



2014

Annual Report

The Arajuno Road Project (ARP) / Proyecto Via Arajuno supports healthy communities and a healthy natural environment in the Ecuadorian Amazon. ARP was created in 2008 with the goal of improving the opportunities available to the children living along the road located between the small city of Puyo and the rural community of Arajuno – a culturally and ecologically diverse and unique area – in the Ecuadorian Amazon. ARP provides quality English instruction, improves the infrastructure and learning environment of their schools, and works on community development and conservation projects, such as school gardens and reforestation.

Arajuno Road Project

ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Small, localized organizations, like ARP, continue to be recognized for the value of long-term, invested and informed relationships we have with partner schools and communities – this is where real development takes place. We recognize our responsibility to be a support agent for our communities who are all too often left behind. We also have a responsibility to share our experiences for the benefit of the larger international and community development sector, just as we learn and grow from

others. It is on-going work at the grassroots as we face common community challenges, as well as those very unique to our region – and we are always grateful for the privilege to play our part in helping our students, participants, partner schools and communities be strong, healthy and sustainable.

As we come to the close of 2014, ARP continues to grow and expand its programming. We are focused on building a toolbox for healthy communities and a healthy environment with the long-term goal of benefiting both the communities of Arajuno Road and many others that find themselves along rainforest roads or otherwise facing similar challenges.

We continue to improve existing programming - such as English instruction and school gardens - but are also building new tools - in areas such as forest conservation, health and youth development - reflecting a wider range of community needs. ARP is building models in existing partner communities in order to allow us to carry our support into many more communities that would like to collaborate but as of yet have not been able to be included in one or more programming areas.

ARP has come so far within the last year, it is difficult to capture with words. We are so grateful to ARP's small, dedicated team and all of our supporters. Knowing that this momentum will carry over to 2015 is truly exciting.

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GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE ARAJUNO ROAD PROJECT

1. *Due to the cultural and ecological diversity of the Arajuno Road and surrounding areas, it is important that the local and international community work to protect this region from socioeconomic and environmental decline, which traditionally occurs following road construction in natural areas.*
2. *Community development originates in the community. Grassroots organizations strengthen community development by providing education and technical assistance, and collaborating with appropriately scaled resources.*
3. *ARP is consciously designed to be a learning experience for everyone involved: children, community members and other local stakeholders, volunteers, interns, and staff.*
4. *Respect for our planet is a basic value for all cultures and religions. Our quality of life is directly related to the health of the natural environment. There is a complex feedback system between poverty and natural resources. Therefore, ARP's work integrates green concepts in as much of its work as possible.*
5. *International and cross-cultural understanding is central to a peaceful and just world.*
6. *Access to quality education is a basic human right. A child's formation is especially important in building healthy societies.*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- ARP's first **youth development course** was successfully carried out with leadership building exercises for graduating primary school students
- **TEFL Programming** keeps building with a new **ARP TEFL curriculum** that not only creates a bridge for students to the new, national secondary school English requirements, but also integrates environmental education, cultural exchange and youth development themes; TEFL instruction time has increased in all partner schools; **Cultural exchange** activities internationally share through Skype, art, photos and correspondence; **Community English Class** continues to be a popular activity
- Collaboration continues in **planting and care** of school gardens; **School and family nutrition assessments** developed and implemented; **Nutrition** education activities developed and implemented; Several school garden **harvests** throughout the year; **New school garden** established
- 2nd year of **Community Development MiniProjects** expand and collaborate with donations and partnership with Nourish International; Outcomes: 1 school roof repaired; 2 school bathrooms repaired and collaboration to greatly improve a 3rd school bathroom; 1 playground/school grounds area painted and improved; collaboration to paint 1 school mural; 1 school greenhouse repaired and collaboration to build 1 new school greenhouse; notebooks for all of our English students and basic teaching supplies purchased; annual holiday gift basket of school supplies given to schools; fund for a permanent ARP Center started
- ARP becomes part of the **US non-profit Omprakash network**; ARP attends and presents at Omprakash conference
- ARP collaborates with US Peace Corps in natural resources and conservation - the expanded capacity of volunteers has helped to develop **forest conservation** programming, **eco-club** activities, ARP's first **women's group** and **family gardens** support.

INTRODUCTION

Where ARP Works

The Arajuno Road Project (ARP) works along the road that extends between the urban center of Puyo, Ecuador, and the rural Amazonian communities of Arajuno and Villano. The region is home to several cultural groups and borders some of the most biologically diverse spots on the planet. While rich in other ways, economically the vast majority of families in this region earn significantly less than the monthly minimum income as established by the Ecuadorian government. ARP works to provide tools for and remove barriers to healthy, secure, environmentally-friendly communities. Partner schools/communities in 2014:



Escuela Simon Bolivar -
km 6, Sector La Libertad



Escuela Republica de Argentina
- Community 10 de agosto



Escuela Gran Colombia -
Community San Carlos



Escuela Jose Maria Urbina -
km 16, Sector La Esperanza



Escuela General Epiclachima -
Communities Esfuerzo I & II



Escuela Angel Manzano -
km 22, Sector Santa Fe



Escuela Juan Leon Mera -
km 35, Colonia Bolivar



Community El Triunfo



Community Chuyayacu

Assessments

Over the last two years, ARP has been developing and conducting various assessments to ensure the organization has a thorough and documented understanding of the realities on the road. These assessments include:

- 2013 Census Questionnaire of the school directors
- 2014 Supplementary Census Questionnaire of the school directors
- 2014 School Nutrition & Garden Assessment
- 2014 Peace Corps Community Assessment Tool
- 2014 Family Nutrition Assessment in Colonia Bolivar

The results of these assessments have been or are being analyzed and made available as reports. While more details are/will be available in the form of public or internal reports, a sampling of findings/confirmations:

- Generally, the more remote the community (accessibility from Puyo), the lower the monthly family income and higher the occurrence of subsistence agriculture.
- The vast majority of families are characterized economically as living at poverty or extreme poverty levels.
- Water security and food security are consistently listed as issues of concern throughout the communities, as well as a general lack of resources on multiple levels.

This has been a wonderful effort by the ARP team that allows us to quantify, qualify and further prioritize needs along the road.

EDUCATION & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

As ARP's founding initiative, TEFL instruction establishes a formal and consistent relationship with partner schools. Quality English instruction is a well-sought after resource that has traditionally been reserved for the Ecuadorian upper class. The Project brings this important skill – a primary world language – to rural, underserved and disadvantaged primary school students. Providing this service allows ARP the presence to positively influence the schools' atmospheres and expand work into other initiatives easily.

Achievements

We continue to see the students' basic language skills improve – observations that suggest efforts to ensure continuity are paying off. ARP continues to focus on quality over quantity and on basic language acquisition over simple language introduction. Achievements of 2014:

- During the 2013-2014 school year, TEFL programming continued on in five schools with approximately 140 1st-7th graders receiving weekly instruction. Beginning with the second semester, ARP was able to increase instruction to two days per week in four of the five schools.
- ARP's new TEFL curriculum was created and put into practice (see below).
- At the beginning of the 2014-2015 school year, a uniform schedule across five partner schools of 2 days per week instruction of 2nd-7th grader students was established. While numbers have been fluctuating with school unifications and the relocation of some families, over 120 students are in the TEFL program this year. English notebooks were again provided to all students thanks to donations.
- More TEFL learning aids continue to be introduced into partner schools, such as posters and labels for common use items.
- Emphasis on language production continued with the introduction of a performance-based portion of term exams.

- ARP continued to receive positive reviews from school directors.
- ARP's traveling library continues to be a wonderful complement to TEFL instruction.

A special thanks to ARP's wonderful staff, coordinators, intern and volunteers for making this possible for the students!

Challenges

The instability of the work environment has made progress difficult however. Noteworthy changes from the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education in 2014:

- School unification - this means some schools are designated as consolidation points, while others have been/will be closed – this is a multiple-year process. We expect that our partner schools will be reduced approximately by half in the end with the remaining schools growing in size. This implies a significant change in community and school dynamics. In 2014, school Simon Bolivar (km 6) was unified with school Republica Argentina in the community 10 de agosto, and enrollment in school Juan Leon Mera (km 16) has dropped in anticipation of unification with the same school.
- Reassignment of teachers – several school teachers have been reassigned, including many long-term school directors.
- Increased student to teacher ratio – this appears to have influenced the number of teachers currently assigned to some partner schools.

We also – although less so – find it difficult to provide quality volunteers at all points throughout the year. ARP continues to adapt and look for solutions to these changes and challenges.

ARP's TEFL Curriculum

As primary school English instruction has been temporarily put aside by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (in favor of improving national English teachers' language levels and restructuring secondary school language requirements), ARP has created our own curriculum to help bridge the students' education to the new nationalized system. ARP's new curriculum takes into account the last English primary school curriculum issued by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education, but focuses on the European system (CEFR - Common European Frame of Reference) now being used in Ecuadorian secondary schools. Other curriculums that have been used in the region and curriculums used by fellow Omprakash partners were also referenced. Additionally, ARP's curriculum has been personalized for our students and integrated with environmental education, cultural exchange and youth development themes when possible. ARP thanks intern June Woo for her hard work in pulling together a great first version of this curriculum.

The curriculum is currently in its first year of use and has been going smoothly. As with all curriculum changes, there will be an adaptation period for current students, especially considering the higher expectations being established. We have recorded results from a baseline CEFR diagnostic and hope to evaluate the students' progress at the end of the school year.



Youth Development

ARP is now reaching the point where we've been a part of some students' entire primary school experience. And as our students grow, we want to grow with them. Moving on to secondary school poses a new set of challenges - most students have to commute or move to continue on with secondary school and many face the challenges of adolescence far from the support of their family and/or community. This initiative jumped off the planning board and into action in 2014 with ARP's first leadership course.

The course was offered to seven of our partner schools' 7th graders for six sessions spread out over six weeks during their last semester in primary school - we had nearly full attendance with 29 students (in addition to a few younger students that took it upon themselves to participate). Sessions focused on leadership, personal skills, communication, teamwork, community service, and future goals. The course ended with a closing ceremony where students gained advice and motivation from a guest speaker, reflected on the course, received certificates of completion, and celebrated with swimming and food. This course was made possible by remarkable teamwork between consultant Mashona Council, advisory board member Femi Vance, instructor Patricia Pinheiro, and funder Great Aves.

