

Volunteering with JUCONI



Information Booklet

INTRODUCTION

We welcome your interest in our work and the volunteer opportunities that we have on offer. It is important, before you make a decision about volunteering with JUCONI, that you understand a little more about Ecuador and the difficulties faced by children who are working on the streets in Guayaquil.

Poverty

Ecuador is a developing country which continues to endure widespread levels of poverty. 40.2% of the population live below the poverty line with a further 16.5% living in extreme poverty. In 2009, a report by the UN expert on Human Rights and Poverty described the living conditions of many families in Ecuador as “terrible”. Access to running water and sanitation is one of the lowest in Latin America and families are often unable to access public services such as health and education due to absence or the inadequate nature of those available.



Ecuador is one of the most unequal societies in the world. Over the last 10 years, the differences between rich and poor have been exacerbated by major political and economic upheaval. Around 35% of Ecuador’s 13.5 million people live on less than \$2 a day – even though the average family of four needs US\$508.94 a month to cover their basic needs.

Guayaquil, Ecuador’s most populated city, is surrounded by urban slums. These communities are plagued by extremely high levels of violent crime and lack even the most basic services, such as paved roads, safe drinking water and sewers. Although electricity is available, the supply is very dangerous as it is drawn illicitly through makeshift devices which are little more than wires thrown over the mains. Most of the houses in these slums are made of cane with zinc roofs. Even when they have built a house, residents often do not have any rights to the land on which their homes stand.

Street-working children - those who work on the streets but who go home to their families at the end of the day - make up the majority of the street-involved child population in Guayaquil. The increase in lawlessness and acute economic recession in Guayaquil has also led to increased levels of violence both within the community and inside the home.

According to UNICEF, about 1,000,000 children and adolescents in Ecuador work, one of the highest rates of child labour in Latin America. 50% of those children have high-risk jobs: selling in the streets, working in mines, on banana plantations or in land-fills, etc. Additionally, the children in the JUCONI program are subject to high levels of violence and abuse: 92% report physical maltreatment and 95% report emotional maltreatment, 15% report sexual abuse and 90% of parents prioritize work over study or school attendance and 24% of children drop out of school before they have learnt to read and write – education in Ecuador is never free.

For these reasons, volunteers must be prepared to face the kind of poverty many of our families are living in. Most families have one or two beds and make do with palettes or

padding on the floor for those who don't fit in the beds. Room division or partitions are sometimes found in homes to separate the parent's room from the children's, but it usually consists of nothing more than a sheet or blanket. The majority of the JUCONI families have many children and at times other relatives, like uncles, cousins, or grandparents also living in the home.

Personal hygiene in families is often neglected due to the lack of efficient services provided. It is very common to see skin problems known locally as "granos, hongos, sarna, salpullido" or skin soars on people because of the quality of water in these sectors along with absence of free health services. The families do not all have the habit of boiling the water for drinking so stomach problems are also present. Nutrition in general is a problem; all families struggle to put three meals on the table and foods that have vitamins and minerals are often not included in the diet because of cost.

ABOUT JUCONI

JUCONI is an Ecuadorian non-profit organisation providing specialized support to street-working children and their families

JUCONI has three key aims:

- 1) To provide personalized educational and therapeutic support to street-involved children and their families to get off the streets and back into school
- 2) To build families and communities which value and respect children's rights
- 3) To share our skills and expertise with other NGOs and service providers so they can work more effectively with street-involved and other socially excluded children



Our families

In Guayaquil, children can start to work on the streets from the age of four. The children can be alone on the streets for up to 13 hours a day, as street vendors, juggling and cleaning windscreens. Their chances of gaining an education are diminished by the long hours they work, the poor standard of local facilities and the high cost of going to school (money must be found for uniforms, registration fees, transport and school materials). The daily risk of accidents, violence, sexual abuse, drugs and assaults in the streets is only one aspect of the physical and emotional consequences of this precarious existence – violence at home is also common in the families that JUCONI works with. When they are not working, girls look after younger siblings and do house work, making it difficult for them to study.

