

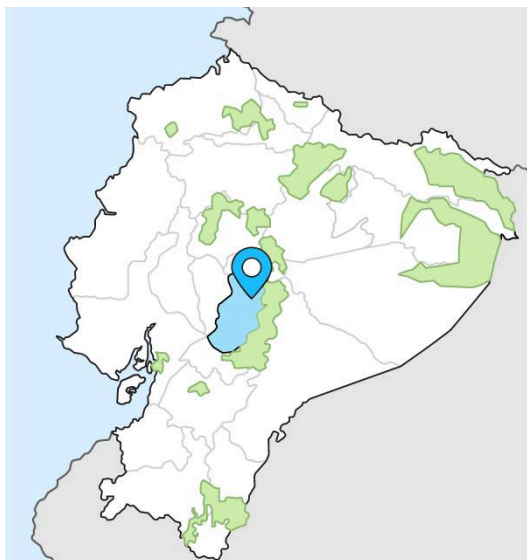
DENTAL RIOBAMBA SERVICE LEARNING TRIP

———— INFO + ITINERARY ————





RIOBAMBA, ECUADOR



Riobamba, nestled in the Andean highlands of Chimborazo province, is where MEDLIFE's journey began. Surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes like Chimborazo, this high-altitude region is rich in Indigenous culture and history, yet many surrounding rural and high-elevation Indigenous communities face severe disparities in healthcare, sanitation, and educational resources. Geography and isolation present unique challenges to accessing routine dental and medical services.

This destination is recommended for:

Volunteers interested in serving rural Indigenous communities in the Andean highlands are

welcome. In Riobamba, the surrounding smaller Kichwa-speaking villages have been the primary target of MEDLIFE's efforts, as many residents face severe disparities in healthcare, sanitation, and educational resources. By joining a Dental Service Learning Trip in Riobamba, volunteers deliver essential dental care, preventive hygiene education, and sustainable development support to underserved Andean communities.

Details of Destination

Promo video	Riobamba, Ecuador SLT destination promo video click here
Student Handbook	Riobamba destination student handbook (Dental Mobile Clinic station details, phrases in local language, and local emergency contacts)
Country	Ecuador
Country Population	16.5 million
Languages	Spanish
Currency	US Dollar (\$)
Weather	Weather: Winter: 15°C / 59°F Summer: 27°C / 80°F Humidity:

	High Precipitation: Occasional drizzle
Location	Andean highlands, Chimborazo province
Population	144,795
Time from the hotel to the communities	30 minutes up to 1:30 hour
Dental Campaign	(fluoridation and prophylaxis) in elementary schools
Extra Activities (Not Included)	- Day Trip to Baños
Travel Opportunities	- Baños de Agua Santa - Chimborazo Volcano and Quilotoa Lagoon

DENTAL CARE IN RIOBAMBA: CHALLENGES AND STATISTICS

Riobamba, nestled in the Andean highlands of Chimborazo province, is where MEDLIFE's journey began. Though the area is rich in natural beauty, it is one of the poorest provinces in Ecuador and lacks many basic services. MEDLIFE's work in Riobamba focuses on smaller Indigenous villages where realities of everyday life include malnutrition, lack of healthcare, and insufficient sanitation infrastructure.



Dental Care Challenges:

Dental care is scarce in these underserved communities. The limited number of dental clinics and trained professionals means that many residents do not receive the necessary dental care. Only about 20% of the population in these areas has regular access to dental services.



Prevalence of Dental Issues:

- **Tooth Decay and Cavities:** Over 90% of school-aged children in these communities have experienced tooth decay, with many suffering from untreated cavities.
- **Gum Disease:** Around 70% of adults in low-income areas suffer from gum disease, which can lead to pain, tooth loss, and severe infections if untreated.
- **Dental Trauma:** About 25% of children in rural and low-income urban areas have experienced dental trauma, often remaining untreated due to the lack of immediate and affordable care.
- **Malnutrition:** Poor nutrition directly affects oral health. Approximately 30% of children in these areas are malnourished, leading to weaker teeth and gums and increased susceptibility to dental problems.

TRIP LOGISTICS

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS

For most volunteers, the only requirement to enter countries where we have Service Learning Trips is a passport valid at least seven months after your trip. Requirements could change frequently and are communicated to volunteers during the registration process.

If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, you may need a visa to enter certain countries. It is your responsibility to determine if you need a visa and make appropriate arrangements.

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Volunteers are responsible for buying their own airfare. However, our team can help you in this process by providing a flight quote for your group. You can request a flight quote by emailing info@medlifemovement.org. Once your flight is booked, please make sure to add your arrival and departure information to your booking.

