



FUNDACIÓN YANAPUMA'S

PREPARATION PACKAGE

FOR INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

Preparation package for interns and volunteers

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Introduction

This package has been prepared for those who plan to work with Yanapuma as an intern or volunteer. We are sending you this package prior to your arrival in Quito to give you the opportunity to be better prepared and to know what to expect in your work with Yanapuma and in carrying out development work in indigenous communities.

Our interns and volunteers are “Yanapumas lungs”

As Yanapuma is still a new organisation, there are only 9 employees (see the section about employees, interns and volunteers below). Several of these employees teach Spanish, and all are very busy with the needs of the office, so the staff has a very limited amount of time to travel to the communities. Therefore, Yanapuma’s interns and volunteers - especially its long-term interns and volunteers - function as “Yanapuma’s lungs”, since they have the time and energy to work in the communities while at the same time demonstrating Yanapuma’s commitment to a consistent presence in the communities.

In other words, the interns and volunteers are seen more or less as Yanapuma’s employees. This means that we respect your work as part of our foundation’s progress, and that we will support you as well as we can in order for you to feel as though you are a part of Yanapuma. However, as an employee you also have a responsibility to know the organisation you are working with and understand its goals and working definitions. You will be responsible for finding the relevant information about the community project that you will be working with and to prepare before going to communities to carry out development work.

Therefore, Yanapuma has compiled this preparation package for you. The first part contains an explanation of Yanapuma’s goals, working definitions, methods and projects, whereas the second part describes where to find relevant information for your project work. The third part contains knowledge relevant to working in an indigenous community. Finally, we have provided some information concerning visa requirements.

Yanapuma: Goals, working definitions and community projects

“The Yanapuma Umbrella”: Goals and working definitions

As an intern or volunteer, it is important that you understand Yanapuma’s mission and working definitions in order to fit your project plan into Yanapuma’s overall strategy. We call it “The Yanapuma Umbrella”; you should see yourself and your project fitting well into Yanapuma’s mission and working definitions.

Yanapuma’s mission is as follows:

Yanapuma Foundation is a cooperatively run NGO whose aims are to facilitate sustainable development in disadvantaged urban and rural communities throughout Ecuador.

In order to carry out our mission we will use the following methods:

- Develop our own “Yanapuma Integrated System of Sustainable Development” to guide our work with each community.
- Work collaboratively with all communities.
- Investigate community needs across 7 principal axes (health, sanitation, education, cultural protection, environmental protection, agriculture, income generation).
- Create a master plan with each community across all 7 axes.
- Maintain transparency in all dealings with each community, and encourage transparency within communities.
- Maintain continuity of projects through constant involvement of the community and Yanapuma staff, interns and volunteers.
- Empower community members to take the lead in the development process.
- Provide technical and logistical support to projects.
- Seek appropriate funding and outside resources to carry out projects desired by the community.
- Carry out monitoring and evaluation.
- Promote ownership of projects by community by involving community members in the planning and execution of all projects.
- Provide appropriate training to community members.
- Send volunteers, individually and in groups, to assist the community in carrying out projects.
- Send students to carry out research on behalf of the community.
- Send employees and interns to plan, facilitate, and manage projects.
- Encourage intercultural exchange by sending cultural exchange visitors and tourists as appropriate.
- Provide ideas and new concepts to community members for discussion and consideration.

- Provide oversight on behalf of the community to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the development of all projects.
- Coordinate with local, provincial and national authorities, and local and international NGOs to deliver needed services to communities.

Yanapuma's community projects in short

Yanapuma works with communities throughout Ecuador, in the sierra, the rainforest, and at the coast. While some communities receive mostly long-term volunteers or cultural exchange visitors, depending on their particular stage of development, others form part of a regional development strategy by Yanapuma in **coordination with one or more communities in a particular area**. The foundation's work with these communities is a response to a complex web of problems that are affecting the indigenous and mestizo communities of Ecuador as the country develops. These problems include:

- A lack of quality education for indigenous children
- Depreciation of indigenous culture in the face of uncontrolled economic development
- Problems of waste management and lack of recycling options
- Destruction of the environment for quick economic gain
- Exhaustion of water supplies through deforestation and destructive agricultural practices
- Impoverishment of diet due to increasing reliance on imported foods and poverty
- Health problems due to environmental pollution and poor practices
- Breakdown of family ties due to forced migration

All of the communities that we work with have requested our help and are eager to receive volunteers and visitors, and appreciate the input that these volunteers and visitors make to the life of the community. Your input to the sustainable development of the communities that we work with will be much appreciated by the community and by Yanapuma.