- 95% of the children on the JUCONI programme report some kind of maltreatment
- 95% describe **emotional abuse**
- 92% report **physical maltreatment**
- 15% say they have been **sexually abused**

Methodology

JUCONI's success is rooted in our therapeutic and educational framework for supporting children, their parents and other key people surrounding. The process will vary according to the family and their particular needs, but in general it takes four years.

Operation Friendship

We target street-working children as they work, attempting to build a relationship of trust between the key worker and the child. As the rapport grows, the relationship is extended to the family and work begins with the child's parents. Trust is built by ensuring that every promise or commitment made to the child or family is kept.



Intensive phase

Work with the child is personalized, family-based, educational and therapeutic, working on four aspects of human development:

- 1. Emotional**
- 2. Social**
- 3. Cognitive**
- 4. Physical**

The entire family is included in the development of their personal and family goals. It is crucial that the changes put in place are sustainable. The third phase enables families to take responsibility for their futures.

Becoming independent

It involves the gradual withdrawal of intensive support, so that families can sustain their achievements independently. We encourage families to share what they have learnt with the wider community and to work together on projects such as improving their neighbourhoods and reducing violence. Once children and families reach the intensive phase of the programme, the benefits are already becoming clear. Reducing violence within the family is a key indicator of progress.

Training and capacity building

JUCONI has developed a tried-and-tested methodology. Our methodology, which is available to other NGOs working with vulnerable children, has been used in Afghanistan, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and South Africa. The JUCONI process in both Ecuador and Mexico has been internationally recognised by UNESCO, the British Consortium for Street Children and the World Bank.

Jefferson, 20

"I was 12 when I started working on the streets, selling oranges or whatever I could. One day, my brother said I could help him selling flowers on the streets. It was there that JUCONI came and found us. Since then, they have helped the family financially, psychologically, given us food and everything. They even gave me money for my studies. I am so glad that my two little brothers will never have to go out and work on the streets. Jefferson shows off his school certificate. He is now working in the army. One day I would like to have a family and give them all the things I never had."

ROLE OF JUCONI VOLUNTEERS

The role of the volunteer in JUCONI is defined on an individual basis. Depending on the abilities of the individual and the type of work each volunteer has in mind, JUCONI can be flexible with volunteers expecting to interact with families, volunteers wanting to work with groups or those who prefer to contribute to the foundation working in the office.



Below are brief descriptions of the voluntary roles we have within JUCONI. It is possible to combine two roles together e.g. translation and Niñez Trabajadora support volunteer. Please state this clearly in your application and describe how your skills and experience relate to both roles. There are other work options for volunteers in the office at JUCONI from organizing pictures and searching for funding, to creating bulletin boards, updating the web page, data input or creating materials for work with children or workshops. Volunteers can help with many activities. Options depend on present needs of JUCONI and the creativity and interests of the volunteers.

Niñez Trabajadora Support Volunteer

JUCONI has four teams in the Niñez Trabajadora program, each consisting of two child practitioners (*Orientador/a Infantil*) and one family therapist (*Orientador/a Familiar*). Volunteers that visit homes will usually visit the same families week after week accompanied by a member of the JUCONI team. Each team visits families in the marginalized “sectors” of the city where the families live. The street working child is visited by the *Orientador Infantil* on a weekly basis and their parents, by the Family Therapist. The majority of JUCONI families are large families with many children and this creates difficulties in ensuring private space in which to undertake therapeutic work. Therefore, the presence of a volunteer during a family visit to help out with the younger children is an asset for the team in being able to work out an issue with the child or parent that might need private attention. Also the individual attention that the younger children receive from a volunteer, whether it be putting a puzzle together, listening to a problem, reading a story or painting is immeasurably beneficial to the children’s development and the relationship they form with the volunteer is very important to these children. Due to this, this voluntary role is only available for a minimum of six months with regular commitment to provide reliability and enable a good relationship with the children to be built.



JUCONI works to eliminate violence from the homes and works with parents to practice positive relations. For this reason, children and adults benefit from the presence of someone able to work with the children demonstrating a ‘model’ or positive relationship. Even though your time may be limited, every positive learning experience for these children will make a difference. You would need to be able to stay patient, be encouraging and be very creative.

