

Ecuador Merazonia

2013



Fundraising Target:  
£1000\*

- **\*NB:**

- Fundraising target needs to be raised ONE MONTH PRIOR TO SCHEDULED DEPARTURE. If target is not met by this date your deposit will not be returned to you;
- Please always raise more than the fundraising target to account for (approx. **£15** international bank transfer fee) **and % taken from VirginGiving** accounts;
- To find out more please see the 'fundraising formalities' section of this handbook

InterVol Society  
Guild of Students  
University of Birmingham

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# January Checklist

## In January, each volunteer needs to...

- ☐ Join the InterVol Society (via Guild website login or membership form available from the Guild)
- ☐ **Sign and submit the volunteer agreement**
- ☐ **Give your £50 deposit to the committee and sign the 'Deposit Contract' form**
- ☐ Deposits are paid by cash or cheque (made payable to 'InterVol, Guild of Students') and will be available to reclaim this after the annual project evaluation meeting takes place before the beginning of the next academic year.\*
- ☐ **Submit £15 liability insurance to the committee and sign the 'Insurance Disclaimer' form**
- ☐ Fill out a CRB form in Student Development ([ASAP](#)) (if applicable)
- ☐ To do this go to the helpdesk in Student Development in the Guild of Students with some forms of ID (the desk can tell you what ID they need to see). Once you have completed the form the Guild of Students will send it off and it can take up to eight weeks to be processed (so get them done ASAP!) If you have a CRB check from an external source you will still need to do one with the Guild.
- ☐ Make sure you have a valid passport that is in date for at least six months after you are likely to return to the UK after your project
- ☐ Check if you need a travel/entry visa for your country
- ☐ Try and meet with your group or at the very least get talking on Facebook to begin fundraising
- ☐ Start looking into the dates of trip, flights, insurance and vaccinations.
- ☐ **Get in contact with your NGO to get communications going and begin planning.**
- ☐ If you volunteered with InterVol last year and would like your deposit to roll over please email us with your name and the project you were previously involved with

# Your Group Roles & Responsibilities

## Your responsibility as an 'InterVolunteer' project group member

- ❖ **Time availability & flexibility** – to attend group meetings and socials, plan fundraising as well as implementing the fundraising events themselves
- ❖ **Excellent communication** with your group & your parent coordinator
- ❖ **Professional & personal organisation** – get all your flights, insurance, vaccinations, visas sorted ASAP, fill in any paperwork required & given to you by your project coordinator, InterVol & the Guild
- ❖ **Fulfil roles and tasks appointed to you by the project coordinator and committee**
- ❖ **Attend all training sessions**, they are compulsory & **non-attendance will jeopardise the return of your deposit** – email info will be sent out beforehand regards training sessions
- ❖ **Elect first aid reps** from your project group to attend first aid training (1-2 people max)
- ❖ **FUNDRAISING** – each group member must do everything within their power to reach the target, **meet your group early, plan early, execute early!**

## The Project Coordinator's responsibilities (these will come naturally! 😊)

**NB:** We have elected your project coordinator on the basis of the applications and interviews. If you feel at any point that they are unable to carry out the responsibilities and tasks required of them, please alert your parent coordinator or your committee member project rep immediately to help resolve the situation.

**You are the link between your group and the committee and as such your responsibilities are as follows (don't be intimidated, it will all come naturally and this is just a guidance outline):**

- ❖ **Create a Facebook group** inviting all group members and your parent coordinator to it – tag, talk, plan and execute!
- ❖ **Create 'VirginGiving' (with InterVol registered charity) account/page** to gain general donation fundraising online (see fundraising section of this handbook)
- ❖ **FUNDRAISING – you are the main person in charge of planning fundraising events and carrying them out. Ensure you plan all activities with your group well in advance and make sure you plan enough activities and events relative to your fundraising target – remember, if you do not reach your target your deposit will be withheld.**
- ❖ Set fundraising targets for each week and month of your groups time campaigning, ensure these are kept on top of to prevent getting behind
- ❖ **Managing communications with all members of your group** to ensure you plan and carry out events to the best of your ability – don't be afraid to distribute tasks/roles!
- ❖ **Contact the NGO ASAP** and regularly post-departure, to ensure they are notified, and kept in-the-loop, with: volunteer numbers, group changes, time of summer volunteer placement itself as negotiated with your group (to reserve places on site and accommodation if



necessary), and fundraising progress. **This is all of paramount importance to ensure your project runs as successfully as it possibly can**

- ❖ **Managing communications with your parent coordinator** – they went on the trip last year so give them the chance to help you whenever they can
- ❖ **Managing communications with the committee** in terms of assistance, paperwork, training, socials and updates. **You are the main point of contact between your group itself and this year's committee – ensure you are always easily contactable**
- ❖ There is a project committee rep for each group that you can get in contact with for issues beyond your parent coordinator's control
- ❖ **Work closely with group treasurer** to ensure that all funds are raised, safely transported and transferred into Guild accounts, as well as monitoring the Guild-Trustee-NGO transfer after target has been met
- ❖ **Manage and submit all group paperwork for your trip abroad (see forms section)**
- ❖ **Manage and submit event activity, room booking and consent forms to StuDev in the Guild** when planning on-campus and/or external fundraising planning and activities – if this paperwork is not completed your fundraising events could be subject to cancellation (see fundraising section)
- ❖ **Manage communications with Guild and Kate Prescott**, particularly with reference to above mentioned event planning and paperwork, as well project abroad paperwork representative of your group
- ❖ **Ensure all group members attend the compulsory training required**

### **Post-project**

- ❖ After you have returned from your project, it'll be your sole responsibility to do the following:
- ❖ Attend the Annual InterVol Evaluation Meeting before the next academic year begins.
- ❖ Prepare and present your own presentation of your project experiences to the new prospective applicants at the start of the autumn term;
- ❖ Interview applicants for the following summers projects;
- ❖ Attend all activities and events asked of you by the committee throughout the year itself (this includes some socials, project-specific cultural training as well as generally meeting with your project group;
- ❖ You will be in charge of your project groups (as their parent coordinator) for the next academic year and oversee/manage their progress as the year goes on.

**Report anything of concern to your committee project rep/committee**

### **The Project Group Treasurer's Responsibility (these will come naturally! 😊)**

- ❖ **Management of fundraising funds** – securely collect, transport and submit all hard cash fundraised money from events to the correct InterVol account (e.g. InterVol Merazonia account) Student Development counter in the Guild
- ❖ **NB: NO fundraised funds should be put into personal/external bank accounts**

- ❖ **Work closely with your group's project coordinator** to ensure you are both keeping on top of everything
- ❖ **Work closely with the Finance committee member with guidance/issues to do with finance/treasurer responsibilities**
- ❖ **Fill in all necessary finance forms** when submitting fundraised cash to Student Development in the Guild
- ❖ **Keep track of fundraising money regularly in Guild account as well as on VirginGiving site** (please see notes on this in fundraising section of handbook)
- ❖ **Keep committee up-to-date with fundraising amounts** and ensure targets from all streams of funding are totalled and accounted for by application deadline
- ❖ **Before/on application deadline, begin process of transferring and monitoring funds from Guild accounts, VirginGiving account to the Trustees** (contact email stated in contacts section of handbook) – **please keep NGO in the loop with this so preparations can be made for your arrival**

Report anything of concern to your committee project rep/committee

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## Contact Information

### Your group's contact details

Create a Facebook group inviting all members as soon as possible in order to communicate well – tag, talk, plan, and execute! Start fundraising quickly to keep it easy ☺


### Your parent coordinator's contact details

Your *parent* coordinator was the *project* coordinator for 2012's summer trip, so they have all the knowledge and experience from being there before. They are there to give you guidance with pretty much ANYTHING! Just ask them, they're bound to know ☺

Caroline Ratcliffe – [CXR918@bham.ac.uk](mailto:CXR918@bham.ac.uk)

### Your committee rep's contact details

If you have any enquiries (general or more serious) that your parent coordinator cannot answer or resolve, the committee rep for your project is there to help with anything you need and are **your first point of contact to the committee of InterVol UoB itself**. They are usually also a past volunteer from your specific project, too!

**Caroline Ratcliffe** – [CXR918@bham.ac.uk](mailto:CXR918@bham.ac.uk)

## **NGO contact details**

Your point of contact when communicating with NGO you'll be volunteering with.

**Project Coordinator:** Get in contact/email with them as soon as possible and keep them updated with your dates, flights, volunteer numbers, fundraising and any changes that occur.

Ask them about absolutely anything when planning your trip (hostels, advice etc), they live in the country after all!

**Name:** Frank Weijand

**Position:** Manager

Tel: 00-593-(0)84213789

Email: [merazonia@mail.com](mailto:merazonia@mail.com)

## **12-13 Committee and contact details**

To get in contact with the committee please email [intervol@live.co.uk](mailto:intervol@live.co.uk)

If you want to email a specific committee member, please state "FAO: <name>" in the subject line of the email.

## **Your Guild Contacts:**

### **Kate Prescott**

Kate is your first point of contact with the Guild – most of the project abroad paperwork needs to be submitted to her. She is also happy to help with any queries or concerns relating to planning fundraising and project group work.