We hope to continue to build this initiative with this course and others, providing scholarships and integrating the youth into ARP's normal programming to directly serve their communities. ARP continues with the groundwork to make scholarships a reality, most recently collecting data about the costs of attending secondary school in the region.



Summer Camp

Summer Camp operates as an informal and fun atmosphere for the children during school vacation. Camp is planned around a weekly theme which is replicated weekdays at school locations spread out along the Arajuno Road. Each theme is broken down into multiple skill building segments such as art, English, team building, etc.

Camp ran six weeks during school vacations in 2014 with a range of 25-84 weekly participants. This year's themes were:

- World Cup - Working as a Team
- Nutrition - Eating Healthy Makes Me Stronger
- Mystery - Problem Solving Detectives
- Health and Hygiene - Knowledge Is Prevention Power
- Environmental Education - Exploring What's Outside Your Door
- Culture - Celebrating Holidays Throughout the Year

ARP also continued to set aside a portion for snacks within the summer camp budget.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CONSERVATION PROGRAM

School Gardens & Nutrition

Through the Project's experience in the schools, it quickly becomes evident that the food the students receive at school is often a primary source of daily alimentation – many students frequently receive both breakfast (upon arrival) and lunch (during mid-morning recess) through the schools. The national and some local governments have been providing some basic staples, granola bars/cookies, and powdered mix to make oatmeal drink. However, perishable foods - valuable sources of protein, vitamins and minerals - are often left out altogether. Both the provincial government and Ministry of Education have ceased their programs supporting school gardens. That has left the effort to the communities and the Project alone. ARP collaborates to improve nutrition by working on soil quality, providing seeds, making structural repairs, helping with maintenance, and educating on nutrition. This work is possible thanks to the year round dedication of our Sub-Director, as well as an intern and volunteers.

Achievements

- A thorough school nutrition and garden assessment and subsequent report were completed; the report on the state of the school gardens and steps forward were updated; and four nutrition education activities were development and implemented thanks to intern and registered dietitian Laura Cochrun.
- ARP collaborated with multiple plantings in school Simon Bolivar (km 6), Angel Manzano (km 22) and Chuyayacu. The first planting in school Juan Leon Mera (km 35) also took place thanks to advancements in internal organization, starting with beans. Crops planted at one or more school/community gardens: two types of beans (over 1400 producing plants estimated), peanuts (20), corn (180), cucumbers (540), tomatoes (450), bell peppers (120), radish (80), cilantro (thousands), and ahojcha (building seed bank).
- School Simon Bolivar (km 6) used proceeds from their garden to reinvest in the school. For example, proceeds for the chickens grown in the chicken coop built last year (Community Development MiniProject 03) were used to buy a PA system for the school.
- School Angel Manzano (km 22) also sold excess harvest to purchase an additional water tank for their garden and livestock.

- A community garden was established in Chuyayacu. This community is remote and has no reported source of monthly income (vivero construction is detailed under the next section). The primary school children and their families work and eat from this garden, which yields good quality produce.
- A family nutrition assessment was developed, and implemented in Colonia Bolivar (km 35) by Peace Corps long-term volunteer Leah Gillett. This assessment can be used in other partner communities moving forward and provides a starting point for family gardens in this partner community, where food security has been an issue.
- Nutrition activities were also integrated into summer camp once again this year.

Challenges

- Unification of the schools has meant the km 6 garden had to be unexpectedly abandoned in September (it is unknown whether it will be possible to recuperate this site yet). Unification also means ARP has to limit resources and support for the schools that are slated to close - ARP is strategizing on general community support for those that will be affected.



Community Development MiniProjects

As a small volunteer organization with limited funds, the Project recognizes that we must take a piece-by-piece approach to collaborative projects in the communities. The Community Development MiniProjects Initiative takes into account community-identified needs and selects projects that have not had or do not have a high likelihood of being funded in a reasonable timeframe by government or other entities. ARP makes the most of supporters' donations, leveraging additional resources when possible. The schools were given first priority in receiving the benefits of this initiative but it is now also open to broader community projects. ARP planned and completed six Community Development MiniProjects in 2014:

1. MiniProject #5 (MP05) – School Juan Leon Mera, Community Colonia Bolivar: A large storm at the end of 2013 damaged the school roof. ARP made emergency repairs collaborating with basic materials and labor. Two teachers and 22 primary school students benefitted from this repair.
2. MP06 – School Jose Maria Urbina, Sector La Esperanza: The students' bathroom received repairs and a new coat of paint. The playground was also spruced up with fresh paint and the creation of several flower beds. Two teachers and 18 primary school students benefitted.
3. MP07 – School of Chuyayacu: Bathroom repairs to the hand wash station, plumbing and toilet tanks. Two teachers and 32 primary school students benefitted.

4. MP08 – Community of Chuyayacu: A community garden was constructed and put into use through a collaboration between the community, Nourish International, and ARP. The community provided the vivero structure, planning and labor. Nourish International provided many of the additional materials and labor. ARP provided the plastic for the roof, planning and labor. The garden is producing excellent produce and several harvest meals have already resulted from the garden. Two teachers, 32 primary school students and 30 families benefitted.