These children expect to be let down by adults and it is important they learn that an adult can be trusted to treat them well, even when they behave badly.

Every year in September the Niñez Trabajadora (NT) program offers two 2-day overnight camps to the children and adolescents that receive home visits from the NT program. This project requires a lot of planning and assistance in the implementation. Volunteers working at JUCONI at the time of the camps usually participate in the planning process and the camps themselves. Niñez Trabajadora Support Volunteers also help with Operation Friendship working with the children in the first stage of the JUCONI method.

Due to the nature of this role an intermediate to advanced level of Spanish is required, along with a recent Police Check and two satisfactory references.

Community Development Support Volunteer

JUCONI's Community Development Team provides workshops and activities in a number of schools in the sectors of Guayaquil. Work takes place with children, parents and teachers with the aim of improving awareness of children's rights, reducing violence in and out of school and improving relationships within the community. Workshops are designed and delivered by qualified psychologists in the JUCONI team. The Community Development Support Volunteer would assist the JUCONI team in organizing and delivering sessions and provide individual attention to children and families.

This voluntary role is available for a minimum of six months with regular commitment to provide reliability and enable a good relationship with the children and families to be built. An intermediate to advanced level of Spanish is also required, along with a recent Police Check and two satisfactory references.

Volunteer Art Assistant - Club de Arte

The Charlotte Miller Art project has been running since 2002 and was set up by Baroness Sue Miller in memory of her daughter. Working in partnership with JUCONI, The Charlotte Miller Art project (CMAP) was created to develop communication skills and self-expression for street-involved and highly marginalized children and young people through community-based art activities.

The project aims for street involved and high risk children and young people to access opportunities to develop, explore and express feelings about their current situation. The project also provides a place where they can identify their hopes for the future and methods of realising those hopes, through art activities appropriate to their developmental stages. Children take part in a variety of arts based activities including painting, drawing, photography, textiles, video, storytelling and performing arts.

We require Volunteer Art Assistants to help CMAP Art Facilitators to deliver art workshops for children within the different sectors of Guayaquil. There are normally 3 – 4 different art projects running at one time. Sessions are around 2 hours long and include games and art activities suitable to the space available.



You will need to be creative, a good team player and enjoy working with groups of children. We are looking for volunteers that have an interest in art and hold at least basic to intermediate Spanish speaking skills. Short term and part-time volunteers will be considered for this role.

For information about CMAP you can visit their website www.cmap.org.uk .

Volunteer Translator

JUCONI is supported internationally through funds from donors in England which presents the need for certain reports, legal documents and evaluations to be translated from Spanish to English, and English to Spanish in some cases. If you are capable of helping with translations you may also help by translating the reports for children and adolescents that receive JUCONI scholarships. The foundation supports around 100 scholarships at a time to children who do not have the financial means to receive an education without this support. The months when translations for scholarship donors are most needed are October/November and June/July; however, translation support is required year round.

For this role you would be required to be a native speaker of either Spanish or English and be fluent in both languages. This role does not require specific time commitment and can be combined with another voluntary role; however, the Volunteer Translator would have to provide consistency and reliability.

WORKING IN A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE MANNER

Having an open mind and motivation to share can be your best tool when working in the homes of families. Families visited by JUCONI are generally very interested in volunteers and are frequently watching your reaction to their homes and families. Keeping this in mind, it is a good idea for volunteers to be conscious of their reactions to things that they are not used to seeing or might consider unpleasant (for example, cockroaches, chickens within the house or bad hygiene practices). Volunteers shouldn't be afraid to remind children to put on their shoes, comb their hair, brush their teeth, wash their hands or look for something to clean up a mess. Part of a volunteer's presence is being a good example.

In whichever capacity that volunteers are working with JUCONI, volunteers must try and be examples for the children and youth whom the foundation works with. Cigarettes should not be brought to visits and volunteers must dress appropriately and in a clean manner (no shorts, mini-skirts or tight clothing).

