

Addressing questions from Friends of Ecuador

From the Association of Producers of Seeds and Nutritional Andean Foods:

Asociación de productores de semillas y Alimentos Nutricionales Andinos "MUSHUK YUYAY"

Health Education:

Within their territory, the Cañari People have instituted a program called Healthy Children, Healthy Future (Niños Saludables, Futuro Saludable). Mushuk Yuyay (New Thought) has designed this intervention to address the problem of malnutrition and poor school performance. This program has wide support and demand in the schools and in the communities. For this purpose, the schools now have demonstration plots for cultivating Andean grains. Through these activities the students are becoming familiar with the nutritional and medicinal values of these products. They also prepare dishes and present the nutritious foods to their communities. This way the students become promoters of traditional nutritious foods.

Within the Cañari family agriculture, the Andean grains such as quinoa, amaranth and lupine have been on the decline over the past 30 years (1978-2008). In the same way the local knowledge of the elders, (the taytakuna & mamakuna in Kichwa) in the area of family agriculture is also disappearing. This situation is due to the nature of the rural "development" projects and the lack of importance given to agricultural education.

For the last three years this program has operated in the local elementary school to various degrees depending on the resources and funding available. Recently, the directors of Mushuk Yuyay have thought of adding a new dimension to the program.

School Breakfast Program

The members of Mushuk Yuyay and the school staff have noticed that many children come to school hungry because of the economic condition of their families. This hunger effects the children's school performance in many ways. To address this problem, Mushuk Yuyay has proposed adding a pilot school breakfast program in the school determined to have the greatest need. The plan is begin this intervention in the 2016 – 2017 school year, evaluate its effectiveness and build community support. At a minimum, 40 children will participate next year at a cost of approximately \$25 each.

Project Objectives:

- 1.) To improve the health and nutrition of the children from poorer families as measured and reported by a nurse and a nutritionist.
- 2.) To improve school performance of the participants in the program as measured by test results and interviews with teachers.
- 3.) To raise community awareness of the importance of this program as evidenced by interviews with parents, children, school staff and other community members.

Action Plan and Implementation Timeline:

- 1.) Presentation of the proposal and the origin of Andean grains, cereals, legumes and guinea pig (cuy) – first 2 weeks of September
- 2.) Acquisition of selected high quality seeds to implement the learning demonstration plots in the schools – 3rd week of September
- 3.) Investment in the purchase of crops and derivatives such as quinoa, barley, amaranth, beans, wheat, lupine, etc. for the exercise of preparation of foods in one school – 4th week of September
- 4.) Preparation of foods in participation with parents, teachers and children of at risk of hunger in weekly activities from the beginning of Oct. through the middle of July.
- 5.) Food festival focused on strengthening the natural and cultural Cañari food heritage with the children presenting and promoting their healthy eating lifestyles

Chronology of activities

N°	Activities	Sept.			Oct. - June			July			Persons Responsible	
1	Presentation of the proposal and the origin of Andean grains, cereals, legumes & guinea pig	X	X									Coordinator & Board of Directors
2	Acquisition of selected high quality seeds to implement the learning demonstration plots in the schools			x								Nutritionist
3	Investment in the purchase of crops and derivatives such as quinoa, barley, amaranth, beans, wheat, lupine, etc. for the exercise of preparation of foods in two schools				x							Nutritionist
4	Weekly preparation of foods in participation with parents, teachers and children of at risk of hunger					X	X	X				Coordinator & Nutritionist
						X	x	x	x	x	X	
5	Food festival focused on strengthening the natural and cultural Cañari food heritage**										X	Coordinator, Nutritionist & Board of Directors
											X	

** This activity will cost between \$5000 and \$6000, and will be funded by First Peoples Worldwide and the Ministry of Culture.

Mushuk Yuyay, the sponsoring organization:

The Association's 200 + members participate in various projects with the objective of achieving sustainable and resilient family agriculture, food sovereignty, and economic self-sufficiency. Each one of the projects that Mushuk Yuyay has designed and begun leads toward this complex objective. Each activity is like a piece of a puzzle, carefully planned and carried out as resources become available.

