46% of Those Trained Earn over Minimum Wage	5-5

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# Unemployment in the Colonias Exceeds 40%

Figure 5.1 Employment rates, 16 or over, not in school, excluding spouse of household head

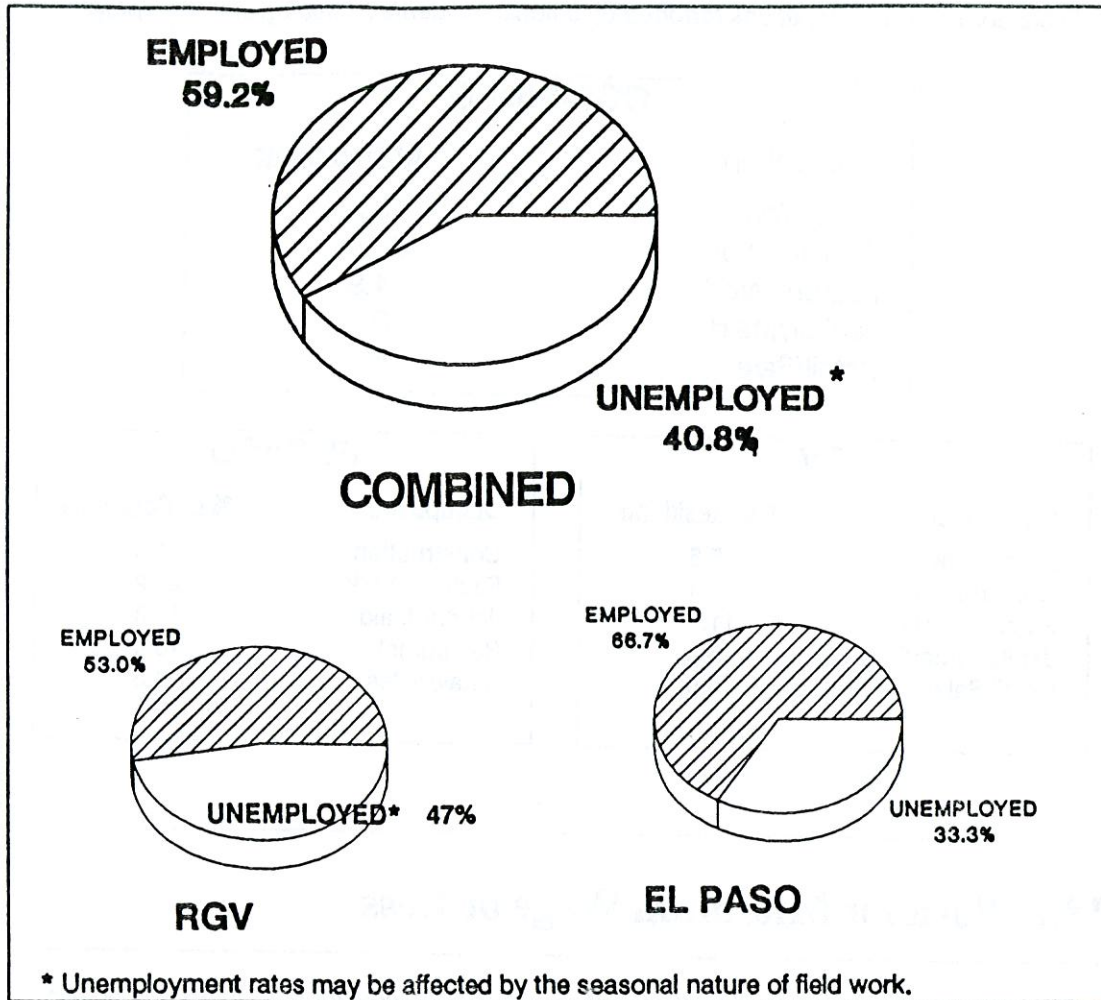


Table 5a. Percentage unemployed for groups of residents over 16 and not in school

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Head of household	40.9	28.9	35.3
Spouse of household head	70.2	63.1	67.2
Quit school or never attended, excluding spouses	49.1	39.1	45.5
Speak English "not well" or "not at all", excluding spouses	48.1	37.8	44.8

## For Those Employed, Farm or Construction Work Are the Most Frequent Occupations

Table 5b. Top five occupations reported by colonia residents (including the unemployed)

COMBINED	
Occupation	% of Residents
Field Work	29.5
Construction	24.4
Factory Work	14.9
Janitor/Maid	10.1
Retail/Sales	5.8

RGV	
Occupation	% of Residents
Field Work	45.5
Construction	14.4
Factory Work	11.3
Janitory/Maid	6.6
Retail/Sales	6.6

EL PASO	
Occupation	% of Residents
Construction	41.5
Factory Work	21.2
Janitor/Maid	17.3
Restaurant	13.4
Retail/Sales	4.5

