# The Peace Corps
## Performance and Accountability Report
## Fiscal Year 2009

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# FISCAL YEAR 2009

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*Environment Volunteer, Panama*

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# Current and Former Peace Corps Countries

## Current Peace Corps Countries

Albania
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belize
Benin
Bolivia
Botswana
Bulgaria
Burkina Faso
Cambodia
Cameroon
Cape Verde
China
Costa Rica
Dominican Republic

Eastern Caribbean:
*Antigua/Barbuda*
*Dominica*
*Grenada/Carriacou*
*St.Kitts/Nevis*
*St.Lucia*
*St.Vincent/Grenadines*

Ecuador
El Salvador
Ethiopia
Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau
Fiji
The Gambia
Georgia
Ghana

Guatemala
Guinea
Guyana
Honduras
Jamaica
Jordan
Kazakhstan
Kenya
Kyrgyz Republic

Liberia
Lesotho
Macedonia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mauritania
Mexico
Moldova
Mongolia
Morocco
Mozambique
Namibia
Nicaragua
Niger

Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Philippines
Romania
Rwanda
Samoa
Senegal
South Africa
Suriname
Swaziland

Tanzania
Thailand
Togo
Tonga
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
Vanuatu
Zambia

## THE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

I am pleased to present the Peace Corps Performance and Accountability Report for fiscal year (FY) 2009. This report provides an overview of the agency's financial and performance results and accomplishments for the past fiscal year.

Originally conceived in 1961, the Peace Corps' mission is to promote world peace and friendship. Nearly 50 years later, the mission and the three goals of the Peace Corps remain the same. These three goals are an invaluable guiding light to those who serve:

1. Help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women
2. Help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served
3. Help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

Today, nearly 7,700 Peace Corps Volunteers serve around the world in 74 countries. Volunteers face old and new challenges. Poverty, disease, famine, and illiteracy are issues that continue to challenge developing countries and, in some cases, are exacerbated by current problems like climate change, government instability, and terrorism. Living and working in communities around the world for 27 months creates hope and a cross-cultural understanding that is incomparable to any other life experience. As a former Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic from 1967 to 1970, I know firsthand the impact such Americans have in the communities where they serve.

The issue of Volunteer health, safety, and security must remain an agency priority. There are inherent dangers in serving overseas, but with quality training, a committed staff, and clear systems in place, the health, safety, and security of Peace Corps Volunteers will be assured in a manner that allows enough flexibility for Volunteers to truly become a part of the community in which they serve.

The past year marked the first year of agency operations under the FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan. The new plan uses the Peace Corps' three core goals as the focus of the agency's strategic planning efforts. Overall, the Peace Corps achieved success in 23 of its 36 measurable performance indicators. Of the 13 indicators where performance was not met, eight had substantive performance, nearly meeting the targets.

The Peace Corps FY 2010 budget request represents the first step in a strategic presidential initiative to increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers. To ensure that the Peace Corps does the best possible job of recruiting, training, and supporting an expanded number of Volunteers, the agency must and will identify best practices and rigorously incorporate them in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

In FY 2010, the Peace Corps will continue to take significant steps to manage quality growth in both new countries and in countries where we already have a post. The agency will establish an Office of Innovation to encourage the pursuit of cutting edge ideas and agency best practices. Finally, the Peace Corps will place greater emphasis on the agency's third goal and encourage returned Peace Corps Volunteers to continue their service at the conclusion of their overseas tour.

The accompanying financial statements are reliable and complete. The appropriated funds from Congress totaled $340 million in FY 2009 and $330.8 million, net of rescission, in FY 2008. Budgetary resources available from all years and all sources for use by the agency totaled $372.6 million in FY 2009 and $356.2 million in FY 2008. The agency's total assets increased from $158 million as of September 30, 2008, to the current level of $177 million as of September 30, 2009.

Improvements in financial management are reflected in the Message from the Chief Financial Officer that follows in the Financial Section of this report.

For the third consecutive year, independent external auditors rendered an unqualified (clean) audit opinion on the Peace Corps' financial statements. No material weaknesses were identified by the auditors or otherwise within the agency. Additionally, our success in reporting accountability was recognized by a second awarding to the Peace Corps of the prestigious Association of Government Accountants' Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting. This was achieved through our fully certified and accredited financial system, our internal control program, and the tireless efforts of the agency's financial management and performance teams.

The agency's financial and performance data presented in this report is fundamentally complete and reliable. The enclosed annual management assurance statement concludes that the Peace Corps can provide reasonable assurance that its internal controls and financial management systems meet the specified objectives in sections two and four of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act.

As the Peace Corps approaches its 50th anniversary, the agency continues to promote world peace and friendship through the outstanding efforts of the thousands of Americans who serve as Volunteers. Moreover, the number of new applicants continues to soar as thousands more Americans are inspired by President Obama's call to service. The Peace Corps stands ready to accept and support a new generation of Volunteers who will usher in the next 50 years of the agency.

Sincerely,

Aaron S. Williams, Director
November 16, 2009

*Education Volunteer, Belize*

# MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

# Overview of the Peace Corps

The Peace Corps works within a capacity building framework to provide human resources, rather than financial or material support, to other countries. Peace Corps Volunteers serve for two years in countries that have expressed interest in working in partnership to address host country development goals. The basic approach is to

- build capacity of individuals, local organizations, and communities
- emphasize appropriate technologies and sustainable practices and
- facilitate peer-to-peer sharing of information and skills

This framework provides the structure for planning and implementing sustainable development work in a number of different sectors. To assure a long-term impact, Peace Corps is responsive to host country goals, designs projects using a participatory process, carefully defines what Volunteers will contribute to national and local efforts, and trains Volunteers for their work with local counterparts and communities.

The Peace Corps brings a unique value-added role to development. Volunteers learn the local language and customs, adopt a modest lifestyle, and immerse themselves both professionally and socially into the lives of their communities for a period of two years. Peace Corps is the only U.S. government agency that takes this approach.

Volunteers are trained to speak the local language and to develop the cross-cultural and technical skills that enable them to build local capacity, often in underserved areas. Because they gain the trust and respect of the people they work with, Volunteers often serve as a functional link between communities and technical resources and information that otherwise might not reach their target audience. In this manner, Peace Corps complements the development efforts of other organizations and agencies.

By living within the communities where they work, Volunteers share American culture while acquiring a deep understanding of their host culture. As returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs), they bring that new understanding home, continuing to encourage cross-cultural dialogue and contributing to America's legacy of service by offering their time and skills to community volunteer programs and organizations around the country. Since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, nearly 200,000 Americans joined the Peace Corps, serving in 139 different countries.

The agency continues to balance growth, new initiatives, and improving operations to optimize its performance and remain relevant in meeting host country needs and the agency's mission and three core goals.

# Mission and Organizational Structure

## Mission Statement

The Peace Corps' mission to promote world peace and friendship is as critical today as it was when the agency was founded in 1961. The three core goals are:

1. Help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women
2. Help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served
3. Help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

Through engagement in development work, the Peace Corps seeks to achieve a number of medium and long-term outcomes in the countries of service. These outcomes include: increasing individual and community awareness and aptitudes in the designated skill areas; changing individual and community practices to foster improved conditions; and strengthening the capacity of individuals and communities to address their problems and serve as role models for others.

Achievement of these outcomes will lead to more stable communities and increase the number of sustainable partnerships between the U.S. and other countries. These partnerships will foster collaboration on critical global issues, which furthers the long-term goal of a more peaceful world.

By living and working within local communities, Peace Corps Volunteers foster positive relationships with host country nationals, dispel myths about Americans, and promote sustainable development. Volunteers reflect the diversity of the United States, and represent some of the finest characteristics of the American people: a generosity of spirit, a strong work ethic, a commitment to service, and an approach to problems that is both optimistic and pragmatic. Volunteers often live in remote, isolated communities where they speak local languages and learn the cultures and customs of the people they serve. During this process, Volunteers share and represent the culture and values of the American people and, in doing so, earn respect and admiration for the United States among people who may have limited contact or exposure to Americans or American culture.

Upon their return to the United States, Volunteers bring back to their communities and workplaces a rich and in-depth perspective about life overseas, the people they served, and the cultures they experienced.

The Peace Corps combines development with the strong people-to-people relationships that Volunteers forge with host country colleagues and communities, providing a crucial foundation for peace and friendship for years to come.

## Peace Corps Organization

* In their functions as Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer, the incumbents report directly to the Director. The Office of Acquisitions and Contract Management reports to the Chief of Staff with a dotted line report to the Director.

# How Peace Corps Volunteers Serve Around the Globe

Volunteer projects and activities are the primary focus of the Peace Corps program. Volunteers are involved in a variety of host country projects because they speak the local languages, appreciate the cultural traditions, and are eager to respond to local community needs. Currently, the Peace Corps' work worldwide falls into six general sectors: agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. Additionally, Volunteers in all sectors incorporate meaningful work in information and communication technology, women in development/gender and development, HIV/AIDS, and youth development into their primary and secondary activities. A discussion of each sector's work objectives and examples of Volunteer activities follow.

## Agriculture

The Peace Corps' agriculture projects are designed to promote environmentally sustainable farming practices. Along with their environment-sector counterparts, many agriculture Volunteers help farmers focus on the long-term productivity of their fields by maintaining and improving soils and managing water. They demonstrate the importance of working with local, natural inputs to control pests and erosion. Increasingly, Volunteers and their partners are promoting approaches to farming that are both sustainable and organic as they continue to work with a broad range of agricultural products. Volunteers are also helping their host country communities mitigate the adverse effects of the global food security crisis. For example, a project in Africa helped a community build silos to store corn and beans, increasing food security by enabling the community to prevent crop loss from rodents, securing higher market rates for their crops, and eliminating the need for pesticides to protect the crops.

Volunteers systematically include women and youth in their agriculture-extension activities. Today, a Volunteer is as likely to be working with a women's association or youth club as with a male head of household.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Training farmers and extension agents to develop and disseminate successful farming practices
- Improving traditional field-crop systems by introducing farmers to better practices and technologies such as new soil conservation techniques, crop diversification, and agroforestry strategies
- Expanding the availability and acceptance of nontraditional crops by promoting and strengthening vegetable gardening and fruit tree production while raising awareness about the nutritional value of the foods produced
- Increasing knowledge and skills needed for small-animal husbandry, such as poultry, rabbits, fish, and honey production
- Helping producers increase the value of their agricultural products by developing new products, while improving storage, expanding distribution, and implementing more effective management and marketing

Nearly 10,000 followers are provided a glimpse of Peace Corps' daily activities through Twitter. Launched in 2009, twitter.com/peacecorps continues to attract a faithful following.

## Business Development

The business development sector includes four subsectors: community, municipal, business, and organizational development. Volunteers with a variety of business education and professional experiences are assigned to projects that focus on

business, organizational, and communication skills in local government offices, nonprofit agencies, and for-profit businesses. Recently, the focus of work in this sector has shifted from business consulting to more community economic development, emphasizing sustainability, transparency, community volunteerism, and leadership training. In response to the needs of a global economy, the number of business Volunteers continues to grow as efforts intensify to assist underserved communities and to expand entrepreneurial skills for women and youth.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Training activities in computer and Internet use
- Training entrepreneurs in marketing, business planning, and bookkeeping
- Helping artisan cooperatives market their handmade goods
- Advising women's groups about access to credit
- Educating young people to enable them to enter the workforce and participate in the market economy
- Helping businesses find markets for traditional and value-added products
- Counseling businesses, including microfinance, on organizational issues
- Teaching financial management to nongovernmental organizations
- Working with ecotourism project planning through community-based resource management.

## Education

Education remains the Peace Corps' largest program sector. In reality, all Volunteers are, to some extent, educators. Many host country nationals describe how the Peace Corps Volunteer who taught them years ago opened up new vistas for their future and empowered them to make a difference. Education projects include team-teaching courses in math, science, health, environment, and civics, or skills-based classes in English and literacy. Education Volunteers strengthen local capacity by training and mentoring teachers in K-12 schools, teacher-training colleges, and universities. Based on the needs of host communities, Volunteers support programs for vulnerable, marginalized or other special-needs children. They also create after-school programs, clubs, and camps for boys and girls to promote HIV/AIDS prevention and life skills. Education Volunteers train teachers to expand learning opportunities through the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), including radio, video, and computers, which are increasingly important for accessing information, communicating professionally, and equipping students with 21st-century skills. Improved ICT broadens access to education, makes learning more interactive, provides teachers with access to classroom materials, and enables classrooms around the world to communicate and collaborate.

Peace Corps debuted on YouTube in 2009. Visitors can learn what service is like by watching Volunteers around the globe at www.youtube.com/user/peacecorps.

Volunteers are also making significant contributions to girls' education and gender awareness. Around the world, Volunteers promote activities that help expand educational opportunities for females in both formal and nonformal settings. For example, Volunteers conduct summer leadership camps for girls, support community awareness of girls' achievements and potential, encourage their participation in the classroom, establish safe environments for after-school study, and organize career fairs for women. Similarly, Volunteers are working with boys and men to explore gender roles, expectations, and opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Teaching students through classes and extracurricular activities
- Mentoring counterparts and training teachers
- Advising in the development of curricula and teaching materials
- Promoting community and school-based resource centers
- Advising school-community organizations, parent-teacher groups, and community development projects
- Supporting adult education
- Promoting distance learning
- Supporting special-needs classes, such as deaf education
- Encouraging early childhood education
- Working with radio stations to teach English and HIV/ AIDS prevention

National and local media promote the positive influence the Peace Corps has had on so many lives. In its September 14, 2009, issue, *Business Week* named the agency as one of the best places to launch a career.

## Environment

Volunteers working on environment projects help strengthen a community's ability to sustainably conserve and use natural resources. They work primarily at the grassroots level, focusing on human needs and sustainable alternatives. Volunteers focusing on agroforestry, for example, identify and train local leaders so they can teach other farmers how to use forestry to improve the productivity and resource sustainability of their fields and gardens. Similarly, Volunteers implement education activities outside the classroom through environmental clubs and eco-camps. At some posts, schools and communities are connected for the first time as parents and youth work together to identify joint projects, such as bottle recycling or community cleanup days.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Promoting reforestation and soil and water conservation with individual farmers
- Co-teaching classes in schools, conducting teacher-training seminars, and developing curricula related to environmental topics
- Promoting nonformal environmental education (e.g., summer camps, eco-clubs, Earth Day events, and theater dramas)
- Working with entrepreneurs and associations to develop or strengthen alternatives to unsustainable harvesting and cultivation practices, such as generating income from renewable natural resources

## Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work in health projects to promote preventive health education, with an emphasis on overall health and well-being. The scope of these projects includes: hygiene and sanitation; water systems development and enhancement; food security; maternal and child health; communicable diseases; chronic illnesses; and healthy lifestyles, exercise, and decision making. Volunteers and their counterparts address these issues in a variety of ways, including formal classroom instruction from kindergarten to university level; materials development; training for health care providers; and nonformal health sessions using murals, theater, radio, television, and puppet shows.

Many Volunteers focus on HIV/AIDS prevention and care exclusively or as part of a comprehensive community health project. Life skills training continues to be at the center of Volunteers' HIV/ AIDS prevention work, particularly when targeting youth. Increasingly, Volunteers are assigned to HIV/ AIDS-related nongovernmental organizations and

assist in increasing the technical, managerial, and administrative capacities of these groups. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in HIV/AIDS prevention because they live and work in local communities and can present information in culturally sensitive ways. The Peace Corps is collaborating with the U.S. Department of State's Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator to support the U.S. government's commitment to worldwide HIV/AIDS care, prevention, and treatment through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Teaching about health and HIV/ AIDS prevention and care
- Expanding peer education to urge youth and others to reduce risky behavior
- Promoting healthy lifestyles, especially for youth
- Supporting youth and orphan activities and care
- Providing nutrition and hygiene education classes in communities
- Promoting education about infectious disease prevention
- Assisting in maternal and child health clinics
- Strengthening nongovernmental health-delivery systems
- Constructing and managing water systems
- Supporting community sanitation efforts

## Youth

Since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, Volunteers have had great success working with youth. It is often young people in a community who are the Volunteers' first language coaches and cultural interpreters. In turn, young people value the opportunity to learn from Peace Corps Volunteers. In many of the countries in which Peace Corps works, nearly 50 percent of the population is under the age of 25. Volunteers in the youth sector are guided by three key principles: promoting positive youth development, facilitating a greater level of youth participation, and approaching community development from an asset-based point of view. Volunteers and their partners integrate these approaches into stand-alone youth development projects and into projects that cross all program sectors. The Peace Corps' approach to youth development supports effective, sustainable work with young people, their families, and their communities. Projects also aim to build the capacity of youth-serving organizations and the host country professionals who work with young people. Critical issues affecting youth throughout the world include successfully making the transition from school to work, developing relevant skills to prepare them for family life, and becoming engaged and active citizens in their communities.

The Peace Corps was formally recognized in 2009 by undergraduate college students as the #7 **most ideal employer** to meet their career goals in a UNIVERSUM survey.

Volunteers also serve a valuable role in reaching special populations, such as children orphaned due to HIV/AIDS, street children, and other vulnerable young people. Volunteers work with their partners to improve employment skills for disenfranchised and out-of-school young men and women, and provide support to youth to help avoid drugs and prostitution. Many Volunteers serve as mentors for young people and as counterparts in youth service organizations. Volunteers are uniquely positioned to provide learning opportunities to girls and boys at the grassroots level. The overarching purpose of youth development work is to help young men and women maintain healthy lifestyles and prepare them for their roles and responsibilities in work life, family life, and as good citizens.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- Increasing employability skills, career planning, and entrepreneurship training
- Supporting training for computer skills and Internet use
- Developing leadership, communication, and teamwork skills through sports, recreation, drama, and arts opportunities
- Providing environmental education and community service opportunities
- Providing life skills through family life and healthy lifestyles training, including HIV/AIDS prevention
- Promoting positive leadership and citizenship development
- Developing the skills of teachers, youth promoters, and social workers to better facilitate participatory, asset-based learning opportunities for youth
- Working to encourage parents and other community adults to support youth priorities

## Volunteer Projects

## Number of Volunteers

The on-board count for all Peace Corps Volunteers and trainees, and Peace Corps Response Volunteers, from all funding sources serving under the Peace Corps as of September 30, 2009, is 7,671. This number includes 339 Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The on-board count includes 68 posts and 74 countries in which the Peace Corps is active or suspended, but not closed. Some posts cover more than one country.

# Overview of FY 2009 Goals and Results

## FY 2009 Overview of Performance

The 1993 Government Performance and Results Act requires all federal agencies to issue a Strategic Plan that includes a mission statement and outlines long-term goals, an annual performance plan, which provides annual performance targets to achieve the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan, and an annual performance report that evaluates the agency's progress toward achieving those performance targets. Since FY 2004, the Peace Corps has published a Performance and Accountability Report to transmit the annual performance information.

## Strategic Goals and Agency Core Goals

This Performance and Accountability Report is based on the new FY 2009-2014 Strategic Plan and is the first report on performance of a new set of 38 indicators (two did not have targets in 2009, but were monitored). The FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan is comprised of five strategic goals the Peace Corps seeks to achieve during that time period. The five goals align with the agency's three core goals and include two that address overall effective management and support of the Volunteers. The Peace Corps' Strategic Plan was developed with the help of over 100 staff members in each office and overseas post; nearly a year went into its creation.

## Outcome Goals and Performance Goals

Each strategic goal is supported by one or more outcome goals that define the results the agency expects to achieve in order to reach its long-term strategic goal. In turn, each outcome goal is supported by one or more performance goals, which state tangible, measurable objectives the agency expects to carry out.

Peace Corps is reaching out to a diverse group of Americans. A 50+ initiative in 2009 contributed to the agency's impressive level of experience, with the oldest serving Volunteer being 85 years old.

## Performance Indicators

Quantitative targets are set for each performance indicator, allowing the agency to measure and report on progress toward its long-term organizational goals.

The Peace Corps met 23 of 36 measurable performance indicators with targets for FY 2009[1]. Despite overall agency resource challenges and other external constraints, the agency met 64 percent of its targets due to the dedicated staff around the world and the work of the Volunteers.

