

Integration Nation: Supporting the Promotion of Community Engagement in Cuenca, Ecuador

An Interactive Qualifying Project
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Executive Summary – English

International journeys have evolved from an activity for tourists to an option for older individuals looking to relocate permanently, as shown by the increasing number of people choosing to retire abroad (Zamudio, 2016). Some locations are more attractive to retirees than others. In 2009, International Living named Cuenca, Ecuador the #1 place in the world for retirees in an edition of their monthly magazine (International Living). The article focused on the economic value of the city - such as its low cost of living - and a variety of attractive features, like cultural festivities and temperate climate. These characteristics may have caused the rates of immigration into Cuenca to increase dramatically. For example, studies show that in 2001, there were 2,924 North American immigrants living in Cuenca and comparatively, in 2010, there was 8,291 North Americans residing in Cuenca (Alvarez et al, 2017).

This influx in international migrants has revealed numerous differences among North American expatriates and long-term Cuencano residents. As migration into Cuenca increases, language barriers, cultural differences, and acclimation difficulties become noticeable within the Cuencano community. This influx of North Americans into Cuenca has established a divide within the city between the two populations.

According to our sponsors, the Department of External Relations, their main goal is to promote the internationalization - the process by which a community attempts to interact with the world on an international scale - of Cuenca. Currently, they are attempting to address the separation between the North American and long-term Cuencano populations of the city. We hoped to better understand this divide between the two communities to help our sponsor resolve issues surrounding integration. After an influx of North Americans immigrants in Cuenca, the Department of External Relations has set up numerous events to facilitate integration of the various communities, attempting to foster a better relationship between these groups. General approaches have included inviting keynote speakers to talk at local universities and establishing specific times at local establishments that are marketed towards North Americans for language practice and cultural discussions (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2014). Rising rates of immigration, however, have prompted our sponsor to search for means of augmenting their programs. As a result, our team investigated and addressed the problems associated with integrating North American retirees into Cuencan society. To accomplish this aim, we developed the following project goal and objectives.



Figure 3. Language Barriers - Ecuadorian Women Reading English Sign (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2016)

Project Goal and Objectives

The goal of this project was to conduct research to help the Department of External Relations understand the dynamic between North American retirees and long-term residents in Cuenca, Ecuador. We did this to support the sponsor's efforts to promote a community which encompasses all members with the aid of supplemental materials. We hoped to clarify the divides that exist between the North American and Cuencano communities and to counteract negative effects of the division. The team assessed perspectives of various community members

about immigration increases in the city and subsequent societal divides. The primary objectives of this project were:

1. To understand perspectives from the North American retirees and Cuencanos to determine lifestyle differences and possible barriers of integration
2. To synthesize data from participants to evaluate trends and identify key obstacles of integration
3. To utilize findings to develop supplemental materials for integration efforts

Methodology

To develop a solution which will benefit both communities, the team attempted to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on integration thus far. In the interviews, we asked a variety of questions to people from both communities to gauge perspectives; these questions revolved around their experiences in Ecuador. Interviews contained open-ended questions about daily life in Cuenca followed by subject-specific questions designed to probe for information that became most prevalent during the previously broad discussion. We used restaurants, parks, and local events frequented by North Americans to locate willing participants as the community that we were trying to reach was mainly retirees, who have free time to spend.

Following data collection from members of the two communities, we used coding to identify prevalent themes. We determined a set of criteria to compare individual interviews and synthesized a large amount of data, thereby creating more intelligible results. We distilled a large number of complex responses down to overarching trends and themes for ease of evaluation.

After gathering and synthesizing relevant data, we used the results to develop the materials which were distributed to the sponsor in order to aid their efforts in promoting social interactions between North Americans and Cuencanos. By using data from the communities involved, we designed materials which suited the needs and preferences of both the North Americans and long-term Cuencano residents, thus promoting the longevity and success of the programs.

Results

In many instances, the culture, language, and food may differ from country to country and, in order to successfully embrace a new life, one must acclimate to the norm. Speaking with individuals throughout the city, we found that the separation of North American immigrants and long-term Cuencanos may stem from cultural differences and an inability to acclimate to a new lifestyle. This may create distinct communities due to disinterest in engaging locals. While some migrants do not have much difficulty accepting the change in culture, others struggle and - as a result - search for familiarity by seeking out the company of other North American retirees, thereby finding comfort in numbers. Unfortunately, this limits their exposure to Cuencan society and hinders their acclimation by preventing the interface of the two cultures. The main social barriers identified from our interview data, and a description of their nature, are included below.

- **Inaccurate preconceived notions:** Resources available which market Cuenca tend to focus on the many positive aspects of life in the city, but fail to mention the problems immigrants may encounter. As a result, they are unprepared when they arrive.
- **Language:** While many attempt to learn Spanish while living in Cuenca, some are still hesitant, though various resources for learning it exist.
- **Culture:** Since the culture in Cuenca is very different from that in North America, many immigrants find it difficult to adjust.
- **Judgments:** Some immigrants judge others and hold preconceptions about social groups in a way that discourages interactions.
- **Generational Differences:** Many North Americans who move here are often of the third-age, meaning they are older than 65, and as a result may find it difficult to interact with individuals who are significantly younger than them.
- **Negative Attitudes:** Some immigrants feel negatively about their life in Cuenca either due to personal disposition or problems they faced in the United States or in Cuenca.
- **Economy:** North American retirees tend to have more money than residents of Cuenca, thereby causing a financial divide between the two.
- **Lifestyle Differences:** Life in Cuenca is perceived to run at a much slower pace and this can be difficult for North American immigrants to adjust to.
- **Differences in Community Background:** Interactions are more friend and family-focused in Cuenca than in the United States.

Materials and Programs

After we completed our data collection and analysis, we used our results to develop materials which we thought would improve integration efforts. Our conclusion from analysis was that there are two distinct groups of retirees: those who engage the community and become well integrated and those who are isolated and therefore are not well integrated. By encouraging the group of isolated retirees to engage with the community, we believe integration will improve. We have developed an acclimation pamphlet for incoming immigrants aimed at lessening the effects of cultural shock. We have developed two programs: a companion program and a volunteer program shown in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. These will be advertised to encourage retirees to interact with the community and hopefully reduce some problems associated with retiring abroad, such as language and cultural differences. We have also developed a guide to identifying and engaging successful volunteers to ease the process of implementing these programs.

Companion Program	
Preparation	Organization - Who to contact to organize the program and how best to set it up
	Advertisement - Information on who to advertise to and where to advertise
Facilitation	Compatibility - Information on methods for compatibility testing and subsequent effort required for each
	Initial Meeting - How best to facilitate and initial meet and greet to educate participants on the program and establish longevity for the future
Maintenance	Evaluation - Information on how to gauge success and longevity of program
Considerations	Safety - Thoughts on how to ensure the safety of each participant
	Cost/time commitment - Thoughts on the amount of time and effort required for different organizations of the program

Table 1. Outline of Companion Program Guide

Volunteer Network	
Preparation	Organization - Who to contact to organize the program and how best to set it up
	Advertisement - information on who to advertise to and where to advertise
	Training - information on how to potentially train volunteers to ensure the best experience possible
Facilitation	Scheduling - Information on how to compile volunteer contacts and schedule work opportunities
Maintenance	Evaluation - Information on how to gauge success and longevity of program
Considerations	Cost/time commitment - thoughts on the amount of time and effort required for different organizations of the program

Table 2. Outline of Volunteer Program Guide

Recommendations

Following data collection and analysis, we recommend that to improve integration efforts, the Department of External Relations contacts organizations that are interested in either a companion program or volunteer program. In this way, organizations interested in developing and utilizing these programs may assume responsibility with the guidance of the manuals we created. This will allow the workload to be distributed throughout various organizations; thus, the future successes of this project are not entirely dependent upon the time or resources of any particular group.

Once the programs are ready for implementation, the advertisement and material distribution can begin. The acclimation pamphlet should be the first material immigrants receive upon arrival in Cuenca, as it will serve as a means to encourage them to become engaged with the community early on rather than beginning a pattern of isolation. The pamphlet will include advertisements for both the companion program and the volunteer program which will serve as a secondary step to community engagement. This engagement will facilitate successful integration by allowing the North American retirees and Cuencanos to interact and share perspectives, thereby understanding each other better.

Resumen ejecutivo – Español

Los viajes internacionales han evolucionados de una actividad para los turistas a una opción para las personas viejas que quieren reubicarse permanentemente, como lo demuestra el creciente número de personas que deciden jubilarse en un país nuevo (Zamudio, 2016). Algunos lugares son más atractivos para los jubilados que otros sitios. En 2009, International Living nombró a Cuenca, Ecuador el mejor lugar para los jubilados en una edición de su revista mensual (International Living). El artículo se centró en los valores económicos dentro de la ciudad, como su bajo costo de vida y una variedad de características atractivas como festividades culturales y clima templado. Es posible que estas características hayan causado el crecimiento de tasas de inmigración en Cuenca recientemente. En 2001, había 2.924 inmigrantes norteamericanos viviendo en Cuenca y, en 2010, había 8.291 residentes norteamericanos en Cuenca (Álvarez, 2017).

Esta afluencia de migrantes internacionales ha revelado numerosas diferencias entre los expatriados norteamericanos y los residentes cuencanos. Mientras la migración a Cuenca aumenta, las personas de Cuenca pueden ver los efectos de las barreras del lenguaje, las diferencias culturales, y las dificultades de aclimatación. Esta afluencia ha establecido una división dentro de la ciudad entre las dos poblaciones: los norteamericanos y los cuencanos.

Según nuestros patrocinadores, la Dirección de Relaciones Externas, su objetivo principal es la internacionalización – el proceso en que una comunidad intenta interactuar con el mundo en una escala internacional – de Cuenca. Este departamento está tratando de comprender y mejorar las interacciones entre los norteamericanos y los cuencanos. Esperamos comprender esta brecha entre las dos comunidades para ayudar a nuestro patrocinador mientras tratan de resolver los problemas de integración. Después de la afluencia de inmigrantes norteamericanos en Cuenca, la Dirección de Relaciones Externas ha establecido muchos eventos para facilitar la integración de las diversas comunidades, tratando de fomentar una mejor relación entre estos grupos. Sus enfoques incluyen las invitaciones de oradores principales que hablan en los universitarios y establecen tiempos específicos en lugares locales que se comercializan hacia los norteamericanos para la práctica lingüística y las discusiones culturales (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2014). La aumentación de las tasas de inmigración, sin embargo, ha llevado a nuestro patrocinador para buscar los métodos de aumentar sus programas. Como un resultado, nosotros estamos investigando y abordando los problemas asociados con la integración de los jubilados norteamericanos en la sociedad cuencana. Para lograr este objetivo, desarrollamos la siguiente meta y objetivos del proyecto.



Figura 3. Barreras lingüísticas – Una mujer con un enseñal en inglés (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2016)

Objetivo del Proyecto

La meta de este proyecto fue realizar investigaciones para ayudar a la Dirección de Relaciones Externas comprender la dinámica entre los jubilados norteamericanos y los residentes cuencanos para apoyar los esfuerzos del patrocinador para promover una comunidad

que abarque a todos los miembros. Esperamos aclarar las diferencias que existen entre las comunidades norteamericanas y cuencanas y contrarrestar los efectos negativos de la división. Evaluamos las perspectivas de varios miembros de la comunidad sobre la aumentación de la inmigración en la ciudad y las subsecuentes diferencias sociales. Los objetivos principales de este proyecto fueron:

1. Comprender las perspectivas de los jubilados norteamericanos y los cuencanos para determinar las diferencias de los estilos de vida y las barreras posibles de integración
2. Sintetizar los datos de los participantes para evaluar las tendencias e identificar los obstáculos principales de la integración
3. Utilizar los resultados para desarrollar materiales complementarios para los esfuerzos para mejorar la integración

Metodología

Para desarrollar una solución que beneficie a ambas comunidades, tratamos de obtener una comprensión más profunda de las perspectivas sobre la integración hasta este momento. En las entrevistas utilizadas para medir las perspectivas, hicimos una variedad de preguntas a las personas de cada comunidad; estas preguntas se enfocan en sus experiencias en Ecuador. Las entrevistas contenían preguntas libres sobre la vida diaria en Cuenca, seguidas de preguntas específicas, diseñadas para investigar información que se hizo más frecuente durante la discusión anterior. Utilizamos restaurantes, parques, y eventos locales frecuentados por norteamericanos para localizar a los participantes dispuestos, porque la comunidad estudiada era principalmente jubilados, que tienen tiempo libre durante el día.

Después de la recopilación de datos de los miembros de las dos comunidades, hemos utilizado la codificación para identificar los temas prevalentes. Determinamos un conjunto de criterios para comparar entrevistas individuales y sintetizamos una gran cantidad de datos, creando resultados más inteligibles. Destilamos un gran número de respuestas complejas hasta las tendencias generales y los temas para facilitar la evaluación.

Después de recopilar y sintetizar los datos relevantes, utilizamos los resultados para desarrollar los materiales para el patrocinador, para ayudar a sus esfuerzos en la promoción de una comunidad que abarca los norteamericanos y los cuencanos. Usando los datos de las comunidades, diseñamos materiales que respondieran a las necesidades y preferencias de los norteamericanos y los cuencanos, para promover la longevidad y el éxito de los programas.