## 38% Work for Minimum Wage or Less

Table 5c. Percentage of employed colonia residents who work for minimum wage or less

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Work for \$3.35/hour or less	47.9	24.6	37.5

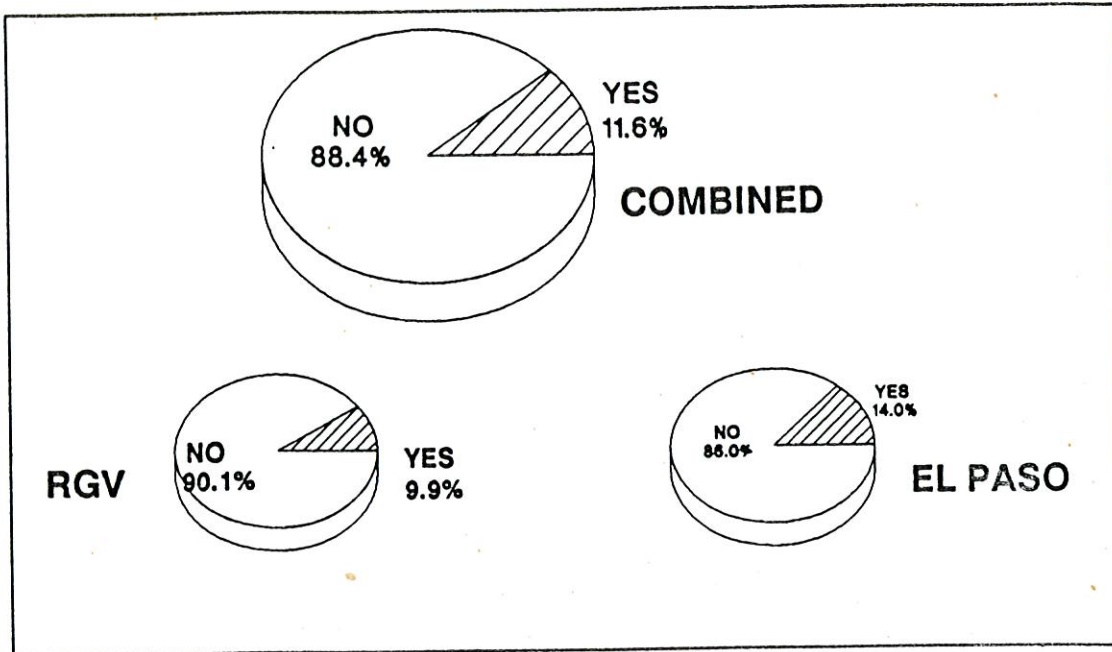
Table 5d. Characteristics of colonia residents who work for minimum wage or less

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Attended vocational training	8.4 %	17.3%	10.7%
Graduated from high school	18.0	50.0	26.6
Speak English "not well" or "not at all"	59.1	41.4	54.0



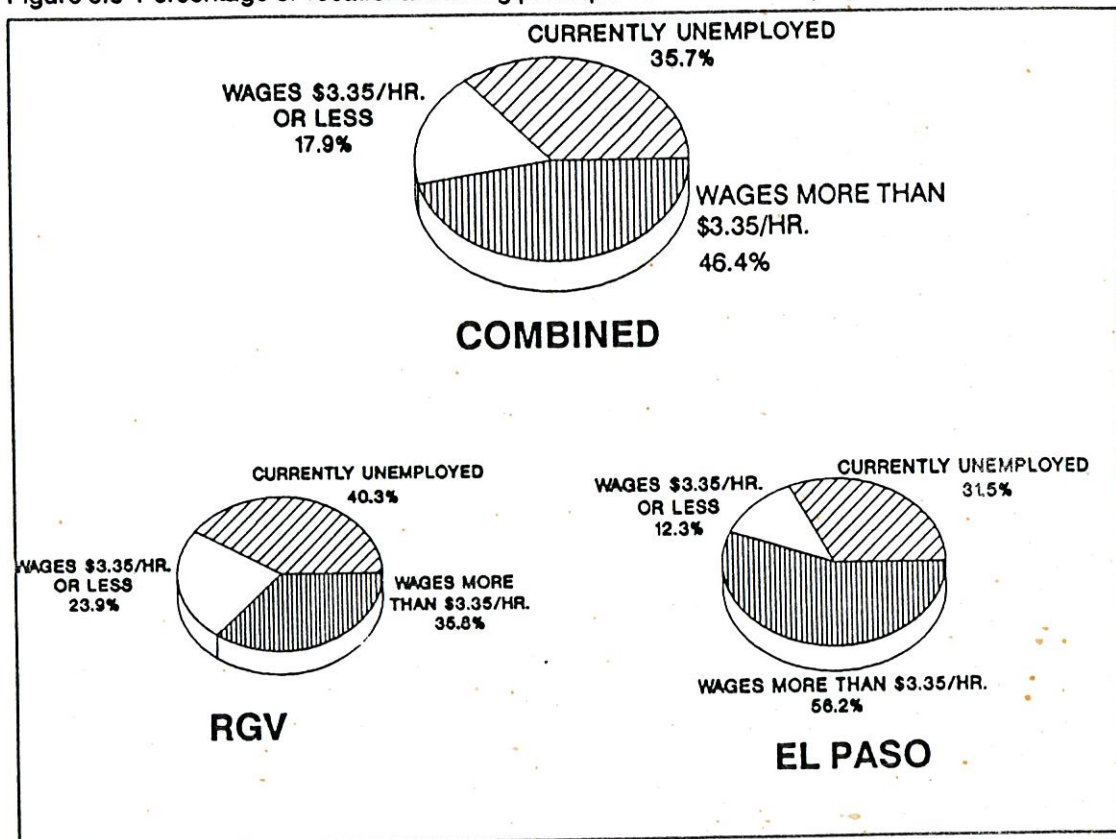
## 12% of Colonia Residents Receive Vocational Training