Email [k.prescott@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:k.prescott@guild.bham.ac.uk)

## **Student Development**

Send all event planning forms and enquiries to Student Development, include room bookings, activity forms, catering forms etc.

Email: [studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:studentgroups@guild.bham.ac.uk)

Steve Streatfield (for more specific enquiries): [s.streatfield@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:s.streatfield@guild.bham.ac.uk)

## **Room Bookings**

Contact Rachael Henn in the Guild when wanting to book Guild spaces/rooms out for fundraising events (state you are part of InterVol) and contact her for info on booking rooms externally to the Guild.

Email: [r.henn@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:r.henn@guild.bham.ac.uk)

## **InterVol Charity Trustees**

You will mainly be involved with the trustees during the transferral of fundraising money to the NGOs themselves, but feel free to pop them an email if you've got any specific questions! ☺

Email: [info@intervol.co.uk](mailto:info@intervol.co.uk)

Website: [www.intervol.co.uk](http://www.intervol.co.uk)

InterVol is in place to give a sustainable, transparent and ethical structure to connect young people in the United Kingdom with trustworthy, community-owned projects in the developing world. We want to make international volunteering projects accessible, affordable and rewarding for students; we aim to maximise the impact that young volunteers can make globally.

As a registered charity, InterVol has a board of trustees which is made up of former InterVol committee members and project co-ordinators. Between them they have an extensive knowledge of international development and InterVol's projects. The trustees work closely with the InterVol university committees and work to build beneficial relationships with other charities and universities. The board of trustees works closely with project co-ordinators and university committees each year to evaluate our projects and ensure that our volunteers are having the maximum impact they can.

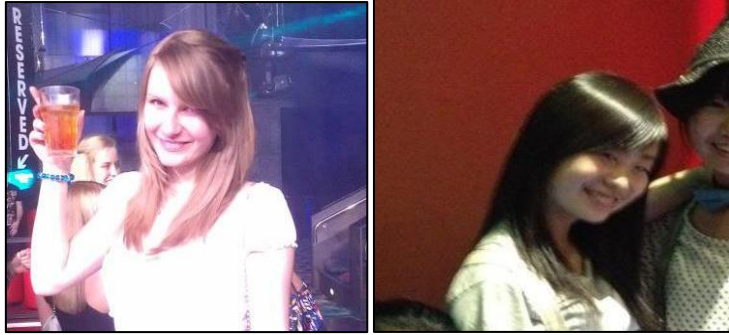
InterVol currently has branches at the University of Birmingham, Imperial College London, Lancaster University and the University of Nottingham and is in the process of expanding to more universities in the UK.

## **Your 2012-2013 Committee**



**(left) Caroline Ratcliffe: President, (right) Hannah Patterson: Vice President of Projects**





**(left) Ola Kucharska: Vice President of Internal Affairs, (right) Yao Wang: Treasurer**



**(left) Liz Waind: PR, (right) Kat Payman: Training**



**Richard Harvey: Fundraising**

## Get more involved with InterVol! Join the Committee!

- ❖ Essential CV experience for future employment (especially travel/charity sector)
- ❖ Gain tons of skills including: teamwork & leadership development
- ❖ Everyone is welcome! Your experience on the is vital to the future of InterVol

**Thinking of running for a position?!** Take a look at the relevant section in this handbook for information on each role

Come to the **Spring Term AGM** to run for **2013-2014 Committee Positions!** Look out for the **email & event!**

## Our Social Networks



**'InterVol Birmingham'**

FOLLOW US ON

**twitter**

**@InterVolUK**

# Flights

**MUST Book by: Monday 4th March 2013**

**You must book your flights during the summer vacation, do not book them outside the following dates:**

**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2013 – Monday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013**

**AS SOON AS YOUR FLIGHTS ARE BOOKED YOU MUST NOTIFY THE COMMITTEE**

Where to book flights to:

- ❖ **OXAB Bulgaria:** Sofia, Bulgaria
- ❖ **LSO Kenya:** Nairobi-Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Kenya
- ❖ **Horizon Farm Trust:** Durban, South Africa
- ❖ **PSD Nepal:** Kathmandu Tribhuvan International Airport, Nepal
- ❖ **Merazonia Ecuador:** Quito Mariscal Sucre International Airport, Ecuador

For info on how to get to your project from the airport, please see the 'getting to your project' section.

**Book your flights as soon as you can to ensure you pay the lowest price possible.**

**Please notify the committee as soon as you have sorted your flights out.**

The UoB Guild of Students has its own **STA Travel agency**; most past volunteers have arranged flights through them as they are well-known for cheap student rates, we thoroughly recommend them! They are really helpful for any kind of travel query at all, so don't hesitate to pop in for a quick chat, even if you're not booking anything with them!

**Useful services for flights:**

[www.skyscanner.net](http://www.skyscanner.net)

[www.ebookers.com](http://www.ebookers.com)

[www.travelsupermarket.com](http://www.travelsupermarket.com)

[www.lastminute.com](http://www.lastminute.com)

[www.kayak.co.uk](http://www.kayak.co.uk)

[www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk)

[www.expedia.co.uk](http://www.expedia.co.uk)

[www.dialaflight.com](http://www.dialaflight.com)

# Visas

**Arrange ASAP**

Please enquire with your host country's embassy in London (via a google search and email) to see if you need to acquire a visa before you depart and for upon entry to your host country.

## **Does your nationality mean you require a visa for entry into your specific country?**

**British Nationals** are covered in many countries but constant international changes mean that British visa regulations for many countries can often change, so always check.

**European/International Students:** please endeavour to check as soon as possible as the conditions of your entry may differ from British Nationals and waiting times for visas may also be longer.

**Always bear in mind the length of your stay in the country – don't get a 30-day visa when you're planning to stay for just over a month! It's not worth the risk and you could be subject to the country's penalisation fines , laws and justice system.**

Some visas require months in advance to process (occasionally as much as 6 months!) as well as a trip down to London, or an application procedure, so please, please look into this immediately to ensure you are granted access far enough in advance.

Other visas will mean you prepare paperwork (or not actually do anything) before your arrival at the host-country's airport. Upon arrival at these airports you may however be expected to buy a visa and thus you'll need to have the enough of the appropriate currency to pay for this.

## **Travel Insurance**

### **MUST Book by: Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013**

Arrange your travel insurance as soon as you can to ensure it is out of the way and not looming over you.

Make sure you read the insurance policy to ensure you are **completely covered for anything you may be doing**, for example, to name just a few:

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| ❖ Working with animals                              | ❖ Remote emergency medical transport |
| ❖ Working with children/orphanages/day care centres | ❖ Cancellation of flights            |
| ❖ Working with sports                               | ❖ Loss of luggage                    |
| ❖ Light construction                                | ❖ Extreme sports                     |

If policies are unclear/lengthy, **call the insurance company directly to clarify that you are definitely covered for your trip/activities.**

**Insurers and useful websites used by past volunteers (some banking policies already cover you/will be willing to):**

- ❖ [www.insureandgo.com](http://www.insureandgo.com)
- ❖ [www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk) (can be arranged in the STA GoS branch)
- ❖ [www.moneysupermarket.com](http://www.moneysupermarket.com)
- ❖ [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)
- ❖ <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/staying-safe/travel-insurance>
- ❖ <http://www.direct-travel.co.uk>

## Health, vaccinations & medication

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### **MUST have sorted by: Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013**

#### **GP/Doctor referral**

Book an appointment with your GP/Doctor to discuss the required (and optional!) vaccinations and medication for your host country. Some you will have to pay for, others you won't (British Nationals get a plethora of free vaccinations, so you'd be silly not to!).

**Make an informed decision!** If they say it's recommended but not optional, then think hard before you get it, especially if it is pricey!

**Do your research and shop around!** Many vaccinations and medications can be obtained from other medical practices, pharmacies, and hospitals. Going down this route could save you a lot of money!

**Decided to travel around?** Remember you could need additional vaccinations and medication for entry into other parts of your host country, as well as travelling to a completely different country.

#### **Rabies**

Many tourists consider the rabies vaccination when travelling abroad, however, unless you are coming into close and frequent proximity with rabid/stray animals or are located in a remote location (more than 24 hours to nearest tropical disease-capable hospital) it can often be an extra cost that is not necessarily required. So think hard before getting it!

#### **Anti-malarial tablets**

When we went (summer 2012) we didn't require malaria tablets at Merazonia or the areas we visited (Quito, Banos, Puyo, Otavalo, Cuicocha) due to the high altitude and low risk. However, things may have changed when you guys go, so it is always best to contact Frank at Merazonia, **just in case!** Also, if you would feel more comfortable with taking them whilst you're out there then go for it. 😊

**Remember that if you're visiting different areas of Ecuador/South America after/before your volunteering placement at Merazonia you may need anti-malarial tablets for these additional areas.**

**Remember to take all (and enough) medications you personally need out there with you, accounting for the duration of stay, pharmaceutical locality (will you be able to get**



replacements easily if you lose anything?). Always prepare extra in case of losses/thefts etc.

