

ECUADOR TRIP 2 CAN-GO REPORT

Trip Dates: June 5- August 2, 2023

Report Written by Jerry Clarkson

C for Champions:

Who is God already using/calling to be a champion for this place? Churches? Individuals? Partners in other continents?

- Edwin and Maria Giron
- Jerry and Kerri Clarkson
- Ken Comfort
- Northwest Yearly Meeting Board of Global Outreach
- Newberg Shuar Prayer Group
- Beatriz Apaza (Before and After)
- José Olivas (During and After)
- Grace Anderson (During and After)
- Jael Alaya (During and After)

Who is praying for these people or place? Will they pray for the team as they endeavor to dream and receive the vision?

- Beatriz Apaza
- Newberg Shuar Prayer Group
- Northwest Yearly Meeting Board of Global Outreach
- Meridian Friends Church
- La Iglesia Amigos de Ciudad Juárez
- Las Vegas Multicultural Ministry
- Newberg Friends Church
- La Iglesia Amigos de Nueva Rosita
- La Iglesia Amigos de Agujita
- Phyllis Brown, Mentor of Jael
- Lizeth Rincon (During and After)
- Luke 10 Facebook Group (140 people) (During and After)

Who is God calling to give their lives to reaching this people group?

- José Olivas
- Grace Anderson
- Jerry and Kerri Clarkson
- Jael Alaya (During and After)

A for Affirmation:

Are there partners or ministries in place that we can learn from prior to us going there? In the greater region?

- Patricio and Andrea Leon- Ecuador
- Dario and Alexandria Salazar-Ecuador
- Charles Milton- Ecuador
- Russell and Sarah Badgely (Before)
- Dan Cammack (Before)

- Ken Comfort (Before and During)
- David Wampati; Ramón & Tania Waam- Shuar - Palora, Ecuador (During)
- Andres Jimbicti- Shuar - Palora, Ecuador (During)

How did the discernment impressions of senders and goers change before, during and after the trip?
What discoveries or stories stand out in this process?

Before

- Jose says that before the trip he thought that the Shuar were less modernized. He thought that we would find people that are complete nomads.
- Jose thought that we would be going further into the jungle than we did.

During

- Jose says that he found the Shuar that we were able to visit to have electricity, internet, cell phones, and modern tools necessary for their production needs.
- We do not have a Shuar speaking guide to take us to other jungle communities.
- Jan says that she expected more poverty than we saw. The people looked like they had the food and clothing they needed. This was evidenced by the fact that the children were healthy enough to be playing in the villages. Village dogs were healthy and well-fed.
- It also stood out to Jan how much we heard about abuse among the Shuar; physical, sexual, emotional, etc. These things lead to many health and family life problems in the future.
- Jan says that the power of the Catholic church to push out Evangelical churches in some places really stood out to her. Tiwinza especially is staunchly catholic.
- Grace had little idea what to expect when coming to Ecuador, and so many of the things that we learned were new to her and/or changed her perspective.
- Jerry, Grace, and Jose traveled to Taisha and then to Panki at the edge of the road accessible jungle. During an outdoor community meeting, Jerry and Jose had the opportunity to visit at length with Tomás and Patricio. Tomás' house had burned two nights before. Tomas said to Jerry, "I went to my fields this morning and was praying while doing my chores. 'God, why did my house burn down?' I had no answer. Now that you have come, I know that if my house had not burned you would not have stayed, we would have been in the fields and not been here to talk with you. We are Catholic. We have no priest, we have no church building, we have no bibles. Are you evangelicals? Can you bring us Bibles? We can pay for Bibles but do not have anywhere to buy them. Can you come to teach us to pray and teach us about God? Come back as soon as possible. Bring us Bibles. Help us build a church. We need someone to teach us." We heard similar stories in many towns and villages. We are called to be with the Shuar to show them Jesus.

Are there people with resolve willing to partner with and send missionaries to this people or place?
Who are they?

- NWYM
- Meridian Friends Church
- Newberg Friends Church
- La Iglesia Amigos de Nueva Rosita
- La Iglesia Amigos de Ciudad Juárez
- La Iglesia los Amigo de Agujita
- Las Vegas Multicultural Ministry
- Mexico YM

- North Mexico YM

N for Need:

What can you share about these people or place?