Figure 5.2 Percentage of residents 16 or older and not in school (excluding spouse of household head) who have received vocational training



## 46% of Those Trained Earn over Minimum Wage

Figure 5.3 Percentage of vocational training participants in various employment groups







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**Chapter 6**

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**HOUSING  
AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE**

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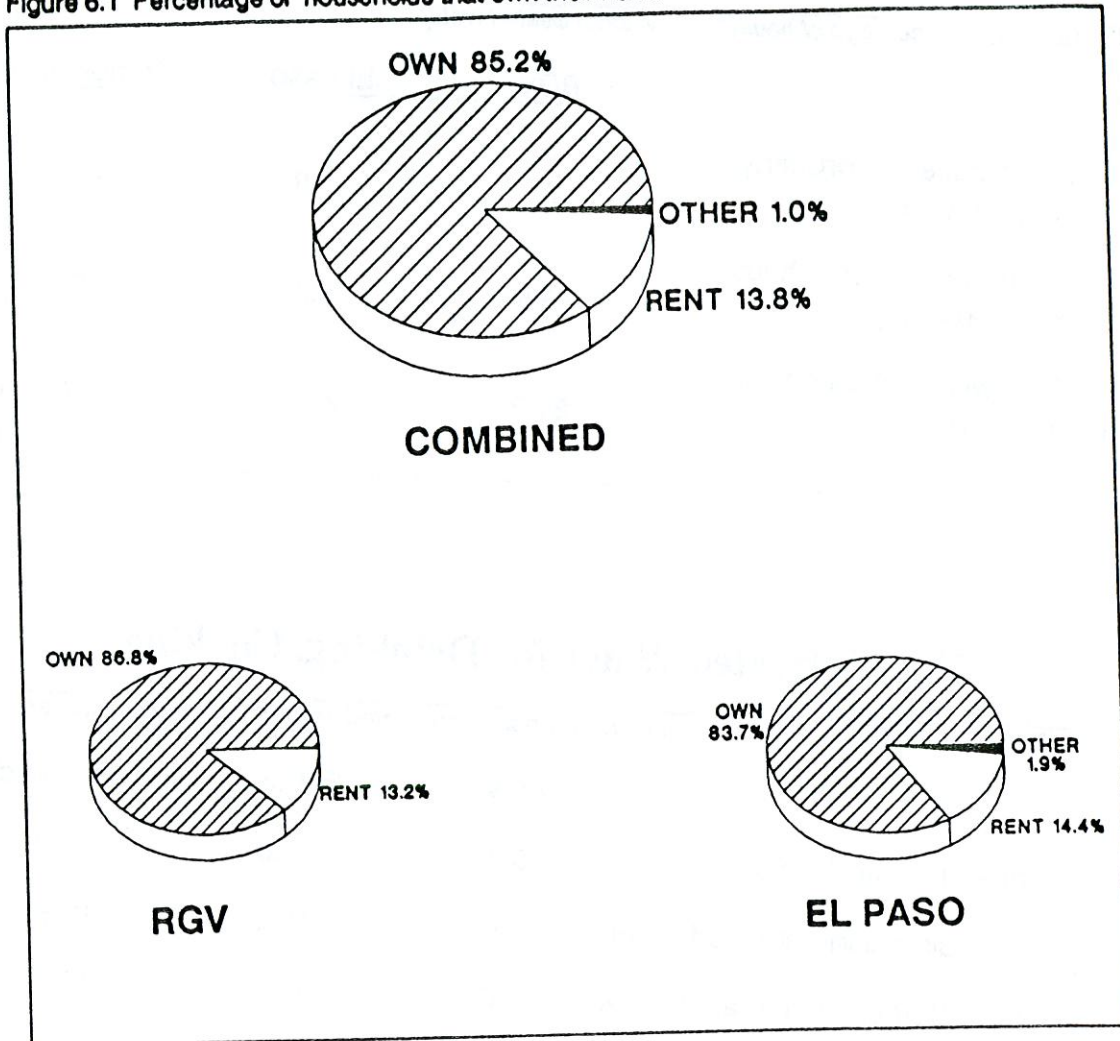
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44% of Colonia Homes Have Outhouses or Cesspools . . . . .	6-5
Flooding Is a Problem for Many Colonia Households . . . . .	6-5