Resultados

En muchos casos, la cultura, el lenguaje, y la comida pueden diferir de un país a otro y, para adoptar una nueva vida, se acostumbra a la norma. Hablando con muchas personas dentro de la ciudad, encontramos que la separación de los inmigrantes norteamericanos y los cuencanos puede originarse de diferencias culturales y una incapacidad para aclimatarse a estilo nuevo de vida. Este fenómeno creando comunidades distantes como un resultado del desinterés en la interacción comunitaria. Mientras que algunos inmigrantes pueden aceptar el cambio en la cultura, otros tienen luchas y, como resultado, buscan por la familiaridad en la compañía de otros jubilados norteamericanos. Desafortunadamente, esto puede crear una limita por su exposición a

la sociedad cuencana y dificulta su aclimatación. Las barreras sociales principales identificadas en las entrevistas incluyen:

1. Nociones preconcebidas incorrectas – Los recursos disponibles que se centran Cuenca, típicamente se enfocan en los aspectos positivos de la vida en la ciudad, pero no mencionan los problemas que los inmigrantes pueden encontrar. Como un resultado, no están preparados cuando llegan.
2. Lenguaje – Mientras muchas personas intentan aprender español cuando viven en Cuenca, algunos todavía tienen dificultades, aunque hay varios recursos para aprender.
3. Cultura – A causa de la cultura en Cuenca es muy diferente de la de Norteamérica, muchos inmigrantes piensan que es difícil para adaptarse.
4. Juicios – Algunos inmigrantes juzgan a los demás y mantienen ideas preconcebidas sobre los grupos social de una manera que desaliente las interacciones.
5. Diferencias generacionales – Muchos norteamericanos que se mudan a Cuenca son a la edad jubilada y, como un resultado, pueden tener dificultades de interactuar con personas que son significativamente más jóvenes que ellos.
6. Actitudes negativas – Algunos inmigrantes se sienten negativamente sobre su vida en Cuenca, posible a causa de su disposición personal o a causa de los problemas que enfrentan en los Estados Unidos o en Cuenca.
7. Economía – Los jubilados norteamericanos típicamente tienen más dinero que los residentes de Cuenca; causa una división financiera entre los dos.
8. Diferencias en el estilo de vida – Algunas personas se perciben que la vida en Cuenca es más lenta que la de los Estados Unidos. Puede ser difícil para los inmigrantes norteamericanos.
9. Diferencias en los antecedentes comunitarios – Las interacciones son más amables y enfocan más en la familia en Cuenca que los Estados Unidos.

Materiales y programas

Después de completar nuestra recopilación y análisis de datos, utilizamos los resultados para desarrollar materiales que pueden mejorar los esfuerzos de integración en Cuenca. Nuestra conclusión del análisis era que hay dos grupos distintos de jubilados: un grupo que participa en la comunidad e integra bien y un grupo que está aislado y no puede integrar bien. Fomentamos al grupo de los jubilados aislados interactúa con la comunidad; creemos que la integración mejorará si ellos tratan de interactuar con los cuencanos. Hemos desarrollado dos programas: un programa de compañeros y un programa de voluntarios. Estos incentivarán a los jubilados a interactuar con la comunidad y reducirán algunos de los problemas asociados con la jubilación en un país extranjero, como el lenguaje y las diferencias culturales.

Programa de compañeros	
Preparación	Organización – Los contactos para organizar el programa y el método de establecerlo
	Publicidad – Información sobre a quién anunciarse y dónde anunciarse
Facilitación	Compatibilidad – información sobre los métodos de probando por la compatibilidad y los esfuerzos subsiguientes necesarios para cada
	Reunión inicial – la mejor manera de facilitar y comenzar a reunirse y saludar para educar a los participantes sobre el programa y establecer la longevidad para el futuro
Mantenimiento	Evaluación – información sobre cómo medir el éxito y la longevidad del programa
Consideraciones	Seguridad – Pensamientos sobre cómo garantizar la seguridad de cada participante
	Obligación de costo y tiempo – Pensamientos sobre la cantidad de tiempo y esfuerzo requerido para organizaciones diferentes del programa

Tabla 1. Guía de programa de compañeros

Programa de voluntarios	
Preparación	Organización – Los contactos para organizar el programa y el método de establecerlo
	Publicidad – Información sobre a quién anunciarse y dónde anunciarse
	Entrenamiento – Información sobre cómo capacitar voluntarios para asegurar a la mejor experiencia posible
Facilitación	Programación – Información sobre como compilar contactos voluntarios y crear un horario de las oportunidades de trabajo
Mantenimiento	Evaluación – información sobre cómo medir el éxito y la longevidad del programa
Consideraciones	Obligación de costo y tiempo – Pensamientos sobre la cantidad de tiempo y esfuerzo requerido para organizaciones diferentes del programa

Tabla 2. Guía de programa de voluntarios

Recomendaciones

Recomendamos que se ponga en contacto con las organizaciones que tienen interés en un programa de compañeros o en un programa de voluntarios para mejorar los esfuerzos de integración. De esta manera, las organizaciones interesadas en el desarrollo y utilización de estos programas pueden asumir la responsabilidad con la guía de los manuales que creamos. Distribuirá más uniformemente el trabajo en varias organizaciones; por lo tanto, los éxitos futuros de este proyecto no dependen totalmente del tiempo o los recursos de ningún grupo en particular.

Cuando los programas están preparados para ser implementados, el anuncio y la distribución de los materiales pueden comenzar. El paquete de aclimatación debe ser el primer material que los inmigrantes reciban a su llegada en Cuenca; servirá como un método para alentarlos a interactuar con la comunidad en vez de comenzar un patrón de aislamiento. El paquete incluirá anuncios del programa de compañeros y el programa de voluntarios, que servirá como un paso secundario para la interacción en la comunidad. Esta interacción facilitará la integración exitosa, porque permite que los jubilados norteamericanos y los cuencanos interactúen y compartan sus perspectivas.

Abstract

An influx of North American retirees has formed two separate groups within Cuenca, Ecuador. The goal of our project, sponsored by the Department of External Relations, was to develop a plan to facilitate successful integration. We achieved the goal in three stages: understanding perspectives from residents, analyzing data collected, and using trends to develop supplemental materials. Based on data, we planned to reach out to the group of isolated retirees through opportunities for community engagement.

Resumen en Español

Una afluencia de jubilados norteamericanos ha formado dos comunidades separadas dentro de Cuenca, Ecuador. El objetivo de nuestro proyecto, patrocinado por el Departamento de Relaciones Exteriores, fue desarrollar un plan para facilitar la integración exitosa. El objetivo se logró en tres etapas: comprender las perspectivas de los residentes, analizar los datos recopilados y utilizar temas para desarrollar materiales complementarios. El resultado fue un plan para llegar a jubilados aislados a través de oportunidades de participación comunitaria.

Acknowledgements

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We would also like to thank our advisors, Professor Lauren Elgert and Professor David DiBiasio, from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, for their continual support and guidance throughout the duration of the project. Their constructive feedback on our report and presentation helped make this project a success. In addition, we thank them for always making themselves available during the duration of the IQP process and for making this four of the most rewarding months of our WPI education.

In addition, our team would like to thank our On-site Coordinator, Professor Gary Pollice, for aiding in the process of finding this project and remaining in touch with the Department of External Relations when we could not be present. Professor Pollice's insight to living in Cuenca was an essential to the success of this project.

Lastly, our team would like to express deep gratitude to the community members of Cuenca, Ecuador. Without their time and willingness to participate in our interviews, our project would not be the project it is today. Our team will never forget their generosity and kindness.

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Introduction

International journeys have evolved from an activity for tourists to an option for older individuals looking to relocate entirely, as shown by the increasing number of people choosing to retire abroad (Zamudio, 2016). People choose to retire abroad for various reasons including - but not limited to - adventure, climate, and culture. Retirement options can also be influenced and affected by the free market globalization associated with wages, pensions, and a variety of other economic metrics. Yet, global migration often brings a variety of individual changes and challenges. With the alteration of day-to-day life, individuals from many societies throughout the globe may experience personal discomfort stemming from cultural change and the subsequent need for social acclimation. However, as a result of technological advancements, long distance communication has become a social norm and has made distance appear lessened, allowing migrants to remain in contact with their loved ones and maintain cultural ties at home. As worldwide relocation becomes more prominent, tension between cultures can disrupt societal harmony and have a negative effect on many facets of everyday life.

Ecuador has become a very popular destination for immigrants from a variety of backgrounds, including those from North America. Movement into Ecuador has become especially popular for those reaching the point of retirement who face difficulties associated with retiring in their native land due to economic constraints, a need for a change in climate, or solely for a change in lifestyle. In 2009, International Living named Cuenca, Ecuador the #1 place for retirees in an edition of their monthly magazine (International Living, 2009). The article focused on the economic prospects within the city, such as its low cost of living, and a variety of attractive features like cultural festivities and temperate weather which may have caused the rates of immigration into Ecuador to increase dramatically since 2009. In 2012, approximately 285,000 Americans traveled to Ecuador by air and “officials estimate there are about 15,000 Americans who have resettled in Ecuador as a whole as of 2010” (Hayes, 2014).

This influx in international migrants has revealed numerous differences among North American expatriates and long-term Cuencano residents. As rates of globalization rise and migration efforts become increasingly popular within the country of Ecuador, language barriers, cultural differences, and acclimation difficulties become noticeable within the Cuencano community. This migration influx of North Americans into Cuenca has established a divide within the city between the two populations. Immigrants represent a variety of populations with numerous ethnic backgrounds, ages, and social statuses – each with differing customs that may contribute to tension within the city.

Our sponsor, the Department of External Relations of the Autonomous Decentralized Government of the Municipal of Canton Cuenca, hereafter referred to as the Department of External Relations, wants to address the separation between the North American and long-term Cuencano populations of the city. For this project, they hoped to create a community that encompasses all members while maintaining Cuencano traditions. We hoped to better understand this divide between the two communities to help our sponsor resolve issues involving integration. After an influx of North Americans immigrants in Cuenca, the Department of External Relations has set up numerous events to facilitate integration of the various communities, attempting to foster a better relationship between these groups. General approaches have included inviting keynote speakers to talk at local universities and establishing specific timeframes at local businesses that are marketed towards North Americans (Dirección de

Relaciones Externas, 2014). While these efforts have been laudable, the rising rates of immigration have prompted the sponsor to search for means of augmenting their programs.

Addressing the division between communities can have a positive impact within a society, yet it can be difficult to promote this sense of unity. Previous studies have assessed migration around the world and the integration of cultures to better society. This work included interacting with community leaders of both parties, identifying the needs and interests of immigrants, understanding the current relationships of the two and volunteering at local organizations (Bolduc et al., 2016).

The goal of this project was to conduct research to help the Department of External Relations understand the dynamic between North American retirees and long-term residents in Cuenca, Ecuador. We did this to support the sponsor's efforts to promote community engagement with the aid of supplemental materials. We hope to clarify what divides exist between the North American and Cuencano communities and to counteract negative effects of the division. The team assessed perspectives of various community members about immigration increases in the city and subsequent societal divides. Ultimately, we assessed why these groups experience intercommunal isolation by studying perspectives from the immigrant and long term Cuencano populations. We synthesized and coded data from participants to evaluate trends and analyzed these findings to develop supplemental materials for integration efforts.

Background and Literature Review

As claimed by the Levin Institute, globalization is “a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies, and governments of different nations. Globalization is driven by various factors including but not limited to international trade, investment, and information technology” (The Levin Institute, 2016). Globalization can be both beneficial and detrimental to any person or location as it greatly affects the environment, culture, political systems, economic development and human well-being. With technological and societal advances, one can travel just about anywhere in the world and at any time while still staying connected with loved ones from home. This process allows individuals to keep their ties within their country of origin while being abroad. By increasing travel accessibility to more people, globalization and consequently migration are growing every year (Prescher, 2014).

Making migration accessible to more people is often not enough of a driving force to prompt individuals to leave their home country. People may wish to leave due to a dissatisfaction in their original country. Whatever the factor driving residents out of their country of birth, individuals often use research to guide the decision-making process of moving and to determine their final destination. In doing so, it is expected that one may be well versed in how to integrate themselves into society in a positive manner, however, that is not always the case. Entzinger’s dimensions of integration which reflects the socio-economic factors, cultural factors, and attitudes between groups in a community is a useful way of thinking about and understanding the issues that arise from societal tension among migrants and the receiving host country (Entzinger, 2003).

Socio-Economic Factors

This section aims to discuss the socio-economic factors of international migration. Many people choose to move to another country keeping in mind socio-economic factors that may be beneficial. With the increased presence of migrants in Cuenca, the local people and atmosphere of Cuenca have also been socially and economically affected.

Transnationalism: Existing in Two Places

Social scientists have coined the term transnational immigrants as people who “live their lives across borders and maintain their ties to home, even when their countries of origin and settlement are geographically distant” (Schiller et al., 1992). Essentially, transnational immigrants may be living away from home but simultaneously participate in relationships with family and friends in more than one nation. Because those who partake in transnational migration embody social relations in more than one place, they must recognize their role in each location. In doing so, researchers look at various levels of their living including the subnational, national, and supranational (Levitt, 2003). Experiences of transnational migration are often associated with political and religious participation as well as familial and communal ties. The level at which migrants associate themselves with their original location or new location can vary. Transnational immigrants may not identify with a certain place but affirm their membership in a broader group that has a local, regional, and national level network. As a result of this, “a migrant’s loyalty to place – a village or district – might take a back seat to wider affinities of genealogically and religiously-defined networks or communities” (Levitt, 2003).

Having ties elsewhere may limit a migrant's participation or open-minded views in their current location.

Dynamics of Global Migration

Migration has economic implications for both the sending and receiving society. Due to an influx in people, the economic status of a country can be improved. Contrasting with this influx, an emigration of citizens from a country can lead to economic troubles which are dependent on the both the nation and the severity of movement (Borjas, 2014). In his book, *Immigration Economics*, he noted that "the economic impact of immigration ultimately depends on differences between the skill and distributions of immigrants and natives." One must be aware that motives have brought immigrants to what they call their new home and this is not a group of randomly selected individuals. Labor markets in both the receiving and sending countries experience change when migration occurs as a "result of immigration-induced supply shifts," according to Borjas. Depending on the location and its economic status, wages can be affected with large influxes or outflows of people. Borjas also noted that natives can often benefit from immigration of others to their country. There are three major areas of economics that migration impacts - labor markets, funds raised by the government, and economic growth. Migrants contribute to the economy of a country through taxes, which are used to support social benefits that allow their new cities, states, and countries to improve (Migration Policy Debates, 2014). In addition, migration aids the working-age population and contributes new and foreign skills to the human capital development of countries. Along with the development of a country, migrants may promote an advance in technology (Migration Policy Debates, 2014). This occurs because many migrants - depending on their native country - bring backgrounds filled with technological advancements.