Before

- The Catholic Church has had more influence on the Shuar people than the Evangelical Church.
- Relatively few of the Shuar have heard the Gospel or internalized it.
- Our first impressions were that the Shuar did not have any Evangelical Churches at all.
- From last year's visit: There is a noticeable lack of children's programming, there is a noticeable lack of pastors among the existing churches, many villages do not have churches, and there is a lack of training among the existing pastors.

During

- There are, however, more churches among the Shuar than previously thought. There is evidence of previous long-term evangelical missionaries among the Shuar. But when they left the work was not sustained.
- The Bible has been translated into Shuar, but most of the Shuar people only know how to read Spanish. Children are taught to read Spanish in school. Shuar syllables and pronunciation are very different from Spanish. Children never have an opportunity in school to learn to read Shuar syllables and pronunciation. Therefore, many Shuar must sound out each syllable and several words before coming to a basic understanding of a phrase. A Shuar reader will then reread or restate the phrase or sentence before reading the next sentence. Flow of paragraph ideas is often lost in the process.
- There is a noticeable lack of Evangelical churches in many villages and a lack of discipleship. There are whole regions without an Evangelical church or evidence of evangelical influence in the past.
- There is a lack of work among young people, children, and women. So, the young people grow up without an evangelical purpose.
- There is a decline in existing churches. Young people have not been disciplined to continue in the church, they receive more influence from the internet than their parents.
- Churches were never trained to train new pastors.
- We have received invitations to return to villages with existing churches, but also to return to villages that have no church, to teach and bring the Bible.
- Even in the existing churches, there are places where the person teaching depends on existing resources and does not have a Bible themselves. They do not always have the money to purchase a Bible.

Is there a ministry need that we can focus on?

Before

- Sourcing or development of discipleship material.
- Long-term presence.
- Children's ministries.
- Evangelism with continued discipleship.
- Discipleship for existing believers.

During

- Evangelism and discipleship.

- Children, young people, and women's ministries.
- Bible accessibility (audio or literacy).
- Whole-life discipleship and development.
- Long-term presence.

How would you summarize the most convincing evidence of need for the gospel and reason/s to start a mission there?

- There are many villages and even regions that do not exhibit any understanding of the Gospel. The people of these villages show animistic beliefs and practices, as well as family issues, including abuse and neglect, leading to medical and social problems. Among the Shuar men there is a high rate of alcohol and hallucinogen use. For most Shuar they appear to be living day to day with a lack of life purpose, doing the same things that their parents did.

G for Gifting:

Who is expressing interest or willingness to consider going as a missionary to this place?

- José Olivas
- Grace Anderson
- Jael Ayala
- Jerry and Kerri Clarkson

What sort of gifts or skills might be required for this work?

- Evangelism
- Discipleship
- People Skills
- Understanding of/willingness to understand culture.
- Willingness to learn language and culture.
- Teaching Skills
- Patience
- Flexibility

How many people will it take to begin this pioneering work? What will it take to get started?

- Mexico Yearly meeting plans to send José Olivas in November.
- We need to begin in two areas, Taishia and Tiwinza.
- We need an individual guy or family group in Taishia to compliment José's work.
- We need two family units for Tiwinza.

O for Opportunity:

Is the soil ready for sowing seeds of the Good News?

- We have found areas ready for seeds to be sown, watered, and disciplined.
- We have also found places that need soil preparation before sowing can be done.
- We have also found seeds sown on rocky ground, without deep roots.
- We have seen places where the ground is firm against Evangelical Christianity.

Who welcomed you or provided hospitality among believers and non-believers? Did you find a woman/man of peace? Did you receive an invitation to bring the Good News to an area that is not being reached?

- Patricio and Andrea Leon (Macas, Ecuador)
- Dario and Alexandria Salazar (Sucúa, Ecuador)
- Charles Milton (Ecuador)
- David Wampati; Ramón & Tania Waam (Shuar - Palora, Ecuador)
- Andres Jimbicti (Shuar - Palora, Ecuador)
- Thomas and Pasqual (Shuar - Panki, Taisha, Ecuador)
- Restaurant owner in Taisha.
- Taxi driver from San José de Morona to Tiwinza.
- Taxi driver in Tiwinza.
- Woodworker, Lago Ayauch, Tiwinza Shuar
- Restaurant owner in Porta Morona.
- Rodrigo and Yolanda Lopez, Genry (Macas, Ecuador)
- Iglesia Efrata (Sucúa, Ecuador)
- Pastors Neftali and Nely (Sucúa, Ecuador)
- Lucia (Macas, Ecuador)
- Enrique Cabrera (Zamora, Ecuador)
- Saraguro Family (Zamora, Ecuador)

Share any opportunities that God may be presenting to us. How might we start? How will we engage with the people? Business? Development? Discipleship and Evangelism? Partnerships?