Guidelines for interns and volunteers

Although internships are unpaid and by nature the work is not always subject to strict schedules, it is nonetheless important to treat your work like a regular job. This means:

- Maintaining a regular daily schedule while in Quito
- Reporting promptly on work completed
- Coordinating with staff regarding time off for travel or days off
- Being responsible as a member of a team
- Achieving deadlines

- Requesting help when confused or uncertain
- Communicating openly with Yanapuma staff about problems

Interns and volunteers working with Yanapuma need to be able to demonstrate a level of maturity, independence and self-organisation. You will receive all the necessary support from Yanapuma staff in your work, but it is vital that you seek appropriate help and advice if you feel unsure of what you are doing. At Yanapuma we are committed to maintaining open lines of communication at all levels, and believe that it is better to deal with a problem while it is small rather than waiting until it becomes a major issue, either on a personal or institutional level.

You are also reminded that when working in a community you represent the foundation, and the reputation and standing of Yanapuma in the community is dependent upon your good conduct, appropriate behaviour and effectiveness in carrying out your work.

We also encourage you to see working with Yanapuma as a good opportunity for professional development, a space in which to practice those skills that will develop a successful career in the future. Too many organisations function poorly because of indirect communication at all levels, lack of commitment, rumour and gossip, unclear goals, etc. To this end we encourage you to:

- Learn to give and take feedback, both positive and negative
- Learn to use your own and others' mistakes as opportunities for learning without being critical and negative
- Learn how to work as part of a team to solve problems
- Learn how to define your own goals clearly within the framework of the organisation and ensure that these are achievable.
- Learn to be a model for the changes you wish to make

Where to find information

Upon your arrival at Yanapuma's office in Quito and beginning your work with a development project, you will need to know where to find relevant information. One option is to talk with Yanapuma staff; another is to review the available written information about Yanapuma's work.

Employees, interns and volunteers

Yanapuma's 10 employees are all willing to help you within their responsibility areas:

- Andy Kirby, president of Yanapuma: Has a good overview of Yanapuma and is therefore an excellent resource for information about how the project you want to carry out fits into Yanapuma's overall strategy. He can also advise on academic issues concerning research and course-related activities.

- David de la Houssaye, executive director: Our computer expert who will be able to introduce you to all the electronic information within Yanapuma. He also has a good overview of Yanapuma and has a lot of knowledge within the theory of development work.
- Azalia Cruz, project director and teacher: She has the most first-hand details about Yanapuma's community projects through extensive time spent in the communities. She can also help with questions concerning how to work and act in an indigenous community. She also teaches Spanish in the school.
- Giovanni Toapanta, coordinator in the community Búa: Coordinating the projects in Búa and the activities of interns and volunteers in the community. He has a M.Sc. in agriculture and has a considerable experience working with communities.
- Sara Di Maria, coordinator until the end of March 2008: Coordinating development projects as well as interns' and volunteers' activities in the communities. She has extensive theoretical and practical experience in the areas of community development and nature conservation.
- Vinicio Quinchiguango, academic director and teacher: Teaches and is in charge of the curriculum for the Spanish school. He also helps plan and coordinate the weekly activities for the Spanish students, interns and volunteers who are staying in Quito.
- Elizabeth Garofalo, treasurer and teacher: Handles all payments and financial transactions for Yanapuma. Also teaches in the Spanish school.
- Maria Cabrera, administrator and teacher: Coordinates arrivals and accommodations for the students, interns and volunteers. Also teaches in the Spanish school.
- Betty Betinez, teacher: Teaches in the Spanish school and helps Vinicio plan curriculum contents and students' activities.
- Doris Amores, teacher: Just like Betty, she teaches in the Spanish school and helps Vinicio plan curriculum contents and students' activities.

You are always more than welcome to come to any one of us if you should have any general questions, problems and concerns. We are here to help you, and as Yanapuma is a new foundation we are very open to suggestions for improvement.