Migrants' purposes and motives determine their contributions to the economic growth of a receiving country. Skills brought by migrants to a receiving country can be beneficial by contributing to human capital development. In addition, migrants that are knowledgeable of technological processes can help further a developing country. The greatest determinant of the net fiscal contribution of a migrant to the receiving country is their employment (Migration Policy Debates, 2014). However, in a European economic review in 2008, Pedersen and colleagues claimed that "increasing the immigration flows may not be a solution to the problem of population ageing but might instead impose a higher fiscal burden on the receiving economies" (Pedersen et. al, 2008). While a population influx may sound beneficial at first, based on individual motives and states of well-being, a population influx can be detrimental to an economy.

Retiring Abroad

Based upon their motives and lifestyle choices, people who choose to retire abroad are considered to be part of a distinct group of immigrants. Over the past few decades, an increasing number of people have chosen to retire abroad, thereby contributing to the world's population of immigrants (Zamudio, 2016). Dependent upon one's financial state and their native land, there is a possibility of retiring earlier and more comfortably in a non-native country. One couple cited that they planned to retire at age 62 but, at age 52, realized that by moving to Costa Rica, their cost of living could be reduced by 65%. This difference in cost allowed them to retire much earlier than expected (Prescher, D., & Haskins, S. 2014). While there are many benefits to

retiring abroad, there are various factors to keep in mind to ensure that the move is worth the time and money including affordability, health care, ease of transition, accessibility, community, housing prospects, climate, and activities (Prescher, D., & Haskins, S. 2014). Many North Americans in Cuenca, report economic motivation as a major reason for their move. Often times, economic and financial insecurity motivate these decisions to migrate (Hayes, 2015).

Cultural Integration

To successfully integrate two groups of different cultures within a community, we must acknowledge and understand the complexity of society. The cultural model of integration, which focuses on integration through cultural understanding and acclimation, is divided into two main categories: the multicultural model and the assimilation model. The multicultural model focuses on bettering the interactions of two cultures while each remains a distinct group. The assimilation model focuses on immigrant assimilation and acclimation within the host culture (Entzinger, 2003). These models acknowledge that there are distinct cultures within societies due to differing attributes and customs of its people. Both models suggest analyzing the different cultural aspects of each group before attempting to facilitate integration.

According to Hofstede's model, it is important to consider historical prevalence of an individual's culture, being that many issues of cultural division progressively develop over time. This model aims to identify differences between two countries by quantifying different societal facets, such as collectivism and individualism, which allows researchers to more easily compare countries and evaluate differences in lifestyle choices and cultural tendencies. The ideas present in Hofstede's model – which scales cultures based upon indexes related to the inequality of power, the extent of threat felt in ambiguous circumstances, how coveted individualistic values are, and how valued masculinity is – are used in social research focusing on many areas of society (Hofstede, 1980).

Racism and Colorism

Racism and colorism, though seemingly similar, have different sociological and cultural origins. Racism is discrimination based upon an international hierarchy of superiority and inferiority that classifies individuals from politically, culturally, and economically diverse backgrounds (Grosfoguel, 2016). Contrastingly, colorism is a process that prioritizes and privileges individuals based upon actual skin tone. As highlighted by Hirschman, it is important to note that racism is – in its entirety – a social construct, while colorist ideas are based upon biology (Hirschman, 2004). Racism and colorism exist in both North American and Ecuadorian societies, though to varying extents. In North America, the phenomenon of colorism has been prevalent throughout history, as shown through the idealization of lighter skin tones. Stemming back to colonial times, during which slavery was common throughout most of the land, lighter-skinned African slaves were often given preferential treatment as compared to those with darker skin (Davis, 2010). In Ecuador, both colorism and racism exist within society; the idea of colorism, though, is much more prevalent than racism. Overall, it is important to recognize the differences in these social beliefs as cultural contributions to the division in community.

Within the United States, colorism towards differing groups has historically occurred in intervals. Amongst Asian Americans, for example, dark skin tone has often been associated with

poverty as many associate this darkness with the need to work outside as manual laborers (Hunter, 2007). Based upon these cultural beliefs, there is a generalized trend in modern societies towards an internalized white ideal, meaning that most individuals with lighter skin tones are valorized as compared to those with darker skin tones. Additional ties between this discrimination and national economy have been highlighted which prove that those who exhibit a darker skin tone have a lesser annual income compared to those who exhibit lighter skin tones. Professor Jennifer L. Hochschild of Harvard University describes this phenomenon as “the skin color paradox,” in which a disparity between the treatments and political attitudes amongst members of the same race in America exists (Hochschild, 2007). In accordance with the prevalence of colorism in the United States, there exists a multi-layered hierarchy classifying individuals based upon a perceived superiority.

Comparatively, Ecuador - like most Latino cultures - has a wide array of diversity throughout its history, stemming from pre-Hispanic settlement hundreds of years ago. Since Ecuador has developed through a diverse history, discrimination based upon race is not common in its society, whereas discrimination based upon color occurs more often, though there are exceptions to this phenomenon. For example, Cuban immigrants in Ecuador are sometimes criticized by members of Ecuadorian society in accordance with overarching stereotypes stemming from the immigration process and associated legalities. This form of discrimination is based upon social differences between Ecuadorians and Cubans and highlights the prevalence of racism within various facets of Ecuadorian society. While racism is present throughout most Latino communities, there is a more overt variability in the offers and opportunities given to individuals based upon skin tone; those with lighter-colored skin tend to have more prospects available (Falicov, 2013). Experts believe that the coveted ideal of white beauty stems from the phenomenon of cosmetic whitening - the idea that having lighter-skin tone implies superiority and is a sign of progress. This phenomenon grows in accordance with the Westernization and modernization of cultures and the ideal of lighter skin (Jha, 2015). Understanding the different views on both racism and colorism in Ecuadorian and North American society can, ultimately, lead to a better understanding of any issues associated with the two that may arise.

Gender Roles

Traveling across different cultures, there are disparities in the various roles of males and females. Through this disparities, different social norms and beliefs begin to emerge as well-defined characteristics of a society. It is important to look at the characteristics of each group to determine the best means of integrating the two. Societies often exhibit different views, expectations, beliefs, and judgments towards individuals based upon gender. As explained by Blackstone, these roles “are the product of the interactions between individuals and their environments, and they give individuals cues about what sort of behavior is believed to be appropriate for what sex” (Blackstone, 2003).

The gender roles developed by European settlers in the United States have progressively blurred throughout the history of America in accordance with changing attitudes towards women’s rights beginning in the middle of the 19th century (Hawke, 2007). Despite these shifting attitudes, the roles of women remain distinguished from men as the ideals of masculinity and femininity contrast each other. As described by Mikkola, gendered personality traits often unconsciously drive socialization techniques and result in stereotypical behavior amongst males and females. These personality traits are often exhibited through contrasts of feminine and

masculine displays of emotions and sexuality within American culture (Mikkola, 2008). Though there is an obvious deviation between the social acknowledgement and treatment of American men and women, each are considered separate entities and the social successes of men and women are independent from one another.

Common gender roles in Ecuador are much different than typical gender roles in North American. As economic troubles develop within a nation, men and women are often forced into generating income through various plausible means; typically, the sources of income among the two groups are distinct and seemingly independent. Typical gender roles in Ecuador are defined by the cultural views associated with vulnerability and the declines in wellbeing during moments of shock and structural adjustment. During recent periods of structural adjustment, various countries cut back public expenses in order to repay loans; many women suffered as dependents upon these social programs. Often, these periods occur in accordance with moments of economic turmoil, which have been noted to affect men and women differently as associated with their social-based and biological gender roles (Correia, 2002). Most of the social-based gender roles within Ecuador stem from derivatives of those present in historic Spain, where women had various rights throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, but were overshadowed by the authority of the male head-of-household figure following the 18th century (Foley, 2006). However, this patriarchal culture – over time – has developed and blended with ideologies stemming from the pre-Hispanic Andean systems. While not all people comply with these stereotypes, it is important to recognize that they do exist within various nations and should be recognized when studying the culture of a society.

Individualism

Expansive cross-cultural comparison highlights the distinctive features between the value associated with individualism and collectivism in a variety of social settings. Often, individualistic models are shown as prizing self-reliance and a pursuit of personal interests while collectivistic cultures emphasize the need to promote permanent and hierarchical relationships. Social scientists often theorize that individualism is much more prevalent within industrialized societies that have undergone heightened levels of Westernization, while collectivism is typically highlighted in the traditionalized societies present in developing countries (Oyserman, 2002). Social scientists have connected this phenomenon to the distribution of wealth in these nations; essentially, an increase in national wealth causes an increase in the individualism of a culture. This occurs because “as people become more affluent, they have more freedom to do their own thing” (Triandis & Gelfand, 2012). Within multicultural societies, there is a heightened possibility of clash between the individualistic and collectivistic personalities that have developed in accordance with accepted social norms.

As previously noted, researchers have used Hofstede’s model as means of identifying cultural tendencies. Hofstede’s model uses multiple facets to classify the types of cultures that exist in a variety of societies and nations. Focusing on the idea of individualism as it compares to collectivism within different cultures, there are ways of determining the core elements of societies. According to Hofstede’s model, Ecuador maintains a society that prizes relationships, group belonging, sacrificial duty, harmony, the power of advice, situational context, hierarchy, and groups – all of which are identified as components of collectivistic societies (Eysenck, 2004). Comparatively, within American culture, there is a focus on well-being and self fulfillment; this is representative of individualism in this nation. As countries begin to place

higher importance on the concept of individualism, they begin to focus efforts on achieving personal successes through financial gains. Often in collectivistic nations, such as Ecuador, there is less emphasis placed upon personal success and therefore a lesser need to achieve individualized financial gains. This often results in collectivistic societies having lower financial wealth compared to individualistic societies. This difference can be used as means of explaining the wealth disparity amongst the different communities of Ecuador and the subsequent lower cost of living that drives many expatriates to move there (Yankelovich, 1998).

Perceptions between the two communities in Cuenca

This section aims to discuss the divide that often occurs with international migration due to perceptions people have of each other. With the increased presence of migrants in Cuenca, there is a variety of perceptions, lifestyles, and languages that are new to the city. With this come challenges of inclusion because migrants often form communities of their own. This is the case in Cuenca, Ecuador where a portion of the North American community is isolated in different areas within the city.

Social Norms and its influence on perceptions between the two communities

Regionalism is a concept that divides many areas of a country. The presence of this phenomenon in Ecuador has shaped the country in numerous ways. Within Ecuador, there are substantial amounts of internal cultural dissimilarities caused by differences in the geographical locations within the country and subsequent isolation. Diversity in the way people dress and talk – and even their physical appearance – can play a role in how people are viewed in society (Crowder, 2001). With the intermingling of different regions, certain areas and cities such as Cuenca have become a hotspot for people from all areas of Ecuador and the globe. Often, migrants become marginalized in Cuencan society due to prior social perceptions stemming from this intermingling. For example, the perceived correlation between the whiteness of skin and wealth predisposes the North American migrants to certain preconceptions by the Cuencanos (Crowder, 2001). Within the city of Cuenca these migrants often live in their own small communities apart from the Cuencanos. Referred to colloquially as “Gringo Nights”, there are certain days and times where the North American immigrants within Cuenca socialize amongst each other at various bars and restaurants. There is a disparaging separation between the North American immigrants and the Cuencanos as shown by the separation in their neighborhoods and social settings.

North Americans views on Cuencanos

In Ecuador the term “gringo” is a very common word often used to describe any individual from North America. Throughout South America, the term has both positive and negative connotations; specifically, in Ecuador, gringo is often utilized as a harmless label. North Americans who travel to Ecuador generally recognize that they are characterized as different in their day-to-day interactions in the Cuencano community; most do not encounter many problems with Ecuadorians (Crowder, 2001). A problematic difference between North Americans and Ecuadorians stems from Ecuadorian indirectness in speech and tone. The North American residents experience difficulty when communicating with the long-term residents of Cuenca because they do not give direct answers to questions, in fear that this may be perceived as rude

(Bustamente, 2012). This creates communication conflicts and limits the extent to which the two parties are able to converse, thereby limiting the views of each group.

Cuencanos views on North Americans

A large divide between the Cuencanos and the North American residents is the difference in language. The North American residents, who are often elderly and have traveled to Ecuador for retirement, do not generally have extensive knowledge about the Spanish language. The two communities have difficulty communicating with each other in accordance with the language barrier. This barrier makes the intermingling between the two parties extremely tedious for the Cuencanos (Bustamente, 2012).

Additional Cuencano views stem from the aforementioned economic ties associated with the influx of North Americans within Ecuadorian culture. The increased presence of these migrants also drives the cost of living in Cuenca up as the migrants are willing to pay higher prices for certain commodities. This often causes tension between the migrants and the Cuencanos, specifically when the North American migrants expect priority treatments at certain markets and establishments (Payne, 2014). Since a substantial number of immigrants are individuals who make the decision to retire in Ecuador and no longer work, Cuencanos often feel a sense of superiority coming from the migrants. The idea that these migrants are privileged or superior to the locals increases Cuencano dislike towards North Americans. Often, the use of the term “American” to describe these migrants is looked down upon in Cuencano communities, appearing to create a sense of entitlement (Bustamente, 2012). By determining these factors and isolating them within the various communities, one can begin to understand the social interactions that exist within the community of the Cuencanos and their views of North Americans.