#### **Recommended websites:**

- ❖ <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/index.htm>
- ❖ <http://www.travax.nhs.uk>
- ❖ <http://www.traveldoctor.co.uk>

### **General In-Country Health**

Refer to your GP when it comes to recommended travel and in-country health procedures for specific countries. More info can be found here:

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/staying-safe/>

## **Compulsory Training**

If you fail to attend any of the relevant training sessions without good reason you are likely to lose some of your deposit (£10 is deducted per training session). We understand that you are already giving up your own time in order to benefit other people and communities but it is important that you are well prepared. The people running all these sessions are giving up their own time to conduct these sessions please respect this and take on board everything that is said. If you cannot attend a training session please email the Training Coordinator in advance at [intervol@live.co.uk](mailto:intervol@live.co.uk).

You will be warned when these training sessions are approaching. Please ask if you are unsure if one of the sessions applies to you.

### **General Cultural and Ethics Training and AIDS Awareness**

This is a training session held by the Guild. It gives you a general over view of points you need to be aware of when travelling or staying in other countries. What is and is NOT appropriate obviously changes when visiting other countries and this must be respected while you are on your project. You can book a place online at this website: <http://guildgetinvolved.eventbrite.co.uk/> . Those who are going on the Nepal project will have extra Cultural Awareness training in Kathmandu when they arrive.

### **Cultural and risk assessment training – project specific**

Every project will have its own Cultural and Risk Assessment training. This will be held by parent coordinator/committee members and is based entirely around your project's country and locations. These sessions are based on previous volunteer's experiences. This has been created as a new addition to the training, by popular demand, as it will make you as prepared as possible for entering into the new culture of your specific host country. Many topics will be brought up during this training that you would not have even thought about before. This will be a great chance for you to ask any questions about the country you are travelling to and to voice any concerns you may have.

## First aid training

This will be an Essential First Aid course (EFA) and MUST be attended by one member from each group. It will be conducted at the University of Birmingham by the St John's Ambulance. As you are a volunteer with InterVol, the society will cover the costs of this training which is £30 per person. This training, like all the others, MUST be taken very seriously. This training can be added to your CV if you attend. If your group does not have a qualified first aider you cannot go to your project, this is for your own safety.

## Fundraising training with Kate VPC

Kate Prescott is the Volunteer Project Co-ordinator within the Guild so she manages a lot of the societies. She will be giving you a lot of help with how to conduct any fundraising. There are multiple forms that need to be filled out and submitted to the Guild weeks in advance before any activity can be allowed to go ahead on the university premises (including the halls of residence). Kate will explain each of the forms to you during this training and will be inform you about how to fill them in correctly. Even if you are already a part of a society and think that you know how to do all of these forms already we still expect you to attend this meeting as each year the system changes and we want you to be as up to date as possible. Be aware that throughout your fundraising you are not just representing InterVol and your project but the university as well.

# Compulsory Volunteering Abroad Guild & InterVol Paperwork

Before you leave, there are various forms that you need to fill in for the benefit of yourselves as well as for the Guild/InterVol. After all, you're not exactly just taking part in a normal external Guild activity, you're going abroad!!

We will be sending out the forms below throughout the spring term and hand them back in TO US (before the Guild) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. However, if you want to earn extra brownie points and want to make a good start on these forms, don't hesitate to email us and ask for them!

Below is a little bit about each of the different kinds of paperwork

## **Project Details Form (submit it to InterVol/Kate Prescott & take it out with you)**

All of your details regarding your project, travelling, insurance etc goes on this form and it is needed by the Guild and InterVol to ensure all main priorities and formai paperwork/person spending and aspects are recorded and documented for our reference and in the event of an emergency so that we can call you.

## **Emergency Plan (submit it to InterVol/Kate Prescott & take it out with you)**

This helps you guys plan for how to deal with difficult/emergency situations whilst out in your host-country and whilst on project. It should also contain ALL contact details for your family/friends back home as well as the Guild, InterVol, and your host-counties UK (and other nationalities) embassies.

### **Risk Assessment (submit it to InterVol ONLY & take it out with you)**

This will be a run through of ALL risks that could potentially be a threat to you and you group and how to avoid such situations, as well as how to plan and deal with them should they happen.

## **Fundraising Deadline & Formalities**

**Your fundraising target NEEDS to be met by: 1 month prior to when you are due to depart**

### **Fundraising Workshop – Taking Place: Beginning of Semester 1**

Richard Harvey, our VP of Fundraising, and Kate Prescott, the Guild's Volunteering Project Coordinator, will be holding a small fundraising session after week 1 or 2 of Semester 2 (spring term).

Although this is not compulsory **it is extremely recommended that you attend**, as it will be beneficial in terms of obtaining guidance with Guild formalities and paperwork, as well as an opportunity to talk one-on-one with Richard and Kate (and possibly other members of the committee, too!) about event/activity ideas and fundraising more generally.

**Please look out for the email from InterVol/Kate Prescott regarding this event.**

### **Extremely important fundraising formalities to bear in mind!**

- ❖ We have already stated to you that if you do not meet the fundraising target of your project you will be refused the return of your deposit;
- ❖ Please bear in mind that **we require the fundraised target to be met a month prior to the due date of your departure**. This is extremely important as within this month we need to account for the multiple transfers (can always take up to a few weeks to go from the Trustees to the NGOs themselves). This time period also allows us to prepare for any delays, problems/errors within the transfer as well as ensuring that the NGO is ready for your arrival on-site.
- ❖ **To account for unavoidable international bank transfer fees, we require you to add an extra £15 to the total of the fundraising target to ensure that these fees are covered and are not taken out of the funds for the NGOs**
- ❖ Please also bear in mind that when using the Virgin Money Giving website pages to raise your donations online, Virgin will take a 2% fee from the amount that is raised on it. Please make sure that you account for this in the total fundraising target to ensure that this is covered and not taken out of the funds for the NGOs.

- ❖ In the ‘**fundraising ideas**’ section we have provided an array of fundraising events/ideas on-campus as well as more generally which should assist you in generating your final fundraising target.
- ❖ Please be aware that the Guild also provides its own fundraising leaflet which you can either pick up in Student Development or find here under ‘fundraising, trusts and sponsorship’ (trust funds are a more long-term investment so we advise you to steer-clear of this route):
- ❖ <http://www.guildofstudents.com/main-menu/student-groups-volunteering/societies/student-groups-societies-hidden/pick-and-mix-documents>
- ❖ It is useful to take advantage of the Guild’s hundreds of other student groups, too, there is an array of other volunteering and campaigning societies that will be more than happy to hold joint events or help promote your own!
- ❖ Please be ethical in your fundraising, ensuring both you and your donors have mutual gains. Don’t mislead them as to where the money is going – remember you are covering the costs of flights, food and accommodation yourselves!

### **Group effort, individual obligation – try splitting your total into group member-amounts**

When organizing an event or a number of activities, it is usually a good idea to delegate/split responsibilities so that there is not just one person doing all the work. Remember, you are working together as a group. :-)

In the past, groups have found it very beneficial to divide the total fundraising amount into individual chunks so everyone knows what to aim for, however, we do still encourage you guys work as a group in order to fulfil the target.

### **Compulsory Guild forms/paperwork needed for fundraising events & activities**

When planning events, on-campus and externally, you need to fill in a number of mandatory forms/various types of paperwork and submit it to the Guild (as well as other departments of the University if relevant) up to 2-4 weeks in prior to your event/activity. **Failure to fill in the necessary compulsory paperwork to the Guild could result in your event being suspended/cancelled.**

Everyone in your group should take responsibility for these forms, you are working as a group, do not leave this solely down to the project coordinator.

**Below are just a few of the examples of the forms you may need to fill in for your particular event** (please contact Student Development (email in the ‘Contacts’ section of this handbook) for all events and, they can send you the relevant and most updated paperwork to fill in):

- ❖ **Risk Assessment** – submitted 2 weeks before event
- ❖ **Events form/group event activity form** – submitted 2 weeks before event
- ❖ **Catering Form** (for bake/food sales)
- ❖ **External Events Form**
- ❖ **Room Booking Forms** (Inside Guild and also on Edgbaston campus)

## Virgin Giving Page

As mentioned in the notes at the beginning of this section, please do bear in mind the 2% fee that Virgin charges for using their service. As above, please account for this.