[1] In FY 2009 there are 38 performance indicators in the annual performance plan, two of which did not have targets in 2009 but were monitored. Targets will be set for FY 2010 and beyond.

*Health Volunteer, Kenya*

## Performance Summary of Goals and Results

The Government Performance and Results Act requires all federal agencies to create performance measures to support its goals. The following tables provide an overview of the Peace Corps' performance measures for FY 2009. The measures are organized by the goals and objectives they support, as specified in the Peace Corps' Strategic Plan.

| STRATEGIC GOAL | Met | Not Met, but Substantive Performance Measured | Not Met |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Enhance the capacity of host country individuals, organizations, and communities to meet their skill needs | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| 2. Promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of host country individuals, organizations, and communities served by Volunteers | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 3. Foster outreach to Americans through agency programs that assist Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| 4. Provide Volunteers who represent the diversity of Americans to meet the evolving technical needs of host countries | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. Implement the Peace Corps mission in an effective and efficient manner through the provision of high quality Volunteer support with optimal health care, safety and security support, and effective management of resources | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| TOTAL INDICATORS | 23 | 8 | 5 |

## STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Enhance the capacity of host country individuals, organizations, and communities to meet their skill needs

**Outcome Goal 1.1:** Country programs fulfill host country skill needs

Performance Goal 1.1.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1a | Percentage of project plans meeting the expressed needs of the host country | 85% | 97% | Y |
| 1.1.1b | Percentage of posts providing annual progress reports to their host country agency sponsors and partners | 75% | 53% | N |
| 1.1.1c | Enhance the average length of service of Volunteers to equal or exceed 21 months | 21 months | 22.1 months | Y |

**Outcome Goal 1.2:** Volunteers have the competencies necessary to implement a country program

Performance Goal 1.2.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.2.1a | Percentage of Volunteers meeting local language requirements for service, per post testing standards | 85% | 93% | Y |
| 1.2.1b | Percentage of Volunteers reporting training as adequate or better in preparing them technically for service | 70% | 80% | Y |
| 1.2.1c | Percentage of Volunteers reporting training as adequate or better in preparing them to work with counterparts | 60% | 79% | Y |

| **Outcome Goal 1.3:** Host country individuals, organizations, and communities demonstrate an enhanced capacity to meet their own needs | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Performance Goal 1.3.1 | | | | |
| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
| 1.3.1a | Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their work transferred skills to host country individuals and organizations adequately or better | 70% | 88% | Y |
| 1.3.1b | Percentage of Volunteers reporting their HIV/AIDS education and outreach is effective | 75% | 59% | N |
| 1.3.1c | Percentage of projects documenting increases in host country national capacity | 70% | 91% | Y |
| 1.3.1d | Percentage of partner organizations reporting their assigned Volunteers fulfilled their requested need for technical assistance | 50% | 52% | Y |

## Strategic Goal 2: Promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of host country individuals, organizations, and communities served by Volunteers

| **Outcome Goal 2.1:** Host country individuals and communities learn about Americans through shared experiences with Peace Corps Volunteers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Performance Goal 2.1.1 | | | | |
| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
| 2.1.1a | Percentage of Volunteers reporting that training prepared them to manage cultural differences during service adequately or better | 91% | 92% | Y |
| 2.1.1b | Percentage of posts conducting supervisory/counterpart training on working effectively with Volunteers | 95% | 100% | Y |
| 2.1.1c | Percentage of host country nationals who have interacted with Volunteers who believe that Americans are committed to assisting other peoples | Target not set. Under development based on ongoing evaluations | 44% | NA |
| 2.1.1d | Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their work helps promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served | 75% | 74% | N |

## Strategic Goal 3: Foster outreach to Americans through agency programs that assist Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

### Outcome Goal 3.1: Americans have increased awareness and knowledge of other cultures and global issues

#### Performance Goal 3.1.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1.1a | Percentage of Volunteers participating in the Coverdell World Wise School program | 60% | 57% | N |
| 3.1.1b | Number of individuals and organizations supporting the Peace Corps Partnership Program | 8,000 | 10,595 | Y |
| 3.1.1c | Number of youth-serving programs hosting Volunteer activities | 4,600. | 4,700 | Y |
| 3.1.1d | Monitor the percentage of Volunteers who report sharing their experiences with family, friends, and the American public | No Target. Agency is monitoring the activities | 99% | NA |

#### Performance Goal 3.1.2

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1.2a | Number of RPCVs participating in agency-initiated activities | 7,700 | 9,102 | Y |
| 3.1.2b | Number of schools impacted by the activities of RPCVs | 550 | 502 | N |

## Strategic Goal 4: Provide Volunteers who represent the diversity of Americans to meet the evolving technical needs of host countries

### Outcome Goal 4.1: Volunteers provided at every post meet the evolving technical needs of host countries

#### Performance Goal 4.1.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1.1a | Maximize the number of Volunteers serving annually based on available funding and the provision of support to ensure their optimal effectiveness | 7,300 | 7,671 | Y |
| 4.1.1b | At least 95% of the number of trainees and skills sought annually are met | 95% | 96% | Y |

#### Performance Goal 4.1.2

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1.2a | Redesign the Volunteer Delivery System and implement recommendations to improve its effectiveness | Complete redesign of critical processes and prioritize implementation of recommendations | Achieved | Y |
| 4.1.2b | Reduce the response time to applicants from 100 days in FY 2009 to 80 days by the end of FY 2011 | 100 Days | 123 Days | N |

### Outcome Goal 4.2: Trainees assigned to serve overseas represent the diversity of Americans

#### Performance Goal 4.2.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2.1a | Number of mid-career and age 50 and older applicants | 1,500 | 2,041 | Y |
| 4.2.1b | Number of applicants of diverse ethnicities | 2,100 | 3,070 | Y |

## Strategic Goal 5: Implement the Peace Corps mission in an effective and efficient manner through the provision of high quality Volunteer support with optimal health care, safety and security support, and effective management of resources

### Outcome Goal 5.1: Volunteers are safe, healthy, and well supported to ensure their focus on Peace Corps' sustainable development and cross-cultural mission

#### Performance Goal 5.1.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1.1a | Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their safety and security training is adequate or better | 95% | 96% | Y |
| 5.1.1b | Percentage of posts having their safety and security plans reviewed annually by Peace Corps safety and security officers | 33% | 21% | N |
| 5.1.1c | Percentage of posts implementing critical recommendations focused on Volunteer/ trainee safety and security on a timely basis | 100% | 84% | N |
| 5.1.1d | Percentage of Volunteers reporting they feel "usually safe" or "very safe" where they live and work | 90% | 89% | N |

#### Performance Goal 5.1.2

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.1.2a | Percentage of Volunteers rating their satisfaction with health care received from Peace Corps medical officers as adequate or better | 90% | 93% | Y |
| 5.1.2b | Percentage of Volunteers reporting the emotional support received from Peace Corps staff as adequate or better | 70% | 81% | Y |
| 5.1.2c | Percentage of Volunteers reporting adequate or better support in coping with stress issues of HIV/AIDS in their community | 60% | 73% | Y |

**Outcome Goal 5.2:** Peace Corps continually improves its staff and critical work processes and manages its resources in an effective and efficient manner

Performance Goal 5.2.1

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2.1a | Percentage of posts and headquarters offices managing resources within approved budgets and operational plans | 95% | 83% | N |
| 5.2.1b | Percentage of posts and headquarters offices that annually review resource management ratios for improvement | 95% | Not fully implemented | N |

Performance Goal 5.2.2

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2.2a | Percentage of post projects engaging host country officials in their formulation and implementation | 95% | 94% | N |
| 5.2.2b | Percentage of posts and headquarters offices with documented personnel practices that include staff development, performance management, and awards and recognition policies | 70% | 56% | N |

Performance Goal 5.2.3

| | PERFORMANCE INDICATOR | FY 2009 Target | FY 2009 Actual | Target Achieved |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5.2.3a | Annually review, streamline, and implement improvements to at least one agency mission critical process | Minimum of one critical process a year | Achieved | Y |

## Performance Analysis

The specific performance of each of the five Peace Corps goals contained in the FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan is discussed below.

### Strategic Goal 1: Enhance the capacity of host country individuals, organizations, and communities to meet their skill needs

#### Results: Met the goal for 8 of 10 measures

At the beginning of the year, Peace Corps projects worldwide numbered 204. Of these, 97 percent reflected the development needs of the country, exceeding the target. Two actions led to success: regional management emphasized to the field the importance of good project plans and provided training and technical assistance on the Peace Corps' approach to participatory development. The agency did not meet the target set for sharing annual reports with host country partners, due to budget constraints and staff shortages. Fifty-three percent prepared annual reports on all of their projects. Twenty percent nearly met the goal, having prepared reports on some, but not all, of their projects. The average length of service improved above the target in FY 2009 to 22.1 months and the resignation rate decreased to 7.3 percent. Continued review of resignation data, along with external factors such as economic conditions and increased interest in volunteerism and service, could be positive factors in helping the agency to retain Volunteers.

The agency is preparing Volunteers well in the key areas needed for them to competently undertake their work. Ninety-three percent of the Volunteers met the local language requirements for service, 80 percent reported that training prepared them technically for their service, and 79 percent reported being prepared to work with their counterparts. Several innovations contributed to successful achievement of the targets. The agency piloted an online language learning system, Rosetta Stone, held workshops and online training sessions for Volunteers and staff, and increased post technical consultancies from the headquarters' staff.

Transferring skills and building the capacity of host country partners is the key result expected of all Peace Corps projects and Volunteer activities. In FY 2009, the number of Volunteers reporting they had transferred skills to host country individuals significantly exceeded the targets. Similarly, projects reporting that increases in host country capacity were documented exceeded the target by 21 percent and the number of partner organizations reporting the Volunteers met their needs for technical assistance exceeded the target by 2 percent.

Volunteers' activities in the HIV/AIDS area, however, fell short of the target. Many Volunteers reported challenges in measuring the effectiveness of their HIV/AIDS interventions. Volunteers know they taught the lessons, but are unsure if that knowledge results in behavior change. The Peace Corps will emphasize the integration of behavior change concepts into future programming and training.

### Strategic Goal 2: Promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of host country individuals, organizations, and communities served by Volunteers

#### Results: Met the goal for 2 of 3 measures

Two of the three performance measures were met. Volunteers reported high satisfaction with the cross-cultural training provided by the agency and reported they were well prepared to work with counterparts. Training increases the Volunteers' ability to live and work in their host community and teaches a set of skills and a framework to interpret cultural norms. Volunteers also reported their work promoted a better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served. Furthermore, all posts conducted training for counterparts or partners of Volunteers.

### Strategic Goal 3: Foster outreach to Americans through agency programs that assist Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

#### Results: Met the goal for 3 of 5 measures

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers participating in agency-initiated activities are the strongest promoters of the third goal. Sharing Volunteer experiences helps to promote an increased awareness of other countries, cultures, and global issues on the part of Americans. These headquarters-sponsored programs exceeded the target in FY 2009.

The Peace Corps Partnership Program allows American students, clubs, individuals, and organizations to provide funds to assist a Volunteer and his or her host community in completing a community-driven project. In FY 2009, the number of individuals and organizations supporting this program greatly exceeded the target, and collectively contributed $1.7 million to assist Volunteers and their communities to implement small scale projects.

Volunteers participated in the Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match, a program that links currently serving Volunteers with school children in the United States. Topics remain timely and relevant to today's challenges and teachers laud the program as a way to "open a window to the world" for their students. Additionally, returned Volunteers were successfully matched with external groups to share their Peace Corps experiences at home.

The Peace Corps is now on Facebook. Learn more at www.facebook.com/peacecorps

### Strategic Goal 4: Provide Volunteers who represent the diversity of Americans to meet the evolving technical needs of host countries

#### Results: Met the goal for 5 of 6 measures

A number of key management decisions were made in FY 2009 in order to improve recruitment effectiveness and efficiency. Organizational changes were made in order to bring leadership and innovation to recruitment activities and to redesign the system used to recruit, select, and place Americans interested in Peace Corps service. As applications continue to increase, the agency is taking steps to attract the best and the brightest and to ensure that the skills these Americans bring match the needs expressed by the countries in which the Volunteers are placed.

The Peace Corps is committed to recruiting as many qualified Americans as requested by our host countries to serve as Peace Corps Volunteers, including applicants over the age of 50 and people of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities. In addition, in FY 2009, the Peace Corps worked with federal agencies and other outside organizations to motivate applicants with specialized skills to apply. Those skills in high demand include more advanced language levels in French and Spanish.

The work the agency has done on assessing and mapping a strategy to redesign its Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) is one of the most important cross-cutting work activities of FY 2009. This modernization will bring the Peace Corps into the 21st century with an integrated, efficient, and comprehensive life cycle management system—from applicant to RPCV—providing new and better tools to attract and place highly qualified, service-oriented individuals.

### Strategic Goal 5: Implement the Peace Corps mission in an effective and efficient manner through the provision of high quality Volunteer support with optimal health care, safety and security support, and effective management of resources

### Results: Met the goal for 5 of 12 measures

Supporting Volunteers in the field is a critical responsibility of every Peace Corps employee. Resources within the organization are allocated with the goal of delivering the best efficiency, effectiveness, and value to the operations that support the work of the Volunteer.

Balancing the need to keep Volunteers as safe as possible while maintaining the integrity of the Volunteer experience is one of the challenges facing the Peace Corps. The agency strives to integrate safety and security considerations into every stage of the Volunteer's service. From application to close-of-service, Volunteers receive the best information available about safety risks and how they can minimize them. While Volunteer service is not without risk and Volunteers must take on much of the responsibility for their own safety, the Peace Corps has an extensive, well-established, and effective support system focused on Volunteer safety.

The health of Volunteers is one of the agency's top priorities, with individuals serving around the world in a variety of challenging environments. Volunteer satisfaction is just one of many components of health that the agency monitors and evaluates. Peace Corps continues to provide the best possible medical and mental health care and support to its Volunteers. The agency promotes and enhances the well-being of Volunteers through the continuous evaluation of business processes and review of practices. Training for both staff and Volunteers, site visits to posts in need of specialized skills (such as countries that have experienced traumatic events), and constant review of available data sources all contribute to Volunteers being healthy and productive.

A new area added to the agency's Strategic Plan focused on financial management and the review of business processes. With a global operation of 68 overseas posts, many different currencies, and thousands of monthly transactions, the agency places a priority on responsible management of its resources. The two indicators show that the agency has a strong record of managing its resources, but can still improve by implementing more reviews and comparisons to other organizations to ensure it is operating as well as its peers. In addition, by identifying, reviewing, and improving a business process each year, the agency should achieve tangible gains in most key functional areas over the life of the Strategic Plan.

## Reporting Procedures and Data Quality

The Peace Corps is committed to providing transparent, reliable data for managerial decision-making and oversight. The Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning, created during FY 2007, continued its work in ensuring continuity and reliability of the performance data reported by the agency.

The agency continued the practice of reviewing performance results during the mid-year budget reviews to reinforce performance and budgeting alignment. This integrated mid-year assessment allows for the redirection of agency resources in consideration of challenges or achievements.

The Peace Corps' FY 2009 performance results are based on reliable and valid data complete as of the production of the results at the end of the fiscal year. Overall, the Peace Corps has made great progress in institutionalizing its performance reporting procedures and processes, and is well-positioned to provide solid results on its performance measures.

# Core Issues

## Agency Priorities

### *Quality Growth*

As the Peace Corps approaches its 50th anniversary, the agency continues to capture the imagination of the American people and stands ready to accept and support a new generation of Volunteers inspired by President Obama's call to service. Quality growth will emphasize strategic recruitment, sustainable programming, exceptional Volunteer support, and strong leadership.

In preparation for growth in existing Peace Corps countries and in countries that do not currently have a Peace Corps program, all operations within the agency must identify best practices. This may include some centralization and reorganization of personnel to ensure efficient and cost-effective growth occurs.

Additionally, the redesign of the Volunteer Delivery System—the agencywide process to recruit, screen, place, and support Volunteers—is underway. Processes and technologies were examined in FY 2009 and new approaches recommended to modernize agency operations. These changes will allow for more efficient, flexible operations, as well as data-driven strategic decision-making.

### *Volunteer Safety and Security*

The issue of Volunteer health, safety, and security must remain an agency priority. There are inherent dangers in serving overseas, but with quality training, a committed staff, and clear systems in place, the health, safety, and security of Peace Corps Volunteers will be assured in a manner that allows enough flexibility for Volunteers to truly become a part of the community in which they serve.

Peace Corps staff and Volunteers work together to create a framework that maximizes, to the extent possible, Volunteers' well-being, enabling them to carry out their mission effectively. The Peace Corps incorporates safety and security information into all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service, and ensures that safety and security policies and training curricula are current. Volunteers are asked to do their part by taking responsibility for their behavior at all times and by integrating successfully into their host communities.

In FY 2009, among other changes, responsibilities were established to provide support and assistance in the aftermath of a serious crime against a Volunteer. The Criminal Incidence Reporting System, the mechanism by which posts report on the status of their safety and security programs, was revised, and the reporting system for safety and security incidents was upgraded. The agency continues to review its safety and security program and implement new measures to maximize its effectiveness.

### *HIV/AIDS Initiative*

Today, one of the most serious worldwide threats to public health and development is the spread of HIV/AIDS. The impact from this global pandemic crosses all areas of community life. Peace Corps Volunteers provide hope and meaningful assistance to people affected by HIV/AIDS through work in public health education, health extension, and development with youth, communities, nongovernmental organizations, business advising, and information technology. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in the field of HIV/AIDS because they are trained in the local language, live and work in the communities where they serve, and know how to share information in a culturally sensitive way.

Since 2004, the Peace Corps has been a key participant in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). As PEPFAR transitions from a focus on "emergency" to a focus on sustainability, the work of Peace Corps Volunteers

building human capacity at the grassroots level is especially valuable. In FY 2009, 25 Peace Corps posts received PEPFAR funds, while other posts benefited from activities organized by the headquarters using central PEPFAR funding. Support provided included training for Volunteers, staff, and counterparts; small grants for communities; technical assistance to posts; and funding for 339 HIV-focused Volunteers, including Peace Corps Response Volunteers who respond to sudden needs for aid such as tsunamis and earthquakes.

In FY 2009, the Peace Corps Global HIV/AIDS Strategy guided the agency's response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This strategy supports the agency's mission of providing an effective and satisfying Volunteer experience, contributes to the achievement of the Peace Corps' three core goals, and aligns with its FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan.

*Food Security*

Peace Corps Volunteers live in communities throughout the world that have been hit hard by the world food crisis. The Peace Corps formed an agencywide food security task force in the spring of 2008 to explore the dimensions of the problem and identify appropriate responses in countries in which the Peace Corps is serving.

In early FY 2009, the Peace Corps hosted a food security summit. Guest experts discussed ways in which international organizations, including the Peace Corps, can collaborate and complement one another's efforts and contribute to possible solutions, while soliciting the participation of the public and private sectors. Twenty-eight recommendations and the creation of an informal advisory group resulted from the summit.

Additionally, the task force created an electronic food security toolkit for Peace Corps country directors and staff to help them identify methods to address food security issues and to help empower Volunteers and their host country partners to continue to take action and effectively respond to the crisis. To raise awareness of the issue of food security to both internal and external audiences, the agency has taken actions like creating an informational video titled "The Silent Tsunami" and launching an internal "landing page" on its electronic knowledge management system, Guru.

Finally, the Peace Corps has been coordinating with other U.S. government partners on the food security issue. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Africa Bureau has assigned a senior food security advisor to work at Peace Corps for one year. The adviser will provide support for Peace Corps posts in Africa to strengthen programming and training in food security and to facilitate additional collaboration and coordination between Peace Corps and USAID in their food security efforts.

*Volunteerism and United We Serve*

In FY 2009, the agency continued its efforts to support Peace Corps Volunteers in promoting volunteerism, using a service learning approach. The newly developed Volunteerism Action Guide was distributed to all Volunteers to assist them in deepening their efforts to promote volunteerism and service learning in the communities in which they serve.