Methodology

The goal of this project was to conduct research to help the Department of External Relations understand the dynamics between North American retirees and long-term Cuencano residents in order to support their efforts to promote community engagement with the aid of supplemental materials. Together, with our sponsors, we created a definition of successful integration which can be found below:

Successful integration occurs when people from different cultural backgrounds handle differences, and are able to communicate and interact with each other in the same public places without problems.

To achieve this goal, we developed the following research objectives:

1. To understand perspectives from the North American retirees and Cuencanos to determine lifestyle differences and possible barriers of integration
2. To synthesize data from participants to evaluate trends and identify key obstacles of integration
3. To utilize findings to develop supplemental materials for integration efforts

In this chapter, we describe the methodology developed to gather and analyze perspectives from members of the community, and how the results of that analysis were used to develop supplemental materials for the Department of External Relations of Cuenca.

Objective 1. To Understand Perspectives from the North American Retirees and Cuencanos

To better understand the two residential groups with which we worked, we gathered information from members of the community directly through the use of interviews. In this way, we were able to gain an uncensored view from the communities who were directly involved with the project.

To develop a solution which will benefit both communities, the team attempted to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives on integration thus far. To ensure we developed a solution that is successful now and in the future, we incorporated the collected perspectives and goals of the communities using appropriate deliverables. We used three different styles of semi-structured interviews, shown in Appendices A through D, as the primary source of data collection from willing participants. Please note that the interviews displayed in Appendix C and Appendix D are the same type of interview; English and Spanish versions are provided for participant comfort. Details concerning interview structure and practices can also be found in Appendix E. The first style of interview conducted was a structured interview where data was only analyzed if the participant took interest in a topic and expounded upon it. The second and third interview were both semi-structured interviews. These interviews contained open-ended questions about daily life in Cuenca followed by subject-specific questions designed to probe for information that became most prevalent during the previously broad discussion. We based initial probing questions on literature review and research; however, we modified them based on interview responses to better encompass the views of the community. Sample probing questions can be found in Appendix F. In all interviews, we asked a variety of questions to people from

both communities; these questions revolved around their experiences in Ecuador. We located participants at local businesses and popular locations for individuals from both communities. We used restaurants, parks and local events frequented by North Americans to locate willing participants as the community we were trying to reach was mainly retirees. These retirees spend time in these locations as they no longer work and have more free time to spend. In addition, we reached out to local business owners as interview participants to gain a comprehensive understanding from the perspective of someone who observes daily interactions between customers.

Objective 2. To Synthesize Data from Participants to Evaluate Trends

After conducting interviews with members of the two communities, we developed means for evaluating each response objectively for comparative analysis. To organize the collected data from the semi-structured interview and in-depth interviews, we looked at over-arching themes relevant to each interview response using thematic analysis, specifically utilizing a code development system that is described in Appendix G. Thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative data specifically using a code which may result in different themes, indicators, or qualifications that are causally related (Boyatzis, 1998). Through utilizing key words or phrases that represented the perspectives of the interviewees, the team identified the prevalent themes within the collected data.

Following our thematic analysis, we reviewed the prevalent themes and grouped them together based on related trends. The themes were split up into three main sections: what is the appeal of Cuenca, what causes separation in the community, and how we can mitigate the effects. By determining a set of criteria to compare individual interviews, we synthesized a large amount of data, thereby creating more intelligible results. We distilled a large number of complex responses down to overarching trends and themes for ease of evaluation.

Objective 3. To Utilize Findings to Develop Supplemental Materials for Integration Efforts

After gathering and synthesizing relevant data, we used the results to develop the supplemental materials and then distributed these to the sponsor in order to aid their efforts in promoting community engagement. By using data from the communities involved, we designed materials which suited the needs and preferences of both the North Americans and long-term Cuencano residents, thus promoting the longevity and success of the programs. To guarantee the success of all the supplemental materials, we attempted to ensure deliverables were appealing to both the community and sponsor. We accomplished this by using the analysis mentioned in Objective 2 to guide deliverable production. Additionally, when developing our community engagement programs and materials, we reached out to interested organizations who have used similar outreach programs in the past to get their insight on these materials. Specifically, we reached out to the University of Cuenca and ETAPA. We spoke with staff from the University of Cuenca to discuss the possibility of having volunteer guest lecturers or conversational English teachers. We also reached out to ETAPA to discuss their specific goals for a volunteer program, which makes use of retirees' skills.

Results and Analysis

We conducted a total of sixty-six interviews comprised of forty-nine North American immigrants and seventeen Cuencanos. These interviewees encompassed immigrants who had spent as little time in Cuenca as 2 months to as many as 7 years, providing us with a diverse sample. Through our interviews, we determined their expectations of Cuenca and some of the barriers to integration from both Cuencano and expatriates' perspectives. We then used this insight to design materials that addresses the issues raised and aims to help both groups understand each other better.

What is the Appeal of Cuenca?

As mentioned, many North America choose to retire in Cuenca for a variety of reasons. For example, economic hardships and other difficulties which accompany retirement prompt residents to seek out new, less expensive homes to enjoy their lives. Immigrants may then research attributes such as environment and lifestyle in order to govern their decision of where to move. Cuenca, according to expatriate interviewees, has many attributes that have made it a desirable retirement destination in recent years.

Cuenca has a Desirable Economy

Data collected shows that many North American retirees migrate to Cuenca, Ecuador for economic stability. Many claim that the cost of living in North America is constantly rising and, thus, they are able to move to Cuenca and live comfortably, rather than struggle financially in their native land. Based on the relatively low cost of living in Cuenca, many retirees claim that they are able to live solely using funds from their regular social security payments. Many claimed that moving to Cuenca has given them a better quality of life and that they enjoy many day-to-day activities at a low cost, such as shopping trips at local food markets and street vendors. One interviewee mentioned that by moving to Cuenca, "not only was I able to afford my house, but another property in the mountains that has a great view," reflecting on how he was able to change his lifestyle completely by moving. In addition, some people mentioned the cost of medical care as a motive for moving to Cuenca and how it has benefitted them. One couple recalled the dentist appointments they each had in a week prior to the interview, describing how they paid just \$10.00 for each appointment. They went on to claim that this type of service at such a reasonable cost is almost unheard of in their native country claiming, "we could never do something like that in the United States." While researching Cuenca as a potential location for a new life, many individuals claimed that discovering the generally low cost of living through publications, like International Living Magazine, fostered their interest in the city.

Opportunities for Community Engagement

With age and retirement, many North American migrants expressed the need to look for a place to enjoy adventure. Cuenca has a vast variety of activities to participate in, destinations to visit, food to eat, and an overall natural beauty inherent throughout the city. Having an abundance of opportunities, like these, there is a possibility of fulfilling this need for engagement amongst the North American retiree population in Cuenca. One individual emphasized the numerous parades, festivals, concerts, and eateries throughout the city - all at little to no cost. One North American retiree noted that "if someone wants to experience the culture, it is easy for

them to do so. However, if the individual has no intention of integrating into the culture, they will likely struggle in day-to-day life.” Many retirees can enjoy a new and beautiful experience during their time in Cuenca. Others described the possibilities of engaging the community through different facets of everyday life, such as through participation in religious and political groups. For example, many individuals claimed that Cuenca is extremely welcoming to all faiths, despite the high prevalence of Roman Catholicism within the city. Participants stated that there are various opportunities to get involved in all aspects of religion; one couple was able to begin a practicing Buddhist group within the city and gained what they described as a substantial number of participants. Through this group, the couple was able to make new friends, learn about the community, and better understand Cuenca as a whole. With the variety of possibilities for new experiences that a retiree can enjoy in Cuenca, they can truly enjoy their time peacefully.



Figure 1. Cultural Festivities in Cuenca, Ecuador (Heavey, 2017)

Appealing Climate

Many North Americans migrate and retire in Cuenca, in part, as a result of the climate and nature of the city. North American residents looking to migrate and retire in Cuenca find the city’s generally warm climate very appealing.



Figure 2. Temperate Climate of Cuenca, Ecuador (Vaccaro, 2017)

One individual mentioned in an interview coming to Cuenca for a month or two to get away from work and the colder winter seasons of the United States; similarly, another interviewee left the United States and came to Cuenca to “escape the brutal and cold weather of New England.” In addition, many North American participants associated the weather with a decrease in the cost of living, as there is no need for heating or cooling systems within the buildings of Cuenca. Consequently, the Cuenca climate influences individuals’ decisions to migrate to the city.

Many expatriates began exploring Cuenca through websites and publications, which promoted the city as a place to retire partially on account of affordability. While there are many attributes of Cuenca that are appealing - such as climate and economy - the perceptions of life in Cuenca online and in publications do not always match the reality. In order to combat these inaccurate preconceived notions, many North Americans believe that learning about new cultures and not making assumptions about the city and the country as a whole is extremely important.

Many expatriates began exploring Cuenca through websites and publications,

Why does separation exist?

In many instances, the culture, language, and food may differ from country to country. To successfully embrace a new life, it becomes necessary to acclimate to the norm. Speaking with individuals throughout the city, we found that the separation of North American immigrants and long-term Cuencanos may stem from cultural differences and an inability to acclimate to a new lifestyle, thereby creating distinct groups because of disinterest in community engagement. Some have noted separation in Cuenca regarding the high gates around many houses and neighborhoods, claiming that this physical separation heightens the inability to engage with other residents of the city. These differences typically propagate issues associated with community engagement. Within the city, there are many opportunities that allow residents to easily embrace local culture. While some migrants do not have much difficulty accepting the change in culture, some struggle and - as a result - search for familiarity by seeking out the company of other North American retirees, finding comfort in numbers. Unfortunately, this limits their exposure to the Cuencan society and hinders their acclimation by preventing the interface of the two cultures.

Language

Many believe that separation between the two groups exists not only because of the difference in lifestyles, but also because of the differences in language. While the city has numerous options to learn Spanish via classes and programs, some North Americans - specifically retirees - find that learning a language is extremely challenging. Participants believe that those who do not speak Spanish have a difficult time in transitioning into the Cuencano community. One interviewee suggested that “North Americans looking to move to South America must recognize that they should want to learn the language and that language is a constant learning process but a worthwhile experience.” However, some immigrants who have lived in Cuenca for multiple years, continue to go to markets without knowing the names of vegetables in Spanish. One individual noted that some North Americans feel embarrassed when trying to speak Spanish while knowing they pronounce words incorrectly. Others noted that Cuencanos often attempt to speak English with immigrants or aid in Spanish correction when they notice a North American is struggling. However, though most felt this was a friendly gesture, some North Americans viewed this interaction as Ecuadorians feeling obliged to correct pronunciation, emphasizing the correction can often come across as condescending. A majority of North American participants agree that Cuencanos are generally very welcoming and believe that if immigrants put forth effort to practice Spanish, locals will be both understanding and helpful if errors are made. However, if they are not willing to put forth effort, their situation may never improve. This language barrier does not only affect North Americans but also Cuencanos; one Cuencano resident shared that because of language barriers, doctors cannot always understand some of the North American patients and therefore cannot help properly.



Figure 3. Language Barriers - Ecuadorian Women Reading English Sign (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2016)

Despite these barriers, most North Americans interviewed had tried - or were in the process of - improving their language skills. Individuals acknowledged that Spanish classes are

readily available throughout the city. Some interviewees shared their beneficial experiences with host families; one participant described spending their first month in Cuenca with a family who only knew Spanish and how it greatly improved their knowledge of the language. This served as means of encouraging them to better learn Spanish and fully immerse within the community. One couple claimed to be the only North Americans in their apartment complex, and thus “have been continually learning Spanish and are able to be make small talk with neighbors despite not knowing the language when first moving to Cuenca.” Many North American participants expressed interest in meeting and mingling with local Cuencanos; similarly, many Cuencanos expressed a like interest referencing North Americans. This interest would allow each group the opportunity to practice language skills and learn each other’s customs.

Negative Attitudes

North American immigrants typically reported more tension and problems with other North Americans. Comparatively, Cuencanos are typically satisfied with their interactions with the immigrant population. During discussions, multiple participants used the term “ugly Americans” to refer to a group of expatriates who do not attempt to become well-integrated into Cuencan society. This may result from the lack of interactions with the local community



Figure 4. Separation among North American and Cuencano Woman (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2016)

compared to the engagement of the well-integrated North American population with the long-term Cuencanos. Data from expatriates suggest that many believe these “ugly Americans” are arrogant and isolated, sometimes having no intent to acclimate to the new culture. Some have claimed that these individuals continue to believe that Cuenca is “a solution to the problems they experienced in the United States, even though they maintain a nearly identical day-to-day life,” such as preserving familiar customs, amenities, and language. This is in direct contrast with the other community of North Americans, which seeks to engage the culture by learning the language and customs of the country. Many interviewees viewed themselves as guests within the community and accepted this role. The difference in these distinct groups stems from their attitudes and outlooks on immigration and their new life in Ecuador. Findings suggest that some believe many of the retirees are part of a self-perpetuating cycle of bad attitudes, where they continue to complain about the problems they experience and do not make an effort to resolve them. This behavior isolates them from community interactions and local engagement. Many immigrants expressed the general consensus that individuals who are unhappy and have exclusive attitudes in North America – or any land – will continue to maintain, if not heighten, those feelings while in Cuenca. This type of negative attitude is problematic because those who are upset with their new life, consequently, won’t attempt to improve it because there is no foreseen value in acclimation. For example, one interviewee mentioned that they had not integrated into the community thus far and had no intentions of doing so in the future, even though they had lived in the city for three years.

Data indicates that efforts made to adjust to a new country varied between the well-integrated group of expatriates and the isolated group of immigrants within Cuenca. Most Cuencanos that we talked to agreed that a majority of North American residents are making the

effort to integrate into the community; specifically, many feel that they are trying to learn Spanish while living in the city. However, some agree that there is still community isolation because, though certain individuals may learn to communicate in the local language, they keep culture and community engagement distant and never fully embrace either. For example, one interviewee described that some North American immigrants have expressed how frustrated they are with the numerous cultural festivals that occur throughout the city on a regular basis. Generally, these appealed to the North American community; however, some claimed that they impede certain facets of everyday life and make daily activities extremely difficult. Without immersion, immigrants have a difficult time fully understanding the culture of their new home; many claim that this can cause difficulties in everyday interactions.