Also bear in mind the issue of **'Gift Aid'** donations when using Virgin Money Giving. Although this is a great way to raise money as it generates extra cash through tax, it is staggered quarterly-annually and so is not a reliable source of extra income for your fundraising target. By all means still encourage your donors to use this feature, **but don't add the 'Gift Aid total' to your total amount, as it will not get transferred on time with the rest of your fundraising.**

## Fundraising planning & ideas!

Fundraising is a key part of the InterVol experience. It can be great fun and very rewarding so get involved as much as possible! **Remember:** small-scale and larger-scale events all contribute to the total fundraising target, try out everything, **but remember to fill in the paperwork required! (see the 'fundraising formalities' section of handbook).**

You can do fundraising events on your own or in your group as a team- it is a great chance to get to know each other and have some fun so we would definitely recommend that you do as much together as possible! 😊

## Virgin Giving Page

This is a great way to get all your friends and family to support you! Only one person needs to set up this page for the group, that way it is easiest for InterVol to track this money and where it is going. They are really easy to set up: go to <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/chooseFundraiser.action>

- ❖ Select the 'Personal Challenge' section and follow the steps.
- ❖ You can create the page for just one fundraising group that you are doing or you can just click 'other' and say you are doing multiple events.
- ❖ **All your fundraising MUST be completed by the end of term but preferably you will have reached your target well before that point!** It is up to you how long you keep the page active for.
- ❖ Make sure you select **'working with others'** while going through the sections.
- ❖ Please **put InterVol in the charities name section** as the specific projects cannot be found on the site. This also helps the charity to make sure you are managing to make your target. The money raised from this site will go to the InterVol charity first, however, they then transfer that money to the specific project that you have raised the money for.
- ❖ **When you are filling your fundraising target be sure to put in MORE than what was has been stated to you.** This is because you must be aware that the virgin money giving account **can take up to 5% of what you raise** to cover the maintenance of the site and you using its facilities. It sounds like a lot but all previous groups have felt this to be worth it as it is an efficient and easy way of raising money. Also **do not count the gift aid with in your fundraising total!** Gift aid does not transfer at the same time as the donated money. It is



only transferred through to the charities every three months because of this often this money will not get to the NGO on time and this has caused problems on past projects so **DO NOT rely on gift aid!**

- ❖ When entering the web address it is best to put the name of your host country, the year and your group (ie. nepal2013group1).
- ❖ Please put your project name and your group as your 'Fundraising team'
- ❖ Each person in the group should register to the site so that you can be added to the team's fundraising email list. By doing this, you will be notified when someone has donated to you and you can all edit the page. It is also the best way of keeping track of how close you are to your target.
- ❖ On the actual page explain about the InterVol charity and your specific project; what activities you will be doing to raise the money, how you will be volunteering while you are out on the project, how long you are there for and what all the money goes towards. **MENTION: that you pay for all your flights and living costs so the money only goes to the organisation and not on funding your trip!**
- ❖ Share and post the site on your Twitter and Facebook pages- you may be surprised at how many people will donate to it once they see it.

### **Guild Bank Accounts**

All the money that you raise in cash or cheque form can be put into your group specific Guild account (ie. Nepal Group 1). Just go to the Student Development desk and fill out a 'Paying-in' form where you will have to state how many 5p, 10p, 20p etc coins and notes you have. This will then be verified by someone on the desk. Once all the money has been confirmed they will take it and put it into your account for you. Before the end of term, the committee treasurer will transfer this money to the InterVol charity and they will in turn transfer this to your specific project.

### **InterVol's Fundraising Guidance**

The InterVol charity have their own webpage dedicated specifically for fundraising ideas, assistance and planning, you can access it via here: <http://intervol.co.uk/#/fund-raising-guide/4554603714>

Please also note that their downloadable (PDF) fundraising guide is very helpful!

### **On-Campus events:**

To do anything on campus you **MUST** fill out the appropriate forms that will be explained to you during your fundraising training and can be provided for you from Student Development.

- ❖ Cake sales and table top sales
  - E.g. – Guild (outside/inside), outside the Library, on the paths, outside halls, Muirhead, various departmental buildings, entrances of the University
- ❖ Krispy Kreme sales
  - Get in touch with Krispy Kreme (Selfridges Birmingham) and they'll be able to provide a wholesale discount
  - You can do these pretty much anywhere, just like the cake sales (above)
- ❖ Bucket shakes

- Virtually ANYWHERE on campus – buckets can be acquired from student development (free!)
- ❖ Fab (Guild) Bucket Shakes
- ❖ Vale Fest Stall – June annually - [Valefestival@guild.bham.ac.uk](mailto:Valefestival@guild.bham.ac.uk)
  - Sell cakes, items, crafts, handmade stuff, whatever!
  - You can apply to have a fundraising stall from the email above (do this early!).
  - NB: Whilst this event has good potential for fundraising there will be large competition from other charitable stalls and all profits are split with the official charities that the festival is held in aid of. Also bear in mind that adverse weather conditions can significantly reduce the number of attendees so please don't rely on ValeFest to reach your target. Furthermore, this event is held very late in the year so DO NOT wait until this point to raise a lot of your target money!!!
- ❖ Charity Sports Events
  - Organisable through the Guild and the Sports Centre

## General Ideas/Events

- ❖ Awake-a-thon
- ❖ 'Don't-wash-for-a-week-a-thon'
- ❖ Silence-a-thon
- ❖ Auctions
  - Ebay! When you are putting items up for auction on this site you can actually added a charity number to make sure the money goes straight to the charity. However, if you prefer to manage it all yourself you can auction your stuff on the site then transfer the money into your virgin giving page or your guild account. This method may be better as you can then keep better track of where all your fundraising money is and having it in only one or two places means that it is easier to see how close you are to your target.
  - Memorabilia – signed football/rugby shirts
- ❖ Raffles
  - Can be easily organised and advertised to friends/family/public/students on campus through the internet (Facebook groups) and publically!
  - Email/write around LOADS of places stating the InterVol charity numbers and asking for free stuff for good cause!
  - Theatres tickets, sports tickets, weekends away, spa days, you name it, try it!
  - Items from independent retailers such as folksy.com, etsy.com are very willing to donate little items for this in exchange for a little advertising (can be done on raffle FB group etc)
  - **Obtain online raffle donations using your Virgin Giving page** (ensure people notify you that they've donated this way to keep track!)
- ❖ Car boot sales
- ❖ Sponsored marathons and activities
- ❖ Quiz nights/band nights
- ❖ Swear jar
- ❖ 'Count how many sweets are in the jar'

- ❖ DRESS UP! – Attract extra attention for your event (whatever it is!) by making yourself stand out 😊 it works!

If you want to obtain anything as a donation (ie. free cinema tickets or discounted Krispy Kreme doughnuts) you will need a letter to confirm that you are raising money for the InterVol charity. Please contact the committee at [intervol@live.co.uk](mailto:intervol@live.co.uk) in advance to obtain this letter.

The committee and project co-ordinators will be keeping an eye on each group's fundraising to make sure you have full support and that everyone is doing their bit! You are a group, one person should NOT be raising all the money!

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## NGO Profile

- This project works with the Merazonia Organisation which is a rescue and rehabilitation centre for trafficked and abused Amazonian animals, located on 250 acres of rainforest, in Mera, Ecuador.
- University of Birmingham has a strong relationship with Frank Weijand (the in-country co-ordinator for Ecuador) and they have now been visiting Merazonia since 2007.
- Volunteers help care for a whole range of animals at the centre from otters and parrots to monkeys and pumas. The volunteer's duties include feeding, interacting with the animals, maintaining and constructing enclosures and trails- all to improve the centre.

## The Volunteering

All training and guidance is provided at Merazonia at all times, so you won't need to worry about not having much to do or feeling unsure about certain tasks. Everything will be explained to you and you will always be kept busy directly helping the animals, maintaining the park and enclosures, and assisting the staff.

In order to coordinate your arrival well with Frank, give him an email (listed in contacts section). The usual days for arrival coordination are Sunday and Wednesday, so try to arrive on one of these days.

**For more information on your placement volunteering and the activities that you'll be doing, you may contact Frank directly (see contacts section).**

If you wish to connect your academic studies or previous experience (if you have similar wildlife volunteering engagement experience) in order to shape your stay at Merazonia to your wants and needs, Frank will be very happy to accommodate this, however, in order to assist and excel on your work or previous experience, please ensure you contact Frank as soon as possible.

He can help you engage in various different ways with the park, beyond that of a regular volunteer, with the way it runs and its staff and animals, but in order to do so, he'll need to plan ahead in advance. You should also try to justify the reasons for why you wish to get more out of the placement, don't worry though, Frank is lovely and will be very excited and happy to help!

## **The Volunteering**

A typical day runs pretty much as follows (as of July 2012):

**7:30am** - Start – Wake up, have a quick cup of tea and head down to the bodega (Spanish for 'store') to prepare the animals' food for the morning

**8:00am** – Head off onto your rounds for the morning

**10:30-11:00** – After finishing rounds, head back to the kitchen for breakfast and a small break

**11:00-12:00**- Quick daily chores, include housework, cleaning the bodega, kitchen, bathroom etc

**12:00-14:00** – Project work (except for lazy Sunday's) – various maintenance around the park itself, there's a good chance you'll be using the money that you fundraising yourself as a group to contribute to your own special project which will help the improvement of the refuge and it's animals directly – really rewarding ☺

**14:00-15:00** – Lunch time – have another hour off to make yourself some scrummy food

**15:00** – Second animal rounds begin – head down to the bodega!

**15:30** – Head off onto your rounds for the afternoon

**17:00** – Finish for the day – take a shower and help prepare dinner/relax!

## **Free time**

### **Daily**

As mentioned in the daily volunteering schedule above, you get two breaks throughout the day. Once you finish around 5pm, your free time in the evening is completely open to you! Order a taxi to Mera in order to use the web and get some nice pastries, coke, alcohol! Choose to hang around the refuge itself by just relaxing reading a book or playing ping pong! Help out with the cooking for the evening.