Field staff members were provided with virtual training opportunities, support materials, and online collaboration tools to support different models of service learning. Additionally, the agency conducted a story and photo contest to identify creative ways in which the Volunteers, staff, and posts are engaging young people to address community priorities in health, education, environmental action, and HIV/AIDS.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers have a tradition of making a difference in their communities by selflessly contributing their skills and experience

through their dedication to service. In FY 2009, the Peace Corps actively participated in the summer phase of President Obama's service initiative—United We Serve—a call to all Americans to join a volunteer effort and be part of building a new foundation for America, one community at a time. United We Serve's summer phase culminated with the inaugural National Day of Service and Remembrance on September 11.

The entire Peace Corps community was encouraged to contribute to United We Serve. Information provided on the Peace Corps website detailed how returned Peace Corps Volunteers, applicants, invitees, and friends and families could become involved in the effort. In honor of the special day, Peace Corps Director Aaron Williams and Peace Corps employees in all nine Peace Corps regional recruiting offices across the country took time to volunteer for local service projects.

*Smart Contracting*

The Peace Corps continues to look for ways to reduce costs without impacting its mission capability. In FY 2009, the agency in-sourced significant portions of its information technology support services contract and completed the first phase of a strategic sourcing effort to reduce the cost of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals. This effort involves taking advantage of buying agreements implemented and managed by the Veterans Administration, as well as establishing new regional/international buying agreements to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the medical supply chain. In FY 2010, the agency plans to in-source three major support service contracts and will also begin the process of converting a cost reimbursement training services contract to a firm fixed-price contract through competition.

*Business Volunteer, Kazakhstan*

# Actions to Address Agency-Identified Prior Year Challenges

## Positioning the Peace Corps for Growth and Impact in the 21st Century

During FY 2008, the agency identified some challenges to the Peace Corps' ability to position itself for growth and increased impact in the years ahead. In FY 2009, the agency took many substantive steps to address those challenges.

### *Impact Evaluation*

Field evaluations began at nine posts during FY 2009 to assess the impact of Volunteer's work on transferring skills to host country individuals, communities, and organizations and promoting a better understanding of Americans on the part of the people that we serve. These evaluations of Peace Corps' first two core goals are taking place across many cultures and in three main program sectors: business development, education, and health and HIV/AIDS.

To ensure that the evaluations are carried out in a consistent and valid manner across the multicultural environments in which the Peace Corps operates, the agency took many proactive steps. Following the pilot evaluations in FY 2008, standard questionnaires were created for counterparts, beneficiaries, and host families to ensure that the concepts are measured in a consistent manner. The field evaluations are carried out by third-party host country interviewers, who help adjust the language of the questionnaires to respect host country norms.

Additionally, the Peace Corps developed an in-depth two-day training program taught by agency and post staff for the host country researchers, helping to ensure a standard methodology. The training includes seven training modules, complete with handouts and session outlines, to ensure consistent delivery of study expectations and implementation across posts. Further, a standard statement of work ensures that the evaluators meet high standards for research and evaluation and have excellent qualifications for carrying out the work in-country.

The data has been gathered from the field evaluations to examine the work of Peace Corps Volunteers in HIV/AIDS prevention. Evaluation topics include the ways in which the individual, organization, or community changed as a result of the Peace Corps Volunteers' HIV/AIDS-related project and whether the changes in knowledge or behavior were still evident after the Volunteer's departure.

The agency began an evaluation of its third core goal activities by conducting focus groups with returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) who are current federal employees. The focus groups included RPCVs from the 1960s through the 2000s, representing all geographic regions in which Peace Corps Volunteers serve. Discussions centered on the long-term career impact of Peace Corps service, as well as the effectiveness of services to RPCVs provided by the agency. The focus groups yielded findings concerning career motivations and choices. For instance, for nearly half of the RPCVs, career enhancement was the primary factor for joining the Peace Corps. A better understanding of motivations and career choices sheds light on recruitment strategies, as well as third goal activities. RPCVs sharing their international expertise and experience with other Americans in a variety of career settings can help U.S. organizations to adapt enhanced international focuses.

Additionally, the agency, through a collaborative process, developed a survey to be administered to RPCVs regarding a broad range of third goal issues. The survey and further focus groups will be completed in early FY 2010.

*Integrating Organizational Performance Management*

The agency's development of its new Strategic Plan for FY 2009–2014 was a very inclusive effort that solicited input from hundreds of staff members at headquarters and all posts throughout the world. As a part of budget and performance integration, managers understand their responsibility for meeting their performance goals and that their progress will be assessed at regular intervals, including during mid-year and year-end reviews.

In FY 2009, the agency focused on implementing the new Strategic Plan at all levels and significantly strengthened the alignment of office and field-level performance with new agency-level performance goals, creating a more integrated approach to Peace Corps work. As a result of the review process undertaken during the budget and performance planning cycle in February 2009, with overseas staff reviewing the agency plan and agency-level reviews of the field plans, both goal alignment and indicator consistency have been improved. For instance, the first quarter performance review in January 2009 and the mid-year budget and performance reviews that took place in May 2009 were an opportunity to reallocate funding and human resources to correct a course of action if there were challenges in meeting performance goals or to validate positive actions taken to meet performance goals.

Furthermore, the development and refinement of performance indicator data sheets for indicators in the FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan incorporated clarifications from the 2009 mid-year reviews and will help ensure consistent performance reporting in the future. In FY 2009, particular attention was given to the refinement and articulation of data collection processes for specific indicators, as needed. The data sheets provide important accountability, transparency, and consistency in performance reporting.

*Youth Volunteer, Nicaragua*

*Growth in the Number of Volunteers*

The agency remains poised for growth while working within the realities of budget uncertainties and constraints. In FY 2009, the agency received more than 15,000 applications from Americans interested in serving overseas as Peace Corps Volunteers, an 18 percent increase over FY 2008. While the funding level in FY 2009 did not allow for an expansion in the number of Volunteers serving overseas, the agency, nonetheless, worked on streamlining its processes for delivering Volunteers to the field to effectively meet host country needs.

The agency has made the Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) modernization initiative a priority. The Volunteer life cycle refers to the agency's recruitment, placement, and support of Volunteers throughout their service and continued engagement with returned Peace Corps Volunteers. To manage this life cycle, the agency employs a number of cumbersome, disjointed systems of forms, databases, and business processes developed over many years and reflecting shifting priorities. Together, these systems comprise the VDS and the modernization effort will generate a single, electronic, coherent system through which the agency will manage the Volunteer life cycle from awareness and application to service and return.

*Financial Challenge*

The major financial challenge anticipated in FY 2008 was not overcome during FY 2009. As expected, the long-term effect of the escalations in overseas costs and the unfunded drop in the value of the U.S. dollar experienced throughout FY 2008 commanded a significant share of the agency resources, forcing strategic reductions in staff, in the number of Volunteers, and in services across the agency during FY 2009, despite an overall increase in agency resources. The agency, though, is poised to be in a much more favorable resource position during FY 2010, with an anticipated increase in funding appropriated by Congress.

Finding more effective and less costly ways to prepare country directors and other personnel for their assignments at posts around the world is an ongoing challenge. Transmitting the critical elements of financial management information successfully to new country directors and others is a process that is continually refined.

*Agriculture Volunteer, Cape Verde*

# Agency-Identified Future Challenges

The development and implementation of the FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan has helped position the Peace Corps for growth and impact in the 21st century. As the Peace Corps approaches its 50th anniversary, the agency continues to capture the imagination of the American people and stands ready to accept and support a new generation of Volunteers inspired by President Obama's call to service.

## Managing Growth Quality

In preparation for growth in existing Peace Corps countries and in countries that do not currently have a Peace Corps program, all operations within the agency must identify best practices to ensure that growth occurs in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The key to Peace Corps growth will be to ensure the agency can both support the Volunteers currently in the field and to recruit the best qualified applicants. Although the Peace Corps is fortunate to have strong support from President Obama, the Congress, and the American people, competition for sufficient funding is always a challenge. Additionally, the Peace Corps operates in a dynamic international environment. Shifting political, economic, or social conditions can hinder Volunteer effectiveness on the ground or result in the agency having to suspend or close operations in certain countries.

## Supporting and Utilizing Innovation

To support quality growth, the agency's new management team plans to place added emphasis on innovation through the creation of an Office of Innovation. This office will encourage the pursuit of cutting edge ideas and best practices through the utilization of new technology, and the modernization of the agency's information technology platform. Investments in information technology will improve communication and the transfer of information among posts and between posts and headquarters, enabling staff and Volunteers worldwide to work as global teams.

Innovation and modernization of technologies can also be applied to the Peace Corps recruitment practices. Investments in the Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) will integrate all formal and informal Volunteer-related business processes, currently encompassing disconnected databases, organizational divisions, and business systems. Full integration of the core business processes of the Peace Corps, from recruitment and selection through deployment, training, support, and medical care, will better prepare the agency for growth, promote efficiency, and protect federally-mandated privacy information. The Peace Corps will be able to more quickly and accurately match recruits to Volunteer positions, thereby simultaneously increasing Volunteer satisfaction and host country benefit. More efficient recruitment processing also ensures higher recruiting yield. An integrated system is a vital and overdue asset for promoting effectiveness and business continuity, essential for an agency that limits employment to five years.

## Promoting the Agency's Third Goal

The third goal of the Peace Corps is to help promote a better understating of other peoples on the part of Americans. When Volunteers and friends of the Peace Corps support and engage in third goal activities, they help Americans gain a greater understanding of the world. They foster the spirit of world peace and friendship and inspire Americans to be civic minded by example.

Peace Corps service is a life-defining leadership experience. Since 1961, nearly 200,000 Americans joined the Peace Corps. However, evaluating the impact of the agency's third goal is challenging. The agency must seek new and innovative ways to encourage more returned Volunteers to share their experiences with their fellow Americans to

promote a better understanding of other cultures and countries.

The Peace Corps is currently finalizing plans to implement the first extensive survey of returned Peace Corps Volunteers since 1996. This survey will provide the agency new perspectives on the returned Volunteer community, on agency outreach programs, and concerning its efforts to bring a better understanding of other peoples to the American people.

*Education Volunteer, Tanzania*

# Analysis of Financial Statements

## Overview

The external auditor awarded an unqualified (clean) audit opinion on the financial statements for FY 2009. This was the third clean audit opinion in the last three fiscal years. The financial statements were generated from Odyssey, the agency's certified and accredited financial system. The Congressional appropriation totaled $340 million in FY 2009 and $330.8 million, net of rescission, in fiscal year 2008, an increase of $9.2 million. Budgetary resources available from all years and all sources for use by the agency totaled $372.6 million in FY 2009 and $356.2 million in FY 2008. The agency has two years in which to obligate appropriated funds and five years in which to complete the payout process.

## Analysis of Financial Condition

The Balance Sheet indicates total agency assets of $176.8 million at the end of fiscal year 2009. This represents an overall increase of more than 10 percent over FY 2008 total assets of $158 million. The $21.1 million increase in the Fund Balance with Treasury was due to a $13 million increase in the cash balance for unexpended appropriations and an $8.3 million increase in non-entity funding for personal services contractors' separation pay. Partially offsetting those increases was a net $1.9 million decrease in the Property, Plant, and Equipment (PP&E) primarily due to activating two software applications late in FY 2008 that were fully depreciated during FY 2009, reducing the overall net book value reported in the financial statements.

**Assets.** Total assets of the Peace Corps reflected in the Balance Sheet were $176.8 million as of September 30, 2009. The most significant assets were the Fund Balance with Treasury at 79 percent and PP&E at 17 percent as shown in the chart below.

FY 2009 Assets by Type

*(Dollars in Thousands)*

**Liabilities.** The Peace Corps had total liabilities of $218.1 million at the end of fiscal year 2009, as reported on the Balance Sheet. The increase in liabilities of $1.4 million from the FY 2008 level of $216.7 million was due to a $2.6 million increase in the federal employee benefits actuarial projection as calculated by the Department of Labor, and a $1.2 million decrease in contingent liabilities for administrative proceedings, legal actions, or claims reported at the end of FY 2009. Areas of significant change include an $8.3 million increase in non-entity fund liability for the personal services contractors' separation and a decrease of $8.8 million to the unfunded employment related liability for the personal services contractors.

FY 2009 Liabilities by Type

*(Dollars in Thousands)*

The net cost of operations at $323.6 million indicates the gross costs of the Peace Corps decreased by $33.8 million during FY 2009 due to the full year's impact of the FY 2008 reduction in the agency's personnel, the favorable effect of the U.S. dollar on global currencies, and an increase in earned revenues from other governmental agencies.

## Limitations of the Principal Financial Statements

The principal financial statements have been prepared to report the financial position and results of operations of the Peace Corps, pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C.3515 (b). While the statements have been prepared from the entity's books and records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for federal entities and the formats prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the statements are in addition to the financial reports used to monitor and control budgetary resources, which are prepared from the same books and records. The statements should be read with the realization that they are for a component of the U.S. government, a sovereign entity.

# Analysis of Systems, Controls, and Legal Compliance

## Management Assurances

### *Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act*

The Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (FMFIA) requires agencies to establish accounting and administrative controls to include program, operational and administrative areas, in addition to accounting and financial management. The implementation of internal accounting and administrative controls must provide reasonable assurance that (i) obligations and costs are in compliance with applicable law; (ii) funds, property, and other assets are safeguarded against waste, loss, unauthorized use, or misappropriation; and (iii) revenues and expenditures applicable to agency operations are properly recorded and accounted for to permit the preparation of accounts and reliable financial and statistical reports and to maintain accountability over the assets. The FMFIA establishes overall requirements for internal control and requires that the agency head evaluate and report annually on the control and financial systems that protect the integrity of federal programs (Section 2 and Section 4 of FMFIA, respectively). OMB Circular A-123, Management's Responsibility for Internal Control, implements the FMFIA and defines management's responsibility for internal control in federal agencies. The three objectives of internal control are to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, reliability of financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The safeguarding of assets is a subset of all of these objectives. OMB Circular A-127, Financial Management Systems, prescribes policies and standards to follow in managing financial management systems.

### *Internal Control within the Peace Corps*

The agency's senior assessment team established during FY 2006 and led by the Chief Financial Officer continued to conduct oversight of the Peace

### *FY 2009 Annual FMFIA Assurance Statement*

The Peace Corps assessed the effectiveness of the internal controls to support effective and efficient operations, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations in accordance with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (FMFIA) Section 2 and OMB Circular A-123. Based on this assessment, the Peace Corps can provide reasonable assurance for FY 2009 that its internal control over the effectiveness and efficiency of operations, financial reporting, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations was operating effectively and no material weaknesses were found in the design or operation of the internal controls.

The Peace Corps conducted its assessment of whether the financial management systems conform to governmentwide financial systems requirements in accordance with FMFIA Section 4. Based on this assessment, the Peace Corps can provide reasonable assurance that its financial management systems are in compliance with the applicable provisions of the FMFIA Section 4 and OMB Circular A-127 for FY 2009.

Aaron S. Williams, Director
*November 16, 2009*

Thomas Bellamy
Acting Chief Financial Officer
*November 16, 2009*

Corps' internal control program. Quarterly senior assessment team meetings monitored progress toward completion of the past fiscal year audit recommendations for the agency's significant deficiencies. Department and office heads throughout the agency conducted risk assessments for their business areas during FY 2009 and identified no material weaknesses. Further, the department and office heads prepared annual assurance statements attesting to the adequacy of internal controls and identified no material weaknesses within their areas. In addition, the Office of the Inspector General conducted reviews, audits, investigations, and evaluations during this fiscal year.

The annual assurance statement on page 33 is consistent with the annual financial statement audit report.

## Summary

Receiving an unqualified (clean) financial audit opinion on its financial statements for FY 2009, as in the past two fiscal years, is a significant achievement for this agency. Our internal controls and financial management systems meet FMFIA and other regulatory objectives. It is with great pride that the agency submits its annual assurance statement on compliance.

*Language Training, Paraguay*

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*Education Volunteer, Guyana*

# PERFORMANCE SECTION

# Agency Performance

## Introduction

In FY 2009, Peace Corps focused on translating the new Strategic Plan into action. The agency was re-energized at all levels to achieve the three core goals of the agency, in particular by strengthening the collaboration, communication, and partnerships with the countries in which Volunteers serve. In an environment of resource challenges and other external constraints, the agency also strove to create effective management mechanisms and support for Volunteers.

The agency met 23 of the 36 measurable performance indicators for FY 2009 due to the dedicated work of the Volunteers and the staff around the world who support them. Of the 13 indicators where performance was not met, eight achieved substantial results. Two monitoring indicators also achieved substantial results and gave the agency new baseline data in order to set future targets.

## Status of FY 2009 Performance Measures

FY 2009 is the first year the agency is reporting on the new set of performance goals and indicator targets outlined in the Peace Corps' FY 2009–2014 Strategic Plan. Overall, the agency achieved success in four of the five strategic goals, and met or exceeded targets in 64 percent of the 36 performance indicators.[2] The analysis of the indicators by performance goal is provided in this Agency Performance Section. The agency will continue to examine and hone its performance management system in FY 2010 to best measure and report on its work.

The chart below presents the agency's FY 2009 achievements as measured by performance goals and indicators.

[2] The agency established success in a strategic goal by achieving targets in two-thirds of the performance indicators under each strategic goal.

| PERFORMANCE GOAL | | Indicators | Reached |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.1 | Ensure the effectiveness of in-country programs | 3 | 2 |
| 1.2.1 | Ensure the effectiveness of in-country training | 3 | 3 |
| 1.3.1 | Increase the effectiveness of skills transfer to host country individuals, organizations, and communities | 4 | 3 |
| 2.1.1 | The work and life experiences of Volunteers in-country promote host country national learning about Americans | 3 | 2 |
| 3.1.1 | Volunteers share their in-country experiences with family, friends, and the American public | 3 | 2 |
| 3.1.2 | Increase returned Peace Corps Volunteers' cultural outreach to the American public through Peace Corps programs | 2 | 1 |
| 4.1.1 | Recruit Volunteers who balance the needed manpower and technical needs at posts with the available applicant pool and its skills | 2 | 2 |

| PERFORMANCE GOAL | | Indicators | Reached |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.1.2 | Manage Volunteer recruitment functions in an effective and efficient manner | 2 | 1 |
| 4.2.1 | Recruitment and Volunteer placement efforts reflect the diversity of Americans | 2 | 2 |
| 5.1.1 | Enhance the safety and security of Volunteers | 4 | 1 |
| 5.1.2 | Provide quality medical and mental health services to trainees and Volunteers | 3 | 3 |
| 5.2.1 | Provide effective and responsive financial management that accurately reflects domestic and overseas operations | 2 | 0 |
| 5.2.2 | Ensure the effective management of Peace Corps resources | 2 | 0 |
| 5.2.3 | Review and improve critical Peace Corps work processes to ensure optimal performance | 1 | 1 |
| | TOTAL INDICATORS | 36 | 23 |

*Business Volunteer, Mongolia*

# Annual Performance Results

## Strategic Goal 1: Enhance the capacity of host country individuals, organizations, and communities to meet their skill needs.

In order to enhance the capacity of host country individuals, organizations, and communities, the agency must first work with the host country to identify its needs. To do this, the agency must have open communication and a positive working relationship at all levels—with the host country governments, partner organizations, communities, and counterparts.

The project framework and activities are designed, in collaboration with national sponsoring agencies, to meet the development needs of the country. Additionally, numerous cross-cutting initiatives are integrated into all sectors, as appropriate, and allow for agility in recognizing shifts in skills needed on the ground. During the time horizon of this Strategic Plan, the agency will place greater attention on the environmental, educational, and food security issues that are critically important and interrelated to addressing the basic development issues in the countries served by Peace Corps. Once country needs are identified, the agency must provide appropriate Volunteers who are trained to effectively build individual and organizational capacity through the transfer of skills. Thus, it is essential to provide Volunteers with adequate language, cultural, technical, and capacity-building training.

Throughout the year, Peace Corps posts collect detailed qualitative and quantitative data from all Volunteers about their activities via the Volunteer reporting tool, an electronic data management system. Each Volunteer reports on his/her activities and the outcomes, with the objectives in the sector-specific projects. Measuring host country capacity building is a major activity within each project and Volunteers report on these results in the reporting tool.

Additionally, the Peace Corps is conducting field evaluations to assess Peace Corps' success in transferring needed skills to, and building the capacity of, host country nationals. The evaluations identify in what way and to what degree skills transfer and capacity building occur as Volunteers work alongside their host country counterparts and community members.

