



Policy Plan Quina Care 2024-2027

'The People of the Amazon Also Have the Right to Quality Care'

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Who We Are

Quina Care is a Dutch foundation with the goal of improving medical care in rural areas of South America, particularly in the Amazon rainforest. The Dutch foundation is supported by Quina Care Ecuador for local implementation and by Quina Care United States for fundraising.

The founders are Jacob van der Ende and Carolien Bouwman, both tropical doctors. During their training, they became convinced that they wanted to work in South America to help people with poor access to healthcare.

What We Want

Improving Healthcare in and Around Putumayo

Putumayo is a district in the northern Ecuadorian Amazon rainforest, bordering Colombia and Peru. It is one of the most remote, impoverished, and unstable areas of Ecuador, where basic services like education and medical care are very limited. This, combined with its difficult accessibility, makes it a forgotten part of Ecuador. Quina Care aims to improve and make healthcare more accessible in Putumayo.

The ongoing guerrilla war makes the region highly unsettled and unsafe. Many Colombians cross the river, which also serves as the border, into Ecuador in search of care. We also want to be there for these people. Our total target population is about twenty thousand people.

Why We Want This

Health Problems

Due to the lack of quality healthcare and the fact that over 60% of the residents of Putumayo live below the poverty line, there are many health problems. Non-communicable diseases (such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases), complications from (teen) pregnancies, malnutrition, especially in children, and urgent care needs (such as snake bites and accidents) are common issues. With this approach, Quina Care aims to contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and Goal 10 (Reducing Inequality).

Lack of Medical Facilities

Medical outposts in the area are scarce. The few that exist are difficult to reach, often understaffed, and lack sufficient facilities. The nearest hospital is 200 kilometers away, requiring a costly trip of at least 4 hours, if transportation is available at all. Providing quality primary care and urgent secondary care is therefore vital for these people.

What We Are Doing Now

Establishment of a Hospital

A boarding school in Puerto El Carmen, Ecuador, was converted into a hospital, which Quina Care opened in November 2021. The hospital is equipped with a laboratory, pharmacy, inpatient department, emergency room, operating room, maternity ward, and diagnostic facilities with ultrasound and X-ray equipment. There is housing for staff and a hostel for the families of patients. Through this hospital, Quina Care aims to provide quality and affordable primary and urgent secondary care, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Since its opening, more than 5,200 new patients have found their way to the hospital. The total number of consultations has reached 13,000, with more than 3,600 for children and pregnant women. There is strong collaboration with the local government and community.



Local Staff

In addition to two Dutch tropical doctors, our hospital is run by 13 dedicated local staff members, including receptionists, administrative workers, doctors, nurses, lab technicians, and cleaners. We provide daily educational sessions after handovers and hold monthly staff lunches. Our staff is actively involved in hospital operations. For all employees, we create a personal learning plan with opportunities for further training.

It is important to us that local staff remain with us for an extended period. Their ongoing commitment and involvement are essential to the stability and quality of our care.

Sustainability

The hospital strives for sustainable operations as much as possible.

Currently, the hospital uses a number of cotton surgical drapes, reducing the use of disposable ones. The plan is to increase the number of these reusable drapes.

This year, one of the volunteers was able to secure solar panels for the hospital. These panels were shipped to Ecuador in the container last summer. As soon as sufficient funds are available, the panels will be installed.



Vision for the Future

A. Healthcare

The focus of healthcare is on four key areas: non-communicable diseases, pregnancies, children, and urgent care. Prevention plays a crucial role, aiming to prevent illness through targeted screenings, education, and lifestyle programs. Additionally, the Electronic Patient Record (EPR) is being further developed, which will improve care through accurate analysis of health trends.

B. Sustainable Development Goals

Socially: The community of Putumayo will feel responsible for the hospital's continued existence, and the leadership of the hospital will be taken over by local staff.

Economically: The hospital will be financially independent of foreign support for its operational costs.

Ecologically: The hospital will manage energy and water sustainably and use materials responsibly.

C. Scientific Research and University Collaboration

The hospital collaborates with local and international universities for academic support, aiming to improve the quality of medical care while also increasing operational efficiency to achieve savings on operational costs.

What We Will Do in the Next 3 Years

A. Healthcare

The focus is on both the treatment and prevention of non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular diseases (high blood pressure) and diabetes, through programs, screenings, comprehensive tests, and treatments.

For pregnancies, integrated care is provided, with prenatal support, assistance during childbirth (including the possibility of a C-section), and postpartum care for both mother and child. During pregnancy, we have all the necessary facilities for laboratory tests and ultrasounds. To prevent unwanted pregnancies, we offer all forms of contraception, including sterilization surgeries for women. In the next 3 years, we aim to also offer sterilizations for men. Our education efforts particularly focus on preventing teenage pregnancies, a significant issue in our population. Several NGOs and other organizations in our region work on this topic, and in close collaboration with them, we provide targeted education and guidance.

For children, the focus is on screening for anemia and malnutrition, as well as education on hygiene and healthy eating. We work closely with local schools and other organizations to have a broader impact on public health.

Urgent care is essential. The hospital is ready 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to respond quickly to emergencies. We aim to treat patients as much as possible on-site and, if needed, stabilize them for referral in collaboration with the public health system to a hospital 4 hours away. Our permanent doctors all take extensive external courses to be particularly skilled in handling trauma patients.

