

REFORESTING LIVES

Panama Chapter



REPÚBLICA DE PANAMÁ
— GOBIERNO NACIONAL —

MINISTERIO DE AMBIENTE



Programa Nacional
de Restauración
Forestal



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GOBIERNO



Reforesting Lives is a project of The Wellbeing Planet, in cooperation with the Ministry of Government (MINGOB) and the Ministry of the Environment of Panama (MiAmbiente). Whose main mission is to investigate the impact of planting trees, ornamental and medicinal plants, promoting the restoration and reforestation of tropical forests in Panama and around the world, in the lives of people who are deprived of liberty, confined, excluded or interned.

The fundamental objective is to observe how participating in a reforestation process can affect people and their communities in cognitive, affective and resilient terms. As preserving biodiversity, we promote the integration of neurodiversity, creating social and environmental justice.

1. Introduction

The Wellbeing Planet is an entity based in the City of Knowledge in Panama, founded by Dr. Richard J. Davidson as scientific advisor and Dr. Koncha Pinos as director. Its fundamental mission is to create well-being through the framework of cognitive, affective and social neuroscience in areas of mental health, education, reforestation and comprehensive projects that promote well-being on the planet.

Among our partners are mainly large institutions, ministries of health, education, environment, international organizations, private foundations, universities, companies and professionals who want to improve their training and well-being, to help positively impact the Planet.

Our interventions are online, offline and face-to-face (when possible in recent times), impacting an average of 2.5 million per year, of which 90% are free services. More than 4,500 volunteers from 45 countries collaborate in it, speaking 20 languages, plus 10 people on staff residing in 5 countries.

Our mission in the area of integrative restoration It consists of preserving all forms of life, from forests or animals to people in the world, to contribute to the development of a healthy external and internal environment, creating a social and economic impact that can benefit the maximum number of beings in the long term.

Our aspiration is to contribute to creating new models of sustainability and research (of a scientific and social nature) in the community that provide a concrete and precise good practice, which, in response to the humanitarian and climatic emergency, stops the erosion of biodiversity in tropical and promoting social justice

2. Our mission is expressed in three fundamental axes

- Creation of forest nurseries, ornamental and medicinal plants in internment centers for adults, accompanied minors, refugees or displaced persons.
- Enrichment, empowerment and psychoeducation in skills, abilities and social skills of the participants
- Reforest and return to the community the fruit of the shared process
- Measure through cognitive, affective and social neuroscience instruments, the impact of the action on individuals (increased resilience, reduced relapse, reduced trauma,)

Funds that Reforest Lives used, are collected from individuals, companies or associated activities that want to act in favor of the environment and reinforce social and climate justice, educating in the understanding of how forest ecosystems and social systems need protection

3. Our principles of action

Our operations framework is based on the key principles of a **Common Multifunctional Framework**. Allowing to evaluate the capacity of a project to provide care and ecosystem services, resistance and resilience, adaptation and empowerment principles to environmental disturbances (drought, erosion or fires) as well as damage to endogenous human systems (poverty, exclusion, injustice) in a sustainable way

- **First principle, species diversity** (a varied selection of native species adapted to the environment is used), we work with neurodiverse people (whose mind and brain have a particular way of functioning) who live in a situation of exclusion
- **Second principle, biodiverse habitats and habits.**
Maintaining or introducing elements that serve the habitat, the local flora and fauna, and the possibility for people to acquire new habits of self-care and well-being that bring them closer to a more integrated life.
- **Third principle, conservation and preservation of life**
Provide non-aggressive, non-victimizing, active and resilient mental health methods in the context of forestry that avoid the release of CO₂ from the soil as much as possible
- **Fourth principle, mixed planting and cultivation of the mind**
The project reforests trees, ornamental plants and medicinal plants, while cultivating emotional well-being, development of healthy emotional patterns, and cognitive restructuring of subjects, reducing the trauma of exclusion
- **Fifth principle, diversity is recipient and kind**

Each plant, like each seed and each human being, has different origins, but they share the same common space and time. That space where both grow is in itself the expression of innate goodness. Linking the subject to the responsibility of the growth of the plant, is to give value to the regeneration process. All beings have innate goodness, but not all have the opportunity to express it.