### Outcome Goals:

1.1 Country programs fulfill host country skill needs.
1.2 Volunteers have the competencies necessary to implement a country program.
1.3 Host country individuals, organizations, and communities demonstrate an enhanced capacity to meet their own needs.

### Performance Goal 1.1.1:

Ensure the effectiveness of in-country programs.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 1.1.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of project plans meeting the expressed needs of the host country | 85% | 97% |
| b. Percentage of posts providing annual progress reports to their host country agency sponsors and partners | 75% | 53% |
| c. Enhance the average length of service of Volunteers to equal or exceed 21 months | 21 months | 22.1 months |

## Results and Analysis:

A well-designed development program should include active participation and collaboration on the part of host country agency sponsors. This practice is the foundation of Peace Corps' work, beginning with the invitation from the host country to Peace Corps to work with them and continuing through the community-based participatory assessments of assets and needs with local partners.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, Peace Corps posts reported a total of 204 projects worldwide. Of those, 97 percent report that the plans reflect the development needs of the country, thus exceeding the target. The reasons for achieving this high number are twofold: first, regional management emphasized to the field the importance of completing the project documentation, and second, the agency provided training and technical assistance to project managers and other staff on ways to achieve compliance with the Peace Corps' approach to participatory development for capacity building. In August 2008, the agency reviewed all project plans and identified those that required a more detailed explanation of the consultation process with host country partners. Throughout the year, headquarters technical staff worked with Peace Corps overseas staff to both improve the consultative process and improve the description of the process.

Reporting annually to host country agency sponsors on the progress of the program is another important aspect of collaboration and increases accountability of the Peace Corps to the host country. The agency did not meet the target for this indicator. In 2009, 53 percent of posts shared with host country partners the annual reports that described all post projects. An additional 20 percent prepared reports on some, but not of all their projects. Annual reports are prepared in the host country language and English, are often shared on post websites, and are welcomed by host country agencies.

Typically, posts reported they combined information from firsthand Volunteer reports, site visits by in-country technical staff, and photos and vignettes to produce a printed brochure that was shared with government ministries and other host country sponsors. An alternate approach used by one post was to ask all Volunteers leaving service during the year to prepare a booklet of photos and descriptions of their work for the sponsoring agencies and their host communities. Some posts that previously had shared annual program achievements informally moved in FY 2009 to more structured reports and used the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with partners.

Two constraints were reported by posts that did not prepare annual reports: budgetary limits and staff shortages.

The effectiveness of Peace Corps' in-country programs is directly related to the length of service of a Volunteer. Longer-serving Volunteers are more fully integrated into their communities, have acquired greater language proficiency, and report higher rates of satisfaction with their work as they have become more comfortable with, and rewarded by, their Peace Corps service.

The average length of service in FY 2009 improved above the target to 22.1 months and the annual resignation rate decreased to 7.3 percent, the lowest in 10 years.

## Performance Goal 1.2.1:

Ensure the effectiveness of in-country training.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 1.2.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers meeting local language requirements for service, per post testing standards | 85% | 93% |
| b. Percentage of Volunteers reporting training as adequate or better in preparing them technically for service | 70% | 80% |
| c. Percentage of Volunteers reporting training as adequate or better in preparing them to work with counterparts | 60% | 79% |

## Results and Analysis:

Proficiency in the language of the host community is a core competency for all Volunteers. Peace Corps' certified language instructors test Volunteers on language training at the end of the pre-service training. The agency language scores show that the agency met its target.

In FY 2009, Volunteer satisfaction with technical training exceeded the target. Eighty percent of Volunteers reported technical training as adequate or better. Technical training to prepare Volunteers to meet the specific needs of their communities is a key component of the preparation Peace Corps provides trainees prior to beginning service in-country. Volunteers participate in additional technical training sessions throughout their service, through formal and informal workshops and site visits from staff and technical experts.

The target was exceeded because of the efforts of the training staffs at post and at headquarters. In early FY 2009, several agencywide workshops were held to respond to the findings of the FY 2008 Volunteer survey. The Peace Corps held development and evaluation workshops in the field for overseas staff in all geographic regions, and increased post technical consultancies from the headquarters' sector specialists. Guidance provided to posts via electronic workshops, additional support through e-learning portals, and the conduct of workshops in training design and evaluation contributed to this improvement. Additionally, the agency created a partnership with USAID to provide a senior food security advisor to strengthen training in food security, an area of increasing importance in Peace Corps programming.

Volunteers report they are well prepared to work with counterparts during their service, demonstrating that training has been effective in enabling them to gain critical skills needed for their assignments. Working with host country counterparts can be a rewarding and challenging aspect of a Peace Corps Volunteer's experience. Volunteers and counterparts connect through their jobs and community activities and the counterparts are key community members with whom Volunteers share knowledge and skills.

Volunteers' satisfaction with the training on how to work with their host country counterparts significantly exceeded the target. Three regional workshops sponsored by headquarters brought overseas training staff together to share best practices among posts. The Strategic Plan indicators were featured at the workshops and staff members were encouraged to identify practical ways posts had developed to train Volunteers.

The agency also made improvements in FY 2009 in the way it measures, assesses, and supports overseas staff capacity and performance. This was done to improve the training of Volunteers, as the Volunteers work directly to build the capacity of host country staff, organizations, and communities. Moreover, the agency conducted an internal assessment of the effectiveness of the office responsible for providing programming and training support to overseas staff at post. In response to the assessment, the agency is implementing numerous recommendations, including substantial organizational and functional changes so the office engages in overseas staff capacity building in addition to traditional functions of supporting Volunteer programming and training. Specifically, overseas staff training shifted from a four-week general orientation to more targeted training for different categories of overseas staff.

The agency continues to look to technology to assist in effectively leveraging expertise and knowledge through online collaboration and knowledge management platforms. The agency is exploring pre-departure online training for "invitees" to enhance language, cross-cultural, and other skills prior to departing for their country of service. Additionally, the agency's new online collaboration program is used by staff worldwide to share best practices and acquire information.

### Performance Goal 1.3.1:

Increase the effectiveness of skills transfer to host country individuals, organizations, and communities.

### Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 1.3.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their work transferred skills to host country individuals and organizations adequately or better | 70% | 88% |
| b. Percentage of Volunteers reporting their HIV/AIDS education and outreach is effective | 75% | 59% |
| c. Percentage of projects documenting increases in host country national capacity | 70% | 91% |
| d. Percentage of partner organizations reporting their assigned Volunteers fulfilled their requested need for technical assistance | 50% | 52% |

## Results and Analysis:

Transferring skills and building the capacity of host country partners is the key result expected of Peace Corps work. In order to build sustainable local capacity, Peace Corps Volunteers' assignments focus on transfer of skills to host country individuals and organizations in such areas as teaching and teacher training, community development, and health.

In FY 2009, the number of Volunteers reporting in the agency's annual survey of Volunteers that they had transferred skills to host country individuals significantly exceeded the target. The agency emphasized to Volunteers and overseas staff the importance not only of achieving results, but measuring the outcomes of the activities. Volunteers received additional training through evaluation workshops and WebEx sessions. In FY 2009, the new electronic Volunteer reporting tool was deployed, which greatly increased Volunteers' ability to track the number of individuals who may have gained new skills and knowledge. Significant training was provided during the roll-out of this tool, which also included training on methods to measure capacity building and skills transfer.

The target established for Volunteer achievements in HIV/AIDS activities was not reached. In FY 2009, all Volunteers were encouraged to conduct activities related to education and outreach on HIV/AIDS. Results from the Volunteer survey show that Volunteers whose primary assignment was in the health/HIV/AIDS sector reported being more effective than Volunteers who participated in HIV/AIDS activities after work and on weekends.

Nevertheless, prevention outreach and education is a difficult assignment for all Volunteers because of the taboo of discussing sex and sexuality in the communities in which they work. More than one-third of Peace Corps posts (26) reported their Volunteers face difficulties discussing HIV/AIDS because of stigma and/or religious beliefs and cultural sensitivities surrounding the disease and sexuality in general. A Peace Corps staff member in one African post wrote, "In rural communities, HIV/AIDS is still a taboo subject. ... It is difficult for [Volunteers] to easily talk about it with target populations." The stigma that people living with HIV/AIDS encounter also makes effective engagement with these vulnerable populations very difficult for Volunteers.

Even when Volunteers are able to impart HIV/AIDs information, they are not able to predict how effectively the students will use the information. Said one Volunteer, "While students involved seem enthusiastic about the (HIV/AIDS) message and grasp the material, it is difficult to tell what they will do with it."

Many Volunteers report challenges in measuring the effectiveness of their HIV/AIDS interventions; they know they taught the lesson, but are unsure if that knowledge results in behavior change. To address this, Peace Corps is placing an emphasis on integrating behavior change concepts into programming and training. Beginning in FY 2009, Peace Corps strengthened field staff capacity to train Volunteers in behavior change communication. In FY 2009, the Peace Corps organized six subregional workshops to introduce the concept of behavior change communication to staff. In FY 2010, additional behavior change communication workshops, using a training-of-trainer model, are planned. In addition to focusing on how to train Volunteers to design and implement appropriate HIV/AIDS outreach activities, these workshops will incorporate monitoring and evaluation methods to enable Volunteers and their counterparts to more ably measure the effectiveness of their work.

All project plans have indicators for measuring capacity building. The methods used to measure capacity building, however, are different across the six sectors in which Peace Corps operates. Some have yet to identify

the most effective ways to measure skills transfer. Of those reporting that they document capacity building, all rely on Volunteers' reports. Seventy-two percent used "documented observations" to demonstrate changes; 47 percent conducted project evaluations. Another 30 percent used pre- and post- tests, most often in the English language programs, though not exclusively. In some countries, Peace Corps works within the national testing system, such as in Ukraine, where the government requires Peace Corps to collect this information from Volunteers' worksites.

Constraints to documenting capacity building and skills transfer exist. Cultural barriers sometimes restrict the type of information that can be collected and partner organization feedback is often not timely. Nevertheless, the Peace Corps staff in one country creatively overcame this reluctance and developed a culturally sensitive questionnaire for host schools that allowed counterparts and school directors to assess Volunteers' impact.

Finally, a Peace Corps Volunteer serves for two years and may not observe the changes resulting from his/her work within that period. The agency's impact studies report that host country nationals, many of whom are interviewed several years after a Volunteer served in their community, are more positive about the new skills learned and maintained than the Volunteer observed.

The agency met the target for requesting information concerning the degree to which Volunteers fulfilled the organization's needs. Most frequently (98 percent) posts sought the partners' feedback during visits to the Volunteers' worksites, a Peace Corps best practice. Post staff also solicited feedback during training courses that partners were invited to join (88 percent). Nearly half (42 percent) of posts convened project advisory committees—a working group of host country sponsors, such as government ministries and district officials, Volunteers, and Peace Corps staff.

### Strategic Goal 2: Promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of host country individuals, organizations, and communities served by Volunteers.

The Peace Corps sends Volunteers to countries around the globe to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the host country individuals, organizations, and communities they serve. A key to effectively sharing about Americans is to ensure that Volunteers learn the local language, customs, and culture, and can live and work alongside host country nationals in a manner that builds trust and a willingness to work together. Thus, the Peace Corps structures its program to maximize a Volunteer's ability to integrate into the local community, earning a trust and ability to share a better understanding of Americans.

Cross-cultural training for both the Volunteers and their counterparts, the specific host country nationals with whom the Volunteers work on a regular basis, is another key factor in providing the groundwork for positive interactions in which Volunteers share a better understanding of Americans. Effective training can break down cultural barriers that exist through lack of knowledge of cultural norms. The Peace Corps strives to ensure that the pre-service and in-service training prepares Volunteers to integrate into their communities and work with their counterparts to build cross-cultural understanding, in addition to carrying out development projects.

Volunteers help promote a better understanding of Americans through their service in host country communities. While Volunteers experience the same living conditions as the host people they serve, Volunteers also exemplify the diversity, characteristics, and values of the American people. As one of the expectations set out for Volunteers, they realize they represent Americans in their community and are mindful of that responsibility.

## Outcome Goal:

2.1 Host country individuals and communities learn about Americans through shared experiences with Peace Corps Volunteers.

## Performance Goal 2.1.1:

The work and life experiences of Volunteers in-country promote host country national learning about Americans.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 2.1.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers reporting that training prepared them to manage cultural differences during service adequately or better | 91% | 92% |
| b. Percentage of posts conducting supervisory/counterpart training on working effectively with Volunteers | 95% | 100% |
| c. Percentage of host country nationals who have interacted with Volunteers who believe that Americans are committed to assisting other peoples | Target not set. Under development based on ongoing field evaluations | 44% |
| d. Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their work helps promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served | 75% | 74% |

## Results and Analysis:

In FY 2009, two of the three measurable targets set for this outcome goal were met. A high number of Volunteers report they feel well-prepared for the cross-cultural part of their service, that they have observed changes in their counterparts' attitudes toward Americans, and that their perceptions of the host country individuals with whom they interacted have changed.

Volunteers reported high satisfaction with cross-cultural training provided by the agency. Such training increases the Volunteers' understanding of the culture in which they will live and work and teaches a set of skills and establishes a framework so they can make sense of what is experienced. Volunteers who report that they are well prepared to work with counterparts demonstrate that training was effective in enabling them to gain critical skills needed for their assignment.

Of equal importance for the Peace Corps is providing training for the counterparts or partners of the Volunteers, so they can understand American culture to better understand the Volunteer, and to help the Volunteers adjust to the local culture and integrate into their communities. All posts conducted training for counterparts and supervisors. The training ranged from a counterpart orientation when Volunteers moved to their sites to technical training conducted jointly with the Volunteers.

The Peace Corps began conducting field evaluations in FY 2009 to obtain host country national perspectives of their understanding of Americans as a result of interacting with Peace Corps Volunteers. The goal of the research is to learn the extent to which host country partners, with whom Volunteers live and work, exhibit a willingness to learn from the Volunteer, observe and learn about Americans, have new perceptions about Americans, and increasingly trust the Volunteer. The evaluations examine the experience from various

angles, seeking to understand the knowledge, attitude, and behavior changes that occur within host country populations through their work and contact with Volunteers.

Baseline data from the FY 2008 pilot phase (144 individuals from three countries) indicated that 81 percent spontaneously reported they thought Volunteers exhibited a caring attitude toward the community.

Nine studies were initiated in 2009. At the end of FY 2009, complete data had been analyzed from three country studies (Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, and Nicaragua) and partial data from two (Jamaica and Romania). Of the 339 individuals for whom data are available, 44 percent spontaneously mentioned that after living or working with Volunteers, they thought Volunteers exhibited a caring attitude toward the community. This data should be read with caution because the data is based on host country nationals' responses to a general question: "Can you briefly describe what you think of Americans as a result of working with Peace Corps Volunteers?" Eighty-six percent reported having a more positive view as a result.

Peace Corps Volunteers promoted a better understanding of Americans in a variety of ways, from sharing the customs of American holidays and food to discussing current events and geography. One said, "I think the issue of time and accountability are good examples of how host country nationals have gained a better understanding of Americans. There are also the general cultural differences in terms of food, music, language, and dress that are good examples. Host country nationals are constantly surprised by my ability to eat the local food. I am often asked questions about the geographical makeup of America or if Americans own cattle. I have been given many opportunities to talk about my upbringing; how the school system operates in America. Host country nationals have shown interest in these broad details, as well as wanting to know about my personal life."

### Strategic Goal 3: Foster outreach to Americans through agency programs that assist Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) support Peace Corps' third goal "to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans," through formal and informal interactions during and after their Peace Corps service. The agency supports such interactions by establishing programs that encourage outreach to the American public through a variety of means, such as personal interaction, electronic communication, and cross-cultural education curricula. The interactions are both one-on-one and in large group settings in classrooms, schools, civic clubs, and with other audiences.

The Peace Corps' education partners at the K–12 and university levels are emphasizing global awareness and 21st century skills, creating a positive environment in which to expand Peace Corps' programs. The programs target different segments of the population, ranging from age-based curricula to a Correspondence Match program that connects a Peace Corps Volunteer with an American classroom, to a master's level program in which a Peace Corps Volunteer's service helps make progress toward his or her degree. Additionally, the Peace Corps Partnership Program, in which students, clubs, individuals, and organizations provide funds to assist a Peace Corps Volunteer and his or her host community in completing a community driven project, creates a strong connection between the American public and communities overseas.

## Outcome Goal:

3.1 Americans have increased awareness and knowledge of other cultures and global issues.

## Performance Goal 3.1.1:

Volunteers share their in-country experiences with family, friends, and the American public.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 3.1.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers participating in the Coverdell World Wise School program | 60% | 57% |
| b. Number of individuals and organizations supporting the Peace Corps Partnership Program | 8,000 | 10,595 |
| c. Number of youth-serving programs hosting Volunteer activities | 4,600 | 4,700 |
| d. Monitor the percentage of Volunteers who report sharing their experiences with family, friends, and the American public | No target. Agency is monitoring the activities | 99% |

## Results and Analysis:

Volunteers' participation in Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match program (a program that matches Volunteers with American school children and other correspondents) didn't grow as expected in FY 2009. The major challenges the program faced were minimal resources for marketing a speakers match program and inadequate data management resources that constricted tracking of users of the program and requests coming through the regional recruiting offices for speakers match. Coverdell World Wise Schools plans to collaborate closely with a third goal specialist from Returned Volunteer Services to conduct outreach to, and track, external groups to increase the number of speakers matching RPCVs with school-based groups. Coverdell World Wise Schools will continue its three-year project to work with various agency offices to secure the necessary technology resources to manage its speakers match data.

Nevertheless, increased outreach during Volunteers' in-country training helped motivate them to correspond with American students about life in their host countries. One Volunteer stated, "It has been very rewarding communicating with a high school class in Kentucky. I think I have opened a window to the world for them and they have helped me view Moldova from their fresh perspective."

Comments received from teachers in FY 2009 show the impact Volunteers have on broadening students' world view. "The Correspondence Match program has been a unique way for the students of one high school to connect with the world beyond the confines of our small town," a teacher said. "So why is the World Wise Schools program important? My students learn more than geography and language arts: They learn perspective and empathy."

The number of programs served through the Correspondence Match program nearly met the target. Continued outreach with professional education organizations increased the number of schools aware of the program and interested in participating. Topics remain timely and relevant to today's challenges.

The Peace Corps Partnership Program helped achieve results in the agency's first and third core goal areas, increasing Americans' understanding of other cultures by inviting individuals or groups to donate funds to specific Peace Corps projects. In FY 2009 the number of U.S. donors, who collectively contributed $1.7 million, surpassed the target.

The Partnership Program links donors in the United States with Volunteers and their host communities overseas. For example, a Peace Corps Volunteer in Togo initiated a "Take Our Daughters to Work Week," with Peace Corps Partnership funds. The project successfully addressed gender and development issues in the Plateaux Region of the West African country.

The funds gave the Volunteer a mechanism to work with community members to identify local development needs, then raise funds and find creative ways to meet those needs. It also allowed family, friends, and community to connect in a meaningful way with people in Togo.

The agency's third goal is furthered as currently-serving Volunteers communicate in "real time" about daily life in their host countries. Technology use, such as podcasts, blogs, Twitter, and personal websites, increased in FY 2009 and allowed even more Volunteers to share their Peace Corps experience with friends and family back home.

### Performance Goal 3.1.2:

Increase returned Peace Corps Volunteers' cultural outreach to the American public through Peace Corps programs.

### Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 3.1.2 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Number of RPCVs participating in agency-initiated activities | 7,700 | 9,102 |
| b. Number of schools impacted by the activities of RPCVs | 550 | 502 |

### Results and Analysis:

RPCVs participating in agency-initiated activities are the strongest promoters of the third goal. These headquarters-sponsored programs exceeded the target in FY 2009.

Sharing Volunteer experiences helped to promote an increased awareness of other countries, cultures, and global issues on the part of Americans. In FY 2009, RPCVs shared their Peace Corps' experiences in classrooms, with youth and other civic groups, and at community events nationwide. The number of RPCVs enrolled in the Fellows/USA graduate program reached an all-time high and the program added six new universities. RPCVs also served as cultural resources to support Peace Corps recruiters when they hosted informational meetings with potential applicants to Peace Corps.