The quality of care is ensured through local protocols, an Electronic Patient Record (EPR), and internal and external quality controls. This enables us to track epidemiological statistics accurately and continuously improve.

A hospital website is being developed as an informative platform to improve access to care. The website will provide practical details such as opening hours and contact information, making it easy for patients to access our services and learn about our care programs. Additionally, it will provide transparency on how the hospital is funded.

B. Sustainable Development Goals

Socially: Annual personal evaluations are part of the staff policy. Staff members are also given the opportunity to further their education. Additionally, continuing education is offered so they can further develop their expertise in their fields. Training for management positions has also begun,



Economically: For the upcoming period, fundraising for the hospital's operations will focus not only on the Netherlands but also on the USA and Ecuador. Additionally, in Ecuador, opportunities are being explored for alternative income sources, such as offering commercial services like medical check-ups. Quina Care Ecuador plays a key role in this.

The hospital in Ecuador greatly benefits from the current partnership with the foundation "Insulin for Life." In the coming period, we aim to establish more such collaborations. Current fundraising efforts in the Netherlands will continue, with the board, our ambassador, and volunteer fundraisers playing an important role. Through our newsletter, social media, and presentations, we keep our donors and sponsors informed about the hospital's developments.

Funds for investments and equipment purchases are still primarily raised in the Netherlands.

Ecologically: The solar panel project will be implemented as soon as sufficient funding is secured. The possibilities for rainwater harvesting are being further explored. The use of disposable materials is being minimized as much as possible. Disposable clothing and drapes are being replaced with cotton surgical garments and drapes. The need for disposable materials, such as gloves, will be repeatedly evaluated critically.

C. Scientific Research and University Collaboration

The goal is to optimize diagnostics and, thereby, healthcare as much as possible regarding the various pathogens present in and around Putumayo. This is also the research question that Jacob van der Ende, under the supervision of Professor Martin Grobusch (University of Amsterdam, UvA), aims to address through his PhD trajectory.

Quina Care also receives academic support from the Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), with which an agreement was signed in September 2021, aiming to improve medical care in Putumayo. The collaboration with USFQ has been intensified over the past three years, including the exchange of laboratory staff to learn from one another.

Even before the hospital's opening, Jacob and Carolien had contact with Josefina Coloma, an Ecuadorian scientist who has worked for many years at Berkeley University in California. Josefina is one of the founders of the A2CARES research group, which is part of the larger CREID network, Centers for Research in Emerging Infectious Diseases. Thanks to this fruitful collaboration with Josefina, Hospital San Miguel is now an official research location recognized by the US NIH (National Institutes of Health).

Attracting research projects in collaboration with UvA, USFQ, and Berkeley will not only optimize diagnostics and the care provided but also increase the efficiency of the hospital's operations, leading to savings on operating costs.

D. Expansion of the Foundation

Professionalization: Quina Care strives for further professionalization, working on optimizing (digital) systems for administration and reporting, which will improve financial control and accountability. Regular evaluations and audits ensure greater reliability and trust among donors and stakeholders. In the area of digital security and the expansion of functionalities for the Electronic Patient File (EPD), the work has greatly increased. Therefore, structural support from an external party will be sought.

Board Expansion: To support the growth and professionalization of the foundation, the board will be expanded with new members.

Impact and Role of Volunteers: Volunteers are and will remain essential to Stichting Quina Care.

A volunteer policy has been established for those working for the hospital, with targeted recruitment, training, and guidance.

Recognizing and retaining volunteers, allowing them to continue participating in long-term projects, strengthens the contribution of volunteers to the foundation's mission and the impact Quina Care has.

Accountability and Financial Policy

Accountability

The division of responsibilities and tasks between Stichting Quina Care (Netherlands) and Fundación Quina Care Ecuador is as follows:

Stichting Quina Care:

- Fundraising and promotion
- Management of resources
- Allocating resources to Fundación Quina Care Ecuador
- Reporting to donors and sponsors in the Netherlands
- Monitoring Fundación Quina Care Ecuador

Fundación Quina Care Ecuador:

- Providing medical care at the hospital in Puerto el Carmen
- Organizing project-based activities
- Deploying people and resources in Ecuador
- Local fundraising and promotion in Ecuador
- Reporting to the foundation in the Netherlands on the allocated resources and the policies implemented

The income and expenditures of Stichting Quina Care are accounted for in an annual report, which is also published on the website. The annual report also includes a 'review' and a 'forward look'. A financial committee is appointed to assess the annual report.

All individuals and companies that have sponsored receive a thank-you email. After the completion of each project, a report on the spending is provided to the relevant trust fund or foundation, often accompanied by photos of the project.

The goal is that at least one of the board members visits the hospital in Ecuador annually to be well-informed on-site. This trip is made at personal expense.

Asset Management

The board of Quina Care is responsible for managing the assets. The board members do not treat the foundation's assets as their own. There is a separation of assets. The foundation has a current account. Once the foundation has funds that are not immediately needed for its objectives, this amount will be placed in a savings account to ensure the foundation's continuity in unforeseen situations. Investments in stocks or bonds are not made.

Use of Assets

The foundation does not aim for profit. The financial policy of the foundation is focused on achieving the above-mentioned objectives. Overhead costs are kept as low as possible, and at least 90% of the assets will be used for the foundation's purpose. Board members are not compensated for their services.