

FOUNDATION FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Location: Pedernales, Ecuador

Partner: Friends of Ecuador

Issue Areas: Child mortality, Universal Education, Economic Sustainability

Points of Interest: Contact with the Global Project

The Organization

The Foundation for People with Disabilities is an organization dedicated to providing services to the large disabled population of Pedernales (population 10,000 to 15,000) in the Province of Manabí on the northern coast of Ecuador. The members of the Foundation are comprised of people with disabilities and the parents and family members of children and adults with disabilities. Over 90% of the members are impoverished and many are illiterate.

The Foundation began as a women's support group for mothers of children with disabilities (initiated in August 2001). Their objective was to provide their children with the professional care their disabilities require, as well as to provide the opportunity for the mothers to share their experiences and to lessen the emotional burden of having a child with disabilities in an un-accepting environment. Through their dedication and perseverance, the women's support group became a legal foundation in March of 2001 with 47 active members. The members of the Foundation are mostly uneducated and impoverished women, yet despite their lack of personal economic resources, have worked together to establish, maintain, and improve the services offered by the Foundation. Through bi-weekly activities, such as bingos and bake sales (foods sold include fruit salads, cakes, and traditional foods such as *ceviches* and *frittatas*) the members maintain the Rehabilitation Center.

Currently the Foundation offers physical, occupational, and language therapy provided by a trained therapists. The Foundation also provides occasional medical attention in the form of medical brigades in coordination with other national foundations.

Why the Need?

There are no health care services for disabled people in the rural Pedernales region. Only the largest cities in Ecuador have public and private health organizations that offer the specialized medical attention the disabled children and adults need. The majority of the people with disabilities in Pedernales live in poverty and they cannot afford the 7-hour trip to Quito or the 8-hour trip to Guayaquil (closest large cities) where they could receive therapy and medical attention.

How Team Efforts Translate to Impact

Funds NGC Teams raise will help support the Foundation provide continued medical care, therapy for people with disabilities and support for their families.

The Partner

Friends of Ecuador is a non-profit organization that serves an active community of over 500 members. The membership include former Peace Corps Volunteers, students, professionals, Americans and Ecuadorians who are committed to better understanding and greater cooperation between the people of Ecuador and the United States. Friends of Ecuador make small grants to community lead initiatives in Ecuador.

NGC's Approach to Sustainable Global Change

NGC and our Global Partners believe that people in communities all over the world are the real experts and know their community and solutions to their problems. We want to advocate and educate others on behalf of this model of sustainable global change. Additionally, we seek to empower our grassroots Global Projects with the financial resources to create change at the grassroots level. 100% of funds your team raises are sent to Foundation for People with Disabilities.

By sending your team's funds directly, your project organization has the power to decide the best way to use the money. Since money will be spent in the community, your funds will also support the local economy.

The Foundation for People with Disabilities buys all locally made educational tools and equipment for the disabled children they are serving. The Foundation has also started an income generating project for the mothers of children with disabilities so they can work to support their family.

Additional Resources

Partner Website: <http://www.friendsofecuador.org/>

CIA World Factbook (Ecuador): <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ec.html>

Embassy of Ecuador: http://www.ecuador.org/nuevosite/index_e.php

Inter-American Development Bank: Country Reports on Disability Statistics:

http://www.iadb.org/sds/SOC/publication/gen_6191_4114_e.htm

See your team binder for more ways to educate your team about your project.