Preconceived Judgments

Speaking with North Americans and Cuencanos revealed that there are various misconceptions and judgments from both parties. These preconceived notions remain unresolved and contribute to the lack of communication between the two groups that heightens tension. During one group interview, the individuals discussed the North American assumption that “Cuencanos are dirty and their parks are filled with rubbish.” This group also mentioned a stereotype that “all North Americans work too much and have no familial focus.” Additionally, some immigrants mentioned how Cuencanos often believe that the North American immigrants have very wealthy backgrounds and, thus, hold positions of power within the economy of Cuenca. However, many North Americans – despite acknowledging these differences in wealth – claim that this association between cultural background and economic status is not entirely accurate. One North American couple explained that they had Cuencano friends who consistently asked them for financial assistance, despite having no knowledge of their economic background. This couple found it frustrating that their friends would draw conclusions about their economic status based only on their ethnicity. As a result, they believe this assumed division of wealth has created a system of class separation. Others connected the differences in socio-economic status with the divides in education between the two groups. They claimed that the educational hierarchy within Cuenca has formed a class system, similar to that formed by the economic division within the community, that distinguishes the different groups of individuals. Additional discussions with other people revealed that these issues were never addressed between the two groups because of the lack of communication; not addressing these issues heightens their effects on the community.

Socio-Economic Differences

North American immigrants and local Cuencanos both acknowledged that there is a disparity of wealth between the two groups. Many North American individuals referred to the term “economic refugee,” which is defined as a person who attempts to escape imminent poverty in their native land by traveling to a new location and developing a reliance on a foreign job market (Project Economic Refugee, 2009). Many individuals who claimed to be economic refugees came to Cuenca in order to live comfortably in retirement without many of the financial constraints prevalent in North America. However, the term economic refugee remains controversial amongst the North American immigrant population in Cuenca; many acknowledge that though life would be more difficult and budgeted in their native land, economic survival is possible. Additionally, many self-proclaimed economic refugees recognized that their contributions to the Cuencan economy improve the city as a whole. These contributions,

however, are also points of contention between the North Americans and the Cuencanos within the city.

Some Cuencanos believe that the influx of North Americans is causing an overall rise in prices across the city as product demand increases. Some believe that this increase in the general prices of goods throughout the city can be attributed to the members of the North American immigrant population who refuse to barter with the local merchants and salespeople. However, collected data shows that many North American immigrants express concerns that this system of bartering and bargaining with the locals can appear extremely rude and arrogant, since some of the immigrants now are in a position of wealth in Cuencan society. One interviewee voiced feelings of “extreme discomfort when asking for more and attempting to take a lot from a culture of generous people who try to give so much.”

Lifestyle Differences

Many residents mention the lifestyle, culture, and aura within the city as a possible source of division. One participant described Cuenca as “todo tranquilo” which roughly translates to everything is tranquil and mentioned that it was one of their favorite aspects about the city. Some North American residents expressed that they enjoy Cuenca because of the relaxed atmosphere. Participants suggested that the influx of the North American residents has not impacted the tranquility of Cuenca, as the local community continues to commend its peacefulness. This tranquility was also recognized by North American interviewees; one man referred to Cuenca as “one of the most, if not the most, peaceful city in the world.”

This peaceful environment of Cuenca often attracts North Americans hoping to avoid the stresses of living as a retiree in the United States, such as political distress or financial constraints from no longer making an income. However, some interviewees shared that upon migrating to Cuenca, many were exposed to a style of living to which they were not accustomed. This lifestyle includes a slower pace of life, siestas during the day, and a significantly less prominent sense of urgency in completing daily tasks. One interviewee described the tranquility of Ecuador as a “tranquillo cloud,” highlighting a problem that the North Americans experience when they first arrive to Ecuador: the difficulty of becoming accustomed to this aforementioned tranquility. Many people agreed that life in North America is much more strictly bound by schedules and, because of this, retiring in Cuenca can be a huge shock for migrants, since some are forced to adapt to a more relaxed pace of life. This factor is often associated with the various cultural differences recognized amongst the two communities in Cuenca.

Some interviewees made the point that upon moving here, “immigrants should leave a type A personality in North America,” meaning that they should not be so concerned with sticking to a schedule. Others made the claim that this scheduled lifestyle is in direct contrast with many aspects of daily life in Cuenca. Some examples that interviewees highlighted included not receiving a bill at restaurants without asking and employees not being punctual. These changes had varying effects on individuals’ lives based on their personal disposition. People who are willing and able to accept the different pace of life in Cuenca will be much less frustrated by the reality of flexible schedules. This adjustment to a new perspective on punctuality can be the difference between satisfaction and dissatisfaction in pace of life. Many claimed that Americans prioritize punctuality and their rigid schedules while Cuencanos tend to live in the moment. Others voiced beliefs that these cultural differences in punctuality act as a barrier and cause separation of the two groups. One North American retiree hoped that other North Americans

would understand and accept that the fast-paced life of the United States is not the same as that of Cuenca.

Differences in Community Backgrounds

Collected data showed that many North American retirees feel welcomed into the Cuencano community. Participants indicated that there was a lack of separation between North American retirees and locals due to the Cuencanos' amicable nature and culture which continually led to friendly interactions. In some cases, local Cuencanos have gone out of their way to make sure that the North Americans find all of the necessities and resources that Cuenca has to offer. Most interviewees agreed that Cuencanos are very welcoming and some indicated that they had Cuencano friends. Embracing this welcoming nature, many subjects believe that volunteerism – such as teaching English within the city – can provide an opportunity to engage the community and culture.

Ecuador culturally values familial ties and relationships that are based around this friendly nature of its people. However, one interviewee found it very difficult to make friends in the area because everyone has strong familial ties and deep roots. It was noted that North Americans tend to socialize more with other North Americans, being that they don't have large families in the area. In one instance, a participant moved to Cuenca with their Ecuadorian spouse and, since being here, has experienced challenges while attempting to make friends. They feel as though many people already have their own friend circles from growing up in the city and these are difficult to intrude upon. However, despite this experience, many participants expressed their love for the general commitment to family and have found long-term Cuencanos welcoming towards newcomers.

Generational Differences

Generational differences can often create social barriers and many individuals have shown concerns associated with these differences. The most prominent group of immigrants in the city are North Americans and many of these individuals are considered to be of the third-age, or over the age of 65, in Cuencan society (Álvarez et al, 2017). There is a disparity in mindset and ways of life between older generations that is not necessarily associated with current culture. One member of the North American community explained that individuals at the age of retirement do not typically engage with a younger crowd in North America, let alone in a different country. Though this disparity in age amongst the two groups is not necessarily tied to cultural differences, it has further propagated social divides between both communities. Recently,



Figure 5. Generational Gap Among Community Members (Dirección de Relaciones Externas, 2016)

Cuenca has rapidly changed and developed; quickly becoming westernized and advanced - as shown through the reformation and alteration of social spaces in recent years (Lowder, 2003). Cuencano individuals of the third-age, thus, grew up in a much different environment. Comparatively, similar modernization in North America occurred in accordance with industrialization prevalent throughout the nineteenth century (National Museum of American History, n.d.). This indicates that current North American retirees have not experienced a shift in culture similar to that of the Cuencano population. Therefore, these two groups - who are both of similar age demographics - do not share many similarities in their cultural backgrounds and, thus, do not engage with each other.

How Do We Counteract Separation?

As indicated by data collected, there are many factors which contribute to successful integration. This success depends largely on personal disposition and preparedness. Findings suggest that the main issue was to get isolated gringos to engage with the community in order to facilitate successful integration. It was our goal to develop materials based on the perspectives of the community that make this engagement easier for immigrants. To accomplish this, we developed three materials: a framework for a retiree tandem program, a framework for a retiree volunteer program, and a pocket-sized acclimation guide with resources. Two of the deliverables that we generated were frameworks for programs that laid the groundwork for implementation. To supplement these programs, we also developed guidelines to identifying and selecting successful volunteers. Additionally, we reached out to potential partnering organizations and conducted research to provide a step-by-step guide so that any interested organization could begin either a companion program or a volunteer network.

To develop the programs necessary to promote community engagement, we reached out to organizations with potential interest in either the volunteer program or the companion program, specifically ETAPA and the University of Cuenca. Our aim through these interviews was to gauge the level each organization would be prepared to commit to either program and to understand their thoughts and opinions on what the structure of the programs should be. Talking to staff at the University of Cuenca, we learned that they were very interested in using retirees as guest lecturers to give university students the opportunity to take a class in English in their major field. In addition, they would be interested in having North American retirees teach conversational English due to their many years of experience. We also met with the university to discuss the structure of their Tandem Program, how it is implemented, and safety concerns that should be considered. All details regarding the meeting with the university staff can be found in Appendix H. Additionally, we reached out to ETAPA and learned that they want to utilize part-time volunteers, each working less than ten hours a week in environmental research. However, they only have capacity for six volunteers at a time and these positions aren't limited to retirees. All details regarding the meeting with ETAPA staff can be found in Appendix H. Additionally, based upon these interviews and information provided from Hearts of Gold, we developed a set of criteria and guidelines for successfully identifying and engaging volunteers, which can be found in Appendix I.

The Companion Program, which can be found in Appendix J, is outlined in Table 1 below. We developed this program with the intent of encouraging isolated North Americans to interact with the community by assigning them a companion with whom they can practice language and learn about culture. In this way, they will experience a welcoming community and

will have a positive outlook on interactions with locals provided they have a good experience with their companion. After meeting with staff from the University of Cuenca, we were able to write instructions for advertising and organizing the program. Once implemented, this companion program will promote engagement and give participants the opportunity to practice language and break down the language barrier. In addition, they will have the opportunity to better understand a culture through a friend to discourage judgments and accept lifestyle differences while having positive experiences to get rid of negative attitudes.

Companion Program	
Preparation	Organization - Who to contact to organize the program and how best to set it up
	Advertisement - Information on who to advertise to and where to advertise
Facilitation	Compatibility - Information on methods for compatibility testing and subsequent effort required for each
	Initial Meeting - How best to facilitate and initial meet and greet to educate participants on the program and establish longevity for the future
Maintenance	Evaluation - Information on how to gauge success and longevity of program
Considerations	Safety - Thoughts on how to ensure the safety of each participant
	Cost/time commitment - Thoughts on the amount of time and effort required for different organizations of the program

Table 1. Outline of Companion Program Guide

The volunteer program, which can be found in Appendix K, is outlined in Table 2 below. We developed the volunteer program with the intent of giving retirees something meaningful to do with their free time, thereby giving back to the community and feeling good about their contributions to the city. In this way, they will hopefully see the benefit of working in the community and experience at positive change in their attitude that arises with efforts. The frameworks provided contain the steps necessary to implement the programs. To develop this framework, we reached out to potential interested organizations such as the University of Cuenca which is interested in using volunteers for guest lectures and conversational English teachers, and ETAPA which is interested in using volunteers in their environmental research. Through these interviews, we were able to better understand their ideas for the program and the extent to which they wish to be involved. We then wrote instructions on how to advertise the program,

how to organize the collection of contacts, how to schedule with volunteers, and other key aspects of the success of the program. Once implemented, this volunteer network will hopefully aid in integration by giving retirees a positive experience that will help them overcome negative attitudes. Additionally, interactions with community members will help dispel judgments, and the opportunity to give their time to the city helps better social interactions.

Volunteer Network	
Preparation	Organization - Who to contact to organize the program and how best to set it up
	Advertisement - information on who to advertise to and where to advertise
	Training - information on how to potentially train volunteers to ensure the best experience possible
Facilitation	Scheduling - Information on how to compile volunteer contacts and schedule work opportunities
Maintenance	Evaluation - Information on how to gauge success and longevity of program
Considerations	Cost/time commitment - thoughts on the amount of time and effort required for different organizations of the program

Table 2. Outline of Volunteer Program Guide

We have also included information in both manuals on maintenance and possible considerations for improvements. We hope that both of these frameworks will help develop programs that allow expatriates to feel comfortable engaging with the community and that these positive experiences will encourage social interactions.

We also developed an acclimation pamphlet that includes cultural tips to help adjust to Cuenca life, a map which includes bilingual spaces for people to interact with both locals and North Americans, and resources for residents to learn more about life in Cuenca. This pamphlet can be found in Appendix L. The purpose of this pamphlet is meant to be a constant support for isolated North Americans to feel more comfortable engaging the community. Additionally, the pamphlet could be used as a means of advertising both the companion and volunteer programs to new immigrants. The pamphlet is intended to encourage new immigrants to engage with the community before immediately isolating themselves amongst familiar things. The goal of this pamphlet is to help to resolve preconceived notions about Cuenca through education and will hopefully encourage community engagement to stop negative attitudes before they form.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Collected data shows that the main barriers of successful integration stem from differences in language, attitude, economics, lifestyle, and generational gaps. A more detailed summary of results can be found in Appendix M. While many interviewees noted that there are plenty of opportunities to learn Spanish in the city, retirees often have difficulty learning. Unfortunately, this has led to a lack of communication among the North American retirees and the Cuencanos, contributing to the divide. The differences in wealth between the community members also leads to a divide within in the city. These differences can be seen among groups of Cuencanos as well as North American retirees. Often, the difference in the cost of living has been mentioned as both a reason for coming to Ecuador and also as a problem as many people have seen a rise in prices accompanying the growth in population. We also learned that tension stems from preconceived judgments of both communities. The separation between the two communities are deepened due to various misconceptions and judgments from both parties. For example, some claimed that many people of the city believe that all North Americans live in Gringolandia or that being white means that you are rich. These judgments are hard to remove due to the lack of communication between the two groups. Some believe that Ecuadorians value time and family in a different way than most North Americans do. In Cuenca, it bothers some retirees that people are continually late when in reality, it is a lifestyle difference of the Cuencanos. In addition, some noted that although they have been trying to make Cuencano friends, it becomes difficult as generally people remain with the friend groups they have known for most of their lives.