The number of schools reached through the agency-sponsored program to match RPCVs with schools requesting speakers fell slightly below the target due primarily to inflated baseline figures that included one-time focused events for groups such as the Girl Scouts.

## Strategic Goal 4: Provide Volunteers who represent the diversity of Americans to meet the evolving technical needs of host countries.

The Peace Corps is charged with helping host countries meet their needs for trained men and women. Essentially, the agency must recruit the "supply" to meet the "demand" for specific skill sets. Thus, it is important to have well refined systems in place to help synchronize the recruitment of individuals with appropriate skill sets with the evolving technical needs of host countries throughout the world. Moreover, since the agency also has a critical cross-cultural component to its mission, it is important that the Volunteers recruited reflect the rich diversity of America.

The Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) is the continuous cycle of Volunteer recruitment, screening, and placement that allows the Peace Corps to deliver the best qualified Volunteers to meet the needs of the agency's host countries. The Peace Corps has strategically aligned its VDS with the agency's mission, modernizing its processes to speed up the delivery process and to reach diverse groups more effectively.

Peace Corps Volunteers are the face of America in the communities in which they serve. When Volunteers reflect the rich diversity of our multicultural society, they help their host communities gain a better understanding of the United States and the values of the American people. Furthermore, more experienced Volunteers often bring skill sets and life experience that can also bring a different perspective to host communities.

### Outcome Goals:

4.1 Volunteers provided at every post meet the evolving technical needs of host countries.
4.2 Trainees assigned to serve overseas represent the diversity of Americans.

### Performance Goal 4.1.1:

Recruit Volunteers who balance the needed manpower and technical needs at posts with the available applicant pool and its skills.

### Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 4.1.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Maximize the number of Volunteers serving annually based on available funding and the provision of support to ensure their optimal effectiveness | 7,300 | 7,671 |
| b. At least 95% of the number of trainees and skills sought annually are met | 95% | 96% |

### Results and Analysis:

The agency achieved its target for the number of Americans serving in the field at the end of the fiscal year, with 7,671 Volunteers serving in 68 posts worldwide. In FY 2009, 3,694 new trainees were sent around the world, and almost every one met the specific request of a host country. The agency continues to find ways to balance the supply and demand of Volunteers in order to best serve its partners abroad.

Volunteer on-board strength in FY 2009 was slightly lower than in FY 2008. This decrease was largely due to budget constraints that forced the agency to trim training classes in order to maintain quality and support Volunteers already in the field. As such, the agency took FY 2009 as an opportunity to reflect on how best to

ensure quality growth and strong Volunteer support in order to expand training input to overseas posts in FY 2010 and beyond.

Headquarters works closely with overseas posts and the regions to best match the supply of qualified applicants to the needs of our overseas partners. The majority of positions requested by the overseas posts are directly matched by individuals with the requested skills.

The degree to which Volunteers' skills meet host country needs is corroborated by information in the agency's impact evaluations, gathered from host country partners. In the evaluations, partners were asked to comment on the extent to which Volunteers' projects meet their needs. In three of four countries in which evaluations were conducted in FY 2009, the partners said the Volunteers met their needs to a large extent. In one country, the needs were met on a smaller scale.

### Performance Goal 4.1.2:

Manage Volunteer recruitment functions in an effective and efficient manner.

### Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 4.1.2 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Redesign the Volunteer Delivery System and implement recommendations to improve its effectiveness | Complete redesign of critical processes and prioritize implementation of recommendations | Achieved |
| b. Reduce the response time to applicants from 100 days in FY 2009 to 80 days by the end of FY 2011 | 100 days | 123 days |

### Results and Analysis:

The agency initiated a major effort to redesign the Volunteer Delivery System (VDS). This modernization will bring the Peace Corps into the 21st century with an integrated, efficient and comprehensive life cycle management system—from applicant to returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV)—providing new and better tools to recruit and place highly qualified, service-oriented individuals. The first step, analysis of a redesign and prioritizing the implementation of recommendations, was completed in FY 2009. Plans are underway to develop and implement the first phase of the new system in FY 2010.

Customer service, in the form of responsiveness to interested Americans during the Peace Corps application process, has long been a priority. In FY 2009, the agency nearly achieved its target in response time by continuing to improve its internal business processes, improving technology use to track applicants, and automating steps whenever possible. The timeliness data analyzed in FY 2009 is even more accurate than in past years, which in turn uncovered faulty methodology for setting the baseline targets, one of the main reasons the target was not met. Thus, the improved data collection and analysis suggests that the baseline mapped to set the new targets may have been too aggressive based on poor data quality. The improved data will allow the agency to better monitor and make improvements in this area.

### Performance Goal 4.2.1:

Recruitment and Volunteer placement efforts reflect the diversity of Americans.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 4.2.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Number of mid-career and age 50 and older applicants | 1,500 | 2,041 |
| b. Number of applicants of diverse ethnicities | 2,100 | 3,070 |

## Results and Analysis:

FY 2009 saw a second straight year of increased applications, with a total of over 15,000 (an all-time high in total applications since the agency went to electronic records). While the bulk of applicants are near college age, among those Americans desiring a chance to serve in the Peace Corps were a number of experienced individuals, as well as an increasingly diverse pool of applicants.

With the strong increase in total applications, the agency met its FY 2009 goals for both experienced and ethnically diverse applicants. The likely impetus for the increase in applications among this demographic is President Obama's call to service and the continued efforts for the agency to recruit skilled and experienced Americans. In addition, results were seen from the combined efforts of agency field-based recruiters, strategic recruiters, and the strategic planning that consolidated the efforts on national outreach and diversity.

As the Peace Corps looks to build a more ethnic, skill-specific, and age diverse corps of Volunteers, the agency will employ broad-based recruiting efforts, strategic planning, and innovative marketing. The agency will use specific research data for appropriate targeting of messages to specific populations, such as students, diverse populations, and more mature audiences. Targeted skill-specific outreach will take place though industry associations, federal agencies, and campus communities.

## Strategic Goal 5: Implement the Peace Corps mission in an effective and efficient manner through the provision of high quality Volunteer support with optimal health care, safety and security support, and effective management of resources.

Peace Corps Volunteers serve at the grassroots level worldwide and experience the broadest range of social and environmental conditions, making health and safety risks an inherent part of Volunteer service. Staff and Volunteers work together to create a framework that maximizes, to the extent possible, Volunteers' well-being, enabling them to focus on their work. Furthermore, the effective management of resources ensures an excellent level of support to Volunteers in all aspects of their service.

Volunteer safety and security is the agency's highest priority. The agency has dedicated safety and security personnel at each post and headquarters who are part of an extensive safety and security support network. The agency enhances the safety and security of Volunteers by identifying risks, developing mitigation strategies, educating personnel, evaluating effectiveness, and incorporating feedback and appropriate policy revisions. Adequate training of staff and Volunteers and continual assessment are key factors in ensuring that Volunteers are well supported to carry out their work in a safe manner.

The agency is responsible for all aspects of a Volunteer's health care during Peace Corps service. The Peace Corps provides a comprehensive Volunteer health care program that focuses on the delivery of high quality care and service and addresses both the physical and mental health of Volunteers. This includes training,

access to counseling, and the provision of medical services. Peace Corps Volunteers work in very demanding environments; thus, the agency focuses on issues of Volunteer resiliency and coping with stress, especially since some Volunteers experience the emotional challenges of working with communities affected by HIV/AIDS.

Effective management of Peace Corps' domestic and overseas operations, including human and financial resources, is critical to carrying out the mission of the agency. The agency has a mechanism in place to send management assessment teams to support posts or offices in need of review and to make recommendations for improvement. Furthermore, the posts must work to integrate the many perspectives of their stakeholders —Volunteers, staff, and host country partners—in ensuring that their programs are on target and serving host country needs.

The Peace Corps strives for constant improvement to provide the most efficient and effective services to Volunteers, staff, host country partners, and in the fulfillment of its mission to the American people. In addition to the continual efforts to evaluate and enhance staff effectiveness throughout the agency, the Peace Corps regularly reviews its businesses processes.

## Outcome Goals:

5.1 Volunteers are safe, healthy, and well supported to ensure their focus on Peace Corps' sustainable development and cross-cultural mission.

5.2 Peace Corps continually improves its staff and critical work processes and manages its resources in an effective and efficient manner.

## Performance Goal 5.1.1:

Enhance the safety and security of Volunteers.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 5.1.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers reporting that their safety and security training is adequate or better | 95% | 96% |
| b. Percentage of posts having their safety and security plans reviewed annually by Peace Corps safety and security officers | 33% | 21% |
| c. Percentage of posts implementing critical recommendations focused on Volunteer/trainee safety and security on a timely basis | 100% | 84% |
| d. Percentage of Volunteers reporting they feel "usually safe" or "very safe" where they live and work | 90% | 89% |

## Results and Analysis:

In FY 2009, 82 percent of the posts worldwide received visits from Peace Corps safety and security officers (PCSSOs). For much of the year, two positions were vacant in the field, which led to the agency not meeting the goal of PCSSOs carrying out full safety and security assessments at 33 percent of posts. It can be expected, however, that the agency will be able to meet a much higher percentage of full post assessments in FY 2010, as most of the remaining posts have already substantially met the requirements.

The percentage of Volunteers who rated their pre-service safety and security training as "adequate" to "very effective" was 96 percent, exceeding the goal set for FY 2009 (95 percent). Additionally, the percentage of Volunteers reporting that they feel safe where they live and work was 89 percent, missing the targeted goal for FY 2009 by less than 1 percent.

While the agency goal of 100 percent implementation of PCSSO recommendations was not met, the agency achieved an implementation rate of approximately 84 percent. It is anticipated that the few unresolved recommendations will be cleared within the first months of FY 2010.

### Performance Goal 5.1.2:

Provide quality medical and mental health services to trainees and Volunteers.

### Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 5.1.2 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of Volunteers rating their satisfaction with health care received from Peace Corps medical officers as adequate or better | 90% | 93% |
| b. Percentage of Volunteers reporting the emotional support received from Peace Corps staff as adequate or better | 70% | 81% |
| c. Percentage of Volunteers reporting adequate or better support in coping with stress issues of HIV/AIDS in their community | 60% | 73% |

### Results and Analysis:

The health of Volunteers is one of the agency's top priorities, with individuals serving around the world in a variety of challenging environments. Volunteer satisfaction is just one of many components of health that the agency monitors and evaluates.

Further, the Peace Corps is working to utilize information technology to create an integrated health information management system. This will enhance the agency's ability to provide exceptional customer service and an effective and efficient Volunteer health system from the application process through the post-service phase of a Volunteer's experience.

As with safety and security, the health of the Volunteer is a major focus of the Peace Corps staff. The agency exceeded its targets on all three indicators, showing Volunteers feel satisfied with the health support they receive from the Peace Corps. The fact that satisfaction is high is significant. The Peace Corps works to ensure that the quality of physical and mental health care provided to Volunteers remains high and that the quantity is appropriate.

In open-ended responses in the annual Volunteer survey, Volunteers expressed satisfaction with the resources that Peace Corps staff have in place to cope with stress issues. A Volunteer in Eastern Europe said, "Peace Corps has made me well aware that there are extensive networks in place for me to use and have made sure that I am aware of how to get in contact with the right people." A Volunteer in Africa said, "They do make sure we know ways to overcome food insecurity at least in our compounds. They also treat HIV/AIDS very seriously." Further, 80 percent of the Volunteers said they were satisfied with the time and resources that Peace Corps allocates to issues of mental health.

## Performance Goal 5.2.1:

Provide effective and responsive financial management that accurately reflects domestic and overseas operations.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 5.2.1 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of posts and headquarters offices managing resources within approved budgets and operational plans | 95% | 83% |
| b. Percentage of posts and headquarters offices annually reviewing resource management ratios for improvement | 95% | Not fully implemented |

## Results and Analysis:

New to the FY 2009-2014 Strategic Plan are indicators focusing on financial management of the agency. An important component to the quality growth and support of Volunteers, fiscal responsibility is an agency priority.

All major offices and overseas posts are required to operate within their approved budgets and plans. In this first year of measuring this indicator, overseas posts, in general, met their targets. Major domestic offices were under budget due mainly to unfilled staff positions caused by budget challenges early in the year and to staff departing and not being replaced with the arrival of a new administration.

In FY 2008, the agency began a systematic review of resource management ratios in order to identify and monitor efficiency and effective management. Each department began a review, analyzed its operations and identified the best measurements for their particular organization. The process was not completed in time to implement during FY 2009, so the agency will review and implement the ratios during FY 2010 and report results in next year's performance report.

## Performance Goal 5.2.2:

Ensure the effective management of Peace Corps resources.

## Agency Level Performance Indicators:

| Performance Indicators 5.2.2 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Percentage of post projects engaging host country officials in their formulation and implementation | 95% | 94% |
| b. Percentage of posts and headquarters offices with documented personnel practices that include staff development, performance management, and awards and recognition policies | 70% | 56% |

## Results and Analysis:

The agency fell just below the target for engaging host country officials in project design and implementation. Peace Corps executes a memorandum of understanding with the host country when entering a country. This indicator measures the degree to which this initial step of collaboration continues as the projects unfold. A frequent vehicle for engaging local stakeholders is the process of identifying where a Volunteer will work and what activities they will undertake. Another productive area for engaging local partners comes during joint training, with supervisors, partners, and Volunteers learning together.

The project advisory committee is an established practice at Peace Corps as a method to engage host country partners with staff and Volunteers. This ensures continuing dialogue over the life of a project. Formal briefings are often appropriate for higher level officials and were mentioned by some posts as an additional method for engaging officials.

Budgetary constraints restricted the number of project advisory committee meetings some posts could convene and they relied, instead, on informal dialogues through phone conversations, focus groups, and other informal meetings with stakeholders. Frequent turnover in government agencies was also mentioned as a constraint by a few posts.

The agency did not achieve the target for documenting personnel practices. Fifty-six percent of the agency's operating units have documented practices in the three major areas of human resource management—performance, staff development, and awards. An additional 22 percent have documented practices in two of the three required areas. Headquarters staff operated under guidance from the human relations staff and the Peace Corps Manual section policy. Overseas posts operate in compliance with the local laws and regulations of each country. Nevertheless, in FY 2010 the agency will convene a working group to review and make recommendations on how posts can meet the requirements of this indicator.

## Performance Goal 5.2.3

Review and improve critical Peace Corps work processes to ensure optimal performance.

## Agency Level Performance Indicator:

| Performance Indicator 5.2.3 | FY 09 Target | FY 09 Result |
|---|---|---|
| a. Annually review, streamline, and implement improvements to at least one agency mission critical process | Minimum of one critical process per year | Achieved |

## Results and Analysis:

The Peace Corps, in its work to review and make changes to the cross-cutting agency processes, has ensured that the proper communication mechanisms and advisory councils are in place to review and recommend improvements to its programs. Several critical processes were reviewed by the agency during FY 2009.

Three areas of focus were listed in the FY 2009 Strategic Plan: the Volunteer Delivery System, a review of the human resource management strategy, and a review of the logistics of the medical supply inventory of the agency.

The first contribution to this performance measure is the completion of the new online Volunteer application, which contains a more comprehensive and visible understanding of the skills sets needed, clearer communication of the expectations of service and core values, and increased transparency of the medical clearance process. These changes will have a positive impact on many aspects of agency business.

The second set of processes reviewed relate to human resource management. The agency reviewed the processes for position management, performance appraisal management, professional development, recruitment, and continuity of information and guidance for organizational administrative staff. A number of changes were implemented. Posted on the agency Intranet were a comprehensive list of low- and no-cost training resources for use by employees and management; refreshing and standardizing position descriptions of record; and innovative recruitment practices (such as shortened and streamlined questionnaires for gathering applicant qualifications, sending out recruitment "tweets" on Peace Corps' Twitter site, analyzing applicant and manager surveys on the applicant process, and tracking results of recruitment events).

The third process review was to improve the way the agency procures medical supplies (drugs, vaccines, nonprescription drugs). Medical supplies make up one of the agency's largest procurement categories. A survey of all posts was conducted to determine current sources of supplies, as well as the availability and cost of supplies from local sources and regional or third-country sources. The purpose of the survey was to determine if using regional supply sources and relying less on the headquarters would produce cost-savings (save money, shorten lead times, and improve fulfillment rates). The data are being analyzed to determine if it is appropriate to consider establishing regional supply sources.

*Education Volunteer, Cambodia*

# Program Evaluation

## Annual Volunteer Survey

The Annual Volunteer Survey is administered by Peace Corps to ascertain Volunteers' judgments concerning their service. The survey results provide a candid, comprehensive picture of the activities, experiences, and views of currently-serving Volunteers. A primary focus of the survey is on Volunteers' perceptions of the extent to which their assignments have built local capacity and produced impact for the three goals of Peace Corps. Survey questions also cover several topics not covered in other assessments, such as questions about preparing for Peace Corps, challenges Volunteers face, and what they see as the best aspects of their service.

The survey uses online software to collect survey responses in a cost-effective manner. Survey results are disseminated shortly after the survey is completed, providing timely Volunteer feedback for headquarters' and posts' staff to evaluate and improve Peace Corps' programs.

*Findings*

**Goal 1:**

- Most Volunteers report achieving the short-term goals: achieving their primary assignment objectives and transferring skills to the people with whom they work.
- Many Volunteers work with young people and are involved in HIV/AIDS efforts, two activities likely to yield long-term capacity-building benefits for their host country communities.
- Volunteers expressed concerns about being fully prepared to do their Peace Corps jobs (Goal 1) and have requested additional training on working with host country counterparts, mastering the local language(s), and performing technical aspects of their work.

**Goal 2 and Goal 3:**

- Volunteers are achieving the Peace Corps' Goal 2 and Goal 3.
- Through their work and interaction with their communities, Volunteers promote cross-cultural understanding, among host country individuals, about Americans, often helping to dispel stereotypes.
- With better access to technology and communications, most Volunteers are able to electronically communicate with other Americans in the United States about life in their host country.

**Overall Volunteer Satisfaction**

- Volunteers who have been in-country longer than a year are generally more satisfied, more likely to make the same decision about joining Peace Corps, and more confident about achieving Peace Corps goals.
- Volunteers most often mentioned stress from the challenges of cross-cultural issues, their primary assignment, isolation/loneliness, and the local language.

## Field-Based Impact Evaluations of Goal 1 and Goal 2

The Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning conducts field-based evaluations to collect information directly from host country nationals. The purpose of the studies is to measure the impact of Peace Corps on host country nationals in two of the agency's core goals. The pilot evaluations began as part of the Peace Corps Improvement Plan, conducted in three countries in FY 2008, creating a baseline for future years.

Locally-contracted researchers conduct interviews in the local language(s) with counterparts, beneficiaries, and host families, within a set of randomly selected communities where Volunteers have served. This approach ensures that the information on the impact of the Volunteers' work is gathered from the most direct sources: host country individuals who have worked with, interacted with, or lived with Volunteers. These individuals are asked questions about the personal and community changes attributable to the Volunteers' work. The respondents are also asked about second goal impacts—whether and in what ways have they gained a better understanding of Americans.

The information is informing the agency on the extent to which host country nationals who work and live with Peace Corps Volunteers think the Volunteers are

- transferring tangible skills
- promoting sustainable development
- fostering positive relationships with host country nationals
- promoting cross-cultural understanding

*Features of the Host Country Impact Studies*

1. Cost efficiency through electronic transfer of documents and use of a Web-based data entry system that allows real time access to interview protocols and interview data
2. Additional cost efficiency and cultural sensitivity through the use of in-country research teams for data collection
3. Integration of best practices in cross-cultural research, structured interview methods, qualitative analysis, and data quality control
4. Overall quality control through use of a continuous feedback loop to monitor the study process
5. Collaboration among posts, country desk units, regional training staff, and headquarters

*Results*

In FY 2009, nine studies were initiated in Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Jamaica, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, and Tanzania.

The preliminary results from 528 host country individuals in four countries (Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Nicaragua, and Romania) are presented below.