It's not ideal to go venturing around the trails of the refuge after rounds as around 5:30-6:00pm it starts to get dark (this time all year round, it's on the equator, after all!) and you'll just want to stay close to the main camp.

## **'Lazy Sunday' and your day off**

Every Sunday is designated 'Lazy Sunday' (usually!), on this day all rounds and chores still have to be carried out. However, project time, usually held daily 12:00-14:00 is cancelled for the day. Instead, you get an extended breakfast/lunch break to do whatever you wish with!

**Staying on site on your day off:** If you'd prefer to hang around on site during your day off, there are plenty of relaxing activities you can do, such as heading to the waterfalls, relaxing in the dining room/recreational areas, going off on a lengthy jungle-jant! Or just helping out around the refuge as well as visiting the animals.

## **Banos and Puyo**

**Should you wish to spend your day off in one of the local bigger towns, read on... ☺**

You will be expected to volunteer for six days a week. On the evening of your sixth day you'll take a taxi to Mera and hop on a bus to Banos (or Puyo) (the buses going either way are very regular and will have their destinations written on them, once they stop, you can simply ask them where they're going, hop on, and hop off at your destination (they should call it out as you arrive in the town you're getting off in)) and spend one night there, you do not really need to book hostels, although if you want to take a day off in a big group, it is advised you coordinated this with Frank and plan ahead.

After your night off in Banos (or Puyo) you can spend the day relaxing or soaking in what the town(s) have to offer. Catch a bus from the bus station no later than 5pm (to account for delays and traffic) and make sure you're back in Mera BEFORE 7:30pm (as the last taxis finish around this time).

# **Getting to your project**

## **Using the public buses around Ecuador**

The buses themselves are pretty safe, however, sometimes they can get VERY busy and you won't always be guaranteed a seat. Whenever you're travelling on them, whether or not you've got a seat, keep a very sharp eye on your bags and belongings.

They can also sometimes be quite intimidating but just stay laid back and relaxed and you'll be fine. ☺

Buses in Ecuador are usually VERY frequent (except on Sunday evenings, as we found out the hard way!) and so you will never usually be waiting too long to get on one from anywhere taking you to your desired destination. For most you don't have to buy tickets until you are literally about to catch the bus, or you can choose to just purchase them once on board instead.

## **From Quito**

You will presumably be arriving and staying in Quito before you start your project, please note that (as of July 2012) **volunteers normally arrive on Wednesdays or Sundays at Merazonia, so you may want to contact Frank to coordinate this and plan your flights and accommodation in Quito/towns and cities accordingly.**

From the New Town or Old Town of Quito (two main areas for hostels, accommodation and shops/bars restaurants), you'll need to catch a taxi from Quitumbe Bus Terminal (NOT Carcelen). This normally takes around 45-50 mins and it'll cost you about \$10-\$15 (remember to barter!)



### Quitumbe Bus Terminal

Quitumbe Bus Terminal can be pretty intimidating when you're wandering around it as it is HUGE and there are a lot of ticket stalls.

Look out for directions in the terminal and head towards signs that point you to 'boletos' (tickets in Spanish). They'll be lots of stalls trying to get you to buy from them, however, Frank, in the past has recommended San Francisco. As long as you get a bus that is headed for Puyo, Banos and/or Tena, you'll be able to hop off at Mera on these. The prices for buses are roughly \$1/hour on the bus, so to Mera from Quito it should cost you more than \$5 per person.

The buses themselves are pretty frequent (every hour or so), just make sure you head to the right bus stop and get on it early (some seats are reserved for you, but sometimes they're not) to guarantee you a seat for the 5 hour journey.

When you get on the bus, make sure you **ask them to stop and alert you when at 'Mera El Parque' (central square) – it is a small town and so they may not be stopping at it automatically, therefore whenever heading to Mera on your days off/for whatever reason, ALWAYS ask the bus driver or his helper to stop at Mera and to alert you upon approach.**

### From Mera itself to Merazonia

Once you arrived in Mera's (if asked for the correct stop (above)) central square, head over to the 'transmera' taxi rank (it's the only one that operates in Mera), it should have a few blue pick-up trucks outside it, hop on one of these and ask the driver to take you to Merazonia, they know it well! This taxi ride should last no longer than 30-40 minutes and should cost you around \$5 altogether.

If you can't find the taxi rank, just ask locals as they'll be more than happy to help and point you in the right direction.

### Travelling from Mera to Banos/Puyo/Quito

Once you've got a taxi back to Mera from Merazonia, you'll need to catch a bus to your desired location. Buses are REALLY easy to catch just from the side of the road in Mera (it doesn't really have a designated bus stop as it's such a small town), just look out for a bus that states the location you want (or a via point/final destination that you know will be passing the town of your choice, e.g. Quito buses usually always pass Banos, so you can hop on one of these) (make sure you're facing the right direction and on the right side of the road!), ask them to stop at your required town/destination and that's pretty much it! Unless you've pre-arranged tickets, you can just pay the driver's helper once on board.

### Travelling back to Mera from Banos/Puyo

Both Puyo and Banos have their own bus stations so just head on over to these to catch a bus or grab a taxi and ask for 'la parada del bus' (bus station). Once you're at the station you can purchase tickets beforehand or grab them once on board.

If travelling from Puyo, take buses heading towards and labelled for Banos/Quito

If travelling from Banos, take buses heading towards and labelled for Tena/Puyo

Remember to ask the driver/helper to stop at Mera!!

### **Travelling back to Quito after your project**

If you're heading back to Quito after your stay at Merazonia, you can just flag down a bus on the road in Mera that's heading towards Quito. However, if possible, (2012s volunteers found it useful to) head to Banos for a night or two before heading back to the capital (or just get off here to catch a separate bus to Quito). This is much better, as you can purchase tickets and reserve seats once in Banos at the bus station to ensure you have a more comfortable journey back, after all, it can take 5 hours!

You will be dropped off at Quitumbe Bus Terminal, and from here you can catch a taxi back to the New Town or Old Town.

## **Project accommodation**

As of July 2012, Merazonia's accommodation costs \$120 per week of stay. If you are staying for more than 2-3 weeks, please contact Frank to confirm prices for this as they may be reduced to \$100/week if you're staying for longer. See [www.merazonia.org](http://www.merazonia.org) for updated info on this.

**Get in contact with Frank AS SOON AS YOU HAVE sorted your group numbers, time of stay in the summer vacation, duration of stay, so that Frank can reserve the necessary beds and volunteer places for you.**

Most groups pay for their accommodation IN FULL upon arrival, however, if you'd prefer to arrange it to be paid online before you get out there, contact Frank to arrange and account for this.

Your accommodation, food, facilities, pretty much everything on-site during your stay is included in the above price.

### **Accommodation itself**

You'll be staying in the main volunteer house, in dorm-style accommodation with the rest of the volunteers that are working on site at the same time as you.

The house has two levels. On the bottom are the beds and dorm-area; on the second floor is the dining area, where you'll eat all your meals together. This level also houses tons of board games, hammocks, ping pong table and LOTS of books, amongst other things. ☺

### **Food & Facilities**

- In terms of food on-site, there is a huge volunteer-shared kitchen in which all food from weekly shops is stored. There is a lot of food in this kitchen, off the top of my head, it was stocked with such things as:

- LOTS of fruit and veg, exotics such as papaya and rambutans to more common like apples, onions and potatoes
- Cream and milk
- Meat twice a week (on shopping days)
- Coffee, hot chocolate and tea
- Cereal
- LOTS OF EGGS!
- Pasta
- Bread, tortillas and crackers
- Cheese and cream cheese (the cheese really is NOTHING like that back home; don't expect lovely cheddar and red Leicester!)
- Lots of tinned food – tomatoes, mushrooms, sweetcorn etc
- Oats, flour, sugar, baking powder – all great for making cakes!
- **Recipe books** – for making all sorts of dishes!
- **Gas hobs and oven** – VITAL to make all the yummy meals and deserts on site ☺
- ***There's lots more and you can always put in your own special request, too!***
- There is very limited electricity on-site, if any at all. It is advised you charge your phones, cameras etc during your days off in Banos, Puyo or Mera and only turn them on for a few minutes a day to preserve them for the rest of your working week
- Toilet – it is a composting toilet so it takes some getting used to, but you don't have to squat and it certainly does the job!
- Hot shower! Absolutely WONDERFUL at the end of a hard day's work ☺

## Cultural Aspect of your host country

### **General and Project Specific Training (Spring Term) (for further info please go to the training section)**

During the spring term (semester two) you will be required to come along to a cultural and risk training session associated specifically with your project, conducted by your parent coordinator and/or committee member.

During this session the trainer (parent coordinator/committee member) will elaborate on points of notes contained in this handbook below and also on the risk assessment side of your project and the paperwork you'll need to fill in before you leave.

### **FAQs of culture (put together by parent coordinator/past volunteers)**

#### **a. Gender**

From our experience last summer, 2012, there didn't seem to be too much gender discrimination. Women are definitely seen as the 'homemakers' and men the 'breadwinners' of the families, a lot more so than the UK and other Western countries are nowadays.