5. MP09 – School General Epiclachima & Esfuerzo 1 Community Center: The facility's bathrooms were greatly improved. The community, Nourish International and ARP collaborated to make this possible. The community provided labor. Nourish International provided the vast majority of materials, as well as labor. ARP provided tools, minor materials, planning and labor. Work included replacing a toilet, installing bathroom fixtures for toilet paper and hand towels, providing new, covered trash bins, increasing the paved walkway around the bathroom so users do not have to walk in the mud, expanding the roof so users can access the bathroom without getting wet during rainstorms, increasing the tiled area of the bathroom and creating a hand wash station with two sinks for hygiene (complete with hand washing instructions in both English and Spanish). The school keeps the bathroom stocked with toilet paper, soap and hand towels and has added additional bathroom instructions in Kichwa. Two teachers, 20 students and their families benefitted.

6. MP10 – GPS unit/Community mapping: This multi-use piece of equipment was leveraged in conjunction with a Peace Corps VAC grant for an upcoming community mapping project. Thirty families will initially benefit.

ARP will continue to allocate donations to the Community Development MiniProjects Fund and whenever possible, use the fund to leverage additional resources and further our impact.



Forest Conservation

ARP works in a megadiverse region. According to the United Nations Development Programme, our small country of Ecuador is home to a significant percentage of the world's species - for example, 10% of plants, 8% of animals, 18% of birds – in the Amazonian region of Ecuador there are over 8,000 documented plant species alone. Working close to some of the most biodiverse spots on the planet, ARP recognizes the importance of integrating environmental programming into all of our work. Conservation has been an indirect goal of the Project for years and in 2014, we were able to start actively making it a direct goal. ARP was approved and received a long-term Peace Corps volunteer to support in this

programming. We hope to promote forest conservation through reforestation, environmental education and sustainable agroforestry.

Forest conservation activities started with a reforestation refresher for staff with an ecological restoration professional. Such consultations have supported Peace Corps volunteer Alicea Settlemoir in collaborating with the partner community of Esfuerzo in their long-standing interest in reforestation – arrangements have been made to construct a tree nursery at the community's school/community center site, a grant has been received to fund the tree nursery, and construction is planned for early 2015. Work is underway to establish compost and collect native tree seeds/starters. This tree nursery, subsequent planting and complementary activities will be documented and serve as a model in carrying this work forward to other partner communities.

Environmental education has traditionally been included in ARP activities such as summer camp and is the theme of an entire unit in the new TEFL curriculum. Ms. Settlemoir has taken this a step further by introducing an eco-club in the community of Esfuerzo. The school director has made this a regular weekly after school activity for all of the school's 20 students. This activity, which began with the present school year, has so far focused on biodiversity, animals, bird identification, reptiles and amphibians. These activities, as well as the women's group (detailed under special projects), dovetail nicely with reforestation efforts.

In addition to the tree nursery grant, a partial grant was also awarded through Peace Corps VAC to assist with material costs for a community mapping and zoning project being planned with the partner community Chuyayacu for 2015.



SPECIAL PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Thanks to energetic volunteers, the Project had the opportunity to carry out several additional activities in 2014:

- **English community class** continues to be held when the Education Program has sufficient capacity. It is held one afternoon a week at km 28 along Arajuno Road. It remains open to children and adults alike; several children and young adults have been attending community class on a regular basis. ARP thanks local volunteer Manuel Caiza for his help in coordinating this class.

- ARP continues to facilitate **language exchanges** between volunteers wanting to improve their Spanish and Ecuadorians wanting to improve their English – each person teaches one hour of instruction in their native language in exchange for received one hour of instruction in the foreign language.
- The Education Program continues to facilitate several **international cultural exchanges** during the school year. The exchanges take place in various formats - emails and letters, photos, art work, and very enjoyable Skype calls – thanks to OneWorld Classrooms and our partner schools in Ecuador and abroad.
- Peace Corps volunteer Alicea Settlemoir has organized a bi-weekly **women's group** in the community of Esfuerzo. Leadership officers were nominated, the women's interests assessed and the meetings began in August with typically 4-8 women in attendance. Recycled art, cooking and compost are example of topics that have been covered.
- Lastly, the Project just put together our customary **holiday baskets** for each school for 2015. Baskets for 2014 were distributed in January. Instead of bringing the children the traditional bags of candy, ARP has started its own tradition of donating a basket full of school supplies for the schools' teachers to use in class.



OUTREACH, PARTNERSHIPS & SUPPORT

Arajuno Road Project calls on the global community to give back to an important and amazing corner of the planet. To create and connect this international culture upon which the Project depends, outreach, partnerships and support are vital to success.

Communications: Keeping the Project Community Connected

Arajuno Road Project's Internet presence:

- Original website: www.youvolunteer.org/ecuador continues to function but is no longer the primary website.
- Current website: Can be reached at domains www.arajunoroadproject.org, www.amazonvolunteerecuador.com, and www.proyectoviaarajuno.org. It had over 5,850 unique visitors in 2014 (as of mid-December).

- Facebook page: www.facebook.com/ArajunoRoadProject has 764 likes (as of mid-December).
- Facebook group: www.facebook.com/groups/ArajunoRoadProject serves as a venue for conversations between past, present and future volunteers, as well as share ways to help from home and more details about ARP. There are 85 members (as of mid-December).
- Twitter: [@amazonteaching](https://twitter.com/amazonteaching) continues to tweet with 55 followers, some mentions, retweets and favorites.