- **Sixth principle, from associative resistance to common resilience**

Many trees, like people, create communities whose objective is survival, in it they develop two ways of being, resistant or resilient. Creating shared resilience is key when it comes to protecting, caring for and sustaining the Planet.

For this reason, the Reforestar Vidas project aims to **maintain, conserve and enhance biodiversity at the level of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic heritage. At the same time that it cares, welcomes, attends and is present in the restructuring of the mind and body of the person, giving rise to new scenarios of shared responsibility, appreciation and gratitude.**

4. Specifications

We appreciate two necessary qualities in the project, the selective criteria and the reward criteria.

4.1 Selective criteria

In relation to biodiversity

- Each center that participates has to produce a minimum of 20,000 trees, 10,000 plants. 5000 medicinal plants per year
- Diversity of planted species, at least 20 species
- Sustainability context prior to planting, the space to be reforested must be affected by natural hazards or degraded land
- Reforestation must take place outside of a conflict or danger zone
- Those responsible for reforestation must accredit experience in the field of reforestation and gardening and work in and with the community
- Those responsible for the project have to report quality information on the studies and progress of the plantations with GPS, reports, photos, videos, etc.
- None of the participants, staff or institutions may have conflicts of interest in the territory

In relation to the neurodiversity of the participants

- A minimum of 80 people, they can be adults, children or adolescents
- Diversity of situations experienced (immigration, deprivation of liberty, mental disorder, trauma, pts.)
- Context prior to the intervention, people must have been affected by situations of exclusion, poverty, justice, abandonment or abuse

- People have to be able to stay in the intervention for a year
- Those responsible for psychoactive follow-up must be able to provide regular quality information on the evolution of the participants, writing reports, questionnaires, graphs, etc.
- Those responsible for training must be able to justify their experience in the field of rehabilitation from the perspective of contemplative psychotherapy, based on contemplative, cognitive and affective neuroscience
- Those responsible for intervention cannot have biases, prejudices, traumas or latencies that affect the good treatment of the participants.
- None of the participants, staff or institutions may have conflicts of interest in the territory

4.2 Reward Criteria

- Priority will be given to reforesting lands of local communities and ethnic minorities, who participate in the projects
- Training, awareness and care training will be developed in local communities
- Those that offer the sustainability and sensitivity of projects in the medium and long term
- Rehabilitation and reforestation or improvement of previous conditions
- Native species will be prioritized to enhance the resistance of the forest mass
- The development of community economic activities associated with the projects will be promoted
- The use of pesticides, exploitation or any form that violates the ethics of forests, communities or systems of living beings will not be promoted.
- Persons deprived of liberty will receive commutations of their sentence for time worked
- Unaccompanied minor adolescents will receive complementary education and their integration will be favored

5. Rules for financing

Each project will have an assigned budget, depending on its size, the associated benefits in the communities involved, the impacts on neurodiverse people, on local biodiversity, on the volume of CO2 produced.

The Wellbeing Planet contribution will be calculated based on the budget agreed with the participating entities and the project coordinator. The funds contributed can be combined in probonus for training, psychology, research, direct funds for the purchase of materials, etc., and can be combined with public or private contributions. Once the annual project has started, additional funds cannot be accepted from third-party organizations, whether public or private, except in situations of force majeure.

The coordinator of the local project will have to provide the following elements

- Invoice from the project coordinator, indicating the amount and details of the project activities
- Report on the number of trees and plants (sown and planted), the impact of the project, the difficulties, the coordinates, photos, videos, etc.