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# 85% of Colonia Residents Own Their Home

Figure 6.1 Percentage of households that own their home



## One Home in Five Lacks Adequate Heating and Cooling

Table 6a. Percentage of households with inadequate\* heating and cooling

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Inadequate heat	36.8	15.9	26.2
Inadequate cooling or ventilation	28.7	16.3	22.4

\* Results based on respondents' interpretation of "adequate" heating and cooling.

## 24% of Households Are Not Connected to Treated Water

Table 6b. Percentage of households without treated water

	<u>RGV</u>	<u>El Paso</u>	<u>Combined</u>
Water outlet on property, not in house	7.7	3.8	5.7
No treated water in house or on property	13.5	22.0	18.0
Total with no treated water in house	21.2	25.8	23.7

## Some Use Untreated Water for Drinking, Cooking

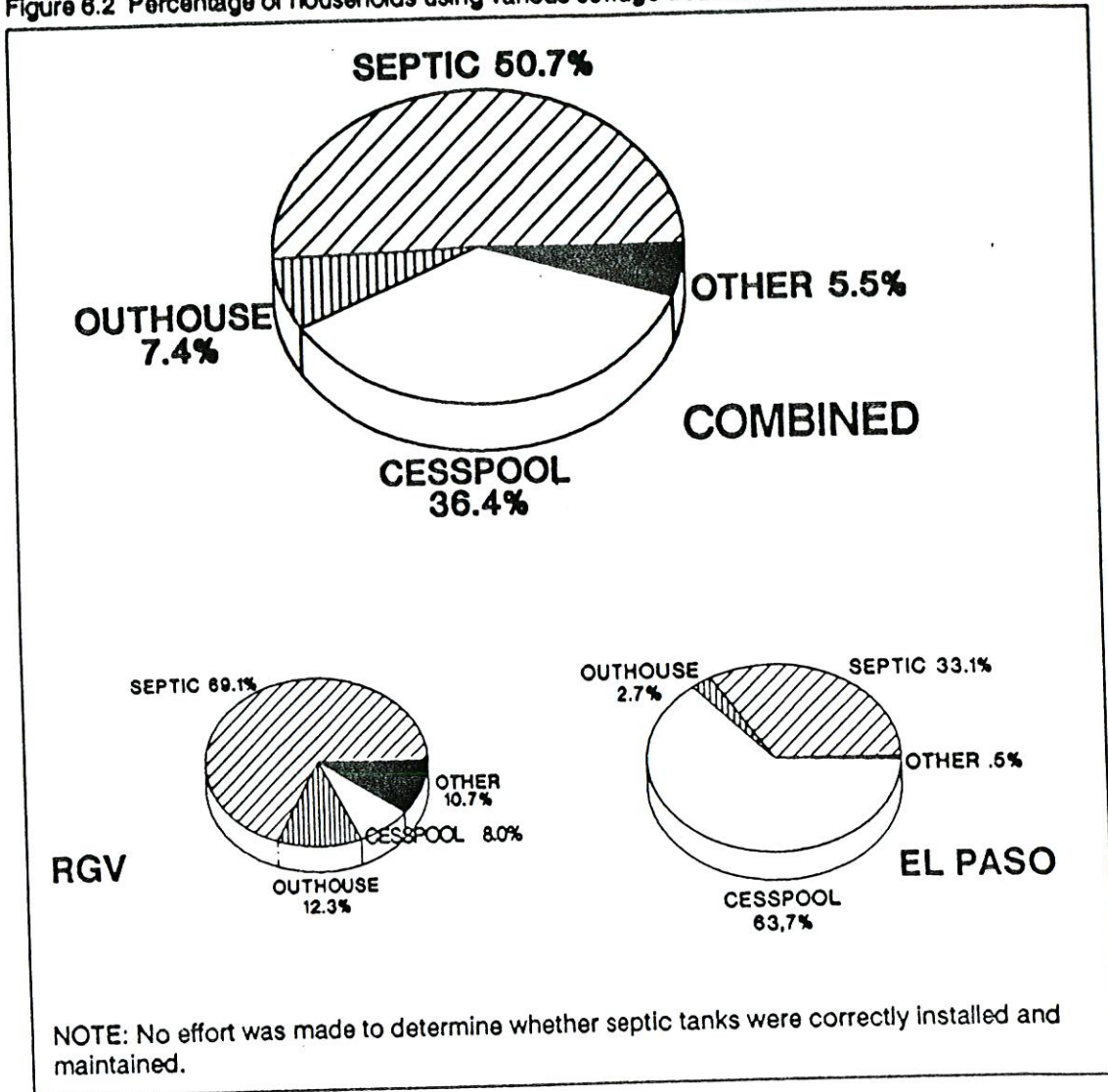
Table 6c. Percentage of households usually not using treated water for common activities