Conferences

ARP's Director and Intern June Woo attended and presented at the Omprakash Foundation conference "Difference in the Right Direction" in early August in Trujillo, Peru. They presented on the theme of volunteer management, attended excellent sessions and enjoyed networking with like-minded organizations. ARP's session and workshop activity results are available to the larger international Omprakash community.

ARP's Sub-Director attended two Peace Corps conferences and presented with Peace Corps volunteer Alicea Settlemoir on ARP and its work area to Peace Corps staff, volunteers and other volunteer counterparts. They also participated in skill building workshops on topics such as project planning and keyhole gardens.



Growing & Continued Partnerships

The Project continues to team up with several organizations with similar interests on the local, national and international levels. Special thanks to the collaborative efforts of the schools of Arajuno Road and School District 1 of Pastaza, Global Land Tour, Great Aves/YouVolunteer (UK charity sponsor), Hotel Andino, OneWorld Classrooms, RealGap, Simon Bolivar Foundation and Transrabbit. ARP also gained four new partners in 2014: U.S. Peace Corps, Nourish International, Community-Based Health Program (UCLA School of Medicine) and the Omprakash Foundation. Joining the Omprakash network has provided ARP with a US 501(c)3 non-profit sponsor.

2014 Honor Roll

The following people, organizations and businesses donated time, resources and/or financial support to the Arajuno Road Project in 2014. Thank you so much for giving back to the community, whether it be global or local, and supporting the Project's work!!!

| | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Gonzalo Alvarez & Family | Antara Finney | George Matthews |
| Anonymous | Camille Fontaine | Isabella McKimmie |
| Josephene Amirthanayagam | Orlagh Geoghegan | Jennifer McKimmie |
| Arpita Ashok | Antoinette Giggins | Heidi Ogg |
| Kim Butler | Danielle Gradisher | Devan Oodal |
| Phyllis Butler | Great Aves | Jehireh Peraza-Williams |
| Georgia Corker | Abigail Gutmann Gonzalez | Luiz Eduardo Queiroz |
| Ellie Crowell | Dennis Hepting | Flor Reino & Family |
| Andrea Davis | Aleksandra Ivanova | Gary Rose |
| Susannah Davis | Aine Jackson | Gary Sayer |
| Lucy de Mello | Line Jonsson | Kevin Shaw |
| Simon de Mello | Harvey Kantor | Danielle Tarras |
| Aaron DiMartino | Thomas Kirby | Elizabeth Tarras |
| Kathryn Elliot | Caterina Kurz | Melissa Tarras |
| Alexandra English | Brandon LaBarge | Natalie Woods |
| Erica Felker-Kantor | Aidan Maguire | Khandra Zaal |

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

At the Project, we feel it is important to facilitate the most productive, comfortable, and safe learning and working environment permitted by Project location and resources. Volunteering at the Project is a life experience – an opportunity to both teach and learn, give and receive. Each volunteer comes to the Project with a different background, different expectations and different goals – Project staff take these differences into consideration to the extent possible to maximize the positive impact of the programs on the children and communities served.

During 2014, ARP overhauled its application and registration process to make it friendlier to both volunteers and staff. The current volunteer house continues to be excellent in terms of location, safety and security. Multiple host family placements were developed during the course of 2014 as well.

Volunteer Feedback

One tool the Project utilizes to gauge the quality of the volunteer experience is a feedback form – filled out during the last days of service and left for staff to review after volunteer departure. This tool has been incredibly helpful in determining what is working well and what areas could use attention. We thank volunteers for their honesty and assistance in the continual evolution of the Project.

2014 Volunteer Feedback

| Category | Average Rating* |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Volunteer work (average rating of the following areas: value of work, support in class/field, support in planning, ability to input ideas, workload) | 8.3 |
| Staff/Coordinator (average rating of the following areas: friendliness, availability) | 9.1 |
| Accommodation overall standard (direct rating for volunteer house) | 8.5 |
| Food (average rating for the volunteer house of the following areas: quantity, quality, variety) | 8.6 |
| Overall experience (direct rating) | 8.7 |

*10-point scale; average of all ratings on file; feedback forms collected from 90% of participants during 2014

STAFF & ADVISORS

DIRECTOR

Laura Hepting, MSc

Ms. Hepting has over 10 years of professional work experience in both government and non-profit settings in rural and urban locations. Environmental and human health connections have traditionally been a primary focus of her work. Ms. Hepting holds a B.A. in Environmental Sciences and a M.Sc. in Interdisciplinary Ecology both from the University of Florida where she focused her advanced studies in the areas of Latin American Studies and Tropical Conservation and Development. Ms. Hepting came to live in Ecuador as a Peace Corps volunteer in 2009. She is married with a young daughter. Her ultimate goal is to help promote healthy lifestyles and quality of life on both the individual and community-level.

SUB-DIRECTOR

Rodrigo Engracia

Mr. Engracia was born and raised in the coastal region of Ecuador in a province with fewer opportunities than most. After reporting and serving for military duty in the Ecuadorian Army, he found a more promising future on the other side of the country where he has now lived for nearly a decade. Mr. Engracia has a true passion and contagious energy for helping others and strong social skills. Along with his work at the Project, he is continuing with his education in agricultural sciences.