It is clear that magazines and websites, such as International Living, influence people's interest and decisions to move to Cuenca, Ecuador. In many interviews, it became evident that if a person or family had done research before moving to Cuenca and more specifically, participated in an exploratory trip, they were better suited to integrate themselves into society. Interviewees recommend that individuals looking to retire in Cuenca spend at least one month during a visit to ensure that they would be able to acclimate themselves in a positive manner. This ensures that they are prepared for things such as not having access to certain amenities, utilizing the public transportation system, or engaging in a community that primarily speaks Spanish.

Recommendations

We recommend improving the relations between North American retirees and local Cuencanos by implementing multiple programs to allow residents of the city to interact with each other as well as volunteer within the community. We believe that the companion program shown in Appendix J, can be implemented to allow retirees to become engaged within the community. The aim of this program is to facilitate interactions that give participants the opportunity to practice language and break down the communication barrier, the opportunity to better understand a culture to discourage judgments and accept lifestyle differences, and positive experiences to overcome negative attitudes. The targeted audience for this program is North American retirees and Cuencanos, specifically those of the third age. Individuals or pairs should be matched together based on similarities in interests and lifestyles. Questions used to gauge

these factors can also be found in Appendix J. The expectations of the program should be outlined to participants prior to them agreeing to a companion; this will ensure that all participants are fully committed. While it is recommended that the pairs meet on a biweekly basis at the least, we encourage the facilitators of the program to plan and set up large group gatherings. This will allow companions to attend together and meet others, hopefully expanding personal networks between the North American residents and Cuencanos.

Similarly, we recommend implementing the volunteer program which is outlined in more detail in Appendix K. This program will hopefully aid in community interactions by giving retirees a positive experience that will help them overcome negative attitudes. Additionally, this program will allow retirees to interact with community members which will help dispel judgments, and allow them to give their time to the city which helps improve social interactions. This should be implemented as it will give both North American retirees and Cuencanos the chance to engage with the community and meet other people. With the help of other organizations such as the University of Cuenca, volunteers can use their skills and life experiences to engage with community members whom they would not interact with on a typical day. We recommended that the Department of External Relations stays in contact with the University of Cuenca as they are very interested in having volunteers give guest lectures in their classrooms and aid in conversational classes. This would give retirees, even those with no Spanish language background, the opportunity to discuss something they are passionate about while inspiring young students to do the same. A schedule will need to be set up to determine participants and their allotted volunteer times. For the guest lecture portion of this program, we recommend that the University of Cuenca, or another university interested in a similar program, be the facilitator of this project but the Department of External Relations aid in its implementation and advertisements. In addition to this work at the school, we recommend that the Department of External Relations reach out to other organizations to learn about possible volunteer opportunities. We have contacted ETAPA and they have expressed interest in utilizing North American retirees' knowledge in environmental science to aid in some of their work in this field.

We recommend using online platforms for advertising both programs as well as posting signs at restaurants and areas frequented by both North American retirees and Cuencanos. To reach full potential, we recommend also posting in places where typically only Cuencanos or only North Americans tend to frequent, hoping to break down barriers of interactions and encourage them to participate in the programs. For safety measures, we recommend that some sort of background check be established before allowing someone to participate in these programs. If anyone has a suspicious background, we recommend that they are denied participation, as they could be a danger to others. Ultimately, this decision should be left to the discretion of the facilitator.

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Appendix A: Structured Interview

Daily Life in Cuenca

Nationality: _____

Was there economic appeal for moving to Cuenca?

Does the economy match what you expected?

How do you view politics in Cuenca compared to your home country?

Has the attitude towards religion in Cuenca influenced your daily life?

Do you feel welcomed within the Cuencano community?

Are there certain areas of the city that you most often frequent?

Do you have any close Cuencano friends in Cuenca?

Additional Comments:

Vida diaria en Cuenca

Nacionalidad: _____

¿Ha visto un cambio en la economía con la llegada de los inmigrantes norteamericanos?

¿Considera que las políticas públicas en Cuenca han cambiado con la llegada de inmigrantes norteamericanos?

¿Siente que han existido cambios en la religión en Cuenca con la llegada de los inmigrantes norteamericanos?

¿Cree Usted que los inmigrantes norteamericanos tratan de integrarse a la comunidad?

¿Se siente Usted incómodo al frecuentar ciertos lugares tales como cafeterías o restaurantes pertenecientes a extranjeros?

¿Tiene Usted amigos norteamericanos que viven en la ciudad?

Comentarios adicionales:



Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview – All Residents

Site:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start/End:

Nationality:

(Question 1)

Do you notice any separation between the North American Immigrants and Cuencanos?

Cree usted que existe algún tipo de separación entre los inmigrantes norteamericanos y los cuencanos?

(Question 2)

Is there any tension related to this?

Piensa que existe algún tipo de tensión a causa de esta separación?

(Question 3)

Why do you or do you not think this tension/separation exists?

Por que, en su opinión, hay una separación o un aspecto de tensión entre los dos grupos?

(Question 4)

If you could change anything about the interactions between the two groups, what would you change?

Si puede Usted cambiar algo sobre la interaccion entre los dos grupos, que cambiaría?

Appendix C: Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview (Cuencano Residents)

Sitio:

Entrevistador:

Fecha:

Comienzo:

Término:

(Pregunta 1)

¿Qué es lo que Usted más aprecia acerca de su vida en Cuenca?

(Pregunta 2)

¿Considera Usted que han existido cambios en la sociedad cuencana en los últimos 10 años, y que estos cambios han estado ligados a la migración estadounidense que ha existido en la ciudad?

(Pregunta 3)

¿Cómo se siente Usted con los migrantes estadounidenses que viven en la ciudad?

(Pregunta 4)

¿Le gustaría cambiar algo acerca de sus relaciones e interacción con los migrantes estadounidenses que residen en Cuenca?

Appendix D: Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview (North American Residents)

Site:

Interviewer:

Date:

Start:

End:

(Question 1)

What made you choose to move to Ecuador?

(Question 2)

What do you like about living in Ecuador?

(Question 3)

What did you imagine Ecuador would be like before moving here? Are you happy with your decision?

(Question 4)

What information guided your decision to move to Ecuador?

Appendix E: Interview Practices

Participant Confidentiality

All participants remained unnamed but grouped in ways to identify the two separate communities, based upon nationality. It was important for the team to keep subjects' identities private to ensure we abided by ethical standards set by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the policy set by the Institutional Review Board of Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

The team maintained this confidentiality by assigning each participant a number and only referring to each participant by name during the interview. The team also disclosed confidentiality policy before and after the interview and obtained consent before conducting an interview in order to ensure best practice. In all written documents, members were identified using assignment variables.

Professionalism

All interviews were formatted in a way that is acceptable and respectful to the participant. In addition, the team accommodated both Spanish and English speakers and ensured that no disrespectful and unprofessional language was used. We ensured that the interview and survey questions were not offensive to either community by first having our advisor and sponsor review and approve each individually. A pilot test was conducted on a local resident to ensure the interview was appropriate and easy to understand. For this project, a test participant was selected that has a background in both education as well as being a local North American resident. Additionally, the team avoided words which may have negative connotations, such as "local" or "gringo" which could have generated tension.

Types of Interviews

The dimensions of integration discussed previously guided the first conducted interview. This allowed the team to determine which, if any, dimensions were not relevant for the scope of this project. The second interview was structured to allow the conversation to flow with guidance from the participant alone, with probing questions asked when appropriate. These two interview styles were administered in a more casual setting for a shorter duration of time. The third interview style was similar to that of the second, but approached with the intent for deeper, more personal conversation, and therefore lasted a longer duration of time.

Method of Gathering Participants

For interviews regarding all topics, we utilized a series of different techniques to recruit participants including utilizing survey sampling methods, such as the snowball sampling tactic, in which we interviewed people that either knew our sponsors or our on-site coordinator.

Appendix F: Probing Questions

Determine appeal of Ecuador

- What made you choose Ecuador?
- What do you like about living in Ecuador?
- What did you imagine Ecuador would be like before moving here? Are you happy with your decision?
- What information guided your decision to move to Ecuador?

Evaluate economic factors

- Is the cost of living in Cuenca what you were expecting?
- Have North American immigrants had any effect on you economically?
- Was there economic appeal for moving to Ecuador?

Quantify how integration can affect society

- How has religion/politics changed with the addition of new residents in the community?
- If a change has occurred, how do you feel about it?
- Where would you like to see religion/politics change, if at all?

Assess community views

- How long have you lived in Cuenca?
- What is your day-to-day life? Have there been major changes recently?
- What are your feelings on North American and Cuencano interactions?
- Overall how happy are you in Cuenca?

Appendix G: Content Analysis

In order to synthesize the data collected, the team decided to use a form of content analysis called coding. Each interview was conducted and then transcribed into the team's online database for ease of access and analysis by all members of the team. Interviews were sorted by locations and date and the participants were denoted as Cuencano or North American, though no personal information was included.

In order to perform the analysis, we looked at each interview individually to see if there were trends that were more prevalent. In order to easily recall prevalent themes, we revisited interviews conducted to summarize themes with tags. In this way the team could more easily find interviews which highlighted a particular issue when revisiting interviews.

Additionally, we categorized the general consensus on particular issues in terms of a positive experience or negative experience. In this way the team knew which experiences to emulate in the future (based on positive feedback) and which to mitigate (based on negative feedback).

- Acclimation- Of or relating to the manner in which residents get accustomed to daily life in Cuenca
- Effort- Of or relating to the effort put in in by individuals to better accustom to culture and daily life in Cuenca
- Attitude- Of or relating to the attitudes of the North American migrants and the long term Cuencano residents
- Judgments- Of or relating to the various judgments of ideas that arise due to the differences between the North American migrants and the long term Cuencano residents.
- Culture - of or relating to the cultural traditions or customs of Cuenca
- Community - of or relating to the amicability of different members of the community
- Language - of or relating to the ability to communicate
- Weather - of or relating to the weather within Cuenca
- Tranquil - of or relating to the general relaxed atmosphere of Cuenca
- Adventure - of or relating to the variety of activities readily available to the residents of Cuenca
- Economy - of or relating to the economy of Cuenca and economic outlooks of residents
- Education - of or relating to the education of all populations within the city
- Religion - of or relating to the religion and religious views of all populations within the city
- Age - of or relating to generational trends within all populations of the city
- Politics - of or relating to political views of all populations within the city

Appendix H: Transcribed Interviews from Interested Organizations

The interviews with the University of Cuenca and ETAPA were transcribed in order to allow provide a reference for each organization's opinions on both the companion and volunteer program.

University of Cuenca Interview

1. Tandem program

- a. Is the tandem program common? Have you only implemented the program with our group?** Yes, the program is common, first we screen the students very carefully looking for participants who are punctual, committed, and who will serve as guides in terms of directing students to safe areas. The screening process can be rigorous because many people want to participate and we can only take the best candidates. Sometimes to accommodate the large number of students on the waitlist two tandems are assigned to a single exchange student. The program is quite helpful because it helps both parties with language and culture.
- b. How many people typically participate?** Of the foreign students who come, some make the program mandatory, like The Ohio State University, while others do not, like your school [WPI], which has an effect on how many people participate.
- c. Do you think the program has been successful so far?** The program has been very successful even though it has only been running for 7 years. There are always improvements that can be made but evaluations show overall satisfaction.
- d. How do you advertise?** We advertise through English teachers in classes and gather contact info. We then select a group of good, responsible students out of the database we create with all of their contact information. Selection of participants is based on responsibility, class patterns, and tardiness. We use these factors because the school has access to records like these.
- e. What would you do to improve it?** If possible, I would organize activities for all the tandems to be together, though we have done things like that before, such as hikes. Additionally, a list of topics for tandems to discuss could be helpful to break the silence at first, though not all students would need it.

- f. How do you pair people?** We often look for similarities in things such as age, major/work field, and interests. We want to make sure each pair is compatible since the program is open to all foreigners. Age is a big deciding factor for us.
- g. What is the time commitment of Tandem Program for you?** Four people run the program for foreigners. One serves as the general coordinator, one coordinates tandem and homestays, and the others work with the language and cultural acclimation program. Specifically, one person runs the Tandem Program. They set up meetings with students, send messages and sometimes call students on the phone, and are always monitoring the pairs. For example, we check in to see how things are going; is tandem punctual? Have you done activities?
- h. What are your thoughts on retiree programs?** Retirees tend to be difficult so you have to be extremely careful, screening must be done thoroughly to avoid problems since there aren't thorough records at the university to verify their credibility.
- i. How did the program get started?** A student from Germany came and asked if such a program existed, so we developed one. So far, only good things have come from it though we have received complaints that some Cuencanos don't cancel far enough in advance.

2. Guest lectures

- a. How does the guest lecture program work?** We have two volunteers helping students with conversational classes. Everything is well organized and after they finish this first semester, they will continue to volunteer. Many people have the ability to contribute to lectures and retirees serve as special guests. They give the students the opportunity to practice English and learn about different fields in another language. Currently we have a list of available retirees and we are working to schedule with them.
- b. Are you looking for people to give seminars?** Yes, always!
- c. Do lectures have to be in Spanish?** No, in fact it's perfect if lectures are in English as many students here take English and many professors speak and occasionally teach in English as well.