- Mexico Yearly Meeting will be sending José to Macas in November. He will be working in partnership with Patricio Leon as he learns Shuar culture, with the intention of eventually moving to Taisha.
- Grace has an opportunity to live in Macas and work with Lucia in outreach to the children in Shuar communities.
- Establish a covenant agreement with AMEE and residency for our staff. Asociación de Misiones Evangelicas Ecuatorianas – AMEE provides legal and promotional support for Ecuadorian missionaries working with new Christian and new church planting among tribal people and under-reached mestizo / colono villages. AMEE also provides legal support and associate opportunities for international missions and missionaries as associate members. (Mestizo / colono are the Ecuadorian Spanish words used to designate Ecuadorians of European or mixed descent that have established colonies in former indigenous areas as allowed by law.
- Work with established missionaries in the regions we plan to enter.
- Begin to establish relationships and converse with people to begin learning Shuar and Shuar culture.
- Establish intention and presence in selected Shuar communities.
- Intentional initial evangelism.
- Intentional initial discipleship -new believer discipleship, spiritual formation, doctrinal formation, discipleship of new workers, discipleship of leaders, multiplication of workers and leaders, discipleship of pastors, multiplication of pastors, discipleship of evangelists and missionaries that could go to villages and possibly other countries.
- Establish new congregations.
- Establish training centers.

- Possible mobile family evangelism/vehicle with Bible and training materials. (This may take a certain amount of leg work to print Shuar Bibles and sell them to the Shuar.)

Is this a CAN GO for EFM at this time? Which of the five criteria do we see the strongest? Which of the five criteria is yet to become convincing?

Choosing which criteria are the strongest and weakest in this field is very difficult because they are all so strong. Looking over our list of champions, we realize that so many people are already invested in Ecuador, both willing to go and willing to support those who go. We have received so many affirmations from Ecuador, the United States, and other countries; of people supporting those who are going or inviting others to go to Ecuador. The needs are great; with many lives needing to hear the Gospel of Christ, and many areas ready for evangelism, discipleship, and development. The opportunities are many; with many places where we could start work and many people of peace to work alongside. We have a gifted team, ready to give their lives to the work and yet still have a need for some new team members to come alongside us.

Describe key points or stories in the process and affirmation/confirmation of God's call to Evangelical Friends to go to this particular people or place.

(José) Since before this trip, God was calling me to take the gospel to the Shuar, when I came on this exploration trip, God confirmed what he had started a long time ago, my experience was the following: when I was in the communities that are not very far inland I was able to realize the great need for the Gospel in those places, my conclusion was that if there is enough need in those places that are close, what will it be in those places that are deep in the jungle with difficult geographic access, the need for the gospel and churches planted in those places would increase.

What steps have you taken since returning from the trip or do you need to take in further discernment or exploration of this field?

- A covenant agreement with AMEE2 will need to be completed in the near future.
- Look for more people to be missionaries on the field.
- Promote the Ecuador field across EFC-NA churches, Mexico Yearly Meeting, Bolivia Yearly Meeting, and Peru Yearly Meeting.
- Immerse ourselves in Shuar culture and Shuar language through internet sources, through communications, and through direct Shuar contact.

Luke 10 Team Recommendation to EFM

- Mexico Yearly Meeting will be sending José Olivas to Macas in November. He will be working in partnership with Patricio Leon as he learns Shuar culture, with the intention of eventually moving to Taisha.
- Establish a covenant agreement with AMEE2 and residency for our staff. Edwin Giron has example covenants from AMEE.
- Grace has an opportunity to live in Macas and work with Lucia in outreach to the children in Shuar communities possibly as early as January. Grace will be working on Spanish fluency for about one year in Ecuador.
- Jael will complete university studies in two years and may be ready to work in Ecuador in one to two years, depending on some studies having online access.
- Jerry Clarkson will be able to lead future candidate teams to Morona-Santiago Ecuador during June and July for the next two years.

- Jerry and Kerri Clarkson will be able to start long term work in Ecuador in three years after Jerry retires from teaching.