EDUCATION PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

April Kujawa

Born and raised in the south suburbs of Chicago, Ms. Kujawa is a Midwesterner at heart. She graduated from Calvin College with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and Spanish, Bilingual Education. After graduating, her passion for the Spanish language, Latino culture, and an excellent education for all children, led her to join *Teach For America* in '09. Ms. Kujawa taught the 3rd and 4th grades in the Brownsville Independent School District in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas for 3 years. In 2012, God opened the door for her to come to Ecuador and serve in a small missions school in Shell. During the 6 months she was there, she met her future husband. When her time of service ended, she returned to the States and worked as a substitute teacher and paraprofessional in the west suburbs of Chicago. In June 2014, Ms. Kujawa returned to Ecuador and began working with ARP as Summer Camp Coordinator. Since August, she is happily married to her wonderful husband, Jorge, and teaches English classes from home and continues to partner with ARP on the Education/TEFL initiative.

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

Alicea Settlemoir, Forest Conservation

Leah Gillett, Gardens & Nutrition

CONSULTANT

Mashona Council, Youth Development

INTERNS

Laura Cochrun, Gardens & Nutrition

Ivonne Montenegro, TEFL

June Woo, TEFL

COORDINATORS

Lee Blaser, TEFL

April Kujawa, Summer Program

Elena Pascale, TEFL

Patricia Pinheiro, TEFL, Youth Development

Justyna Strelnik, TEFL

Eric Tetreault, TEFL

Alexis Weisman, TEFL, Volunteer Coordinator

ADVISORY BOARD

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Profesora de inglés, Colegio Orellana-Puyo

Meaghan Clark, MPP

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Erica Felker-Kantor, MA, MSPH, TESOL

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Executive Director, Tropical Conservation
Consortium (TCC)
Instructor and Research Coordinator, Institute for
Environmental Learning, Simon Fraser University

Femi Vance, Ph.D.

Research Associate, Public Profit

FINANCIALS

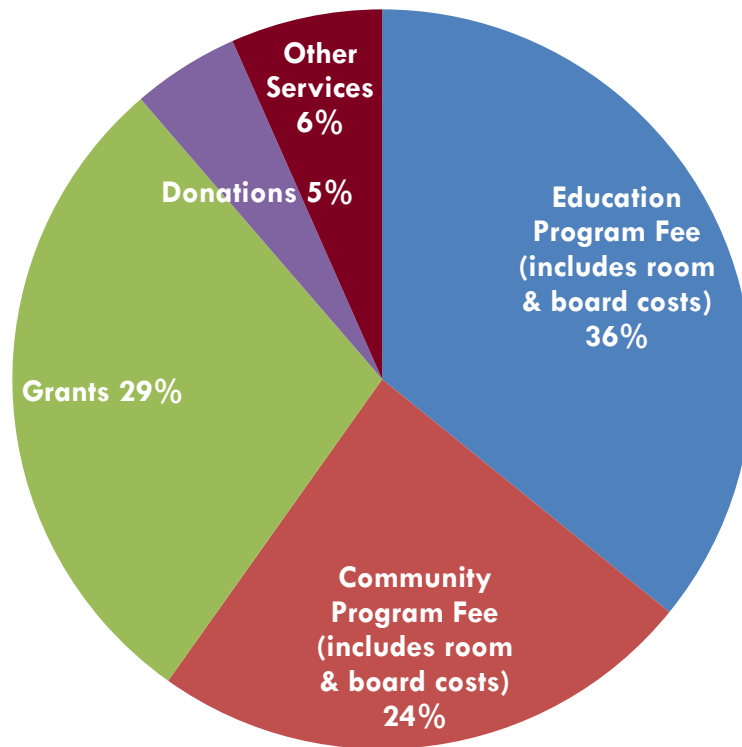
The Project continues to improve its financial standing and diversify support and resources. Having secured new partnerships and sponsorships, ARP is beginning to dive into grant writing and has had success with initial small grant applications. We are very grateful for key donations and grants that have allowed the Project to increase the impact of our work, as well as to our volunteers who understand that while the Project is low-cost, it must charge contribution fees to cover operating costs. Please refer to the following tables and graphs for a breakdown of the general operating budget, grants and how donations were allocated (*information from January – December 2014; accounts projected for the second half of Dec. 2014; all figures are in \$USD*).