Finally, Yanapuma has several interns and volunteers working in the foundation. Each of them is working with one or more community projects, either in the Quito office or in one of the communities, depending on the nature of their project.

Written information

Please realise that since Yanapuma's staff and its interns and volunteers are often busy with their work, you will have to do some independent reading to gain additional information about the projects. Below is a description of the different types of information within Yanapuma, and where it can be found:

On the *Yanapuma server*, you will find many documents related to Yanapuma projects written by the Yanapuma staff or former and current interns and volunteers. You can access the server from your laptop (we can set this up for you) or through one of our machines.

We are developing a *library* which will contain one folder for each of the communities that Yanapuma collaborates with. Each folder will have general information on a specific community, description of the objectives and activities of Yanapuma's projects in the community, and the long-term plan of the work in the community.

The recently initiated *Yanapuma Newsletter* contains short stories about the projects, special events and activities in Yanapuma's communities. Furthermore, each newsletter includes a spotlight on an employee, an intern or a volunteer working with Yanapuma.

More specific details about Yanapuma projects can be found in the *monthly reports*, containing more detailed information about the latest news and decisions from each of Yanapuma's communities. However, be aware that these reports were recently initiated, thus we do not yet have reports from all communities.

Important things to know before visiting an indigenous community

What to expect when performing development work

Development work requires an awareness of a few factors that might seem small and unimportant, but are very important to understand:

Even though you might only be working with Yanapuma for a few months, you can still make a significant contribution to a development project as long as you *think and plan in a realistic way*. For example, it is better if you *focus on one single phase of a project* (either investigation or implementation – *not both*) rather than try to do it all. Thus, you can focus on a few important tasks and execute them well, enabling others to easily continue from where you left off. Remember that *carrying out development work and working in a community in a sustainable way takes time...lots of time*. You have to *be patient* with the community members, as some of them might not understand exactly why you are there, and others might not have time to talk to you because of their daily activities. In addition, community members often change plans if something more important comes up. Finally, we come from much more goal-oriented and driven cultures. It can be frustrating to work in a community with a very different cultural perspective. *We need to be aware of our own values and motives in comparison with those of our hosts* when carrying out work or research, and learn to be patient and wait for suitable opportunities to proceed.

Another recommendation is to *stay in the community for as long a period of time as you can*. Naturally, most of the interns and volunteers that we receive want to go sightseeing in Ecuador, but *working in a community in a sustainable manner requires a long-term presence*. Thus, it is preferable to travel around Ecuador either before or after you stay in the community. Generally, much time is taken simply communicating with community members, gaining their trust, and developing an understanding of the way they think and live. With a longer stay in the community, your work will mean more to the community and most likely will integrate better with the actual needs of the community. Moreover, *your presence in a community is in itself* an event that may overshadow, at least initially, any information gathering or work that you want to do. One more reason for a sustained presence in the community is that it takes time for your “novelty” to wear off and for people to get used to you.

Finally, you should be aware that what you learn when studying development may be fine theory, but that putting this in practice is nearly always much more complicated than you may think. So please, *take time to understand all that is going on in any community or project before feeling competent to judge the situation*. For example, it can be *very difficult to gauge reactions to the work or suggestions we make*, as indigenous cultures are often less demonstrative and direct in their style of communication. So it is important not to feel demoralised when you do not receive the reaction that you expect. Another example is that *there may be distrust of foundations and external organisations* among members of the community due to past negative experiences. This is something that Yanapuma needs to work on to gain the trust of the community, and something that interns need to be aware of as a possibility, too.

Yanapuma is committed to supporting you and supervising your work, providing guidance on how to carry out your work while also helping you stay within Yanapuma’s overall strategy.

Norms of conduct

Culture:

- Prior to your visit, try to learn as much as you can about the customs and culture.
- Be understanding and respectful of the community’s concepts of time, space and culture, which may differ greatly from your own.
- Adapt to the conditions of daily life in the community, particularly in regards to food and accommodations. Do not expect special arrangements *unless absolutely imperative*.
- Always ask permission before taking photos.
- Respect the community’s historical and cultural sites. Do not take any “souvenirs”.
- Obtain permission before entering natural areas or sacred sites.

