

ECUADOR PRE-LAUNCH PLANNING REPORT

Report Written by EFM's Ecuador Field Study Group in NWYM, Edited by Jan Cammack

1. In a brief sentence for each of the five CAN GO criteria, what is the latest update concerning each: Champion/s, Affirmation, Need, Gifting, and Opportunity/Openness.

Champions:

- José Olivas, Juarez Friends Church, Mexico; Currently on the field in Ecuador under Mexico Yearly Meeting
- Grace Anderson, Newberg Friends Church, Oregon; Interested future missionary service.
- A number of members of Northwest Yearly Meeting
- Two Hispanic churches in Southwest Yearly Meeting: Iglesias Amigos Las Vegas; currently supporting Jose Olivas
- Two Hispanic churches in Eastern Region: Iglesia Amigos Philadelphia; currently supporting Jose Olivas

Affirmation, Need, Gifting, Opportunity/Openness:

- Each of these have been confirmed by Jose Olivas who is currently serving in Ecuador. He has been talking to Shuar leaders who are asking for help.

2. Compelling conviction to launch (to build just a short paragraph on top of the CAN GO summary). What is the compelling picture that is worth giving our lives or the lives of our sons and daughters to? How might these peoples or places look different because we paid the price to take holistic Good News? What words would sharpen our Help Wanted sign for this new field?

- National Shuar leaders are asking for teaching and training. Although several Christian denominations planted churches among the Shuar in the past, the work has not been sustained in many places since the missionaries left. Leaders are asking for training in evangelism and discipleship to create a sustainable evangelical Christian movement.
- There is great need among women and children. There is rampant substance and sexual abuse. Establishing a ministry for survivors, with counseling from a trained counselor, could be life-changing for these women and children. Bringing in couples or families with a healthy husband/father figure who can disciple and model Godly manhood for the community could prove equally transformative for the Shuar men.

3. Strategy : What informal ideas make the most sense at this time for how this mission field will be launched and developed? How does this impact entry strategy?

- Macas (Sevilla – in Canton Morona) has been a strategic city for entry into Shuar territory. The Badgleys cultivated valuable contacts there which have been invaluable to our exploratory teams and now to Jose Olivas.
- Macas remains a good starting point for missionaries to learn language and culture while working with local churches. Joining the work of an existing camp and their outreaches to women and children could provide a “soft” entry into Shuar language, culture, and ministry.

- We've been invited by Shuar leaders to send short-term instructors/teachers for intensive focused courses. Mendez, and Limon, and Palora are areas where we can send temporary teachers and also send teams to learn Shuar language and culture.

4. Visa: What are the visa requirements and what are our best options? What, if anything, does this mean for strategy or preparation?

- We must establish a covenant agreement with AMEE, (Asociacion de Misiones Evangelicas Ecuatorianas) the interdenominational agency that provides legal and promotional support for Ecuadorian missionaries. Jose Olivas and Mexico Yearly Meeting are paving the way for working with attorneys and government officials as Jose has started serving in Ecuador.

5. Skill Sets: What are the skill sets that stand out as we look for missionary candidates for this field? How might people in your church hear the opportunity and call, including those who never imagined themselves as "missionaries." How might the call for workers help people discover that their life or work experiences, character and interests fit into the missionary team/s? Young adults? Mid-career? Retired? Long term? One to two years of service?

- There is a need for both long-term and short-term gifted foundational Bible and Theology teachers. There is a need for teachers of evangelism and discipleship.
- There is a need for workers among women and children including trained counselors.

6. Language Learning: First term missionary's objectives will focus on language and culture learning through immersion. What relationships and connections might be available for language helpers for language learning through immersion? Are there formal language school options that should be considered? How much will these options cost? How does this impact what city or neighborhood they start?

For those needing to learn Spanish:

- Possible immersion into existing Mexico ministries.
- Possible immersion into work in Macas, Ecuador. This option also gives exposure to Ecuadorian and Shuar language and culture.
- Possible language schools in Quito although this would be farther removed from the Shuar.
- An EFM provided language helper to provide language learning strategies.

For fluent Spanish speakers learning Shuar:

- Immersion into Shuar communities. Jose found a teacher/mentor to work with in a Shuar village.

7. Location: Where will our missionaries live? What is the region, specific city, or neighborhood?

For Spanish learners:

- Cities on the edge of Shuar territory such as Macas, Mendez, or Limon. Recommend living and learning in one of these for the first 2 years and then reevaluate.

For Spanish speakers:

- Shuar villages such as Taisha, Yasnunca, and San Joaquin (where Jose is working.) These are Shuar villages asking for help.

8. Lifestyle: What will the missionary lifestyle look like for their first term of culture and language learning immersion? Will they have a car or use public transportation? Will they live on their own or with someone else?