Mushuk Yuyay is an open, transparent, association, democratically managed by solidarity economic principles, with the intention of carrying out programs decided on by the Cañari People. Mushuk Yuyay functions in complement with other organizations in the area including the agricultural cooperatives formed during the agrarian reform of the 1960s.

Since its incorporation, Mushuk Yuyay has worked on projects in collaboration with the Participatory Research with the National Legumes and Andean Grains Program of the National Agricultural Research Institute (INIAP), the McKnight Foundation and Ekorural in research and production of Andean grains (quinoa, amaranth, & lupine), legumes (broad beans, peas, and various other beans) and cereals (wheat and barley). Currently, Mushuk Yuyay is involved in a quinoa and barley research project in collaboration with Washington State University.

La asociación de productores de semillas y alimentos nutricionales andinos Mushuk Yuyay-APROSANAMY was constituted as a social not-for-profit organization in 1994 and holds an International Certificate of Social Responsibility in business. The association sustains and

guarantees Cañari family agriculture, Cañari food security and, in this project, to raise the academic performance of the children.

Board of Directors:

President: Teresa Guanman Pomavilla

Secretary: Antonio Guaman

Oversight: José Guaman

Administrator: José Luis Pichazaca P

Coordinator: Nicolás Pichazaca Mayancela

Budget for the School Breakfast Project:

Purchase of local food products: 10 packages @ \$22 = \$220.00

Purchase of food preparation supplies locally: \$300.00

Salary of Nutritionist: 14 days @ \$25 = \$350.00

Transportation \$125.00

Total costs: \$995.00

Duration of the Project:

The present proposal will have a duration of eleven months beginning in the month of September, 2016 and finishing in July, 2017.

Measurable Results: (Expected outcomes)

Instances of student's malnutrition will decline as measured by school health records and nurse and nutritionist testing.

School performance will improve as measured by test results and teacher observations.

Parents, school staff and other community members will respond positively about the intervention in interviews.

The teachers in the schools will increase participation in demonstration plots with the students for learning about Andean grains.

Parents will encourage and help children cultivate and consume Andean grains on their family farms

Families and students will gain a greater understanding and capacity of putting their knowledge about the cultivation of these products to use.

The students will be able become promoters of the nutritious food and the Cañari traditions as well as becoming better involved in ending the rampant prevalent malnutrition.

Affiliations/conflicts of interest:

The financial assistance is for the association Mushuk Yuyay with the objective of strengthening the value chain of grains and cuy and for promotion of consumption of nutritious foods in the schools. To make this initiative a reality two former Peace Corps Volunteers have become involved: Alan Adams and Stuart Moskowitz, RPCVs Ecuador, 1967-1969. They are not involved in any way financially in this association. They donate their time to this effort. Stuart Moskowitz is a member of NPCA, BARPCV and Friends of Ecuador.

Accountability/Reporting

At the end of the program, Mushuk Yuyay will provide a narrative of the results with copies of receipts and a projection of how the program will be continued and expanded in the future.

Sustainability of the School Breakfast Program for children who come to school hungry

This program will be sustained in future years through local community support with some input from the Department of Education.

1. Contributions from local businesses: When it is demonstrated that the program is successful, Mushuk Yuyay will approach local businesses, many of which do business with Mushuk Yuyay, to contribute small amounts toward this program.
2. Mushuk Yuyay contribution: As the budget grows due to projected increased sales of local agricultural products, the association will be able to contribute to this effort.
3. Local governments (GAD): As positive results are available, the local Cantón governments of Cañar, Suscal and El Tambo will be willing to include partial financing for this effort in their budgets
4. Other funding agencies will be willing to invest in this program as well when its effectiveness is proven.
5. The Department of Education: By demonstrating the need and a ready solution to the problem, the Cañari community is more assured of national support for the school breakfast program. The department has expressed interest in school breakfasts, but without a program model.

Probability of success

The staff is in place, the school plots are ready, the community supports the current Nutrition Education program, the plan is detailed, and Mushuk Yuyay is a solid enterprise. This children will be completely invested in the program because they will cultivate the crops, process the foods, and prepare meals for each other. In addition, we have the volunteer services of a local nurse as well as input from professors at the National University of Education in Azogues.

Yupaychani (Thank you)

The Cañari community thanks Friends of Ecuador for your generous help in making this program to alleviate hunger in school a possibility.