In Ecuador, it is custom to offer something to guests in your home and so some families offer juice, cola or food to volunteers and educators. Juices are usually not made with boiled water, and while it is your choice to accept or decline, keep in mind that any offering from a very poor family is a gift and sacrifice. How someone turns down a drink or food offered to them is important in not offending the family (simply saying you would not like it is offensive). If a volunteer decides to turn down food or drink, some good strategies are to claim that you are ill or that you have already eaten and always thank them for their generosity. Drinking or eating only part of the food if it is accepted should be avoided as it prevents the family from reusing the uneaten portion and forces them to waste food that they cannot afford to throw away.

POINTS OF SAFETY

Guayaquil is hot during most of the year, with temperatures sometimes rising to 42 degrees Celsius (107F) during the winter (December to April). It is advisable to carry bottled water to avoid dehydration, as well as a hat and/or sunglasses and sun block to prevent sun burn from the equatorial sun. Volunteers should also carry insect repellent to prevent bites from the prevalent mosquitoes.

Volunteers should carry toilet paper and take advantage of public restrooms when walking through the neighborhoods. The toilets (when they exist) in private homes may be used but there is often no privacy and they can be very unsanitary. There are often few chairs in homes so be prepared to sit on the floor or on a bucket and be aware of loose floor boards and holes within them when walking around.

Personal security in the sectors is something that volunteers must be conscious of at all times. Theft and robberies are common in the sectors JUCONI visits and volunteers may witness violence in the families and communities they visit. For new volunteers; there is a risk of getting lost. Most streets in the sectors are not marked and the houses often look alike, so it can be confusing. Volunteers should be accompanied at all times by a JUCONI educator. The JUCONI shirt has also proven to be helpful tool in identifying us to the neighborhood. JUCONI T-shirts, bibs and caps must be worn at all times during visits.

Volunteers should not carry anything they do not mind losing and nothing they are willing to fight for. Volunteers should not wear any clothing, jewelry or accessories that may look expensive and draw attention. If there is no need to wear it or carry it then we would recommend that volunteers don't so not to put yourself or others with you at risk. Mobile phones can be carried but should not be used whilst walking through the sectors unless in an emergency. Most volunteers and educators work safely in the sectors, but the risk that exists is very real and volunteers must be cautious and alert at all times.

Guayaquil is a relatively safe city to live in so long as you take precautions to avoid putting yourself in danger. Researching new areas and using your common sense is imperative.

APPLICATION PROCESS

In the first stage, a prospective volunteer must complete an application form to express their interest and reasons for volunteering with JUCONI along with showing their compatibility with the project criteria. If the applicant submits a successful application they will be invited for an interview. The interview will be carried out by a member of management either face to face, by telephone or through Skype as we acknowledge that some volunteers may not already be living in Guayaquil.

JUCONI offers volunteering opportunities to a range of individuals from diverse backgrounds and experience although we do require that every volunteer:

- Is a minimum of 22 years old*
- Can offer a minimum of 6 months commitment*
- Speaks intermediate to advanced Spanish*
- Is able to fund the cost of their own accommodation and food while in Ecuador (approx \$400 - \$500 per month)
- Has adequate medical insurance whilst volunteering for JUCONI and living in Ecuador
- Has proof of residence in Ecuador or a valid passport and volunteer visa
- Provides 2 references; one professional and one personal

- Provides a police check completed in the last 6 months

***Please note:** these requirements differ for volunteers applying for a Volunteer Art Assistant role; the minimum age is 19, the minimum commitment is 3 months and JUCONI requires you to speak at least basic to intermediate Spanish. A police check is not a requirement for this role as you will never work alone with the children.

Volunteers at JUCONI are not recruited to replace paid workers or do tasks which should be done, or have previously been done by paid workers. Volunteers undertake necessary tasks which help in the children's and families' development including play that would otherwise not be undertaken.

We regret that we cannot recruit volunteers without an intermediate to advanced level of Spanish. This is necessary to integrate into the community and communicate with co-workers and families effectively. On some occasions and for certain roles volunteers will be recruited with lower levels of Spanish, but the volunteer will be expected to learn Spanish whilst volunteering with JUCONI.