- Respect and obey local laws.
- Respect the religious beliefs and system of your hosts and refrain from proselytising or seeking to challenge their beliefs or promote your own.

Personal possessions:

- Try to avoid bringing/exhibiting jewellery, personal gadgets, or other items of value.
- Do not give away your possessions to individuals within the community as this can cause rivalries and jealousy in a small community.
- Do not loan/borrow money from guides, members of the community, and/or directors/employees of the community's central office.
- If you enjoy your experience in the community and want to find a means of thanking them, consider making a small donation to the community organisation (if one exists) or Yanapuma's community fund. Avoid handing out money to individuals, as this may set up false expectations for future guests and create rivalry within the community. And make your donation reasonably public so that more than one person knows that you have donated.
- Avoid intimate contact with guides or members of the community. Such behaviour can affect moral and/or cultural traditions in the community, can change locals' expectations of future guests and compromise future visitors enjoyment of the community.
- Be aware of local customs and norms regarding nudity and always behave accordingly (in the heat, swimming, bathing, bed-time, etc.).

Environment

- Do not leave plastics, glass, batteries, or other items that cannot be recycled easily. Any waste brought into a remote community should be carried out upon leaving.
- Consume as little energy (electricity, hot water, etc.) as possible. Remember that it probably represents a much greater cost to the community than in your own home situation.
- Use only natural, biodegradable bathing products (shampoo, conditioner, soap, etc.).
- Avoid taking excessive quantities of personal care products.
- Appreciate/observe local fauna, but use care to not damage it. Do not remove local fauna.
- If participating in curative practices with medicinal plants or other forest resources, follow instructions carefully.
- Learn about local endangered species and do not contribute to their extinction. No hunting, collecting, exchanging, or consuming of local species.
- Generally speaking, work to minimise any physical and social impacts to the community that could be generated by your presence.

Development:

- Do not hesitate to share constructive criticisms/opinions/suggestions with the local organisation. Remember that you are there to help them to develop sustainably. However, do so in a respectful manner.
- Learn about the problems facing the community so as to develop and disseminate informational materials upon returning to your home country.

What to bring

- High SPF waterproof sun block and after sun lotion
- Insect repellent
- First aid kit and medicine (especially cream/gel for insect bites)
- All-natural, biodegradable shampoo, conditioner, soap
- Hat or cap (especially for communities in the highland)
- Sunglasses
- Lightweight fast-drying trousers, long-sleeved shirts, and T-shirts
- Rubber boots (for rainforest communities); easily purchased in Ecuador
- Sneakers or hiking boots
- Raincoat or poncho
- Bathing suit and rubber/foam sandals
- Light sweater or jacket
- Lightweight sleeping bag
- Towel
- Wet wipes
- Small backpack for daytrips
- Water
- U.S. money in small denominations
- Photocopy of passport (in plastic bag to keep dry)
- Flashlight or headlight
- Soap for hand washing clothes (for those planning to stay in the community for longer durations)

Spanish

To maximise the positive impact of your work and to offer you the best possible experience in the communities, we strongly recommend an intermediate level of Spanish language before beginning your work in the community. This will enable you to interact with the community members without difficulty or misunderstandings. If you are intending to carry out a research project then you will need an advanced level in order to be able to gather reliable information. Yanapuma Spanish School (www.yanapumaspanish.org) can offer you intensive Spanish classes at special pricing to improve your level of Spanish prior to beginning your work.

How your payment to Yanapuma is used (why should I pay for working?)

When you work for Yanapuma as an intern, you pay a one-time fee and a monthly fee. The one-time fee helps cover time costs for project setup and supervision by Yanapuma staff members. The monthly fee helps cover office expenses, such as internet access, office space, printing, office supplies, and tea/coffee/snacks.

When you are staying as a volunteer, you pay a one-time registration fee that covers project setup and ongoing support by Yanapuma staff in the community. This helps ensure that you are working with a project that fits into Yanapuma's overall project planning.

While staying in a community, unless otherwise specified, interns, volunteers and students pay \$8 per day to the community for food and lodging. The community does not profit greatly from this when you consider the cost of leaving the community to buy food, cooking, providing accommodation, bedding, time taken up, etc. The idea is that they are fairly compensated for the effort that they make.