The project coordinator can be a natural or legal person or a consortium, they must be able to demonstrate two years of activity in forestry or agriculture and also in social exclusion work (psychoeducation). You must also contribute

- A bank account dedicated exclusively to this project
- Be legally established in the country

Project coordinator commitments

The responsible coordinator or consortium must commit, through an acceptance document, MOU or contract, to respect the following agreements

- Use the funds received to plant and reforest the trees initially defined
- Replace dead plants in the first 2 years after planting and guarantee a recovery rate of 80% for the entire plantation
- Facilitate the visit and all the data of the people responsible for monitoring the project, during the 5 years after the concession
- Promote the performance of sowing, care and planting work, ensuring that what has been agreed upon is strictly complied with
- Provide monthly monitoring, including details of the trees and plants in nurseries and later on the ground, with their GPS location, identity of the beneficiaries, photos and summary of the activity
- The owner of the land must be legally recognized, either by law, in writing or by consensus, it must be proven and communicated
- If the lands belong to communities, they must have been approved by free and democratic consensus, through accredited public consultations.
- The project rejects all forms of forced labor, in bondage, trafficking or military, extortion, threat, debt or trafficking in species associated with it.
- No person will be required to perform any work that may offend their dignity, if they are a child anything that may interfere with education, mental, spiritual or moral development.
- Reject any form of discrimination related to the process, whether in training, hiring, benefits, procedures or opportunities
- Make what is planted accessible to those who have contributed to its reforestation.
- Allow a poster to be placed with the name of the benefactors if they so wish, or where appropriate, place the term anonymous donors
- It will not be allowed to use the photos, reports or conclusions more than strictly necessary. Preserving the identity of people and good ethics.

Projects

Each selected project cannot have an endowment greater than 25,000 dollars or the probonus or equivalent contribution. This finances the following activities

- Training of local technicians and participants
- Start-up of forest nurseries
- Purchase of seeds or materials
- Transportation of plants to planting sites
- Sensitization of local communities.

6. Project first. Sowing Peace Reforesting Lives, La Joyita Penitentiary Center in Panama

Penitentiary center in Panama, with 80 inmates, already underway, see attached dossier. New edition April 2022.

The La Joyita center has been operating in the field of trees, gardens and flowers for 4 years. It also has 2 psychologists working with inmates. Our intervention is based on improving and differentiating existing work

Project phases

From February to April 2022

Carry out the profile of the 80 inmates with interviews of half an hour each. Obtain the degree of perceived stress, relationship they have with nature, perception of themselves and the emotional profiles of the brain

From April to December 2022

Sowing and care of trees, plants and gardens 6 hours per week

Daily physical exercises 20 minutes

A monthly class of 2 hours

An evaluation on the initial follow-up markers every month

From December to March 2022

Plantation of the species outside the enclosure.

Promotion at fairs and social returns of what has been done

Monthly meeting with the participants to evaluate the process

Final annual markers of the process

program content

Neuroscience of wellbeing and self-care

Emotion, mind and body

What is an emotional style?

emotional styles

Applications of nature in the cultivation of well-being

Conclusions and integration of what has been learned

Evaluation model

Evolution of stress levels, self-perception, perception of nature and emotional styles of the brain

Evolution in impulse control, emotional regulation, socio-emotional competencies in the center

Number of trees, plants and ornamental flowers planted

Number of trees, plants and ornamental flowers planted

Number of participants from outside the center who are involved in the process

Number of days in sentence reduction of those deprived of liberty

Impact in multiplier effect of the same (events and new associated projects)

Write an article about the process

Others projects related with nature, wellbeing and social justice, that we work

Costa Rica- Tortuguero. Cooperatives of women working with forest and café. 80 women . **Costa Rica University and Communities.**

Argentina- Buenos Aires. Cooperative for education in wellbeing and emotional learning, with forestry in prison, for 70 men privates of freedom.

Justice Minister and Cooperatives

Indonesia- Bali. Cooperative of Christian families, who have handicap children, who plant their food and forest. Health, education and soberanity of food

Gouvernour and King of Bali, Bali University and Cooperatives

Spain- Cuenca. 80 Muslim teens inmigrants who had committed crimes. Project about forestry education, compassion in difficult situations and reconstructions of their lives

Secretary Prision of Spain, minister of Justice

More information about this initiative, doubts or suggestions direct them to direccion@thewellbeingplanet.org

The Wellbeing Planet

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