**Goal 1: Capacity Building and Skill Transfer**

- 99 percent of counterparts report using, in their work lives, the knowledge and/or skills gained through their work with the Peace Corps. Sixty-nine percent use them daily.
- 92 percent of counterparts and beneficiaries report using, in their personal lives, the knowledge and/or skills they gained through their work with the Peace Corps. Seventy percent use them daily.
- 82 percent of host country national (HCN) counterparts and 84 percent of HCNs overall were very satisfied with the changes that resulted from their work with the Peace Corps.
- 95 percent of respondents reported they would definitely want to work with another Peace Corps Volunteer.
- 98 percent of respondents reported that the positive changes which resulted from the Peace Corps work have been maintained to some degree after the departure of the Volunteer. Seventy-nine percent said that the changes were either "largely" or "completely" maintained.

**Goal 2: Promoting a Better Understanding of Americans**

- 84 percent of HCN counterparts and 86 percent of HCNs overall reported that, after working with Peace Corps Volunteers, their views about people from the United States were more positive.
- 87 percent of host family members said that, after living with Peace Corps Volunteers, their views about people from the United States were more positive.
- Respondents' attitudes toward Americans moved from a limited understanding of Americans before interacting with a Volunteer to a moderate understanding of Americans afterwards.

*Education Volunteer, Malawi*

| Summary of Performance Evaluations by Goal | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Summary of Major FY 2009 Program Evaluations and Studies | | | | |
| Name of Report | Goal | Issue | Findings and Recommendations | Agency's Response |
| *Host Country Studies* | 2 | The evaluation studies were developed as part of the Peace Corps Improvement Plan. In FY 2008, the agency piloted studies in three countries to measure the promotion of a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served. During FY 2009, the agency continued and expanded these efforts to an additional nine posts. | The findings reveal that the Peace Corps is promoting a better understanding of Americans among the peoples served. Eighty-six percent of respondents reported improved views of Americans and the average self-reported level of understanding increased from "limited" to "moderate."<br><br>The scores vary across respondent types and countries.<br><br>It is recommended that additional studies be conducted. | Pilot reports were submitted in December 2008. The agency authorized the expansion of the studies to include an additional nine posts per year through 2011.<br><br>Individual country programs adjusted Volunteer cross-cultural training programs to include findings from host families and partners on host country nationals' perceptions of Americans. |
| | 1 | The studies query host country nationals, both partners and beneficiaries, about the extent to which the work of the Peace Corps has met their need for trained men and women and built local capacity in a sustainable way. | The studies suggest that HCNs are gaining useful skills and knowledge, are able to maintain the changes which result from their work with the Peace Corps, and are satisfied with the work conducted.<br><br>Based on the limited number of sites and project types examined to date, it is recommended that additional studies be conducted to allow for analysis by region, project sector, and respondent type. | |

## Office of Inspector General Audits and Evaluations

The Peace Corps' Office of the Inspector General (OIG) regularly conducts audits and evaluations on the effectiveness of programs that support Volunteers. Auditors focus on fiscal accountability and effectiveness of internal controls over Peace Corps resources. Evaluators analyze the program operations of the Peace Corps at both overseas posts and domestic offices. These audits and evaluations analyze compliance with laws, regulations, and Peace Corps' policies, in addition to identifying internal control weaknesses and best practices, and recommending program improvements and the means to comply with Peace Corps policies.

During FY 2009, the OIG issued eight audit reports and six program evaluation reports concerning 13 countries. The audit reports related to administrative and financial operations at overseas posts. Other audit work included the Peace Corps purchase card program and oversight of the independent auditor's annual audit of the agency's financial statements and the Federal Information Security Management Act.

The evaluations were conducted in the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guyana, and Nicaragua. The program evaluations address issues such as the extent to which the post has developed and implemented programs and provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers to enable them to increase host country capacity and promote cross-cultural understanding. Reports from these audits and evaluations are submitted to management, which then takes appropriate action to address any concerns that have been identified.

| Program Evaluations Completed by the Office of the Inspector General | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | **Major Findings and Recommendations** |
| Dominican Republic | • Strong, committed leadership and able management<br>• Satisfied and meaningfully engaged Volunteers<br>• Excellent training resources<br>• Need alignment of post performance management system with Volunteer reporting tool<br>• Need standardized site selection criteria and housing safety and security criteria<br>• Need improved completion and standardization of site locator forms |
| Ghana | • Strong program with knowledgeable and competent staff<br>• Very effective in working relationships with project partners and in process of identifying Volunteer counterparts<br>• Peace Corps' Volunteer leaders did not have primary projects that comply with Peace Corps policy<br>• Volunteers were not regularly submitting performance reports<br>• Need improved in-person site development, including Volunteer housing and early identification of language<br>• Adapt language training and the in-service training curriculum to better meet Volunteers' needs<br>• Improve consistency of Volunteer support |

| Program Evaluations Completed by the Office of the Inspector General | |
|---|---|
| **Country** | **Major Findings and Recommendations** |
| Guyana | • Struggled with low Volunteer satisfaction and poor staff performance<br>• Areas in need of improvement include training, medical access controls, and housing criteria<br>• Need regular performance appraisals, and must address problems with staff turnover, morale, and a lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities for key programming activities, such as site development<br>• Post needs to remain focused on improving current programming and operations before exploring expansion efforts<br>• Numerous staff members and regional leaders have worked with the post to strengthen its programming and processes and improve Volunteer satisfaction and retention<br>• Significant improvements have been made in the areas of programming, quality of staff, and relationships between the staff and Volunteers |
| Nicaragua | • Post benefits from engaged leadership and resourceful team to enable Volunteers to serve effectively<br>• Volunteers rated their training as very effective and were satisfied with the staff support they received<br>• Emergency action plans could have enhanced information on consolidation points and post should eliminate discrepancies between the number of crime incidents recorded by the post and the headquarters<br>• In the area of support, issues were raised concerning the effectiveness of the Volunteer Advisory Council, medical confidentiality due to the physical limitations of the medical office, and inadequate Volunteer living allowances, though more information is needed |

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*Youth Volunteer, Tonga*

# FINANCIAL SECTION

# Message from the Chief Financial Officer

An unqualified (clean) audit opinion was earned by the Peace Corps during the FY 2009 financial statement audit. The financial statement opinion covered hundreds of thousands of annual transactions in 74 countries in more than 70 currencies, with 7,671 deployed Volunteers, nearly 3,000 staff members, and $340 million in appropriated financial resources. For the third consecutive year, no material weaknesses or federal system noncompliances were identified during the financial audit or otherwise within the agency. In addition to the clean audit opinion, the Peace Corps received the prestigious Association of Government Accountants' Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting for quality reporting in the FY 2008 Performance and Accountability Report. This is the second consecutive year for the award. Such achievements are the result of dedicated efforts by all who work in financial management and other operating areas throughout the regions, the posts, and within the headquarters. Each year the sound financial management foundation expands and grows stronger, and we expect to continue providing excellent service to our posts, Volunteers, and the communities served. As always, agency resources were managed effectively to meet the agency missions and goals within the appropriated funding level.

The significant deficiencies identified by the FY 2008 audit were monitored and controlled this fiscal year through the agency's senior assessment team, the corrective action plan, and the work of the operational managers. Corrective actions, though, on some significant deficiencies remain to be completed in FY 2010 despite the FY 2009 strong mitigation efforts.

Though no material weaknesses were identified during the FY 2009 financial statement audit, two significant deficiencies were identified in our internal controls for the accounting business processes and the information system security controls. Those significant deficiencies and the supportive audit findings are addressed in Appendix 1, Summary of Audit Findings.

During FY 2009, the following financial management improvements benefitted our posts located worldwide, our three regions, and Peace Corps headquarters:

- Successfully negotiated with the Office of Management and Budget a $33 million increase in the President's FY 2010 budget to Congress
- Obtained $6 million through the open obligation reviews by closing or adjusting open obligations in current and prior years' (expired) funds
- Performed a mid-year review of all personal service overseas contracts and obligations to ensure posts were fully funding their obligations and to ensure delegations of authority were properly documented
- Provided Volunteers with a better personal property insurance plan
- Drafted a manual to uniquely assist the agency's age 50 and older Volunteers with their special needs
- Automated the processes to manually download and distribute reports from the State Department
- Fully implemented the paper check conversion program for overseas posts to eliminate mailing checks, expedite check collections, and minimize time spent researching lost or returned checks
- Replaced the J.P. Morgan Chase prepaid debit card with the Citi Declining Balance Card used to cover per diem and other incidental payments to new Volunteers, significantly streamlining the process and reducing the vendor and administrative program costs
- Automated payment confirmations in the Odyssey financial system, thereby greatly reducing manual entry

- Incorporated key cashiering transactions (check replenishments, deposits, host country collections) into the Odyssey financial system, eliminating manual entry from an outside system
- Processed more than 284,000 transactions valued at $229.6 million for domestic and overseas payments
- Implemented prior year adjustment accounting at the detail level to provide greater visibility of upward/downward adjustments by year

A new budgeting, planning, and forecasting software, Hyperion Planning/Essbase, was procured during FY 2009, with design planned during FY 2010 and implementation scheduled for the fourth quarter of FY 2010. Additionally, we developed the Volunteer In-Country Allowance payment system which integrates all in-country payments within one system. The pilot is scheduled for the first quarter of FY 2010.

Although the agency recognizes the benefits of formally correlating costs to the agency strategic goals and capturing costs by program, we do not yet have a cost accounting system capable of accurately capturing those costs.

The most significant financial management issue facing the agency is how to improve operations and infrastructure to meet planned future Volunteer growth.

The Peace Corps' financial statements and notes that follow are both reliable and complete and were prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for federal government entities and by subjecting the statements to an independent audit.

While we are pleased with our FY 2009 accomplishments, my dedicated staff and I will pursue new financial management improvements, promote effective internal controls, and continually work toward securing future unqualified audit opinions on the agency's financial statements.

Thomas Bellamy
Acting Chief Financial Officer
*November 16, 2009*

# Financial Statements

## Peace Corps
## Balance Sheet
## As of September 30, 2009 and 2008
**(In Thousands)**

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| **Assets** | | |
| **Intragovernmental** | | |
| **Fund Balance With Treasury (Note 2 and 3)** | $ 139,058 | $ 117,964 |
| **Accounts Receivable (Note 5)** | 878 | 635 |
| **Total Intragovernmental** | 139,936 | 118,599 |
| **Cash and Other Monetary Assets (Note 4)** | 40 | 40 |
| **Accounts Receivable, Net (Note 5)** | 17 | 26 |
| **General Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net (Note 6)** | 30,503 | 32,458 |
| **Other** | | |
| **Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances (Note 7)** | 3,863 | 4,304 |
| **Other Assets (Note 8)** | 2,485 | 2,541 |
| **Subtotal Other** | 6,348 | 6,845 |
| **Total Assets** | $ 176,844 | $ 157,968 |
| **Liabilities** | | |
| **Intragovernmental** | | |
| **Accounts Payable** | $ 1,219 | $ 997 |
| **Other** | | |
| **Unfunded FECA Liability (Note 9)** | 27,560 | 25,582 |
| **Other Liabilities (Note 10)** | 2 | 2 |
| **Subtotal Other** | 27,562 | 25,584 |
| **Total Intragovernmental** | 28,781 | 26,581 |
| **Accounts Payable** | 9,104 | 11,396 |
| **Federal Employee and Veterans Benefits (Note 9)** | 121,902 | 119,302 |
| **Other** | | |
| **Other Employment Related Liability (Note 9)** | 5,629 | 14,436 |
| **Non-Entity Funds (Note 2)** | 40,060 | 31,947 |
| **Accrued Funded Payroll and Leave** | 5,346 | 4,252 |
| **Unfunded Annual Leave (Note 9)** | 7,237 | 7,600 |
| **Other Liability (Note 10)** | - | 1,164 |
| **Subtotal Other** | 58,272 | 59,399 |
| **Total Liabilities** | 218,059 | 216,678 |
| **Commitments and Contingencies (Note 11)** | | |
| **Net Position** | | |
| **Unexpended Appropriations** | 80,239 | 68,274 |
| **Cumulative Results of Operations** | (121,454) | (126,984) |
| **Total Net Position** | $ (41,215) | $ (58,710) |
| **Total Liabilities and Net Position** | $ 176,844 | $ 157,968 |

# Peace Corps
# Statement of Net Cost
# For the Periods Ended September 30, 2009 and 2008

(In Thousands)

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| **Program Costs:** | | |
| **Gross Costs** | $ 327,233 | $ 361,036 |
| **Less: Earned Revenue (Note 12)** | 3,610 | 2,897 |
| **Net Cost of Operations** | $ 323,623 | $ 358,139 |

# Peace Corps
## Statement of Changes in Net Position
## For the Periods Ended September 30, 2009 and 2008
(In Thousands)

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| **Cumulative Results of Operations:** | | |
| **Beginning Balances** | $ (126,984) | $ (117,982) |
| **Adjustments** | | |
| **Corrections of Errors** | 122 | 460 |
| **Beginning Balances, As Adjusted** | (126,862) | (117,522) |
| | | |
| **Budgetary Financing Sources:** | | |
| **Appropriations Used** | 322,738 | 342,817 |
| | | |
| **Other Financing Sources (Non-Exchange):** | | |
| **Transfers-In/Out Reimbursement** | 250 | 1,398 |
| **Imputed Financing (Note 16)** | 6,043 | 4,462 |
| | | |
| **Total Financing Sources** | 329,031 | 348,677 |
| **Net Cost of Operations** | 323,623 | 358,139 |
| **Net Change** | 5,408 | (9,462) |
| | | |
| **Cumulative Results of Operations** | **(121,454)** | **(126,984)** |
| | | |
| **Unexpended Appropriations:** | | |
| **Beginning Balances** | 68,274 | 81,586 |
| **Adjustments** | | |
| **Changes in Accounting Principles** | 3 | - |
| **Corrections of Errors** | (1) | (2) |
| **Beginning Balances, As Adjusted** | 68,276 | 81,584 |
| | | |
| **Budgetary Financing Sources:** | | |
| **Appropriations Received** | 340,000 | 333,500 |
| **Appropriations Transferred In/Out** | (2,000) | - |
| **Other Adjustments** | (3,299) | (3,992) |
| **Appropriations Used** | (322,738) | (342,818) |
| | | |
| **Total Budgetary Financing Sources** | 11,963 | (13,310) |
| **Total Unexpended Appropriations** | 80,239 | 68,274 |
| | | |
| **Net Position** | **$ (41,215)** | **$ (58,710)** |

# Peace Corps
## Statement of Budgetary Resources
## For the Periods Ended September 30, 2009 and 2008
(In Thousands)

| | 2009 | 2008 |
|---|---|---|
| **Budgetary Resources:** | | |
| **Unobligated Balance, Brought Forward, October 1** | $ 24,921 | $ 21,501 |
| **Recoveries of Prior Year Unpaid Obligations, Actual** | 7,778 | - |
| **Budget Authority** | | |
| **Appropriation** | 340,000 | 333,500 |
| **Spending Authority From Offsetting Collections** | | |
| **Earned** | | |
| **Collected** | 4,872 | 5,415 |
| **Change in Receivables from Federal Sources** | 248 | (14) |
| **Change in Unfilled Customer Orders** | | |
| **Without Advance from Federal Sources** | (8) | 901 |
| **Subtotal** | 345,112 | 339,802 |
| **Nonexpenditure Transfers, Net, Anticipated and Actual:** | | |
| **Actual Transfers, Budget Authority** | (2,000) | - |
| **Permanently Not Available** | | |
| **Cancellations of Expired and No-Year Accounts** | 3,252 | 1,290 |
| **Enacted Reductions** | - | 3,808 |
| **Total Budgetary Resources** | $ 372,559 | $ 356,205 |
| | | |
| **Status of Budgetary Resources:** | | |
| **Obligations Incurred:** | | |
| **Direct** | $ 339,280 | $ 329,072 |
| **Reimbursable** | 3,299 | 2,212 |
| **Subtotal** | 342,579 | 331,284 |
| **Unobligated Balance:** | | |
| **Apportioned** | 22,829 | 13,127 |
| **Unobligated Balance Not Available** | 7,151 | 11,794 |
| **Total Status of Budgetary Resources** | $ 372,559 | $ 356,205 |
| | | |
| **Change in Obligated Balance:** | | |
| **Obligated Balance, Net** | | |
| **Unpaid Obligations, Brought Forward, October 1** | $ 62,396 | $ 72,947 |
| **Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources, Brought Forward, October 1** | 840 | (46) |
| **Total Unpaid Obligated Balance, Net** | 61,556 | 72,993 |
| **Obligations Incurred, Net** | 342,579 | 331,284 |
| **Gross Outlays** | 326,716 | 341,835 |
| **Recoveries of Prior Year Unpaid Obligations, Actual** | 7,778 | - |
| **Change in Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources** | 240 | 886 |
| **Obligated Balance, Net, End of Period** | | |
| **Unpaid Obligations** | 70,481 | 62,396 |
| **Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources** | 1,081 | 840 |
| **Total Unpaid Obligated Balance, Net, End of Period** | $ 69,400 | $ 61,556 |
| | | |
| **Net Outlays:** | | |
| **Gross Outlays** | $ 326,716 | $ 341,835 |
| **Offsetting Collections** | 4,872 | 5,415 |
| **Net Outlays** | $ 321,844 | $ 336,420 |

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## Note 1 Significant Accounting Policies

### a) Reporting Entity

The Peace Corps was initially established by President John F. Kennedy pursuant to Executive Order 10924 on March 1, 1961, and was subsequently formalized by the Peace Corps Act of 1961.The Peace Corps is an independent agency within the executive branch of the United States government.

The core mission of the Peace Corps is to promote world peace and friendship by making available to interested, less developed countries men and women of the United States qualified for service abroad and willing to serve, even under conditions of hardship if necessary. The Peace Corps' goals are to help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

### b) Basis of Presentation

The financial statements present the financial position, the net cost of operations, and changes in net position along with budgetary resources activities of the agency pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3515 (b). They have been prepared using Peace Corps' books and records in accordance with agency accounting policies, the most significant of which are summarized in this note. The statements are in addition to the financial reports used to monitor and control budgetary resources, which are prepared from the same books and records. The statements are presented in accordance with the applicable form and content requirements of OMB Circular A-136, Financial Reporting Requirements, issued June 2009. The statements should be read with the realization that they are for a component of the U.S. government, a sovereign entity.

The Peace Corps' accounting policies follow Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board standards and other generally accepted accounting principles for the United States federal government.

The financial statements are subdivided in two categories: intragovernmental and public. The intragovernmental balances, revenues, and costs reflect financial transactions between the Peace Corps and other federal agencies. Public activities are those with non-governmental customers, including Volunteers, contributors, employees, contractors, and vendors.

**Federal Financial Statements**

| Statement | Federal Objective |
|---|---|
| Balance Sheet | Reflects the agency's financial position as of the statement date. The assets are the amount of future economic benefits owned or managed by the agency. The liabilities are amounts owed by the agency. The net position is the difference between the assets and liabilities. |
| Statement of Net Cost | Shows separately the components of the net cost of the agency's operations for the period. Net cost is equal to the gross cost incurred by the agency less any exchange revenue earned from its activities. |
| Statement of Changes in Net Position | Explains how the net cost for the agency's operations was funded, and reports other changes in equity that are not included in the Statement of Net Cost. It reflects the changes in both the proprietary and the budgetary activities through the respective components: Cumulative Results of Operations and Unexpended Appropriations. |
| Statement of Budgetary Resources | Provides information about how budgetary resources were made available as well as their status at the end of the period. It is the only financial statement exclusively derived from the agency's budgetary general ledger in accordance with budgetary accounting rules. |

### c) Basis of Accounting

Accounting principles encompass both accrual and budgetary transactions. Under the accrual method, revenues are recognized when earned and expenses are recognized when a liability is incurred, without regard to receipt or payment of cash. Under the budgetary basis, however, fund availability is recorded based upon legal considerations and constraints. The agency receives financing sources through direct appropriations from the general fund of the U.S. Treasury to support its operations. This financing source—appropriations used—is recognized to the extent that appropriation authority has been applied against received goods and services.

### d) Fund Accounting Structure

The agency's financial activities are accounted for by U. S. Treasury Appropriation Fund Symbol. They include accounts for appropriated funds and other fund groups described below for which the Peace Corps maintains financial records.