	<u>RGV</u>	<u>El Paso</u>	<u>Combined</u>
Drink untreated water	5.8	2.8	4.2
Wash dishes in untreated water	6.4	18.6	12.8
Wash clothes in untreated water	6.6	19.1	13.1
Bathe in untreated water	6.2	17.8	12.3
Cook with untreated water	6.5	3.7	4.9



# 44% of Colonia Homes Have Outhouses or Cesspools

Figure 6.2 Percentage of households using various sewage treatment methods



## Flooding Is a Problem for Many Colonia Households

Table 6d. Percentage with flooding problem

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Percentage of households reporting flooding in their colonia	45.0	42.9	43.9
Percentage of colonias in which at least one household reported flooding a problem	93.3	86.7	91.1





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**Chapter 7**

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**HUMAN  
SERVICES**

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15% of Colonia Households Do Not Usually Have Enough to Eat . . . . . 7-3

One-third of Those without Enough to Eat Receive No Food Aid . . . . . 7-4

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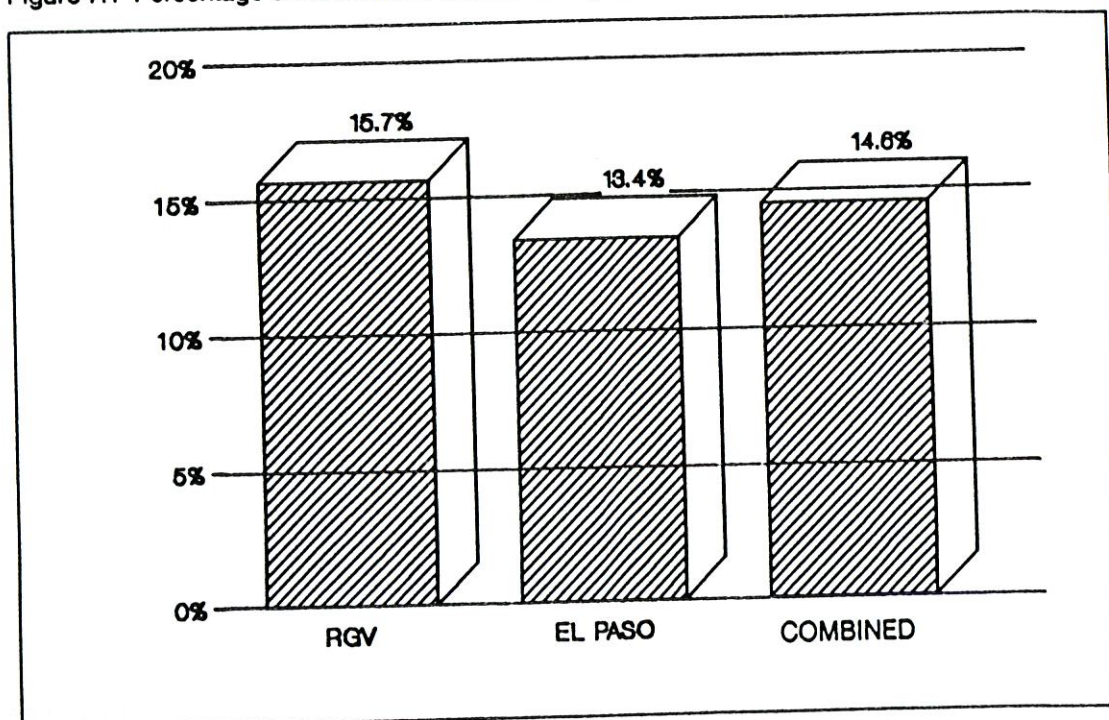
## Colonia Residents Use Various DHS Services