Men and boys do tend to 'awk' at you quite a bit though sometimes, especially if you're a blonde! But don't worry about this too much it really is nothing but a bit of staring, typical of any kind of country where blondes are much more unique to tourists rather than locals.

#### **b. Sexuality**

Again, we didn't seem to witness any sort of sexuality discrimination either. Homosexual people are around but you don't see them all too often, they seem to be more apparent during nights out in Quito or Banos and even then no one discriminates against them as such.

#### **c. Family**

Family is very important in Ecuador (and in most South American countries), most families stick together during the entirety of their lives and go to many occasions and events together as a family (like church etc). As stated in the 'gender' section, women are seen as the 'homemakers' more so than the males, and men seen as the 'breadwinners' and the parent that earns the money for the family.

#### **d. Common practices**

No particular 'common practices' stood out to us much whilst we were out there in summer 2012. A good basic grasp of the language is definitely well-received and greeted with politeness by the locals, though. So sharpening up on your Spanish is a necessity!

All this being said, Salsa dancing is a huge part of life in Ecuador, so definitely get involved!

Church practice is also a common custom in Catholic-dominated Ecuador

#### **e. Religion**

Ever since the Spanish Conquistadors set foot on the west coast of South America in from the sixteenth century there has been a huge Catholic population in Ecuador (and other South American countries). It is definitely the dominant religion in the country and cathedrals and catholic churches are dominant everywhere. Visiting the churches/cathedrals is a definite must too, wherever you go, they're quite spectacular! Families tend to regularly visit church (particularly on a Sunday, obviously ☺)

#### **f. Clothing**

Like anywhere when going abroad (except for maybe Malia or Ayia Napa and the like), dressing fairly respectfully and modestly is always appreciated and lessens your chances of standing out as typical tourists. When travelling at such high altitude, too, you'll be wanting to wrap up anyway! All this being said, on our nights out, we did see A LOT of locals dressed very provocatively! So don't be shy to dress up for nights out (within reason!) and remember that you will stand out and men have hawk-eyes for scantily-dressed women wherever, and Ecuador is no exception to this! ☺ so just be careful if dressing posh or with less clothes...

#### **g. Typical manners, greetings and thanks of country**

As mentioned above, a good grasp of some basic Spanish goes down very well in Ecuador.

The typical greeting is 'Hola!' obviously and goodbye 'Adios' or 'Ciao' (pronounced 'chow')

Good day = 'buenas dias', good afternoon = 'buenas tardes' and good evening/night 'buenas noches' (buenas is usually pronounced Buenos if a boy is saying it, I THINK, not too sure) ☺

Thanks = 'gracias', thank you very much 'muchas gracias' (muchos for boys, I THINK! Not too sure again, haha!)

#### **h. National issues**

In the past Ecuador has been victim to a few riots to do with the government and taxes, however, these haven't occurred recently and I'm not aware of anything since we've left too.

The borders of Ecuador (particularly the northern border with Columbia) can be VERY dodgy and travelling there alone is STRICTLY prohibited due to rogue drug cartels and a higher risk of crime. Just earlier this year a couple of girls got kidnapped on the Ecuador-Columbia border (they did get found safe, though!)

However, it is always good to check the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for updated information.

#### **i. Race**

Racism wasn't particularly prominent whilst we were out there and as far as I know it isn't much of an issue at all. ☺

#### **j. Volcanoes and Earthquakes**

Ecuador is a beautiful country and the main reason for this is the very active range of volcanoes located all over the country. They can be beautiful to witness from a distance but always check with websites/local advice when visiting certain areas near active volcanos.

Banos' local volcano is called Tungurahua volcano is VERY active and is stunning! However, the town has had to be evacuated quite a few times in recent years and there are guidelines and emergency procedures in place should you be in the town during an eruption. During one of our days off in Banos this year we were awoken by a rather large earthquake but there was no eruption thankfully!

When it comes to other Ecuadorian towns and earthquake/volcano guidelines always check before you depart to go to places where there may be particular risk.

#### **k. Culture shock**

Culture shock may well be connected to how used to other cultures and how much travelling you have done in the past. I have done quite a bit of travelling before, but the countries I've travelled to in the past didn't prepare me that well for Ecuador. But everyone is different! I am a bit of a worrier, that's all.

If you don't know much Spanish you *will* find it more difficult than if you know some, it definitely helps you get along well in the country and the less you know, the more the issue may impede on your general enjoyment of the country.



Generally the main thing that got to me the most in terms of 'culture shock' was the difference in development of the country, which isn't even particularly prominent.

Just bear in mind that you are going to somewhere COMPLETELY different and as much of a scary thing it can sometimes be, it is amazing and the more you worry about things the less you'll enjoy it! Just embrace it all. 😊

### **I. Development and state of country**

As just mentioned, the development of Ecuador is different to the UK and other westernised countries. There are particularly poor parts of most towns and they can be quite shocking at times, with homeless people common as well as stray animals. The best thing to do when in such areas is just be wary of yourself and use your common sense. (also check the 'safe travel tips' section of this handbook if you're particularly worried for any reason! 😊)

## **Information on local vicinity of your project**

### **Mera**

The local town (located 20-30 minutes by taxi from Merazonia, an hour from Banos, 30 mins from Puyo, 4.5-5 hours from Quito) Mera is very small and rural, this being said, it does have small shops/patisseries/bakeries, internet and phone shops, churches and cafes that you can utilise during your time at Merazonia.

This is where you will catch your buses out of town and when you'll be dropped on the way back to Merazonia (see 'getting to your project' section of this handbook).

You can choose to spend your day off here (if you wish to spend your day off at Merazonia, then take a taxi into Mera for the day) to use the services. Most volunteers in the past have gone to Mera during the evenings, after finishing the rounds/volunteering for the day, to have an hour or so on the web, or grabbing some cakes and beers from the local shops.

**Recommended!** The chicken and chips stall next to the Transmera taxi rank makes DELICIOUS chicken and chips with some scrummy sauces, too!!

**Mera's taxis finish operating at 7:30pm so remember to grab a taxi back to Merazonia/out of Merazonia before this time!**

### **Puyo**

Banos is a bit too far to head to unless you plan on spending your day off there, however, in the past volunteers have taken a taxi 30 mins down the road to Puyo for their evenings. There are some brilliant restaurants in the centre of the town as well internet cafes, banks, a western union and a greater variety of shops than in Mera.

**Recommended!** 'El Jardin' located quite a way from the centre of Puyo so make sure you either know where you're going, get directions from the staff at Merazonia or ask the taxi driver to take you straight there. They do a MEAN steak as well as some wonderful vegetarian dishes and pasta!

## Recreational Travel in Country and Region

Lonely Planet provides a great travel guide of Ecuador and the Galapagos islands with loads of useful tips on food, accommodation and attractions of this beautiful country. This can be found at [www.lonelyplanet.com](http://www.lonelyplanet.com) for £16.99 or as you are students there are surely second-hand copies available on amazon.co.uk.

There is a huge variety of places and activities to do in Ecuador so there will definitely be something for everyone!

### Quito-

- The capital city that you will be flying in and out of
- You are recommended to stay here for a few days before you go to the Merazonia centre so that you can get used to the altitude anyway! – it's best to arrange accommodation in the New Town or Old Town for the best accessibility to amenities, shops, bars, restaurants etc
- You can get a hostel for under £5 per person per night
- The Company of Jesus Church is a beautiful piece of architecture and is described as 'Quiteno-colonial art' so would definitely be worth a visit
- The Cloud forest reserve- it is the closest pristine rainforest to Quito
- Green Horse Ranch for horseback riding
- The Intian museum- learn a bit about the history of Ecuador

### Galapagos Islands-

- 13 islands which are full of weird and wonderful wildlife that cannot be found anywhere else in the world.
- If you do want to travel here wait until you are in Ecuador to book your trip as it can be up to 50% cheaper and you are helping the local communities rather than huge corporate businesses!!!
- You can get hostels for just over £10 per person per night so just search around for the best deals while you are there.
- There are opportunities for; snorkelling, kayaking, hiking, surfing, bird watching and scuba diving
- Or you could visit their various park and reserves to check out the wildlife!

### Peru-

- Since you are paying so much for flights you may as well make the most of your time in Latin America by seeing the wonderful countries that neighbour it.
- You can get a hostel for just over £5 per person per night
- There is the opportunity here to trek the Inca trail on the Machu Picchu mountain
- Amazon Rainforest- another once in a life time to see more amazing wildlife!
- Tour the Floating Islands of Lake Titicaca- learning more about the lives of the aboriginal people

Obviously this does not cover all the wonderful activities and sites available in Ecuador so we strongly recommend that you do your own research too to see if there is anywhere that you would like to do ☺ You can visit [tripadvisor.co.uk](https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk) for lots more ideas!

