



# FUNDACION ALLI CAUSAI

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## WHO IS FAC?

FAC is a non-profit organisation improving the health of Ecuador's indigenous populations. The ideology is to provide a comprehensive healthcare solution; not just treating the illnesses but also tackling the roots of the problems: for example, providing health education, basic sanitation and installing training programmes to empower the communities to better function as citizens within society.

## MAIN OBJECTIVES

- To provide basic healthcare in remote areas with limited access to health resources
- To raise the level of health awareness in the most underprivileged sectors of the Ecuadorian population and to train them for emergency response to urgent medical conditions.
- To take into account the patient's vision and culture when delivering health services
- To implement training of technical health staff, taking into account the needs and potential within the local communities

## OUR HISTORY

FAC's roots date back to 1983, where a small group of doctors and dentists started to assess patients in remote rural communities in the highlands of Ecuador. In the early days, the social inequalities that shaped the country were more pronounced and in most of the villages the western health care system and the presence of the state were virtually non-existent. Patients from these villages had to travel for many hours by foot to access the district hospitals, where they found racial discrimination and overcrowding as the reward for their struggles.

In response, FAC began itinerant health campaigns, focusing on primary care that would reach the community. One of the main concerns was the presence of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, that in some cases could reach ten times the national prevalence. Another early project, crucial to the organisation's philosophy, was training of community health workers and technicians to work within their own communities.

Over the years, FAC has worked on a number of projects promoting the sustainable development of the most remote and impoverished areas of Ecuador. We have worked with the local civil administrations, indigenous organisations and, in later years, also the Ministry of Health.

Today, FAC has 35 members and works in 4 provinces of the country.

## **WORK AREAS**

### ***Urban health care***

The headquarters of the organisation is in the Andean city of Ambato – home to the Hospital Alli Causai, located in an area primarily populated by poor, rural immigrants. The decision to build a hospital here helped give the organisation a central reference centre for all the surrounding provinces. The services offered by the Hospital include an outpatient clinic, laboratory, x-rays, emergency operating theatre and 40 beds.

In the last year a new area of Hospital Alli Causai was opened, destined to the care of the elderly. In Ambato, and all around the country, elderly people face not only the concerns of old age but also the lack of resources to solve their health problems: most of them don't have any form of social security or state benefits and in the most extreme cases, have been abandoned by their families. A new team is now working in the creation of a day care centre, with physiotherapy, psychological support and other activities.

### ***Healthy Schools***

One of our most successful programmes is the Healthy School Programme in the urban overspill around the city of Ambato, an area characterised by poverty and limited access to health services. The programme annually reaches over 2,000 children between six and 12 years of age.

FAC's urban team performs medical and dental examinations and treatments to all the children in the participating schools. Treatments are followed up with preventive control campaigns with the children, who learn about issues such as personal hygiene, waste control, clean water, prevention of accidents. Also, the training activities are extended to parents and teachers. This year, 1,390 parents and 52 teachers were involved in various training sessions, including relevant social topics such as the prevention of domestic violence and family planning.

### ***Rural primary care***

Since FAC began its main concern has been to treat the most prevalent diseases in isolated areas of the country. It has brought health directly to the communities through its campaign work. FAC's medical teams create bases in the local schools or community centres and perform medical and dental attention. Basic medication is also provided.

Another goal of rural primary care is creating healthy schools in rural areas. Similar to the urban programme, our professionals carry out medical and dental care for children, train teachers and parents and invest in improving the sanitary conditions of the schools, which in some cases do not even have toilets or hand-washing facilities.

### ***Health Education***

FAC has trained three generations of health workers in various professional profiles and duties, ensuring that the trained human resource will then stay on and serve their community in a long-term relationship. The health education efforts are divided in two levels. Firstly, the community health worker profile, which operates on a voluntary basis and, as a result, tends to be more transient. These health workers are devoted to recognising and referring medical emergencies. On the other hand, in association with The State University of Bolivar, we conducted a professional education degree for long-term local leaders, which has resulted in some of the most efficient health workers that the NGO has and are now serve as full-time employees devoted to the development of their communities.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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