

Gaia Pacha Foundation

National and International Volunteer Program



BOLIVIA

Gaia Pacha is a Non-profit Foundation that reflects the vision of women and men committed to the sustainable relation between people and nature. Gaia Pacha's main goal is to design and implement sustainable initiatives in order to embrace people's behavior change towards the use of environmentally friendly technologies without losing perspective in the Bolivian policy context.



Since 2006, the Gaia Pacha Foundation has been involved in a different array of environmentally friendly initiatives that includes projects of environmental education, adaptation/mitigation to climate change effects, and research. Since 2008, Gaia Pacha also has consolidated a volunteer project that supports the broad efforts of the Foundation in all the working projects.

The Volunteers Project is open to foreign and Bolivian people and represents an opportunity of professional development or the interchange of valuable experiences.

Featured Projects

1. Local Environmental Education initiatives:

- The Pedestrian Day
- The "Manzanas Verdes" campaign
- Workshops at the rehabilitation center
- Strategic activities at the "Demonstrative Center of Environmental Education"

2. Design and production of educational material

3. Educational spaces through the use of mass media Communications such as the Radio Program "La Chiwana Verde" (<http://www.radiolachiwana.org>).

4. Research efforts in order to develop mitigation/adaptation strategies as response to the negative impacts of climate change in Bolivia.



What do we want ?

What do we require?

Desired Volunteer Profile

- Responsible, committed, enthusiast, and eager to learn
- Culturally sensitive and good performance in teamwork
- Spanish level medium



We offer

- The possibility to be part of a team conformed by recognized professionals and to belong to a renowned leader institution
- The opportunity to participate in any of the working projects of Gaia Pacha
- For University students, the volunteer experience can be endorsed as a working practice
- 90% of field working experience

International Volunteer Program's Structure

Orientation and Support

The volunteers should attend to orientation sessions that will represent 10% of their overall time. During the sessions Gaia Pacha will **a)** introduce and present the goals of the pertinent project, and **b)** coordinate and outline a work schedule based on the volunteer's time and capabilities.

Host Organization

Once the orientation sessions are finished, Gaia Pacha will introduce the volunteer to the correspondent host organization. The host organization will be in charge of showing a more specific job description and will assign the volunteer a proper working space.

Accommodation

In order to encourage a full cultural experience, the volunteers are expected to live with an authentic Bolivian host family.

Small Fund

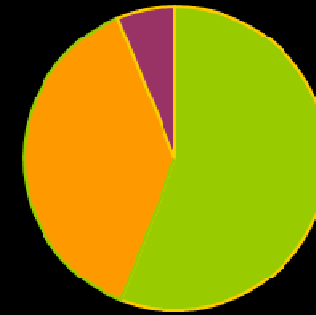
In order to ensure the continuity and implementation off the projects, It is required for the volunteer to support the project's activities with a small fund. Usually, the small fund is used in the elaboration and production of educational material.

What do we do with your contribution ?



Others
5,90%

Production of
Educational
Material
38,06%



Green Infrastruc-
ture investment
52,93%

Distribution of economic contributions

During the time period 2008•2010, about 38% of the volunteers' funds were utilized to elaborate and produce environmental education materials such as: educational games, and informative booklets in Spanish and Braille system.

Approximately 56 % of the funds were invested in the construction of green infrastructure such as a tree nursery in 2008.



Program Costs...

International Volunteers, the costs are distributed as follows:



Accommodation
(250 US dollars per month)

Administrative and operational expenditures
(100 US dollars per month)

Funds for different project's development
(150 US dollars per month)

National Volunteers, Gaia Pacha encourages the participation of Bolivian students bringing them the opportunity of professional development performance. In the same way, Bolivian professionals eager to share their experiences are equally welcome to work with Gaia Pacha. The only requirement for nacional students and professionals is that they should accomplish the stablished goals set by the Foundation. There is no cost for nacional volunteers.



Cochabamba



The state of Cochabamba is located in the heart of Bolivia. According to the popular travelers guide Lonely Planet (<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/bolivia/the-southwest/cochabamba>):

“Cochabamba is a progressive and active city, has a growing population of approximately 1 million inhabitants and a vitality that is visibly absent from the more traditional higher-altitude cities. The *Cochabambinos* believe that the city has the world's most comfortable climate, with warm, dry, sunny days and cool nights. The city's name is derived by joining the Quechua words *khocha* and *pampa*, meaning 'swampy plain'. The city of Cochabamba lies in a fertile green bowl, 25 km long by 10 km wide, set in a landscape of fields and low hills. To the northwest rises 5035 m “Cerro Tunari”, the highest peak in central Bolivia. The area's rich soil yields abundant crops of maize, barley, wheat, alfalfa, and orchards and citrus fruits”.

The city is surrounded by valuable *preincaicos* and *incaicos* vestiges which preserve the colonial facade. Cochabamba presents a strong political root of social movements, which can be exemplified with the worldwide known Water War of 2001. This year, organized social movements protested against the privatization of water rights (<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/bolivia/timeline.html>; and http://www.democracynow.org/2010/4/19/the_cochabamba_water_wars_marcella_olivera).

In a similar way than other states of Bolivia, Cochabamba prioritizes the fulfillment of basic needs such as access to water, sewage systems, electricity, education, and health among others. Unfortunately, the type of development that characterizes any growing city usually leaves behind the negative effects in the quality of the natural resources and the environment. Despite of this fact, there is clear evidence of several initiatives that promote local sustainable development in rural and urban areas by encouraging the use of proper green technologies and the change of people's behavior.