## Safe travel tips!

- ❖ **Use your common sense and your gut instincts;** don't leave things to chance or risk, especially when abroad!
- ❖ **Don't let locals rip you off!** Whether it be taxis, food stands, local stalls/shops and handicrafts, wherever! Bartering and haggling is the norm. Get a strict price in your head and don't settle for more than what you think the service/item is worth.
- ❖ **Pay in small change whenever and wherever you can** to avoid getting ripped off. Some countries have rife problems with counterfeit money so do your research bear this in mind.
- ❖ **Review emergency plans and risk assessment** a few times with your group prior to your departure.
- ❖ **Stick to your insurance** – remember, you won't be covered if you willingly partake in any activity or event that's not included in your policy, think before doing things, are you covered? You could be forced to fork out a hefty medical bill if not.
- ❖ When in busy cities always keep your **money and personal items** well concealed. Avoid keeping things in non fastening pockets and be aware that a lot of thieves operate by snatching bags or cutting straps/bag pockets. Keep your cash and your cards separate so that if you do get robbed you don't lose both!
- ❖ Try to avoid giving money to strangers if you can help it. The homeless or just plain scheming are known to target foreigners and/or westerners in many countries, and not for innocent reasons, there's a good chance they may be using you.
- ❖ **Avoid staying out after dark if you can help it** (especially in rural/quiet areas or notorious areas of towns/cities) or if in small groups. If **out at night** always take a taxi rather than walking or by offered lifts – stranger danger!
- ❖ **Girls (and boys!) – avoid travelling or wandering around alone,** always stick together.
- ❖ When taking **public transport** use licensed taxis and always keep an eye on your luggage on buses. Just because it's stored above your head or below your feet does not mean that no one will try to steal it. Most people won't experience any trouble but **don't be fooled by assuming everywhere is as safe as Britain.**
- ❖ Make sure **you board public transport as soon as you can to ensure you get a seat** and to increase the likelihood of you sticking and sitting with your group.

- ❖ **Avoid uses public buses at night.**
- ❖ **If uncomfortable with standards of driving – tell the driver/staff!**
- ❖ Remember when you're travelling that culture can be very different throughout the world and act accordingly: with respect and an open mind.
- ❖ **Listen to local advice, ask the staff on-site** at your NGO before your arrival and during your stay (and for information after your departure from the project if planning to travel afterwards)
- ❖ **Keep the contact details of the staff at your NGO with you at all times, wherever you are in the country** – even before you've arrived on your project and after you've left, they live in the country, they'll be able to assist if they can.

## Currency, money & Kit List

### Currency and Exchange Rate

**NOTIFY YOUR BANK AND PHONE NETWORK PROVIDER BEFORE YOU LEAVE AND FOR YOUR DURATION OF STAY IN THE HOST-COUNTRY/COUNTRIES– and take note of their charges for usage abroad.**

**When using cash machines abroad – ensure that they look safe and are safe. If they look at all dodgy, find another.**

Ecuador uses the US dollar as its national currency, so you can get that exchanged over in the UK and take it over with you or get it out from ATMs in-country. However, when using your dollars, expect traders/restaurants etc to give you change in Ecuadorian currency, this is completely fine and Ecuadorian currency usually equates to the same amount as US dollars. For example, 1 Ecuadorian dollar/currency is worth the same as 1 USD.

The exchange rate for Nov 2012 is roughly 1.6 USD to the British pound.

You can get up-to-date currency information here: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

**Cash machines in Ecuador can be VERY temperamental.** For example, only two out of the four group members in summer 2012 had a working card, therefore we had to owe each other money until we got back to the UK. From previous experience we advise that you bring enough hard currency to see you through if your cards do not work. Try and bring more than one debit/credit card if you can, to ensure that at least one may work.

This being said, cash machines can be found and are easily accessible in Quito, Banos and Puyo (as well as other major cities). Please note, Mera does not have a cash machine (as of July 2012) so it is recommended that before you head out/back to Merazonia, get cash out from the main cities/towns before you leave.

Western Union branches are an option for getting currency out to you in Ecuador should you not have access to your bank/money, however, the only branches of WU near to Merazonia are located in Puyo and Quito, please note that there is NOT one in Banos and Mera.

## **Kit List**

Talk to your entire group to see if you guys can share the weight and prices of some things

### **Paperwork and vital documents**

- ☐ PROJECT DETAILS FORM
- ☐ EMERGENCY PLAN (for all essential contact info for home, NGO, Guild, Committee, InterVol and host-country Embassy)
- ☐ RISK ASSESSMENT
- ☐ Passport (with photocopies)
- ☐ Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- ☐ Visas (with photocopies)
- ☐ Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- ☐ ID (alternative to passport) (with photocopies)
- ☐ Extra passport photos (if required, always handy to have!)
- ☐ Currency and/or travellers cheques (for personal spending)
  - ☐ Of host country (USD for Ecuador)
  - ☐ Sterling
  - ☐ USD (dollars are a good hard-currency and in some countries it is seen as more desirable than the local coin)
  - ☐ Emergency money (in case of problems with bank cards/theft/loss)
- ☐ Vaccination certificates (if required of host country borders-crossings i.e. yellow fever)
- ☐ Two debit/credit cards (for personal spending)
- ☐ **Phrase books or cue cards (these can be bought online or you can make them from free resources found online)**
- ☐ **Guide book**

### **Generally recommended by past volunteers**

- ☐ **PHONE**
- ☐ Moneybelt
- ☐ Day back/smaller backpack
- ☐ Back pack (substituting for a suitcase) (60-80 litres)
- ☐ Padlocks for bags
- ☐ Alarm clock
- ☐ Camera!
- ☐ Mp3 player/iPod
- ☐ **Torch/head torch**
- ☐ Sleeping bag & pillow (optional) (past volunteers have preferred taking their own sleeping bags and pillows to use when at **Merazonia, although they do provide bedding on-site**)
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Mosquito nets at Merazonia are optional, you are located in a house with nets for windows so you shouldn't really be affected, however, if you feel you'd like to bring one, go ahead!
- ☐ Insect repellent and after-bite

- ☐ Books!
- ☐ Diary (document your time away!)
- ☐ Travel wash/cleaning detergents
- ☐ Cards
- ☐ Towels (small and larger) (quick-dry towels are very easy to pack)
- ☐ **First aid kit** (containing: plasters, paracetamol, ibuprofen, bandages, anti-septic cream, antihistamine, medical tape (micro porous), safety pins, dehydration tablets/electrolyte sachets, anti-diarrhoeal tablets (Imodium), vitamins, Amoxicillin (good general antibiotic for skin infections etc)
- ☐ Toiletries (preferably biodegradable!) (shower gel, shampoo, conditioner, razors, tooth brush and paste, hair brush, hair bands, deodorant, scissors, nail clippers, tweezers etc)
- ☐ Toilet roll (sometimes not available in public/restaurant toilets, or even in hostels!) (can be bought in-country)
- ☐ Travel mirror
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Sun cream
- ☐ Aftersun

### **Clothing**

- ☐ Good walking shoes/pumps
- ☐ Flip flops/sandals
- ☐ Sun glasses
- ☐ **OLDER/SCRUFFY CLOTHES** – some activities on our projects mean your clothes **WILL** get ruined! Think about the kinds of activities you'll be doing and what you'll think about wearing/what would be best to wear for these activities
- ☐ Shorts/skirts/dresses
- ☐ Trousers/joggers
- ☐ Swimwear
- ☐ Sun hat
- ☐ Underwear and lots of socks
- ☐ Shirts/T-shirts/tops
- ☐ Hoodies
- ☐ Warmer clothes for evenings
- ☐ Conservative clothing – longer sleeve/leg-length
- ☐ Nice clothing for nights/weekends away
- ☐ Waterproof jacket (remember, it's the RAINforest!)

## **Bursaries/funding support**

Before applying you should have felt reasonably happy and confident that you could cover the personal expenses of your project. There are bursaries available that you can apply for to alleviate any strains you may have when it comes to your own personal expenses and covering them. You do

need to justify why you need them usually and please appreciate that for many of them there is usually an early deadline and selection process.

To find out more info on various UoB bursaries, visit the link below:

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/internships/funding/index.aspx>

**However, we can NOT guarantee that any volunteer will be able to obtain any of this funding while doing an InterVol project so please DO NOT rely on this for financial support!**

## Employability

You can get official recognition for your time fundraising, training, meeting your group, working abroad and volunteering, basically all hours you've spent arranging your project pre-, during and post-departure!

- ❖ By filling out a form in the Guild stating the hours you have volunteered, you could receive certificates. All the above activities (except for recreationally travelling!) counts towards your total. For more information ask at the desk/or email Student Development in the Guild.
- ❖ **PSA – Personal Skills Award (Activity)** – if you're not already enrolled on the PSA (must complete it by Feb of your final year), apply for the Activity pathway and your time volunteering with InterVol (including the activities listed above) can contribute to your PSA. PSA is an accredited award you will gain additionally to your degree if you complete it before you leave, and is a brilliant extra-curricular asset to add to your graduate CV.
- ❖ Find out more here: <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/psa/index.aspx>
- ❖ **CV Experience** – there's no denying it, coming out of your time at University with just a Bachelor's isn't enough anymore in today's tough job-market. By proving you have dedicated your time and money towards volunteering with InterVol, you can line your CV with vital extra skills and activities you gained during your time with us.
- ❖ **Ask for a reference** – most of the NGOs we work with are official charities within their country, and they'll be more than happy to issue you an official reference after your time working with them.