- d. What demographic are you targeting with these lectures? Retiree population?** We're trying to reach out mostly to students.
- e. Do you think it has been successful so far? High attendance or involvement?** Yes, there has been a high attendance rate. In fact, some students request these lectures!
- f. How do you advertise?** So far, through friends and contacts. There was an attempt to have foreigners as special guest and help with practice. We've learned that the volunteers need to an organized schedule in order for things to run smoothly.
- g. Is there an associated cost?** Retirees would be volunteers and the lectures would be integrated into the class structure so it's just a matter of scheduling and there is no associated cost.
- h. What is the time commitment for the organizer?** If there was one person, they would only need to work on this for 2 hours per week.

ETAPA Interview

1. Volunteer Program

- a. Do you want a program of volunteers or contracted employees?** We need scientists and we want the thoughts and skills of the people of the city (including retirees). We are looking for volunteers specifically, though.
- b. Are there volunteer programs that exist in ETAPA already?** Not currently, the few programs we have done have been geared towards younger people, specifically high school and university students who are paid to do work and get experience. We don't have the capacity for something large since we can't accommodate many people so we're looking for people in specialized fields.
- c. What are your ideas about a program for volunteers, new or existing?** Depends on volunteer population and their interests.
- d. Do you want this program for any particular amount of time?** It depends largely on the type of work.

- e. **How many volunteers do you want? And how many hours would they work?**
6 people who would work for 10 hours per week.
- f. **What profession do you want for volunteers?** We're looking for people with career fields in environmental science.
- g. **Do you intend to use some manner of training? What type?** We use professional expertise from the people that worked in these fields but volunteers also have to acclimate to the company's style of work.
- h. **How many people are necessary to organize this program? How many hours?** All of the office organizes it and it can take many hours in order to organize and teach them. The volunteers and the organizers have to give an equal time commitment.
- i. **Other ideas?** Make a program that encompasses all citywide organizes so people can choose their specialty and guide their volunteer work in that direction.

Appendix I: Volunteer Facilitation Guide

Volunteer Facilitation Guide

With special thanks to Hearts of Gold for their support, participation in interviews, and information on volunteer efforts.



The team developed the following guide with the intent of facilitating successful volunteer efforts for North American retirees in the community of Cuenca. All information and tips have been adapted from Hearts of Gold’s *Facilitator Guide*. We developed it with the intention of aiding the Volunteer Network Manual encompassed in this report.

The Benefits of Volunteers

Volunteering involves a person giving his or her own knowledge, skills, time or resources to help others. The following is a list created by Hearts of Gold demonstrating what a good volunteer network can do for the community.

- Volunteers are a vital connection between organizations and the community
- Volunteers are at the heart of community-building
- Volunteers promotes trust and reciprocity
- Volunteers exemplifies good citizenship
- Volunteers experience an environment where they can learn the responsibilities of community and civic involvement

Accuracy in Volunteer Position Description

It is important to write a clear and accurate job description as the demand for volunteers often outweighs the supply of volunteers. Because of this, volunteers will tend to engage in activities that they enjoy and feel comfortable with. If the job description is inaccurate, the volunteer can be dissatisfied with their experience and choose not to come back. Whereas if you provide a

clear and accurate description, you know you are working with volunteers with the necessary skills and the volunteer feels comfortable with the job leading to satisfaction.

Components generally included in a good job description:

- Overview of Organization facilitating volunteer efforts
- Position Title
- Purpose of Position
- Job Summary
- Responsibilities & Duties
- Required Knowledge & Skills
- Time Required
- Training to be Provided (if any)
- Benefits of Volunteering

Offer Formal Training

To make volunteers feel comfortable when performing their assigned task, offer formal training. This will ensure that volunteers are going into the task confident while also being able to teach them about the community they are volunteering in whether it be a government, childcare, or school culture. In addition, this is a great time to thank the volunteers for their effort and time.

A formal training session will allow the organization to get what they want out of the program by explicitly telling their volunteers what they are looking for and educating them on any situations that may arise when volunteering. Training may not always be necessary. Training can be offered for skills and knowledge that are required for the job that the volunteer does not have. When the volunteer is selected, return to the job description to assess whether training is needed.

Theory & Content of Valuing Volunteer Involvement

The largest benefit people usually get from volunteering is the satisfaction of incorporating service into their lives and making a difference in their community. Research has shown that volunteering has measurable health effects; those who volunteer have lower mortality rates,

greater functional ability, and lower rates of depression later in life. A critical starting point for effective volunteer management is to be sure that everyone volunteering is valued and that they will be taken seriously in return for investing their time, skills, and money to the organization.

Theory & Content of Volunteer Engagement & Motivation

If applicable, feedback about performance on the volunteer job is extremely important to keep volunteers engaged. Many times, organizations shy away from giving constructive feedback to volunteers because they are not paid staff. However, not giving feedback to the volunteer can give them the signal that the work they do is not important. One method of evaluating volunteers and their work is through surveys for the organization to fill out. Example administered surveys are shown in the companion program framework and volunteer program framework which are found in Appendices J and K, respectively.

Theory & Content of Leading Powerful Check-Ins

It is important to gather feedback from the volunteer about their experience within the organization. It is recommended that an organization completes a check-in with the volunteer, especially if the volunteer effort is an ongoing process. This check-in allows you to collect valuable feedback about the volunteer's experience as well as allows them to feel heard and valued. A check-in can be completed through a survey as well and be used as means to get feedback on the experience and how to improve the experience for others. Conducting feedback meetings can lead to increased engagement, a more meaningful connection and higher volunteer retention. It is very important that if a volunteer gives valuable feedback, that it is acknowledged.

Learning Styles

If training is applicable, to successfully train individuals as volunteers, you must first understand their learning styles; volunteers can have a wide variety of learning styles. According to social research, these can be grouped into four main learning styles as follows:

1. Diverging (feel and watch): People learn through watching something be performed, rather than through the direct performance of the task. These people have a strong

imagination and emotional capacities, are strong in arts, prefer to work in groups, and are open minded to feedback.

2. Assimilating (think and watch): People learn by being provided good, clear information. They can logically format the information and explore analytic models. They are more interested in concepts and abstracts than people.
3. Converging (think and do): People learn by solving problems and, then, put their learning into practical issues and uses. They prefer technical tasks and experiment with new ideas.
4. Accommodating (feel and do): People learn through doing things practically. They are attracted to new challenges and solve problems intuitively. They learn through concrete experience and active experimentation.

Further research in the area has proven that culture has an impact on the way that people learn. Studies have shown that Latin Americans learn most effectively through active experimentation, which would be grouped within the styles of converging and accommodating; comparatively, North Americans typically learn through reflective observation, which would be grouped within the styles of diverging and assimilating.

Appendix J: Companion Program Manual

Companion Program Manual

With special thanks to the following for their support and participation in interviews

The University of Cuenca

The Department of External Relations

Worcester Polytechnic Institute



DIRECCIÓN MUNICIPAL
DE RELACIONES
EXTERNAS



The team developed the following manual with the intent of facilitating community engagement between North American retirees and long-term residents of Cuenca. We developed it with insight from the Tandem Program for foreigners at the University of Cuenca and also with interview responses from the data collection phase of this project.

1. Preparation

- a. **Organization:** There are many ways to organize the companion program; some methods require more time and effort than others. It is important to note that, whatever method of organization is implemented, there should be sufficient resources to support the program. One example would be how companions may be paired. If the organization opts for a method of pairing where interested companions write a brief paragraph about their interests and get to select companions they feel they would be compatible with, little to no additional effort would be required to make pairs. However, if participants use a questionnaire to form companions, someone would need to be hired to make the buddy pairs manually or someone would need to write an algorithm to pair companions based on compatibility. Both would require time and effort.

- b. **Advertisement:** The extent to which the program is advertised is a critical factor to the program's success; without participants, the facilitators' time and effort are wasted. Since this program aims to reach out to isolated immigrants, seek out venues that are frequented by immigrants such as Wind Horse Café, the Vegetable Bar, or Joe's Secret Garden as places to advertise. In addition, ask to advertise in restaurants with a mixed demographic such as Fabiano's,

Moliendo's, Raymipampa's, and Morita's in order to get participants who are already demonstrating a willingness to engage with the community. Additional advertisement strategies include reaching out to local expatriate sites, such as Cuenca Highlife, Gringo Tree, and Gringo Post to inquire about posting an advertisement.

- i. A sample advertisement may include the following information and should be translated to Spanish for Cuencano participants - Hello! Are you a new resident to the city of Cuenca who is interested in practicing Spanish and experiencing Cuencan culture? If so, you should consider signing up for our companion program! In the program you (and a friend, if you'd like) will be paired with a long-term resident of Cuenca so that you may share cultural experiences, practice language skills, and gain a new friend in the city! Please visit _____ to learn more.

2. Facilitation

- a. **Compatibility:** We can use many methods to determine the compatibility of companions. The two methods we developed include personal paragraphs or a questionnaire. For the personal paragraph method, participants would write a few sentences about their interests, language capability, and time available to commit to the program. Willing participants could then select their companion based on the paragraphs written. For the questionnaire method, each willing participant would fill out a brief questionnaire and, based on answers, companions could either be manually paired or an algorithm could determine compatibility and make pairings automatically. Questions may include:
 - i. What is your level of English/Spanish?
 - ii. What is your age?
 - iii. What is/was your profession?
 - iv. What are your interests?
 - v. How much time are you able to commit to the program?

- b. Initial meeting:** An initial meeting is one of the most important parts of implementation, as it sets the precedent for future meetings between companions. The aim of this meeting should be to make companions feel comfortable and to explain the process of the program so that it can be self-sustaining. If possible, the initial meeting should include many companion pairs to allow people to feel more comfortable. At this meeting, companion pairs should outline a schedule of meetings in order to establish some longevity of their interactions as well as to discuss potential ideas for activities or conversation topics. This ensures that participants don't feel lost or overwhelmed when trying to plan with their companion.

 - i. Topics may include: occupation, interests, life in Cuenca vs. life in USA, family, etc.
 - ii. Activities may include: lunch together, biking along the river, free cultural activities (ex. Pumapungo concerts), a walk in a park, etc.
- 3. Maintenance:** Since the aim of this program is to be self-sustaining, after the initial companion meeting, it can be difficult to check on the success of the program and to determine if buddies are meeting regularly. We recommend two methods to verify the success of the program; hold a large event or utilize email. The large event would hopefully bring together a large group of companions to discuss and share their experiences. This event also provides a great opportunity to distribute a survey or questionnaire concerning people's thoughts on the program. For email, simply require that willing participants provide their email to be a part of the program and then distribute a questionnaire or survey. The survey may include questions such as:
- a. How often do you meet with your buddy?
 - b. Are you satisfied with your experience so far? Why or why not?
 - c. Are you satisfied with your companion? Why or why not?
 - d. What could we do to improve our companion system?

4. Things to consider

- a. **Safety:** Facilitators should screen participants to ensure that each companion is safe and responsible before pairing them with another participant. Additionally, individuals should not provide personal information, with the exception of first name and a form of contact, such as a phone number or email address. Participants are able to share any information with their companion, though we recommend that they exercise caution.

- b. **Cost/Time commitment:** Cost and time commitment depend largely on the structure of the program. The program at the University of Cuenca relies on four hired professionals to run both their tandem program as well as the language program for foreigners. For this reason, we estimate that the University utilizes 1 employee to run the Tandem Program. They also mentioned that each buddy pairing takes approximately one hour; thus the time commitment of the program depends on the number of companion pairs.

Appendix K: Volunteer Program Manual

Volunteer Network Manual

With special thanks to the following for their support and participation in interviews

The University of
Cuenca



ETAPA



The Department of External
Relations



DIRECCIÓN MUNICIPAL
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EXTERNAS

Worcester Polytechnic
Institute



The team developed the following manual with the intent of facilitating community engagement between North American retirees and the community of Cuenca through volunteering. We developed it with insight from organizations interested in developing volunteer opportunities, including the University of Cuenca and ETAPA as well as interview responses from the data collection phase of this project

University Volunteers (Guest Lectures or Spanish Teachers)

1. Preparation

- a. **Organization:** The first step to developing this volunteer network is to reach out to interested universities who are willing to help with the organization of this program. From our meetings, we learned that the University of Cuenca is interested and believes that other universities are likely interested as well. This is a good way to gauge interest in terms of how many volunteers each university is willing to take on and in what areas they need the help (ex. conversational English vs. guest lecturers).
- b. **Advertisement:** The extent to which the program is advertised is a critical factor to the program's success; without participants, the facilitators' time and effort are wasted. Since this program aims to reach out to isolated immigrants, facilitators should reach out to local expatriate sites, such as Cuenca Highlife, Gringo Tree, and Gringo Post to inquire about posting an advertisement.

i. A sample ad may include the following information - Hello! Are you a new resident (immigrant) to the city of Cuenca who is interested in giving your time to (help teach English or give a lecture on your previous profession/work in your previous profession/help care for children)? If so, you should consider signing up for our volunteer program! In the program you will have the opportunity to give back to the community and share your wisdom over many years of work and meet young students at the university. Please visit _____ to learn more

1. On the site, interested participants can give their profession, availability, preferred volunteer opportunity (lecture in career field or conversational English aid), and contact information

c. **Training:** For this program it is beneficial to have some form of training to make sure volunteer efforts are standardized and successful. This helps to ensure that each volunteer is properly prepared for their responsibilities in any role. Training requires the hiring or contracting of an employee and developing a training program.

2. **Facilitation:** Facilitators must compile a list of possible volunteers as well as their contact information and professions from the responses to the posted advertisement. They should then contact the appropriate partnering organizations to set up a schedule for volunteer and work opportunities. For example, the University of Cuenca is looking to have volunteers aid in conversational English classes and to have guest lecturers give presentations in their career field. This involves booking rooms for certain days and times based on the availability of volunteers and the university.