Table 7a. Percentage of households currently receiving DHS services

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Food stamps	56.6	20.0	38.1
AFDC	9.8	4.3	7.0
Medicaid	20.7	10.4	15.5
HEAP	31.4	6.7	19.0
In-home services for elderly	1.7	1.6	1.6
Family self-support	3.3	1.4	2.3
Children's protective services	0.4	1.8	1.1
Food services	63.7	40.3	51.9
Family violence temporary placement	1.7	0.7	1.2

## 15% of Colonia Households Do Not Usually Have Enough to Eat

Figure 7.1 Percentage of households without enough to eat



# One-third of Those without Enough to Eat Receive No Food Aid

Table 7b. Percentage of households without enough to eat who currently receive DHS services

	RGV	El Paso	Combined
Food stamps only	14.3	11.3	12.9
Food services only	23.8	31.0	27.1
Both	35.7	19.7	28.4
No food aid	26.2	38.0	31.6



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# APPENDIXES

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---



## Appendix A

Name of the Colonia \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Household \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Household \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write in the name and age	Person 1 Age	Person 2 Age	Person 3 Age	Person 4 Age
1. How is _____ related to the head of household?	Head of Household _____	_____	_____	_____
2. (Ask only for household members over age 10) How well does _____:				
a. speak English?	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All
b. read English?	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All
c. write English?	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All	1 Very Well 2 Well 3 Not Well 4 Not at All
3. Has _____ ever attended vocational training?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
4. Has _____ ever attended college?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
5. a. What is _____'s current school status?	1 Too Young 2 In School 3 Old Enough, but Never Attended 4 Quit 5 Graduated from HS 6 Graduated from college	1 Too Young 2 In School 3 Old Enough, but Never Attended 4 Quit 5 Graduated from HS 6 Graduated from college	1 Too Young 2 In School 3 Old Enough, but Never Attended 4 Quit 5 Graduated from HS 6 Graduated from college	1 Too Young 2 In School 3 Old Enough, but Never Attended 4 Quit 5 Graduated from HS 6 Graduated from college
b. (Ask only for household members who have attended school) What is the grade _____ completed in school? (Write in K, 1-12, or 0 if never attended)	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. (Ask only for household members in school) What type of school is _____ attending?	1 Kindergarten 2 Grades 1-12 3 College 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Kindergarten 2 Grades 1-12 3 College 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Kindergarten 2 Grades 1-12 3 College 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Kindergarten 2 Grades 1-12 3 College 4 Other (what?) _____

Name of the Colonia \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Household \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Household \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write in the name and age	Person 1 Age	Person 2 Age	Person 3 Age	Person 4 Age
6. a. Does _____ have health insurance?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
b. (Ask only for household members with health insurance) Main health insurance coverage for this person comes from: (Circle only one)	1 Employer, union or group health insurance 2 Medicaid 3 Medicare 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Employer, union or group health insurance 2 Medicaid 3 Medicare 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Employer, union or group health insurance 2 Medicaid 3 Medicare 4 Other (what?) _____	1 Employer, union or group health insurance 2 Medicaid 3 Medicare 4 Other (what?) _____
7. Where does _____ usually go for routine medical care?	1 Curandero, sobador, or partera 2 Doctor's Office 3 Outpatient Clinic 4 Emergency Room 5 Other (where?) _____	1 Curandero, sobador, or partera 2 Doctor's Office 3 Outpatient Clinic 4 Emergency Room 5 Other (where?) _____	1 Curandero, sobador, or partera 2 Doctor's Office 3 Outpatient Clinic 4 Emergency Room 5 Other (where?) _____	1 Curandero, sobador, or partera 2 Doctor's Office 3 Outpatient Clinic 4 Emergency Room 5 Other (where?) _____
8. In what country does _____ usually receive medical care?	1 U.S. 2 Mexico	1 U.S. 2 Mexico	1 U.S. 2 Mexico	1 U.S. 2 Mexico
9. In the last 25 years has _____ had:				
a. Tuberculosis (TB)?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
b. Hepatitis?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
10. Has _____ been vaccinated against:				
a. Polio?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
b. Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT)?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
c. Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No
11. Is _____ currently employed?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No



Name of the Colonia \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Household \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Household \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write in the name and age	Person 1 Age	Person 2 Age	Person 3 Age	Person 4 Age
12. (Ask only for household members who are at least 16 years old, not in school and not employed) Why is _____ not employed? (Main reason)	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
13. (Ask only for household members who are currently employed)  a. What is _____'s wage at his/her main job?  b. How many hours per week does _____ usually work at his/her main job?	_____ per _____  _____ hrs/wk	_____ per _____  _____ hrs/wk	_____ per _____  _____ hrs/wk	_____ per _____  _____ hrs/wk
14. What kind of work does _____ usually do at his/her main job?	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. In the last year, how many weeks did _____ work?	1 Did not work 2 1-4 weeks (1 month) 3 4-26 weeks (2-6 mos.) 4 27-49 weeks (6-11 mos.) 5 50-52 weeks (all year)	1 Did not work 2 1-4 weeks (1 month) 3 4-26 weeks (2-6 mos.) 4 27-49 weeks (6-11 mos.) 5 50-52 weeks (all year)	1 Did not work 2 1-4 weeks (1 month) 3 4-26 weeks (2-6 mos.) 4 27-49 weeks (6-11 mos.) 5 50-52 weeks (all year)	1 Did not work 2 1-4 weeks (1 month) 3 4-26 weeks (2-6 mos.) 4 27-49 weeks (6-11 mos.) 5 50-52 weeks (all year)
16. Last year how much income did _____ receive from:  a. Wages, salaries, bonuses and tips b. Social Security c. Veteran's benefits (VA) d. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) e. Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) (continued)	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____