AIRPORT: Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO)

Recommended timeframes for arrivals and departures is as follows:

Riobamba, Ecuador

Arrival: Saturday from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm (Mariscal Sucre International Airport, UIO).

Departure: anytime from 10:00 pm Saturday to 12:00 pm Sunday.

If students arrive outside of the set time frames, they will be responsible for covering the cost of transportation to their site. If your flight arrives outside the timeframes listed please email info@medlifemovement.org. Remember that any additional nights and transfers that are added before/after your trip because of early or late arrival are not included in the Service Learning Trip donation goal, and will be at the cost of the volunteer.

We highly recommend purchasing trip cancellation insurance, which will allow you to cancel for any reason. You can contact info@medlifemovement.org for more information about our insurance options.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation details are shared with your group in the WhatsApp group before departure.

HEALTH

TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE

Emergency medical insurance is included in the cost of your trip, but trip cancellation insurance is not included.

VACCINATION

MEDLIFE follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations and requirements. Immunization recommendations for all of our trip locations may be found on this page: www.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list. We recommend consulting the CDC page and/or visiting a local travel clinic for more information.

Visit your doctor: MEDLIFE does not require any vaccinations however, you should follow all CDC requirements and any advice from your medical professional.

OTHER

MONEY

We recommend that you have access to at least \$150 to \$200 during your Service Learning Trip week to cover two days of meals, tourism activities, and any additional food, drinks, or souvenirs you wish to purchase.

Volunteers can easily exchange money in the locations they will visit. They can access their bank accounts via ATM or debit card and can also easily change cash with money-exchange officials on the streets or in nearby exchange houses.

WHAT TO PACK

You should plan to look professional but dress comfortably. Jeans, shorts, polos, athletic wear, and t-shirts are all acceptable. In all locations, a MEDLIFE t-shirt will be provided, but you are not required to use it. Check suggested items and checklist for your destination here: [SLT Packing Lists](#)

DONATIONS

Many volunteers organize themselves to bring essential supplies such as medical equipment, educational materials, and hygiene items to the communities they serve. These donated products enhance the effectiveness of healthcare and education initiatives, fostering a direct and immediate positive impact on the lives of those in need. This is not

mandatory, but if you wish to bring medical or any other kind of donations, please consult the recommended packing and donation lists.

EMERGENCY PREPARENESS

In the unlikely event you have a travel or health emergency and there are no MEDLIFE staff to assist you, you can contact us via the following numbers.

When in-destination or in transit to destination	ECUADOR EMERGENCY PHONE	+593 99 565 6237 (whatsapp, call, or SMS)
When calling from within North America	MEDLIFE HQ PHONE	1-844-633-5433

Emergency or Medical Assistance Procedure

Before Your Trip: Contact your local emergency authorities
For non-urgent matters, contact your Chapter, MEDLIFE HQ Phone, or email
info@medlifemovement.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If you still have doubts and/or question about trip details we suggest you consult our FAQ section of the MEDLIFE movement website to search for the answer. the link is here:
<https://www.medlifemovement.org/service-learning-trips/faqs/>

DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY

Arrival → Departure

Day 1	Arrival to Riobamba	Day 6	Permanent Clinic
Day 2	Walking Tour & Orientation	Day 7	Development project
Day 3	Reality Tour	Day 8	Optional Tourism Activities
Day 4-5	Mobile Clinics	Day 9	Departure

DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY

1

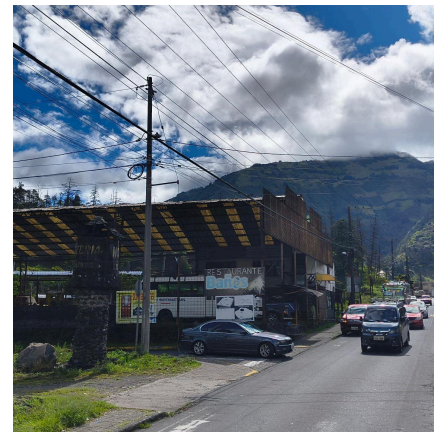
Saturday

Arrival to Quito

Arrive at Mariscal Sucre International Airport (UIO) between 5pm and 11pm. A MEDLIFE associate will be waiting for you outside of the airport with a MEDLIFE sign. Participants will arrive at the hostel and have the night to settle in at the hotel and recover from the long travel day. Meals are not provided today, but there are restaurants nearby.