## Project Evaluation Meeting: Post-project Assessment (end of summer)

- ❖ This meeting will be attended by all the Trustees, a Guild representative (probably the VPC, Kate Prescott), the 2012-2013 committee members and the newly elected committee, and as many volunteers as possible. **At least one member from each group MUST attend! If there is no one there to represent your group none of you will get your deposits back.** The University of Birmingham is not the only University that is linked with InterVol so representatives from Imperial College London, Lancaster University and Nottingham University will also attend this meeting.



- ❖ The date and location of this meeting will be notified to you by the 2012-2013 committee months in advance so that you can prepare. It is expected to be held at the start of first term at the end of September or very beginning of October.
- ❖ This is the best way for all the volunteers to give feedback about their experience. This meeting is essential for the continuation of the projects and the charity in general. It is used to examine any points that need to be addressed in order to improve the organisation for future volunteers and the charities they go to help. At the start of term you will be given an Evaluation Feedback form on your project where you will be asked questions about your experience. The form should be filled out by each member of your group. However, if you decide as a group that you would all end writing the same thing you should all meet up and fill in one form collectively. Any problems that your group encountered while you were away on your projects will be discussed at this meeting.
- ❖ During this meeting the Trustees will read out correspondents from the in-country co-ordinators about each of the groups that were sent out on the projects that summer. They will explain anything they thought was good about the group but also highlight any problems that occurred during their volunteering.
- ❖ The Trustee secretary will be writing the minutes during this meeting and will send them to the in-country co-ordinators and the new committee. This will ensure that every point has been addressed and discussed properly. This will also reveal anything issues that require further investigation or discussion in order to improve all projects for the next volunteering groups.

## Getting onto the Committee, AGM & Role Information

InterVol will be holding an Annual General Meeting (AGM) during the Spring Term of 2013. If you're interested in applying for a position on the committee, please see the role descriptions below and contact us if you have any questions regarding them.

In order to put yourself forward for a position you'll need to prepare a small speech (only about 30 seconds-minute or so) which you will then need to present at the AGM when your role opportunity arises. All in attendance at the AGM will then vote democratically for whichever candidate they wish to choose. Please don't be put off by this aspect of running for a position, it really isn't scary!

**If you are interested, please look out for the email regarding the AGM which will be sent out at some point in semester 2 ☺**

### President (Chair)

The President is the overseer of InterVol and all its members. They decide the strategy for the projects whilst maintaining a good relationship between InterVol and the Guild. They are the representative of InterVol both internally at the University of Birmingham and when meeting external organisations. They are the main point of contact for all volunteers with problems that cannot be dealt with by their parent or project coordinators or the Vice President of Projects or

Training Coordinator. The role of president demands much of what you would expect from a society leadership role. You have to know the ins and outs of each event happening through the year. Be able to organise and delegate tasks throughout your committee, and be able to make morally right decisions throughout. As InterVol is more than just a society, you will also be the main point of contact to the Trustee Board when it comes to official charity business. Even though there may be a lot of responsibility, there will always be plenty of support, through the trustees and your committee as we will ensure the current committee can train you up so that you are prepared to run InterVol - Birmingham

### **Vice President of Projects**

The Vice President of Projects is often the first point of contact with the committee for Birmingham volunteers. It is the role of the VP Projects to manage the parent coordinators in passing over projects to the following year groups, for example, they would ensure that parent coordinators are in attendance at and directly involved with presentation sessions, interviews, icebreakers and socials in semester 1, as well as making sure parent coordinators successfully manage their project groups throughout semester 2, all of this is done in order to smoothly secure a past-group-to-present-group transition. In order to achieve this, it is their job to manage regular communications with parent coordinators to ensure that all relevant information, such as responsibilities, paperwork, personal preparation etc, is passed to the project coordinators and other project group members. This role is extremely social and active, as you will be required to work with all committee members and volunteers on a day-to-day basis.

### **Vice President of Internal Affairs (Secretary)**

The VPIA handles all internal administration and paperwork. This includes: checking both InterVol email accounts, as well as the production and maintenance of our mailing lists and email folders; regularly checking our Guild pigeonhole; providing professional, detailed minutes for every committee meeting as well as minutes for external InterVol trustee-involved meetings. The VPIA also manages the databases and hard drives (such as the Guild computer account and our Dropbox folders) that we use to store all InterVol paperwork, documents and administration. The Secretary is in charge of submitting and processing all society forms and requests, such as room bookings, risk assessments, activity forms and all others paperwork attached to InterVol UoBs daily, monthly and annual running. Arguably the most important role the VPIA has is to create and maintain a series of spread sheets. Such spread sheets include the Volunteer Checklist (which includes applicant contact details, semester 1 and 2 checklists, fundraising maintenance and targets, project group paperwork checklists etc). These spread sheets are of paramount importance as they are required to log, keep track of and ultimately ensure that all volunteers go through all compulsory procedures, submit all compulsory paperwork and attend all compulsory training. This role demands unwavering organisation and planning skills and is ultimately a very internal-based role which mainly works alongside the committee and Guild rather than directly with volunteers, however, it is the backbone of the society itself and is thus a very rewarding and thoroughly enjoyable role to take on!

### **Finance (Treasurer)**

The Finance Committee member keeps track of all things financial within InterVol UoB. The role consists of keeping track of the group's level of annual expenditure by regularly checking all of InterVol's Guild accounts (current, deposits, Merazonia, Kenya, Bulgaria, Nepal, South Africa etc) and by ensuring that the Society has enough money to use for the group's general and event expenses. In order to ensure that finances are kept in as much order as possible, the treasurer is expected to facilitate their own series of checks and administration procedures. Finance is in charge of the collection and return of InterVol's financial intake, this includes collecting all volunteers deposits and insurance money (and passing insurance cash to the InterVol trustees) as well as managing the return of the deposits at the end of the year (and whether deposits have been subject to reduction for some volunteers and to ensure that this is carried through and volunteers receive their appropriate deposit amount in return). The final, and arguably, most important task (as it keeps us running!) that the treasurer is in charge of, is the annual Guild Grant application. We use this grant to ensure that our volunteers are paid for when facilitating first aid training and to assist us with our annual expenses, so it is paramount importance that we apply for it in order to obtain it and utilise it effectively. The role of finance is a demanding one, and you will be expected to have some interest and experience in cash handling, simple mathematics and excellent organisational skills. Although the treasurer works primarily with the Committee and Student Development Desk, they are also involved directly with the volunteer groups and their own financial fundraising management.

### **Training Coordinator**

The Training Coordinator organizes all the training that volunteers need to complete before going on their projects and contacts them when training is approaching. They are in charge of managing and ensuring that all volunteers attend the necessary training and contact any volunteers that may have missed sessions in order to reschedule or compensate for what is missed. In some circumstances, the training coordinator will be in charge of managing and presenting a training session itself. The role of Trainer is very rewarding one and requires unwavering organisation and planning skills. Training works directly with the Committee regularly (particularly VPIA when logging volunteer training attendance) as well as working with the volunteers themselves during training sessions.

### **PR (up to two spaces available)**

The PR Committee member is in charge of all media-related aspects of InterVol UoBs running and advertising throughout the year. The role of PR is particularly autumn-semester intensive as they have to manage and facilitate the successful planning and running of InterVol's stall at the Fresher's Society and Fundraising fairs, normally held over two days during Welcome Week. PR are also in charge of the advertising of presentation sessions across campus and electronically University-wide to ensure that InterVol is as widely marketed to all students as possible and thus raising the chances of a high application intake for the following summer's projects. PR are also in charge of producing weekly or monthly newsletters, to ensure that all Committee members and volunteers are kept in-the-loop with all of InterVol's activities and to spread the word for our great causes by advertising project group events etc! The PR role also encompasses the organisation and carrying out of our socials throughout the year, such as sending emails out to all volunteers and past and present. PR works closely with the Fundraiser Committee member to ensure that all fundraising events are as widely advertised as possible to secure good turn-out to the society's fundraising events. Ultimately,

PR is a very sociable, active and fun role to be apart of! You will be expected to be creative and utilise your own personal initiative, skills and motivation to come up with unique and original ways of getting the InterVol name heard on campus and beyond.

### **Fundraising (multiple spaces available)**

InterVol Committee Fundraisers are involved with creating Society events on (and off) campus to ensure that the Society's Guild bank account have as much cash as possible to help with the general day-to-day running and administration of InterVol. They are expected to plan a series of different kinds of events that are open to all students and staff at UoB, regardless of whether or not they are members of the society itself. In the past, fundraisers have planned and executed such successful events as: band nights, bake sales, rag-swaps, socials, sponsored runs, raffles etc. Fundraisers are also encouraged to approach trust fund organisations and other corporate bodies in order to secure funding to help us run as well as to extend our corporate network links. Fundraisers work closely with Finance and PR to handle the cash collected and advertise the events. Ultimately, the role of Fundraising is very a sociable and engaging role to be involved with, as you will be directly involved in what makes charities generally tick and progress. You will be expected to be confident and friendly as well as have good organisational and planning skills. A unique and creative take on things is always a bonus too to ensure original events are thought-up and generate a good chunk of cash.