JUCONI will provide volunteers with:

- Resources and materials for those doing visits, including a guide to activities with the children
- JUCONI T-shirts, bib and caps to be worn at all times during visits
- Cover costs of mobilization made during field work with children and families
- JUCONI can help volunteers locate places to rent prior to arrival
- For overseas volunteers, if we know in advance of your arrival date a person may receive volunteers at the airport or bus terminal and transfer them to the place of stay in Guayaquil
- A supervisor who will be your day to day contact within the organization
- An induction to JUCONI, and
- Orientation day of Guayaquil for long-term international volunteers

PLACEMENT PREPARATION

Fundraising

As there is no charge to volunteering with JUCONI we would like to encourage you to try and raise some funds for our charitable activities. We recommend you set a minimum fundraising target of \$300 (approximately £190). JUCONI really appreciates any support you give. If fundraising is not possible you could donate clothes, games, art materials or toys for the children you may be working with. However, please discuss this first with JUCONI to ensure your donations will be useful.

Fundraising Ideas

Raising money shouldn't be scary or pressured. Here are a few pointers:

- Talk to people like family, friends and colleagues to raise awareness as much as possible
- Approach companies, some organizations will match your fundraising pound for pound, and they can claim a tax break too
- Set up an online fundraising page so you can raise money from anywhere in the world via a secure, easy to use site (for example www.justgiving.com)
- Get your work, friends/family, community involved
- Do a sponsored run or challenging activity
- Hold fun events and get as much publicity as you can

- Brainstorm ideas and be as creative as possible
- Use your strengths – for example what contacts or skills do you have

Child Sponsorship

You could encourage your family, friends or colleagues to sponsor a JUCONI child, or you could sponsor one yourself. JUCONI has a great child sponsorship scheme. You could help by enabling us to protect a child from the dangers of working on the streets by sponsoring a child for \$20 a month or \$240 for a year. If through your efforts a child is sponsored then you've nearly hit your minimum target of \$300. As a volunteer you will actually see how this money is being used and meet the child or children sponsored. The child sponsored will receive benefits on a **permanent basis throughout the year**. These benefits include but are not limited to:



- School expenses, including uniforms, shoes, and school supplies;
- Monthly food baskets that includes yogurt, milk, soybeans, oats, lentils, and quinoa;
- Coverage of emergency medical expenses;
- Personalized in-home visits, twice a week, by professional psychologists (family key workers);
- Personalized school visits, twice a month, by professional psychologists (family key workers);
- Semi-Annual Progress Reports on child's development.

A sponsor will receive:

- A semi-annual progress report on the sponsored child;
- A handmade postcard from the sponsored child;
- A newsletter focusing on the activities of JUCONI.

For further information on child sponsorship or making donations visit our website www.JUCONI.org.ec .

Sponsor a Volunteer

Additionally, you can encourage your family, friends and colleagues to sponsor your volunteer effort by directing them to our website where they can click on 'donate' on our home page and make any size of donation – small or large before or after your placement.

You can then update your sponsors with regular emails or through a blog to show them what amazing work you're doing or have done. The money donated will be used to fund games, toys, art materials, books etc for you and other volunteers to use with the children and will also go towards supporting the families JUCONI works with such as helping with medical expenses and school fees.

BASICS IN COUNTRY

If you are an international volunteer not already living in Guayaquil you will need to budget for your stay. Your budget will totally depend on your situation, but roughly you can expect the following:

Vaccinations: Ask your doctor about latest travel advice. Prices vary depending on the individual surgery and your country of residence. Yellow fever and Rabies vaccinations cost approximately £200 in the UK in 2011 and some vaccinations must be administered over a period of a few months. It is imperative that you prepare for your vaccinations well in advance of your departure date.



Visa: A 12 month visa cost £120 in the UK in 2011.

Rent per month: Approximately \$200 per month

Accommodation: JUCONI will help international volunteers to locate a place to live within Guayaquil and where possible this would be shared accommodation with other volunteers.

Food per month: Approximately \$150

Additional Spending: Around \$225 per month, which is obviously down to the individual but is enough to go away a few weekends a month, go out at weekends, buy some clothing and other basics for example shampoo etc if budgeted well.

If you require any further information about volunteering with JUCONI in Ecuador then please don't hesitate to contact us.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN JUCONI!



To find out more about JUCONI contact us at:

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