Overnight
Quito MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

2

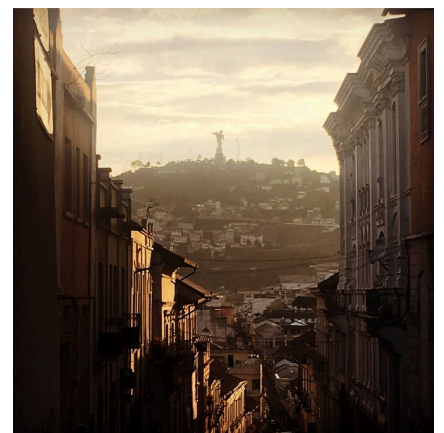
Sunday

Walking Tour & Orientation

Arrive at Riobamba. Sunday morning will be dedicated to an orientation meeting where we will cover what to expect for the week and review safety precautions. Today will be an introduction to Riobamba for all students with a walking tour led by your Trip Leader. In the afternoon, participants can enjoy some free time to explore the area. Meals are not provided today.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

3

Monday

Reality Tour

Today we gain a better understanding of the geographical, political, and social realities of the region. Your first stop is at the Iglesia de Balbanera, the oldest church in Ecuador, where you will continue to learn about Spanish colonization and the influence of Catholicism in Andean Ecuador. Here you can purchase local artisan goods from local vendors.

We will visit a Medical Center in Llinllin de Columbe to talk about the conditions of public health in the area. After this visit we'll head to the San Martin community to share some rural activities with the local comuneros and get acquainted with the indigenous culture as well as understanding historical events like the Reforma Agraria from the people who have experienced it firsthand.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

4-5

Tuesday to Wednesday

Mobile Clinics

Every day, Mobile Dental Clinics travel to various communities, with 30-minute to 2-hour travel times. Upon arrival, volunteers unload supplies and attend a brief training session before opening the clinic at 8-9 am. They work until lunch around 11:30 am, then switch stations. Clinics close between 1-3 pm, depending on patient volume.

Volunteers will also visit a permanent clinic to learn from and shadow local doctors while overseeing deeper and more complex treatments for patients. Procedures can include surgeries, permanent dentures, and more!

On free days, they can explore the city.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

6

Thursday

Permanent Clinic

Volunteers visit MEDLIFE's permanent dental clinic to learn about and observe our long-term Patient Follow-Up Program. Patients who require specialized or complex procedures that cannot be completed during Mobile Clinics—such as root canals, oral surgeries, dental implants, or prosthetics and dentures—are brought to the permanent clinic. On this day, volunteers shadow local dental specialists and healthcare professionals during advanced treatments, seeing firsthand how MEDLIFE provides continuous, sustainable care to patients in need.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

7

Friday

Development Project

On Development Project Day, volunteers work alongside local community members and MEDLIFE staff on hands-on development projects that address long-term infrastructure and safety needs in partner communities. Designed in collaboration with local community leaders, these sustainable initiatives may include constructing pedestrian staircases, building water and sanitation facilities, or renovating community spaces and schools. Volunteers engage in physical building and improvement activities, fostering meaningful cross-cultural connections while helping improve quality of life and access to essential services.



Overnight
Riobamba MEDLIFE Hostel



DAY

8

Saturday

Optional Tourism Activities

Make the most of your trip by participating in an optional tourism activity or extension. In Ecuador, most volunteers choose a Day Trip to Baños, a super fun city to visit.

[Click here to see the full list of extension options.](#)



DAY

9

Sunday

Departure

Continue exploring Quito or return home. Depart anytime between 12pm and 9pm.

INCLUDED

- ✓ 8 nights dorm room accommodation
- ✓ Breakfast, lunch, and dinner from Monday to Friday
- ✓ Transportation to and from the airport (within the established schedule), and to SLT activities
- ✓ English-speaking Trip Leader
- ✓ Safety equipment (including face masks)

NOT INCLUDED

- ✓ Flights
- ✓ Tips
- ✓ Pre or post-trip accommodation
- ✓ Optional excursions
- ✓ Weekend meals

Travel Advisory

All volunteers require a valid passport of at least 6 months from the SLT start date. You can register for the MEDLIFE SLT without a passport, but you must submit the info at least 2 weeks before the trip. You must ensure your passport validity before departure.

If you're not a U.S. or Canadian citizen, **you may need a visa** to enter certain countries. It is your responsibility to determine if you need a visa and make appropriate arrangements.

Visit your doctor: MEDLIFE does not require any vaccinations; however, you should follow all CDC requirements and any advice from your medical professional.