- Cities such as Macas, have apartments and houses for rent.
 - For Singles in Macas there are apartments near church contacts and pastors.
- Cities have schools and public transportation.
- For village work, access to a car or motorcycle is essential. Hiring a driver is possible but can get expensive.
 - Jose is finding that hiring drivers is using much of his budget. He is pursuing buying a motorcycle.
 - Some warn that, although using public transportation is expensive, it enables better entry into the community. Owning a car (transportational self-reliance) may be isolating.

9. Spiritual Issues: What are the significant spiritual issues in the area? How does this impact missionary self-care and support in this particular environment (i.e. coping strategies)?

- Shuar society contains a pervasive culture of: animism, witchcraft, alcohol and drug abuse, and sexual immorality including incest.
- Those ministering, especially among tribal cultures like the Shuar, need advanced training and coaching from those experienced with this type of spiritual darkness.
- Missionaries among the Shuar, need extra prayer support both locally and from home. It is important that they develop local Christian relationships and a prayer/support community.

10. Missionary Care: What needs considered for missionary care in the first term of language learning and culture bonding. What support is required? What pace and rhythms should be considered in this immersion context? Where will the missionary/s go for respite? Are there needs for on-site short- or long-term missionary support personnel? What support or camaraderie already exists in the area of service? What options are there for children's education (if applicable)?

Missionaries among the Shuar need:

- extra prayer support both locally and from home.
- to develop local Christian relationships and a sustained prayer/support community.

- coaching from experienced missionaries: Giron's have frequent contact with Jose for mentoring and encouragement.
- Rest and retreat options: Possible locations include Quito, Banos, Limon, and Cuenca
- yearly prayer trips from supporters.

11. Teams: It is natural to ask “what if” we have one missionary household ready to deploy but we don’t have others identified or ready. There are many ways to define teams and each context/scenario will impact the way EFM would have “peace of mind” short or long term in the process of launching and building/developing healthy thriving teams and mission strategy long term. Please identify what missionary or ex-pat personnel outside of EFM are working (or planning to work) in the area of this new field location who could serve as interim or long term “team” support to EFM worker/s. Briefly explain current status of relationship with these persons.

- We have in-country relationships with national Christians.
 - Jose has begun in Ecuador working in partnership/collaboration with national Patricio Leon in Macas while commuting out to Shuar villages. He intends to eventually live in a Shuar village.
 - We have contacts with a Christian camp near Macas asking for help.
- We are praying for additional team members.

12. Support Budget: What will the major field expenses be during the first term? Housing? Language helper and/or language classes? Transportation? Any insights concerning income levels and lifestyle in the area of service? What else?

- Jose Olivas is currently living in Ecuador and his experience as a single person will be invaluable to set realistic budgetary goals. Mexico Yearly Meeting has given him a budget but is working on increasing that budget due to expensive travel, rent, food, and the need for teaching materials. Living in Macas (and in cities in general) is more expensive than living in a smaller village.
- There is public transportation in cities but in general, unless you own a car, lots of walking is required.
- Cities usually have reliable electricity. There is no electricity in some villages (such as Yasnuca).

13. Possible Missionaries: Who are possible missionary candidates for this field that we should be talking with and preparing? This includes people who don’t have traditional “call” but are willing and able to serve within EFM’s missionary qualifications and within context of type of service.

Career Missionaries:

- Jose Olivas is currently serving, sent by Mexico Yearly Meetings.
- Grace Anderson, Northwest Yearly Meeting, is pursuing missionary service.
- Jael Ayala, Northern Mexico Yearly Meeting, is interested and considering options for the future.

Possible Teachers/Trainers for short intensive trainings: (Our dreams)

- Maybe Edwin and Maria Giron, Ken Comfort, Hal and Nancy Thomas, etc???

14. Partnerships and relationships with other organizations, or collaborations with other regions/yearly meetings in the U.S.

- Mexico Yearly Meetings: They are currently sending Jose Olivas.
- Friends Southwest: Two churches (Iglesias Amigos Las Vegas) are currently supporting Jose Olivas.
- EFC Eastern Region: Two churches (Iglesias Amigos Philadelphia) are currently supporting Jose Olivas.
- Northwest Yearly Meeting: Initiated this field with the Badgley family and anticipates sending Grace Anderson in the future.
- AMEE: (Asociacion de Misiones Evangelicas Ecuatorianas) the agency that provides legal and promotional support for Ecuadorian missionaries.

15. What are other insights, questions, concerns, points which need to be noted and remembered?

- NWYM initiated this field in the mid 2000's with the Russ and Sarah Badgley family and a small but dedicated prayer team from Newberg Friends church has prayed for the Shuar field for many years. Recently the 94 year old convener of that now very small prayer group has had to step down and the group is not formally meeting. In the last several years NWYM support has lost momentum for Ecuador compared to previous years. Although Grace Anderson is pursuing missionary service in Ecuador, we are concerned that there needs to be renewed interest across NWYM.
- We are very excited about the potential partnerships with the interested churches in Southwest and Eastern Regions and with Mexico Yearly Meetings. It is exciting that as NWYM momentum declines other areas are picking up this vision.
- We need to make more partners.