General Operating Budget

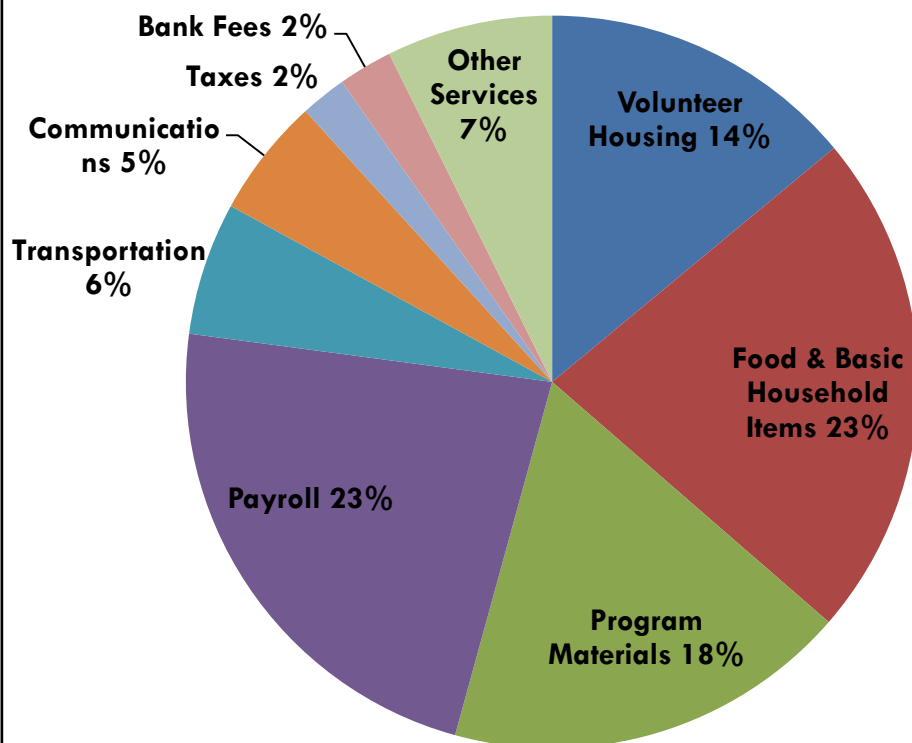
ARP 2014 Financials (Jan-Dec 2014)

| | Year Total |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Income | 27241.22 |
| Education Program Fee (<i>includes room & board costs</i>) | 11689.50 |
| Community Program Fee (<i>includes room & board costs</i>) | 7820.87 |
| Grants | 4038.02 |
| Donations | 1530.00 |
| Other Services (<i>Meet & Greet, accommodation, keys, refunds</i>) | 2162.83 |
| Expenses | 24460.76 |
| Volunteer House (<i>center rent, utilities, maintenance, host families</i>) | 3419.19 |
| Food & Basic Household Items | 5479.09 |
| Program Materials (<i>printing, classroom, crafts, gardens</i>) | 4376.78 |
| Payroll (<i>staff pay & reimbursement of costs for external assistance</i>) | 5585.31 |
| Transportation (<i>motorcycle, bus, taxi</i>) | 1435.05 |
| Communications (<i>phone, internet, computers, website</i>) | 1289.03 |
| Taxes | 497.46 |
| Bank Fees (<i>international banking, PayPal fees</i>) | 584.05 |
| Other Services (<i>Meet & Greet</i>) | 1794.80 |
| Balance | 2780.46 |