Name of the Colonia \_\_\_\_\_ Number in Household \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Household \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Write in the name and age	Person 1 Age	Person 2 Age	Person 3 Age	Person 4 Age
f. Unemployment	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. Child Support	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. Other (Write in)	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. a. In what country was _____ born?	1 U.S. 2 Mexico 3 Other (what?)	1 U.S. 2 Mexico 3 Other (what?)	1 U.S. 2 Mexico 3 Other (what?)	1 U.S. 2 Mexico 3 Other (what?)
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. (Ask only for household members not born in the U.S.) How long has _____ lived in the U.S.?	____ yrs ____ mos	____ yrs ____ mos	____ yrs ____ mos	____ yrs ____ mos
c. Is _____ a legal resident or naturalized citizen of the U.S.?	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No	1 Yes 2 No

The remaining questions are to be answered by the household head or the adult in charge of the household at the time of the interview.

**Section II—General Information**

1. What is your position in the household?  
 1 Household Head    2 Spouse of Household Head    3 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(write in relationship to household head)
- 2a. Have you heard that some non-legal residents may be eligible to become legal residents of the U.S.?  
 1 Yes 2 No
- b. Have you heard about the Immigration Reform Control Act (IRCA) of 1986?  
 1 Yes 2 No
- c. Do you know how IRCA may affect you?  
 1 Yes 2 No
3. What language is usually spoken at home?  
 1 Spanish    2 English    3 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)
4. (Observation only) Ethnicity?  
 1 Hispanic    2 Anglo    3 Black    4 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Specify)



5. What is your marital status?

- 1 Married    2 Single    3 Divorced/Separated  
4 Widow/er    5 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify)

6. Has any member of your household had a serious injury or illness that was not treated?

1 Yes 2 No

If yes, what was the injury or illness and why was it not treated? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Are there any unpaid medical bills for anyone in the household?

1 Yes 2 No

8. Is there usually enough for everyone in your household to eat?

1 Yes 2 No

If no, explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Are there persons in your household with untreated: (Circle all that apply)

1 Dental Problems

2 High Blood Pressure

3 Diabetes

4 Other untreated health problems (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are there school-aged children in your household without glasses who have been told they should get glasses?

1 Yes 2 No

If yes, why don't they have glasses? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Are there children in your household with mental or developmental handicaps?

1 Yes 2 No

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

12. Are there individuals in your household who need family planning information services and are not receiving them?

1 Yes 2 No

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Section III—Home and Neighborhood**

- 1a. Do you own or rent your homestead?    1 Own    2 Rent    3 Other (what?) \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Are you making payments on your homestead?    1 Yes    2 No
- c. How long have you been making payments?    \_\_\_\_\_ yrs    \_\_\_\_\_ mos
- d. How much are your payments per month? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many rooms are in your home? (Include bathroom) \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many buildings are there on the property in which household members live? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you pay to an electric utility company or the city for your electricity?    1 Yes    2 No
5. What type of fuel do you use for: Heating? \_\_\_\_\_ Cooking? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What type of appliance do you use for: Heating? \_\_\_\_\_ Cooking? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Is there adequate heating in your home during the winter?    1 Yes    2 No
- If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Is there adequate heating in your home during the winter?    1 Yes    2 No
- If no, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
9. What type of sewer disposal system is currently used most often by individuals on your property? (Circle only one)
- 1 Septic tank    2 Outhouse    3 Cesspool    4 Other
- 10a. Is your home connected to treated water?    1 Yes    2 No
- If your home is not connected to treated water:
- b. Is treated water connected to your property?    1 Yes    2 No
- c. If no, does a treated water line run by your house?    1 Yes    2 No
- d. If no treated water service is available to you, where do you usually get your drinking water? (Circle all that apply in a usual month)
- 1 Nearby city/town    2 Well    3 Neighbor    4 Bottled water
- 5 Rural water supply company    6 Other (what?) \_\_\_\_\_
- e. What do you use treated water for? (Circle all that apply)
- 1 Drinking    2 Washing dishes    3 Washing clothes    4 Bathing    5 Cooking
11. What water-connected facilities do you have? (Circle all that apply)
- 1 Kitchen sink    2 Automatic clothes washer    3 Bathroom sink
- 4 Toilet    5 Bathtub or shower    6 Water heater



12. We are interested in people's reasons for living in colonias. I will be reading you some possible reasons for living in a colonia. For each one I want you to tell me how important it is to you in your decision to live in a colonia.