3. **Maintenance:** In order to verify success of university volunteers, administer a survey to both students and volunteers. This determines how the students feel about having a volunteer aid in their education and how the volunteer feels about participating in the program.

a. Questions for students at the end of class or the following class may include:

- i. What did you like most about the guest lecturer/teacher?
 - ii. What did you like least about the guest lecturer/teacher?
 - iii. What could have been done to improve your experience?
- b. Questions for volunteer at the end of class may include:
 - i. What did you most like about the volunteer experience?
 - ii. What did you like least about the volunteer experience?
 - iii. What can we do to improve your volunteer experience?
 - iv. Would you be interested in volunteering again?

4. Things to consider

- a. **Cost/Time Commitment:** Since the University is interested in having guest lecturers and volunteer teachers, they may be willing to facilitate the organization of the program. Interviewees estimate one person could commit an hour a week to scheduling and organizing the program.

ETAPA

1. Preparation

- a. **Organization:** The first step to developing this volunteer network is to reach out to ETAPA, who is potentially interested in employing volunteers with a background in environmental science. This is a good way to gauge interest in terms of how many volunteers ETAPA is willing to take on and in what areas they need the help.
- b. **Advertisement:** The extent to which the program is advertised is a critical factor to the program's success; without participants, the facilitators' time and effort are wasted. Since this program aims to reach out to isolated immigrants, facilitators should reach out to local expatriate sites, such as Cuenca Highlife, Gringo Tree, and Gringo Post to inquire about posting an advertisement.
 - i. A sample ad may include the following information - Hello! Are you a new resident (immigrant) to the city of Cuenca who is interested in volunteer work in environmental science? If so, you should consider signing up for our volunteer program! In the program you will have the opportunity to give back to the community and share your wisdom over many years of work and meet members of the community. Please visit _____ to learn more
 1. On the site interested participants would give their profession, availability, and contact information.
- c. **Training:** For this program it is beneficial to have some form of training to make sure volunteer efforts are standardized and successful. Since most of the volunteers have a background in this field of work, the facilitators may not need to place heavy emphasis on this training. However, training helps to ensure that each volunteer is properly prepared for their responsibilities in any role. Training requires the hiring or contracting of an employee and developing a training program.

2. **Facilitation:** Facilitators must compile a list of possible volunteers as well as their contact information and professions from the responses to the posted advertisement. They should then contact ETAPA to set up a schedule for volunteer opportunities. ETAPA is interested in acquiring volunteers willing to bring their skills to the city of Cuenca, including people with backgrounds in environmental science. Facilitators can also establish similar volunteer programs with other companies and organizations. However, this involves identifying organizations where the retirees have job opportunities, determining which career fields would be useful, and setting up a work schedule with retirees based on availability.

3. **Maintenance:** In order to verify success of volunteers, administer a survey to both the company workers and its volunteers. This determines how ETAPA feels about having a retiree volunteers and how the retirees feel about participating in the program.
 - a. Questions for employee may include
 - i. What have you liked most about your employee experience so far?
 - ii. What have you liked least?
 - iii. How could we improve the program?
 - iv. Would you be interested in continuing work?
 - b. Questions for ETAPA may include
 - i. What have you liked most about contracting retirees so far?
 - ii. What have you liked least about contracting retirees so far?
 - iii. What can we do to improve the program?
 - iv. Would you provide more volunteer opportunities to retirees in the future?

4. Things to consider

- a. **Cost/Time Commitment:** Since ETAPA is interested in having volunteer workers, they may be willing to facilitate organization of work schedules. Interviewees estimate one person could commit an hour a week to scheduling and organizing and that would be sufficient. Facilitators and volunteers would have to commit equal amounts of time, according to interviews with ETAPA employees.

EMAC

1. Preparation

- a. **Organization:** The first step to developing this volunteer network is to reach out to EMAC, who is potentially interested in having volunteers care for the children of its employees. However, further research may need to be done on what the company expects from the program. This is a good way to gauge interest in terms of how many volunteers EMAC is willing to take on.
- b. **Advertisement:** The extent to which the program is advertised is a critical factor to the program's success; without participants, the facilitators' time and effort are wasted. Since this program aims to reach out to isolated immigrants, facilitators should reach out to local expatriate sites, such as Cuenca Highlife, Gringo Tree, and Gringo Post to inquire about posting an advertisement.
 - i. A sample ad may include the following information - Hello! Are you a new resident (immigrant) to the city of Cuenca who is interested in giving your time to help care for children? If so, you should consider signing up for our volunteer program! In the program you will have the opportunity to give back to the community and meet families. Please visit _____ to learn more.
 - 1. On the site, interested participants would give their availability and contact information.
- c. **Training:** For this program it is beneficial to have some form of training to make sure volunteer efforts are standardized and successful. This helps to ensure that each volunteer is properly prepared for their responsibilities in any role, though organizers may need to specialize training towards child care. Training requires the hiring or contracting of an employee and developing a training program.

2. Facilitation:

- a. **Contacts/Scheduling:** Facilitators should compile a list of potential volunteers and contacts for reference from the advertisement. EMAC should be contacted to set up a schedule for volunteer and work opportunities.

- b. **Meet and Greet:** Since volunteers will be caring for the employees' children, facilitators should hold an initial meeting where employees and their children can come and interact with potential volunteers to develop trust and determine if they are comfortable participating in the program. This meeting is a good opportunity to identify if volunteers are compatible with the program and to determine any immediate problems.
3. **Maintenance:** In order to verify success of volunteer work, administer a survey to EMAC employees who are involved in the program and volunteers in order to ensure everything is running smoothly
- a. Questions for EMAC parents
 - i. What did you like most about your child care volunteer?
 - ii. Have you had a problem with your child care volunteer? If so, what?
 - iii. Would you be interested in continuing to volunteer?
 - iv. Would you prefer a new child care volunteer to care for your children?
 - b. Questions for volunteers
 - i. What did you most like about the volunteer experience?
 - ii. What did you like least about the volunteer experience?
 - iii. What can we do to improve your volunteer experience?
 - iv. Would you be interested in volunteering again?
4. **Things to consider**
- a. **Cost/Time Commitment:** Since EMAC is interested in having volunteers, they may be willing to facilitate training and scheduling of volunteer opportunities. Dependent upon this scheduling, volunteers could potentially go to the employee's home. However, it may be safer and more regulated to rent a space where volunteers care for the children.

Appendix L: Cultural Acclimation Pamphlet



The pamphlet features a background image of a mountain range under a cloudy sky. The design is divided into several sections with distinct color backgrounds: a red box for 'Interested in Getting Involved?', a white box for 'Interested in getting involved in the community?', a red box for 'Interested in getting involved in the community?', a white box for 'Interested in getting involved in the community?', a red box for 'Interested in getting involved in the community?', and a white box for 'Interested in getting involved in the community?'. The text is arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some sections rotated 90 degrees counter-clockwise.

Cultural Tips

- Interactions in Cuenca rely on oral communication, be prepared for conversations to last longer than expected
- Greet friends on the street when you see them and converse with them
- When greeting a group, greet everyone, even people you don't know
- Don't be surprised if strangers stand close to you in line or in public, this is normal
- Say please and thank you frequently
- Never place feet on a chair or table, this is considered rude

Interested in Getting Involved?

Interested in getting involved in the community? Consider signing up for our companion program where you will receive a Cuencano buddy with whom you can practice language and share cultural experiences. Or consider signing up to volunteer and become engaged with the community by giving back and meeting new people!

For more information visit
www.cuenca.gob.ec

Department of External Relations
Calle Sucre y Benigno Malo
visit www.cuenca.gob.ec

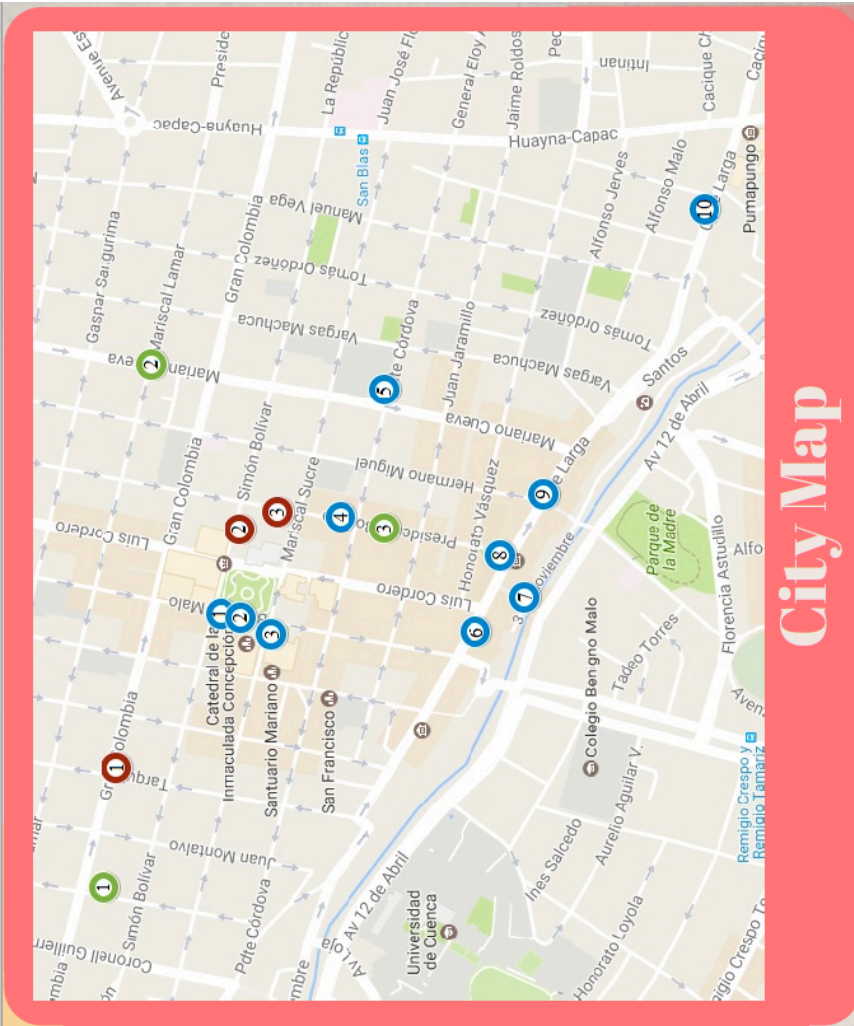
Life in Cuenca

A Beginner's Guide for New Immigrants

Figure 6. Outer Side of Cultural Acclimation Pamphlet

Recommendations for Integration

- Identify a way to improve your language skills
- Find an activity in the community you can do that you love
- Keep an open mind about your new life in Cuenca
- Make an effort to make a variety of friends (immigrants and locals)
- Utilize blogs to share experiences with other immigrants



- | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Restaurants | Health Services | Banks |
| 1 - Tutto Freddo | 1 - Hospital Bolivar | 1 - Banco del Pacifico |
| 2 - Raymipampa's | 2 - Framacia Cruz Azul | 2 - Banco Pinchincha |
| 3 - Don Cologne | 3 - Farmacia Cruz Roja | 3 - Banco del Austro |
| 4 - Cafe Melatte | | |
| 5 - Fabiano's | | |
| 6 - El Mercado | | |
| 7 - Mayu | | |
| 8 - Goza | | |
| 9 - Restaurante Esquina | | |
| 10 - Tres Estrellas | | |

Figure 7. Inner Side of Cultural Acclimation Pamphlet

Appendix M: Summary of Results

Summary of Interview Results

The team wrote the following summary as a guide to direct future integration efforts. Its aim is to encapsulate the opinions of interviewees so that future efforts can incorporate the needs of the community. We recognize that our sample size is not entirely representative of the residents of Cuenca but this summary serves as a baseline for development of integration efforts.

Barriers which Inhibit Successful Integration

Inaccurate pre-conceived notions

- Perceived Problem: Resources available which market Cuenca tend to focus on the many positive aspects of life here but fail to mention the problems immigrants may encounter. As a result, they are unprepared when they arrive.
- Potential Solution: Make online publications which disclose the pros and cons of immigrating to Cuenca so that retirees are prepared to make the changes necessary to acclimate when they arrive.

Language

- Perceived Problem: While many attempt to learn Spanish while living in Cuenca, some are still hesitant though resources for learning exist.
- Potential Solution: Make practicing Spanish more relaxed by encouraging immigrants to practice with friends in a setting where they won't feel concerned about making mistakes.

Culture

- Perceived Problem: Since the culture in Cuenca is very different from that in the United States, many immigrants find it difficult to adjust.
- Potential Solution: Encourage immigrants to interact with culture through events (potentially with companions) and find an aspect of culture that they enjoy so that they can participate and relate to culture in Cuenca.

Judgments

- Perceived Problem: Some immigrants judge other immigrants or local residents in a way that discourages interactions.
- Potential Solution: Encourage immigrants to interact with and make friends with Cuencanos so that these assumptions are disproven.

Generational Differences

- Perceived Problem: Many North Americans who move here are often of the third age and as a result may find it difficult to interact with individuals who are significantly younger than them.
- Potential Solution: When retirees feel isolated, encourage them to reach out to people their age to feel a sense of familiarity and feel less uncomfortable.

Negative Attitudes

- Perceived Problem: Some immigrants feel negatively about their life in Cuenca either due to personal disposition or problems they faced in the United States or in Cuenca.
- Potential Solution: Give immigrants an opportunity to have positive experiences that will hopefully influence their perception of life in Cuenca in a positive way.

Economy

- Perceived Problem: North American retirees tend to make more money than residents of Cuenca and as a result there are assumptions made about their personality and financial status.
- Potential Solution: Encourage friendships between Cuencanos and immigrants to dispel assumptions.

Lifestyle Difference

- Perceived Problem: Life in Cuenca is perceived to run at a much slower pace and this can be difficult for North American immigrants to adjust to.
- Potential Solution: Try to educate immigrants on the change in lifestyle and encourage them to keep an open mind.

Differences in Community Background

- Perceived Problem: Interactions are more friend/family-focused in Cuenca than in the United States.
- Potential Solution: Encourage friendships between immigrants and Cuencanos so that immigrants learn first-hand about culture to ease acclimation.