Visa

The visa information below is only a guideline containing the information Yanapuma presently has. Changes occur frequently, so please check with the Ecuadorian embassy in your home country for up to date information. Verifying this information is important, as you will be fined \$200 or more upon your departure from Ecuador if you do not have the required visa depending on the time period of your stay.

If you are staying in Ecuador up to 90 days

For a period of 90 days or less in Ecuador, a tourist visa is sufficient. You receive this automatically upon your arrival at the airport in Ecuador - just make sure that they actually give it to you! Be aware that the 90 days are precise (i.e. this does *not* mean 3 months). If you stay just a day more, you need to follow the steps explained below.

If you are staying in Ecuador 90 to 180 days

For a period up to 180 days, a tourist visa is also sufficient. However, the tourist visa you automatically receive upon your arrival at the airport in Ecuador is only valid for 90 days. *Before* the 90 days run out you must renew this tourist visa by getting another stamp for free at a local immigration office in order to stay legally in Ecuador for 180 days in total.

Be aware that if you have spent time in Ecuador during the past year, you are only allowed to stay in Ecuador for a period of 180 days in any 360 day period. For example, if you stayed in Ecuador for 85 days, left Ecuador on June 1st 2007 and decided to return in August, you could only stay in Ecuador for an additional 95 days on a tourist visa.

If you are staying in Ecuador more than 180 days

If you are staying more than 180 days in Ecuador, you need a volunteer visa or other type of long-term visa (e.g. cultural exchange visa). The process of getting a volunteer visa (12-VII) includes 3 steps:

First, you need to contact the *Ecuadorian Embassy* or the *Ecuadorian Consulate* in your home country and ask them to provide you with the required papers for a volunteer visa (12-VII) as well as a stamp in your passport. To receive this visa you must bring the following documents to the embassy/consulate – well in advance:

- Passport.
- Written document from Yanapuma including the duration of your stay, an explanation of why you will be working in Ecuador, and a brief description of the tasks you will be assigned to in Ecuador (preferably in Spanish).
- 3 photographs.
- Medical certificate (from a doctor) stating that you are medically healthy and do not suffer from any contagious diseases including HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis A, B or C.
- Police certificate with criminal record where you reside stating that you have not committed any crimes.
- 180 US dollars (150 visa, 30 application form); this is free of charge for citizens from Colombia, Spain and Paraguay.

Secondly, after your arrival in Ecuador, you need to go to *Dirección General de Extranjería* (address: Calle San Ignacio 207 y San Javier, Quito) to register your volunteer visa. Be aware that you must do this within 30 days of your arrival to avoid a \$200 fine. You need to bring:

- Passport + copy of passport and visa stamp in passport (received in home country).
- Visa papers received in home country (make copies of these for yourself).
- 10 US dollars.

Remember to ask for a receipt showing that they have your passport (the process normally takes about a week) as well as a receipt for the \$10 fee.

Finally, you need to go to *Dirección Nacional de Migración* (address: Av. Amazonas y Av. República, Quito) to obtain your *censo* (identification card) and your permission to leave the country. This office is often busy (with both tourists and Ecuadorians), so it is a good idea to go before 8 a.m. and ask for a number for the *censo* waiting line. You will need to bring:

- Passport + copy of passport and all visa stamps (received at the embassy, at the airport and *Dirección General de Extranjería*).

- Written document from Yanapuma stating the period you will stay, explaining why a foreign person is going to work in Ecuador, and a brief description of the tasks you will be assigned to in Ecuador (in Spanish) – with Andy Kirby's signature.
- Copy of Andy Kirby's identification card.
- Documents related to the Yanapuma office (please, ask Elizabeth at the office): Verification of Andy's signature (*nombramiento*) legalised by a notary, rent contract, photocopy of the house owner's identification card, copy of the last payments of rent, water and electricity.
- Documents related to housing: Rent contract, photocopy of house owner's identification card.
- A big envelope with your photo (size: passport), address and phone number
- 4 US dollars.

You will receive a plastic card, which is your identification card (*censo*) as long as you are in Ecuador. The last step is to obtain your permission to leave the country. Get a number for the *permiso de salida* waiting line and pay 4 US dollars to receive this permission slip; take good care not to lose it.