	<u>Not true for me</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>Not very important</u>	<u>Very important</u>
a. Lack of affordable public housing in the cities	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Lack of affordable private housing in the cities	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. The lower costs of buying land in a colonia compared to city or town	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. The ease or independence of living in a colonia	_____	_____	_____	_____
e. To be with or near relatives or friends who live in colonias	_____	_____	_____	_____
f. The proximity of my job to a colonia	_____	_____	_____	_____
g. The lack of building code enforcement in colonias	_____	_____	_____	_____
h. The lower costs of building a house in a colonia	_____	_____	_____	_____
i. The lower taxes in colonias	_____	_____	_____	_____
j. I lived in another colonia before coming here	_____	_____	_____	_____
k. I inherited this property	_____	_____	_____	_____
l. I was born in this colonia	_____	_____	_____	_____

13. How serious do you think the following problems are in colonias?

	<u>Not a problem</u>	<u>Minor problem</u>	<u>Major problem</u>
a. Lack of access to drinkable water service	_____	_____	_____
b. Lack of sewage treatment facilities	_____	_____	_____
c. Lack of representation by elected officials	_____	_____	_____
d. Lack of native leadership in the colonias	_____	_____	_____
e. Apathy of the colonia residents to their own problems and needs	_____	_____	_____
f. Apathy of the general public with regard to colonia problems and needs	_____	_____	_____
g. Apathy of the city officials	_____	_____	_____
h. Lack of streets and drainage improvements	_____	_____	_____
i. Lack of financial resources to make home improvements	_____	_____	_____
j. Apathy of the County Commissioners' Court	_____	_____	_____

14. Do you have a flooding problem within your colonia? 1 Yes 2 No

If yes, describe \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

15. How do you usually get to places that are too far to walk? (Circle only one)

1 Use own car    2 Public transportation    3 Ride with someone else

4 Don't go    5 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Write in)



Do you or a member of your household now receive any of the following DHS services?	1 Have not heard of service	2 Have heard of service but have never needed it	3 Have needed service but never applied	4 Applied for service but didn't qualify	5 Have received service before but not receiving it now	6 Currently receiving service	If participating, how long? Other comments
Food Stamps							
Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)							
Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC or Welfare money)							
Medicaid (Medical assistance)							
In-home Services for Elderly or Disabled Adults (including nurse or helper in home, home-delivered meals)							
Family Self-support Services (including child day care, employment services early and periodic screening diagnosis and treatment (EPSDT), family planning and refugee resettlement services)							
Children's Protective Services (including foster care, adoption, and reports of child abuse or neglect)							
Food Services (including school lunches and breakfasts, special milk, and commodities distribution)							
Placement of adult and child in temporary emergency shelter because of family violence							

What do you think is the most important thing DHS can do to help it's clients become self-supporting?

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Interviewer's Signature

## APPENDIX B

### DHS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Brief descriptions of services referred to in this report are listed below. More detailed descriptions are available from DHS.

Food Stamps - coupons for food redeemable by eligible low-income households in grocery stores and other similar retail stores

Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) - financial aid to eligible low-income families with children who are deprived of support because of the absence or disability of one or both parents

Medicaid - medical assistance program to help eligible low income individuals and families in the payment of some of their medical expenses

Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) - semi-annual cash payments to eligible low income families who cannot afford to heat or cool their homes

In-Home Services for Elderly or Disabled Adults - services to eligible low income elderly or disabled adults to allow them to become or remain self-sufficient (including a nurse or helper in the home and home delivered meals)

Family Self-Support - a group of programs designed to help eligible low income families become self-supporting and self-sufficient (including employment-related services; Early and Periodic Screening; Diagnosis and Treatment for eligible individuals under 21; day care; and family planning)

Child Protective Services - services provided without regard to income to children under 18 years of age who are in need of protection, usually because of abuse or neglect

Food Services - a group of programs designed to provide food to needy individuals and families (including the School Lunch program, School Breakfast program, Special Milk program, Child Care Food, Nutrition Education and Training, Temporary Emergency Food Assistance, Summer Food Service, and Food Distribution)

Family Violence Temporary Placement - services for victims of family violence designed to stop the violence and help them to become or remain self-supporting and self-sufficient, including temporary emergency shelter



## Appendix C

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