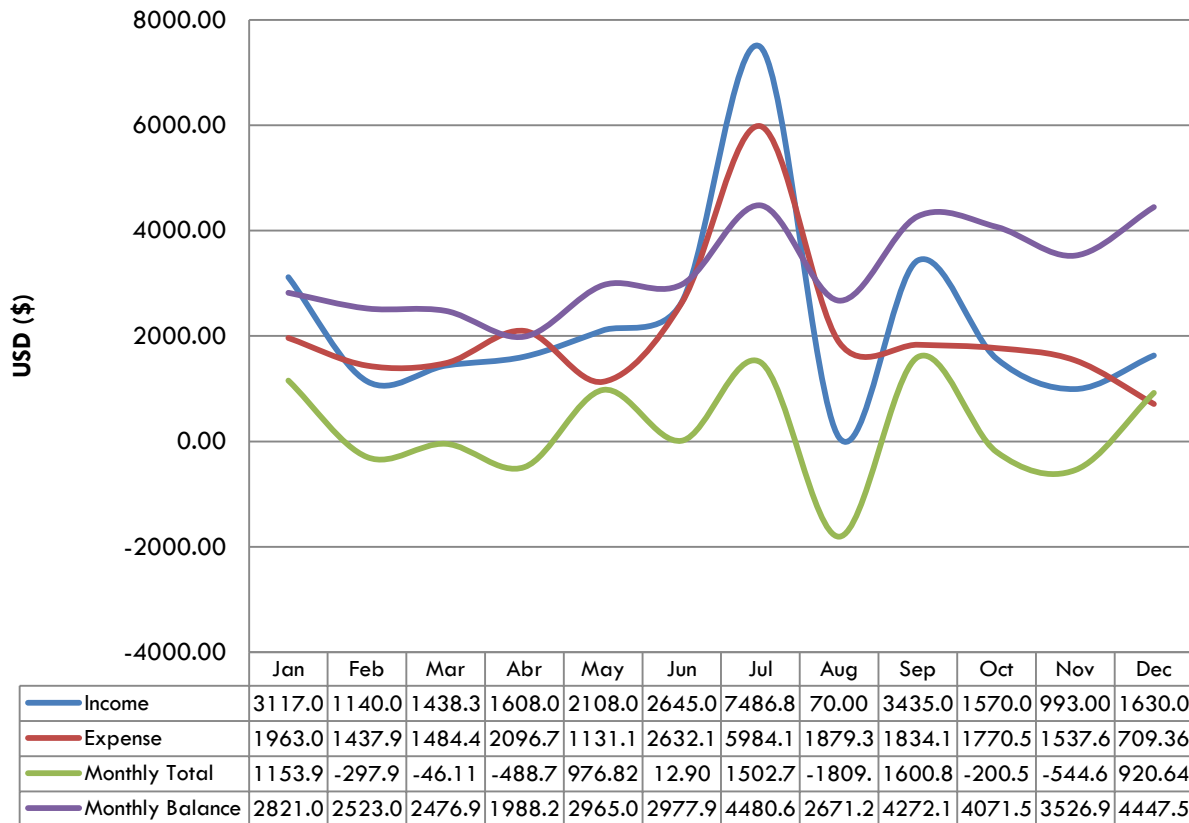
2014 Income Sources



2014 Expenses



2014 Monthly Balances



Grants

| ARP 2014 Grants Received (Jan-Dec 2014) | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| FUND | PROJECT | AWARD | STATUS |
| Youth Development | | | |
| Great Aves | Leadership course for students graduating primary school | 447.00 | Completed |
| Community Development | | | |
| Nourish International | Chuyayacu community garden; Esfuerzo school/community bathroom | 1500.00 | Completed |
| Private Group | Water security (2015) | 1493.02 | Planning |
| Forest Conservation | | | |
| Peace Corps VAC | Esfuerzo tree nursery and reforestation project | 440.00 | In progress |
| Peace Corps VAC | Chuyayacu community mapping materials (2015) | 158.00 | Planning |

Donations

| ARP 2014 Donations (Jan-Dec 2014) | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Community Development MiniProjects Fund | | |
| | <i>2014 Seed Fund</i> | 236.72 |
| | 2014 Donations Allocation | 601.00 |
| | Bank Fees | -37.20 |
| | MiniProject #5 (MP05): Emergency repair of school roof after storm caused wind damage at school Juan Leon Mera (km 35) | -23.90 |
| | MP06: Maintenance and improvements at school Jose Maria Urbina (km 16) – bathroom, playground and planting beds. | -112.90 |
| | MP07: Basic maintenance and improvements at school in Chuyayacu – plumbing and paint. | -77.50 |
| | MP08: Greenhouse plastic for new community garden at Chuyayacu and patchwork for the garden at school Angel Manzano (km 22). These funds, community contributions, and a grant and participation from Nourish International made Chuyayacu's community garden possible. | -239.40 |
| | MP09: Second hand wash station for the school General Epilachima (Esfuerzo). These funds, community and ARP labor, and a grant and participation from Nourish International made the larger project of greatly improving the school/community bathroom possible. | -40.00 |
| | MP10: GPS unit and rechargeable batteries. Purchasing this equipment leverages additional funding for a community mapping project being planned in the community of Chuyayacu – a small Peace Corps VAC grant has been received to complement materials costs and additional grants are being sought. | -172.93 |
| | <i>Carry over to 2015 MiniProject Fund</i> | 133.89 |
| School Materials Fund | | |
| | <i>2014 Seed Fund</i> | 133.55 |
| | 2014 Donations Allocation | 195.00 |
| | Plastic table and chairs; Cabinet locks | -89.50 |
| | Spanish-English dictionaries | -45.00 |
| | Student notebooks for 2014-15 school year; Misc. school supplies | -90.10 |
| | 2013 Holiday Baskets for Schools (projected cost) | -103.95 |
| | <i>Carry over to 2015 School Materials Fund</i> | 0.00 |
| | IN KIND: Projector, Children's books, School supplies | |
| General Fund | | |
| | <i>2014 Seed Fund</i> | -41.40 |
| | 2014 Donations Allocation | 317.00 |
| | Bank Fees | -9.42 |
| | Postcard Income | 4.00 |
| | Project T-shirt cost | -117.00 |
| | T-shirt income (partial inventory remains for 2015) | 162.00 |
| | <i>Carry over to 2014 General Fund</i> | 315.18 |

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT THE ARAJUNO ROAD PROJECT

Volunteer

Whether you have served with us or not, we always need more hands and more fresh ideas. Can't travel right now? The Project can always use help on a variety of tasks you can do at home in your spare time.

Donate

The students and schools the Project works with are constantly short of basic school and teaching supplies. School infrastructure is in need of repair. The Project needs a permanent headquarters. What may seem like a little money goes a long way in the Ecuadorian Amazon. Donations can be made through:

Fundrzr: <http://fnd.us/c/cP4E5>

Omprakash (US tax deductible): https://www.omprakash.org/partner_donation?partner_id=2623

Don't have money to spare? Try Give As You Live (UK online shopping):

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/charity/greataves> Or hold a fundraiser, or fundraise for us using Fundrzr above. We've seen some creative fundraising by volunteers! If you or your family work for a company, ask about their Corporate Social Responsibility program or if they contribute matching funds for employee donations.

Tell people about us

Simply tell a friend, family member, colleague and/or fellow traveler about the Project. We are happy to share fliers that you can post at universities, workplaces, hostals, etc. Make it a cultural exchange opportunity and present a slideshow at school or work. Let us know if you think we should be outreaching to any particular groups or organizations.

Keep in touch

The Project is only as strong as its community of supporters. How to contact us and interact with the Project:

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