*General Funds*—These funds consist of the receipts and expenditures by the government that are not earmarked by law for a specific purpose and used to fund agency operations and capital expenditures.

*Special or Trust Funds*—These funds consist of receipts and expenditures by the government for carrying out specific purposes and programs in accordance with terms of the statute that designates the fund as a special fund or trust fund. The balances in the agency's trust funds are non-entity assets and are included in the financial statements.

*Deposit Funds*—These funds consist of monies held temporarily by the Peace Corps as an agent for others. These include allowance and allotment accounts for employees and Volunteers. The balances in these funds are non-entity assets and are included in the financial statements.

*General Fund Receipt Accounts*—These funds consist of monies collected by the Peace Corps that are returned to the U.S. Treasury and not available for Peace Corps' use.

### e) Budget Authority

Congress annually passes multi-year appropriations that provide the agency with authority to obligate funds over a two-year period for necessary expenses to carry out operations. After the right to create new obligations has expired, this two-year budget authority is available for five additional years to complete the liquidation of open obligations, advances, and receivables. After the five-year period, all open transactions for the respective fiscal year will be cancelled and funds will be returned to the U.S. Treasury. Any valid claims associated with these funds after closure must be processed against current year funds.

In addition, Congress enacts no year appropriations that are available until expended. All appropriations are subject to OMB apportionment as well as Congressional restrictions. The agency places internal restrictions to ensure the efficient and proper use of all funds.

### f) Revenues and Other Financing Sources

Peace Corps operations are financed through appropriations, proceeds from the sale of property, and interagency agreements. For financial statement purposes, appropriations are recorded as a financing source and reported on the Statement of Changes in Net Position at the time they are recognized as expenditures.

### g) Fund Balance with the Treasury

The Fund Balance with the U. S. Treasury consists of appropriated funds that are available to pay current liabilities and finance authorized purchase commitments, and special funds that periodically are direct-financing reimbursements to the appropriated funds.

The agency does not maintain cash in commercial bank accounts for the funds reported in the balance sheet. All cash receipts and disbursements are processed by the U.S. Treasury or the Department of State (DOS).

The funds that make up post cashiers' imprest funds belong to the U.S. Treasury through DOS's accountability. These funds are routinely used to pay for small-value purchases of goods and services and are also used to make an occasional emergency payment. Per agreement with DOS, the Peace Corps is responsible for paying for any losses incurred by the cashiers that would normally fall on the account holder. All international payments made by DOS on behalf of the Peace Corps are charged to the Peace Corps and reduce the applicable Peace Corps appropriation unexpended balance in U.S. Treasury records. As of September 30, 2009 cashier imprest funds represented by cash on hand, checks on hand, interim advances, and cashier checking account balances totaled approximately $1.6 million in U. S. dollar equivalents.

At any point in time, the posts have U. S. dollar equivalents and local currency checks in their possession that are awaiting delivery to the payees/vendors. These checks were recorded as disbursements on Peace Corps and

U.S. Treasury records in the month the checks were issued. As of September 30, 2009, these checks totaled approximately $8.4 million in U. S. dollar equivalents.

Fund balance with Treasury is carried forward until such time as goods or services are received and payment is made, or until the funds are returned to the U.S. Treasury.

### h) Foreign Currency

Accounting records for the agency are maintained in U.S. dollars, while a significant amount of the overseas expenditures are in foreign currencies. For accounting purposes, overseas obligations and disbursements are recorded in U.S. dollar equivalents based on the budgeted rate of exchange as of the date of the transaction. Foreign currency payments are made by the U.S. disbursing officers located at the Department of State Financial Service Centers in Charleston, South Carolina; and Bangkok, Thailand.

### i) Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable includes amounts due from other federal entities and from current and former employees and Volunteers. Annually, a determination of the amount of the Allowance for Doubtful Accounts will be established for material amounts of nonfederal (public) debt exceeding $30,000. The agency recognizes an Allowance for Doubtful Accounts when it is determined that the amounts are more likely than not to be totally uncollected. Accounts with approved payment plans in place and for which the debtor is meeting the terms of the plan are exceptions to this write-off policy.

### j) Advances and Prepayments

Payments in advance of the receipt of goods and services are recorded as advances and recognized as expenses when the related goods and services are received. Advances are made principally to agency employees for official travel and prepayments to Volunteers for living allowances.

Pursuant to Section 5(b) of the Peace Corps Act, Peace Corps Volunteers are entitled to a living allowance in order that they may serve effectively and safely overseas. Living allowances are paid to Volunteers to provide support while in their country of assignment. Allowances, which are based on local living standards and costs, include food, clothing, household items, rent, utilities, and local transportation.

### k) Property, Plant, and Equipment (PP&E)

The agency capitalizes property, plant, and equipment that has an individual acquisition cost of $25,000 or greater, a useful life of two years or more, not intended for sale in the ordinary course of business, and intended to be used or available for use by the entity. Aggregate purchases of general property, plant, and equipment in the amount of $500,000 or greater are capitalized. Software purchased for $25,000 or developed for internal use at a cost of $25,000 or greater is capitalized and amortized over its expected life (currently 3 to 9 years). Vehicles in the amount of $10,000 and over are capitalized. Acquisitions that do not meet these criteria are recorded as operating expenses. Assets are capitalized at historical cost and depreciated using the straight-line method. The agency has established a policy that uses an estimated salvage value of 40 percent for the agency's vehicles based on their resale value in recent years.

The agency does not own any real property. Nonexpendable personal property is depreciated over 3 to 15 years. The agency operates land, buildings, and equipment that are provided by the General Services Administration. Rent for this property is expensed. Deferred maintenance amounts are immaterial with respect to the financial statements.

### l) Accounts Payable and Other Liabilities

Liabilities represent the amount of monies or other resources that are likely to be paid as the result of a transaction or event that has already occurred. Liabilities classified as not covered by budgetary resources are liabilities for which appropriations have not been enacted.

## m) Employee Benefits

I. *Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) Accrued Claims*—FECA provides income and medical cost protection to covered federal civilian employees injured on the job, to employees who have incurred work-related occupational diseases, and to beneficiaries of employees whose deaths are attributable to job-related injuries or occupational diseases through the Department of Labor (DOL). The FECA liability consists of two components. The first component is based on actual claims paid by DOL but not yet reimbursed by the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps reimburses DOL as funds are appropriated for this purpose, generally a two year lag. This is the liability for the actual claims paid by DOL to be reimbursed by the Peace Corps.

II. *Future Workers Compensation Benefits*—The second component of FECA is the estimated actuarial liability for future benefit payments as a result of past events. This liability includes death, disability, medical, and miscellaneous costs. DOL determines this component annually, as of September 30, and the Peace Corps recognizes an unfunded liability to DOL for the estimated future payments.

III. *Accrued Leave*—A liability for annual leave is accrued as leave is earned and paid when leave is taken or employment terminates. Accrued annual leave is paid from future funding sources and is reflected as a liability not covered by budgetary resources. Sick and other leave is expensed as taken.

IV. *Employee Health Benefits and Life Insurance*—The agency's employees are eligible to participate in the contributory Federal Employees Health Benefit Program and the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program. The agency contributes to each program to pay for current benefits.

V. *Post-Retirement Health Benefits and Life Insurance*—Agency employees who may be eligible to participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program and the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program could continue to do so during retirement. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has provided the agency with cost factors that estimate the true cost of providing the post-retirement benefit to current employees. The agency recognizes a current cost for these and other retirement benefits at the time of employment with the agency. The other retirement benefit expense is financed by OPM and offset by the agency through the recognition of an imputed financing source on the Statement of Changes in Net Position.

VI. *Employee Retirement Benefits*—Peace Corps direct hire employees participate in one of three retirement systems: Civil Service Retirement System, Federal Employees Retirement System, or the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System. Foreign Service National (FSN) employees at overseas posts who were hired prior to January 1, 1984, are covered under the Civil Service Retirement System. FSNs hired after that date are covered under a variety of local government plans in compliance with the host country's local laws and regulations.

The Peace Corps recognizes its share of the cost of providing future pension benefits to eligible employees throughout their period of employment. The pension expense not covered by budgetary resources is calculated using actuarial factors provided by OPM and is considered imputed cost to the agency.

VII. *Valuation of Host Country Resident Personal Service Contractor Severance and Retirement Liability*—The Peace Corps is generally liable for separation or retirement payments to eligible host country resident personal service contractors (PSCs) in countries that require payments under local labor laws. Until systems are in place to track this liability in a timely manner, the estimate of the current and future costs of the severance and retirement liability is determined annually.

## n) Commitments and Contingencies

The agency is involved in various administrative proceedings, legal actions, and claims arising in the ordinary course of business. Contingencies are recognized as a liability when a future outflow or other sacrifice of resources is probable and measurable.

## o) Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements required management to make some estimates and assumptions that af-

fect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, as well as the disclosure of contingent liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the amount of revenues and costs reported during the period. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### p) Interest on Late Payments

Occasionally, the agency incurs interest penalties on late payments. Such interest penalties are paid to the respective vendor in accordance with the guidelines mandated by the Prompt Payment Act, P.L. 97–177, as amended.

### q) Intragovernmental Net Costs

The Statement of Net Cost is consolidated for the agency using a budget functional classification code. This code is used to classify budget resources presented in the budget of the United States government per OMB. The agency is categorized under budget functional classification code number 150—International Affairs. Gross cost and earned revenues from other intragovernmental agencies (reimbursable agreements) fall under this code.

### r) Adjustments to Maintain Inherent Account Relationship Integrity

In order to correct the relationships between the proprietary and budgetary accounts, a high-level analysis was performed. Cash balances were adjusted to align with the U.S. Treasury fund balance to permit the agency to pass edit checks and submit FACTS II reports to Treasury. All of the adjustments for fiscal year 2009 were immaterial.

### s) Allocation Transfer

The Peace Corps is a party to allocation transfers with the Department of State as a receiving (child) entity. Allocation transfers are legal delegations by one agency of its authority to obligate budget authority and outlay funds to another agency. A separate fund account (allocation account) is created in the U. S. Treasury as a subset of the parent fund account (Department of State) for tracking and reporting purposes. All allocation transfers of balances are credited to this account, and subsequent obligations and outlays incurred by the child entity (Peace Corps) are charged to this allocation account as they execute the delegated activity on behalf of the parent entity. All financial activity related to these allocation transfers (e.g., budget authority, obligations, outlays) is reported in the financial statements of the parent entity, from which the underlying legislative authority, appropriations, and budget apportionments are derived.

## Note 2 Non-Entity Assets

Non-entity assets are composed of trust fund, special fund, deposit funds, and clearing accounts. These funds are not available for the use of the Peace Corps and are not part of the Peace Corps resources. The Peace Corps monitors collections, status, and distribution. Below, as information, are the U.S. Treasury fund balances of non-entity assets which are non-governmental.

| **Non-Entity Assets** | **September 30, 2009** *(in thousands)* | **September 30, 2008** *(in thousands)* |
|---|---|---|
| Trust Fund | | |
| FSN Separation Liability Trust Fund | $ 7,222 | $ 7,349 |
| Special Fund | | |
| Host Country Residents Contractors Separation Liability Fund | 13,971 | 5,658 |
| Deposit Funds | | |
| Volunteer Readjustment Allowance | 18,325 | 18,417 |
| Volunteer Payroll Allotment Account (Payroll Savings Bond Account) | 11 | 14 |
| Clearing Accounts | 531 | 509 |
| Total Non-Entity Assets | 40,060 | 31,947 |
| Total Entity Assets | 136,784 | 126,021 |
| **Total Assets** | **$ 176,844** | **$ 157,968** |

## Note 2 Non-Entity Assets (Continued)

*Trust Fund*—The FSN Separation Liability Trust Fund represents the estimated accrued liability for separation pay (based on local labor law) of the FSN employees.

*Special Fund*— Host Country Residents Contractor Separation Liability Fund represents the estimated accrued liability for separation pay (based on local labor law) of the personal service contractors.

*Deposit Funds*—The Volunteer readjustment allowance is an allowance earned by Volunteers for each month of satisfactory service and payable upon their return to the United States. The Volunteer payroll allotment account reflects the value of held U. S. government bonds purchased by the Volunteers through allotments from the readjustment allowance. The bonds allow the Volunteers to earn interest on their earnings while in service overseas.

*Clearing Accounts*—The proceeds of sales funds represent cash received from the sale of assets, primarily vehicles, and available to be reinvested in a like-kind replacement purchase (e.g., proceeds from vehicle sales used to purchase replacement vehicles).

## Note 3 Fund Balance with Treasury

| **Fund Balances** | **September 30, 2009** (in thousands) | **September 30, 2008** (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Appropriated Funds | $ 98,998 | $ 86,017 |
| Total Non-Entity Assets (Note 2) | 40,060 | 31,947 |
| **Total** | **$ 139,058** | **$ 117,964** |

| **Status of Fund Balance with Treasury** | **September 30, 2009** (in thousands) | **September 30, 2008** (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Unobligated Balance | | |
| Available | $ 22,829 | $ 13,127 |
| Unavailable | 7,151 | 11,794 |
| Obligated Balance Not Yet Disbursed | 109,078 | 93,043 |
| **Total** | **$ 139,058** | **$ 117,964** |

The Fund Balance with Treasury is equal to the unobligated balance of funds plus the obligated balance not yet disbursed.

*Available Unobligated Balance*—Composed of apportionments available for allotment plus allotments available for obligation or commitment.

*Unavailable Unobligated Balance*—Composed of unapportioned authority plus unobligated appropriation authority from prior years that is no longer available for new obligations. This latter authority is only available for adjustments to existing obligations.

## Note 4 Cash and Other Monetary Assets

| | **September 30, 2009** *(in thousands)* | **September 30, 2008** *(in thousands)* |
|---|---|---|
| Total Cash and Other Monetary Assets | **$ 40** | **$ 40** |

The cash balances represent imprest funds at headquarters held in U.S. currency.

## Note 5 Accounts Receivable, Net

| Accounts Receivable as of September 30, 2009 *(in thousands)* | Accounts Receivable, Gross | Allowance for Doubtful Accounts | Accounts Receivable, Net |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intragovernmental | $ 878 | $ - | $ 878 |
| Other | 17 | - | 17 |
| **Total** | **$ 895** | $ - | **$ 895** |

| Accounts Receivable as of September 30, 2008 *(in thousands)* | Accounts Receivable, Gross | Allowance for Doubtful Accounts | Accounts Receivable, Net |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intragovernmental | $ 635 | $ - | $ 635 |
| Other | 65 | 39 | 26 |
| **Total** | **$ 700** | **$ 39** | **$ 661** |

Intragovernmental receivables are due from other federal agencies for services provided per reimbursable agreements.

Other accounts receivable are due from nonfederal entities, consisting primarily of receivables from employees.

Annually, a determination of the amount of the Allowance for Doubtful Accounts will be established for material amounts exceeding $30,000. The agency recognizes an Allowance for Doubtful Accounts when it is determined that the amounts of nonfederal (public) debts are more likely than not to be totally uncollected. An allowance was not established for the agency as of September 30, 2009.

## Note 6 General Property, Plant, and Equipment, Net

| Components of Fixed Assets as of September 30, 2009 *(in thousands)* | Useful Life in Years | Cost | Accumulated Depreciation | Net Book Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| General Property, Plant, and Equipment | 5–10 | $ 3,008 | $ 2,716 | $ 292 |
| Vehicles | 5 | 19,657 | 6,002 | 13,655 |
| IT Hardware | 3–15 | 12,789 | 8,001 | 4,788 |
| Leasehold Improvements | 10 | 402 | 140 | 262 |
| Internal-Use Software | 3–9 | 30,036 | 18,530 | 11,506 |
| **Total** | | **$ 65,892** | **$ 35,389** | **$ 30,503** |

| Components of Fixed Assets as of September 30, 2008 *(in thousands)* | Useful Life in Years | Cost | Accumulated Depreciation | Net Book Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| General Property, Plant, and Equipment | 5–10 | $ 2,983 | $ 2,656 | $ 327 |
| Vehicles | 5 | 17,857 | 5,847 | 12,010 |
| IT Hardware | 3–15 | 11,565 | 6,145 | 5,420 |
| Leasehold Improvements | 10 | 402 | 100 | 302 |
| Internal-Use Software | 3–9 | 29,366 | 14,967 | 14,399 |
| **Total** | | **$ 62,173** | **$ 29,715** | **$ 32,458** |

As of September 30, 2009, Peace Corps fixed assets include internally developed software and those assets that are reflected as active in the property management databases. These assets are located at headquarters in Washington, D.C., the nine regional offices, and the overseas posts.

Values for all assets other than internally developed software were obtained from data extracted from the databases. Values for internally developed software were derived from the most reliable available data for each system. There are no restrictions on the use or convertibility of General Property, Plant and Equipment owned by the Peace Corps.

## Note 7 Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances | **$ 3,863** | **$ 4,304** |

*Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances*—Payments of Volunteer living allowances are made prior to the entitlement month so the posts can ensure timely payments of the allowances to the Volunteers. These payments are pre-positioned so that Volunteers will not incur a financial burden for their living costs.

## Note 8 Other Assets

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Travel Advances to Employees | $ 48 | $ 82 |
| Relocation Advances to Employees | 68 | 30 |
| Prepaid Property, Plant and Equipment | - | 94 |
| Prepaid Rent | 2,350 | 2,335 |
| Prepaid Guard Contract | 19 | - |
| **Total Other Assets** | **$ 2,485** | **$ 2,541** |

*Relocation Advances to Employees*—Direct-hire employees are provided a relocation advance when appropriate.

*Travel Advances to Employees*—Travel advances are provided to employees when appropriate. Advances remain in the financial records until they are offset against travel entitlements or collected.

## Note 9 Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Intragovernmental Liabilities | | |
| Unfunded FECA Liability | $ 27,560 | $ 25,582 |
| Liabilities | | |
| Unfunded Annual Leave | 7,237 | 7,600 |
| Unfunded Employment-Related Liability | 5,629 | 14,436 |
| Federal Employee and Veterans Benefits | 121,902 | 119,302 |
| **Total Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources** | **$ 162,328** | **$166,920** |

*Unfunded FECA Liability*—A liability for the direct dollar costs of compensation and medical benefits paid on the agency's behalf by the Department of Labor. Since the agency is dependent on annual appropriation, it will include the amount billed for the direct costs in its budget request two years later.

*Unfunded Annual Leave*—A liability for annual leave is accrued as leave is earned and paid when leave is taken or when the individual terminates. The balance represents the estimated value of annual leave for U.S.-hired employees earned but not used on September 30, 2009. Payments are charged to the appropriation current at the time of payment. The valuation of the accrued annual leave for foreign service national employees and the foreign national PSCs has been estimated for this financial statement. There are approximately 195 foreign service nationals and 1,878 foreign national PSCs working for the Peace Corps at fiscal year end. Annual leave earned is based on local labor law requirements. Annual leave is paid out of current appropriations when taken.

*Unfunded Employment Related Liability*—A liability for the estimated severance of foreign national PSCs. Lump-sum payments are generally made to eligible international long-term personal service contractors based on local labor law requirements for separation. These payments are made when the individual terminates and are paid out of current appropriations.

*Federal Employee and Veterans Benefits*—Liability for the actuarial value of future payments for FECA as estimated by the Department of Labor for the agency.

## Note 10 Other Liabilities

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Intragovernmental | | |
| Advances from Others | $ 2 | $ 2 |
| Other Liabilities | | |
| Contingent Liability-General Counsel Cases | - | 1,164 |
| **Total Other Liabilities** | **$ 2** | **$ 1,166** |

*Advances from Others*—The balance of amounts advanced by other federal entities for goods and services to be furnished (e.g., money advance for Small Project Assistance grants).

*Contingent Liability*—See Note 11.

## Note 11 Commitments and Contingencies

In the opinion of the management and legal counsel, there are no contingent liabilities related to administrative proceedings, legal actions, or claims that are probable and measurable as of September 30, 2009.

Disclosure is required if there is a reasonable possibility that a loss may be incurred. The likelihood of a reasonable possibility of a loss related to administrative proceedings, legal actions, or claims is estimated to be $190,000 as of September 30, 2009.

## Note 12 Exchange Revenues

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Intragovernmental Earned Revenues | $ 3,195 | $ 2,426 |
| Earned Revenues from the Public | 415 | 471 |
| **Total Exchange Revenues** | **$ 3,610** | **$ 2,897** |

Exchange revenues represent revenue from services provided. This includes reimbursable agreements from other government agencies such as U.S. Agency for International Development sponsored HIV/AIDS education, prevention, and mitigation activities; and umbrella programs covering environment, health, youth, micro-enterprise and Small Project Assistance technical assistance.

## Note 13 Apportionment Categories of Obligations Incurred: Direct vs. Reimbursable

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct | Reimbursable | Direct | Reimbursable |
| Category A | $ 339,280 | $ 3,299 | $329,072 | $ 2,212 |
| **Total Obligations Incurred** | **$ 339,280** | **$ 3,299** | **$329,072** | **$ 2,212** |

All obligations incurred are Category A. The Peace Corps does not have any Category B or Exempt apportionments.

## Note 14 Undelivered Orders at the End of the Period

| | September 30, 2009 (in thousands) | September 30, 2008 (in thousands) |
|---|---|---|
| Undelivered Orders – End of Period | $ **61,156** | $ **52,468** |

The undelivered orders are budgetary obligations with and without advances/prepayments placed against federal budget authority where no goods or services have been received.

## Note 15 Reconciliation of Net Cost to Budget

| FY 2009 | Direct | Reimbursable | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Net Obligations Incurred | $ (331,360) | $ (3,187) | $ (334,547) |
| Less: Undelivered Orders | ( 8,696) | 8 | (8,688) |
| Total Expended Obligation Authority | (322,664) | (3,195) | (325,859) |
| Financing Sources Used | (322,739) | (3,195) | (325,934) |
| Obligations Not Resourced | 75 | - | 75 |
| Adjustments Reconciling Obligations To Costs Included in Obligations Not in Costs | | | |
| Acquisition of Assets | 6,880 | - | 6,880 |
| Subtotal | 6,880 | - | 6,880 |
| Included in Costs Not in Obligations | | | |
| Future Funded Expenses | (10,358) | - | (10,358) |
| Depreciation, Amortization, and Depletion | 7,705 | - | 7,705 |
| Employer Contributions to Employee Benefit Programs | 2,002 | - | 2,002 |
| Changes in Actuarial Liabilities | 2,600 | - | 2,600 |
| Offsetting Revenues | - | (3,195) | (3,195) |
| Imputed Financing | 6,043 | - | 6,043 |
| Nonfederal Receivables | 14 | | 14 |
| Net Change on Dispositions | (166) | - | (166) |
| Other Financing Sources | (1) | - | (1) |
| Subtotal | 7,839 | (3,195) | 4,644 |
| Adjusted Expended Obligation Authority | (323,623) | - | ( 323,623) |
| Statement of Net Costs | 323,623 | - | 323,623 |
| Unexplained Differences | $ - | $ - | $ - |

| FY 2008 | Direct | Reimbursable | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Net Obligations Incurred | $ (329,072) | $ (2,212) | $ (331,284) |
| Less: Undelivered Orders | 13,779 | 214 | 13,993 |
| Total Expended Obligation Authority | (342,851) | (2,426) | (345,277) |
| Financing Sources Used | (342,834) | (2,426) | (345,260) |
| Obligations Not Resourced | (17) | 0 | (17) |
| Adjustments Reconciling Obligations To Costs Included in Obligations Not in Costs | | | |
| Acquisition of Assets | 8,361 | - | 8,361 |
| Subtotal | 8,361 | - | 8,361 |
| Included in Costs Not in Obligations | | | |
| Future Funded Expenses | 7,429 | - | 7,429 |
| Depreciation, Amortization, and Depletion | 7,871 | - | 7,871 |
| Employer Contributions to Employee Benefit Programs | 1,468 | - | 1,468 |
| Changes in Actuarial Liabilities | 2,852 | - | 2,852 |
| Offsetting Revenues | | (2,416) | (2,426) |
| Imputed Financing | 4,462 | - | 4,462 |
| Net Transfers Without Reimbursement | (1,398) | - | (1,398) |
| Nonfederal Receivables | (17) | - | (17) |
| Net Change on Dispositions | (230) | - | (230) |
| Other Financing Sources | 1,212 | (10) | 1,202 |
| Subtotal | 23,649 | (2,426) | 21,223 |
| Adjusted Expended Obligation Authority | (358,139) | - | (358,139) |
| Statement of Net Costs | 358,139 | - | 358,139 |
| Unexplained Differences | $ - | $ - | $ - |

## Note 16 Imputed Financing

| | September 30, 2009 *(in thousands)* | September 30, 2008 *(in thousands)* |
|---|---|---|
| Federal Employees Health Benefit Program | $ 3,884 | $ 3,478 |
| Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program | 13 | 12 |
| Civil Service Retirement System | 1,842 | 846 |
| Federal Employees Retirement System | 169 | (6) |
| Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System | 135 | 132 |
| **Total Imputed Costs** | **$ 6,043** | **$ 4,462** |

Imputed financing recognizes actual costs of future benefits which include the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program, and pension benefits that are paid by other federal entities. Negative balance shown above was reported by the entity paying the benefits. The agency is not required to reimburse other entities for these costs.

## Note 17 Disclosure on Contributions to the Peace Corps

1. Media Contributions Received –The agency was provided free donated space equivalent to $3.9 million in print, radio, and television media through public service announcements in the first 11 months of FY 2009.

2. Host Country Contributions—The agency received cash and in-kind contributions from host countries. In-kind contributions estimated at $4.3 million in fair market value were received at posts through the end of FY 2009 for services, supplies, equipment, and facilities. The end of FY 2009 host country cash balance is $1,001,269.

# Inspector General's Audit Transmittal Letter

Since 1961.

To: Aaron S. Williams, Director

From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

Date: November 12, 2009

Subject: Audit of Peace Corps' Fiscal Year 2009 Financial Statements

This letter transmits the reports of Urbach Kahn and Werlin LLP (UKW) on its financial statement audit of the Peace Corps' Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 Financial Statements. As required by the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002, the Peace Corps prepared financial statements in accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular No. A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements,* and subjected them to audit.

## Audit Reports on Financial Statements, Internal Control, and Compliance and Other Matters

We contracted with UKW, an independent certified public accounting firm, to audit the Peace Corps' financial statements as of September 30, 2009 and 2008. The contract required that the audit be done in accordance with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards, OMB audit guidance, and the Government Accountability Office/President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency Financial Audit Manual.

UKW's audit report for FY 2009 includes: (1) an opinion on the financial statements, (2) a report on internal control, and (3) a report on compliance and other matters. In the audit of the Peace Corps, UKW found:

- The financial statements were fairly presented, in all material respects, in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles,
- There were no material weaknesses in internal control.[1]

[1] OMB Bulletin 07-04 defines a material weakness as a significant deficiency, or combination of significant deficiencies, that result in a more than remote likelihood that a material misstatement of the financial statements will not be prevented or detected.

- UKW's report on internal control identified two significant deficiencies:[2]
    - Accounting business processes need enhancements. Enhancements needed are related to accountability over selected fixed assets and consistency in reporting of Host Country Contributions.
    - Information system security controls need improvement. The auditor cited security management, contingency planning, access controls, and change management as areas needing improvement.

- UKW found no instances of reportable noncompliance with laws and regulations it tested or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards or OMB guidance.

## OIG Evaluation of UKW's Audit Performance

In connection with the contract, we reviewed UKW's report and related documentation and inquired of its representatives. Our review, as differentiated from an audit in accordance with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards, was not intended to enable us to express, and we do not express, opinions on Peace Corps' financial statements or conclusions about the effectiveness of internal control or conclusions on compliance with laws and regulations. UKW is responsible for the attached auditor's reports dated November 12, 2009 and the conclusions expressed in the reports. However, our review disclosed no instances where UKW did not comply, in all material respects, with U.S. generally accepted government auditing standards.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Peace Corps staff involved in issuing the financial statements within the established OMB milestones. Their professionalism, courtesy, and cooperation allowed us to overcome the many challenges associated with performance of the audit and our oversight of the audit process. If you or a member of the Peace Corps staff has any questions about UKW's audit or our oversight, please contact me or Gerald Montoya, Assistant Inspector General for Audit, at 202-692-2907.

Attachments

cc: Stacy Rhodes, Chief of Staff
Thomas Bellamy, Acting Chief Financial Officer

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[2] OMB Bulletin 07-04 defines a significant deficiency as a deficiency in internal control, or a combination of deficiencies, that adversely affects the entity's ability to initiate, authorize, record, process, or report financial data reliably in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles such that there is more than a remote likelihood that a misstatement of the entity's financial statements that is more than inconsequential will not be prevented or detected.

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# Auditor's Report

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

**Independent Auditor's Report**

To the Director and Inspector General,
Peace Corps

We have audited the accompanying Balance Sheets of Peace Corps as of September 30, 2009 and 2008 and the related statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position and Budgetary Resources for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of Peace Corps' management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 07-04, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, as amended. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Peace Corps as of September 30, 2009 and 2008 and its net cost, changes in net position, and budgetary resources for the years then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards,* we have also issued our reports dated November 12, 2009, on our consideration of Peace Corps' internal control over financial reporting and on our tests of Peace Corps' compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations and other matters. The purpose of those reports is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of that testing and not to provide an opinion on internal control over financial reporting or compliance. Those reports are an integral part of our audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and should be considered in assessing the results of our audit.

The Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) is not a required part of the financial statements but is supplementary information required by accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the required supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

The Message from the Director, Performance Section, Other Accompanying Information and Appendixes listed in the table of contents are presented for additional analysis and are not a required part of the financial statements. Such information has not been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements and, accordingly, we express no opinion on them.

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP

Arlington, Virginia
November 12, 2009

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

**Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control**

To the Director and Inspector General,
Peace Corps

We have audited the financial statements of Peace Corps as of and for the year ended September 30, 2009 and have issued our report thereon dated November 12, 2009. We conducted our audit in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards,* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 07-04, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, as amended.

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Peace Corps' internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing our auditing procedures, we obtained an understanding of design effectiveness of internal controls, determined whether they have been placed in operation, assessed control risk, and performed tests of Peace Corps' controls for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statements and to comply with OMB Bulletin No. 07-04, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting. We did not test all internal controls relevant to operating objectives as broadly defined by the *Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act* (FMFIA) (31 U.S.C. 3512), such as those controls relevant to ensuring efficient operations. The objective of our audit was not to provide assurance on internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Peace Corps' internal control over financial reporting.

Our consideration of internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the preceding paragraph and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that might be significant deficiencies or material weaknesses. However, as discussed below, we identified certain deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that we consider to be significant deficiencies.

A control deficiency exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent or detect misstatements on a timely basis. A significant deficiency is a control deficiency, or combination of control deficiencies, that adversely affects Peace Corps' ability to initiate, authorize, record, process, or report financial data reliably in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles such that there is more than a remote likelihood that a misstatement of Peace Corps' financial statements that is more than inconsequential will not be prevented or detected by the Peace Corps' internal control. We consider the deficiencies described below to be significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting.

A material weakness is a significant deficiency, or combination of significant deficiencies, that results in more than a remote likelihood that a material misstatement of the financial statements will not be prevented or detected by the Peace Corps' internal control.

Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting was for the limited purpose described in the second paragraph of this section and would not necessarily identify all deficiencies in the internal control that might be significant deficiencies that are also considered to be material weaknesses. However, we believe that none of the significant deficiencies described below is a material weakness.

**Significant Deficiencies**

These control deficiencies, detailed on the following pages, are summarized as follows:

1. Accounting business processes need enhancement

2. Information systems security controls need improvement

In addition to the significant deficiencies described above, we noted certain matters involving internal control and its operation that we will report to the management of Peace Corps in a separate letter.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the management of Peace Corps, the Peace Corps Office of Inspector General, OMB, the Government Accountability Office and Congress, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP

Arlington, Virginia
November 12, 2009

## SIGNIFICANT DEFICIENCY 1

## ACCOUNTING BUSINESS PROCESSES NEED ENHANCEMENT

### Property Plant & Equipment

Fiscal year 2009 was the second full year implementing the Fixed Asset Module. Although Peace Corps continued to make improvements in accounting for fixed assets, problems still exist in accounting for Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) assets timely and accurately. OCIO continually struggled to report asset additions and dispositions timely and accurately to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer. Additionally, OCIO is unable to consistently locate where assets are physically located. We identified the following issues through our FY 2009 internal control and substantive testing.

Physical Observation:

- Several assets observed during physical observation could not be located in the asset listing. Peace Corps determined that these assets may not have been capitalized and therefore, would not be on the listing. However, supporting documentation was not provided to show that they should not be capitalized.

- There were three instances where assets from the asset listing could not be physically located. Peace Corps determined that these missing assets to be expendable items and therefore should not be tracked.

- The asset listing contained numerous assets without identification numbers.

### Recommendations

We recommend the Peace Corps Director:

1a. Enforce current policies designed to ensure complete and accurate asset listing.

1b. Ensure that roles and responsibilities outlined on Peace Corps Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are carried out by posts and HQ for property accounting and financial reporting personnel that perform accuracy, verification, and completeness checks on the capitalized property listings.

1c. Develop procedures to ensure that additions and disposals recorded accurately and timely.

1d. Designate a receiving clerk to accept all IT assets upon delivery and to maintain a listing of all IT assets received.

### Host Country Contributions

Posts receive two types of Host Country Contributions (HCC): in-kind and cash. In-kind contributions are any non-cash items such as housing for volunteers, utilities, and donated supplies. Cash HCCs are used for payment to local contractors, allowances for volunteers and Peace Corps programs. Currently, about ten to twelve Posts have cash contributions balances in local currency as of September 30, 2009, for which the donor country may or may not have restricted the funds for specific purposes. Cash donations are recorded in FOR Post and

recognized as an HCC receipt. Posts are required to deposit HCC receipts and submit a deposit slip to Headquarters.

In fiscal year 2007 Peace Corps began working with legal counsel to determine the nature of the cash contributions and whether the cash received from host countries meet the definition of gifts or donations and whether the balance should be reported by Peace Corps on its principal financial statements in addition to footnote disclosure. The current guidance published in CFO Policy Statement 07-01, *Accounting for Funds and Miscellaneous Items*, was prepared, reviewed, approved and disseminated in accordance with the agency's authority to provide definitive guidance where policy does not specifically cover a gray area in the law. This authority was issued to describe the procedures for accounting and reporting of HCC funds based on the determination that these funds should be treated as fiduciary activity and the property of the donating country.

In fiscal year 2008, UKW was informed by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) about a suspected fraud in excess of $50,000 related to HCC Funds at one of the Posts. The OIG team followed up on this matter.

UKW proposed recommendations in fiscal year 2008 to revise the CFO policy 07-01 to treat HCC as fiduciary activities and report the balances in the financial statements. However, Peace Corps has failed to comply with the deadlines established by their management and have extended the date for final implementation until fiscal year 2010.

**Recommendations**

We recommend the Peace Corps Director:

1e. Amend current CFO Policy 07-01 regarding HCCs to ensure that recognition, recording, monitoring and reporting is consistent with reporting fiduciary activity.

1f. Continue to work with legal counsel to determine the nature of these assets and any restrictions that may impact their reporting or classification. Peace Corps management should ensure the policy is updated to reflect the legal counsel and Peace Corps' determination on how to report these assets and implement the updated policy in fiscal year 2010 to address the proper reporting of HCC in the financial statements and the full disclosure of Peace Corps fund sources.

1g. Set up strict guidelines on access, dual authorization and handling of cash and other forms of host country contributions to prevent embezzlement of such funds.

## SIGNIFICANT DEFICIENCY 2

## INFORMATION SYSTEM SECURITY CONTROLS NEED IMPROVEMENT

Peace Corps made improvements to its information systems control environment during FY 2009. However, we found that certain internal control weaknesses related to the Financial Management System, Odyssey and Peace Corps' overall Information Technology (IT) environment continued to exist at September 30, 2009. Our assessment of the general and application controls of Peace Corps' key IT infrastructure and financial systems identified the following conditions.

### Control Weaknesses

*Security Management*

- As reported under the Fiscal Year 2009 Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) assessment, Peace Corps has not certified and accredited 5 of the agency's 12 information systems. Specifically, the Domestic and International General Support Systems which support the financial management systems have not been certified and accredited. Without completing the certification and accreditation process, senior level agency officials will not have taken the appropriate steps to mitigate or accept risk for their information systems as required by OMB. In addition, without a complete certification and accreditation package (i.e. security plans, risk assessments, contingency plans) proper security may not be administered over the data within the agencies information systems.

*Contingency Planning*

During the FY 2009 FISMA assessment, we noted the following regarding Peace Corps' controls surrounding contingency planning for agency's information system environment:

- Peace Corps did not have contingency plans in place for 4 of its 12 information systems including the Domestic and International General Support Systems.
- The Peace Corps Business Impact Analysis had not been updated by the agency to ensure identified impacts reflect current agency continuity of operations planning and are accurately incorporated into disaster recovery planning for the agency's current system environment.
- The Office of Chief Information Officer Business Recovery Plan has not been updated to reflect the new recovery procedures.
- Personnel with disaster recovery responsibilities had not received appropriate contingency training.
- Peace Corps was unable to provide evidence of backup testing and there were no records of contingency plan testing to determine if the organization includes a full recovery and reconstitution of Peace Corps systems.

Peace Corps management did make improvements related to contingency planning during FY 2009 as they began the development of alternate methods for contingency planning and disaster recovery utilizing virtualization and the Atlanta, Georgia Regional Recruiting Office. Peace Corps is in the process of revising recovery plans to include the new virtualization

environment and conducted an exercise in late September 2009. However, corrective action is still in process.

The lack of an up to date agency Business Impact Analysis creates a deficiency in the contingency planning process for information systems. A deficiency in this process means that key impacts or threats could be overlooked leading to the ineffective or delayed recovery of agency systems. The lack of Contingency Plan testing for Peace Corps systems increases the likelihood that agency systems will not be effectively recovered following a major disruption of service. In addition, the lack of contingency training may lead to individuals not understanding their roles during an emergency situation.

*Access Controls*

- We noted weaknesses relating to the Odyssey UNIX environment. Management-approved access request forms were not on file for all individuals with access to the production environment servers. Without management-approved access request forms, management cannot track who has been given access to the system and management does not know if the appropriate personnel are accessing the system.

- System administrators for Odyssey modules were found to have functional user roles within Odyssey which violates the principle of segregation of duties. In addition, the system administrators had the capability to grant themselves access to additional system roles. Furthermore, we noted that an Odyssey functional lead with conflicting roles within the system. Unauthorized and erroneous transactions may occur if proper procedures are not implemented to control and limit an employee's effective role within the system.

- Peace Corps network accounts are not being deactivated in a timely manner. We noted the following conditions: multiple accounts were enabled with passwords that have not been reset in over ninety days, accounts remained active that had never been logged into, accounts were enabled without having a password set and accounts were enabled that did not require a password. Since accounts are not disabled after a defined period of inactivity, accounts may be left active increasing the risk associated with unauthorized access to the system.

*Change Management*

- Developers for the FOR HQ application had access to the production environment of the FOR HQ application. In addition, multiple accounts for the same individuals were present in the production environment. Inadequate segregation between development and production environments increases the risk of inadvertent or intentional unauthorized software modifications being placed in the production environment. Unauthorized software modifications, or modifications that have not been independently reviewed, may go undetected. As a result, the ability to investigate and address any identified issues in a timely manner is diminished. Multiple unnecessary accounts for the same individuals also increase the risk that an account may be used improperly.

As required by OMB Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*, Appendix III security accreditation provides a quality control and challenges managers and technical staff at all levels to implement the most effective security controls possible in an information system.

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication 800-37, *Guide for the Security Certification and Accreditation of Federal Information Systems,* states "Security certification is a comprehensive assessment of the management, operational, and technical security controls in an information system, made in support of security accreditation, to determine the extent to which the controls are implemented correctly, operating as intended, and producing the desired outcome with respect to meeting the security requirements for the system. The results of a security certification are used to reassess the risks and update the system security plan, thus providing the factual basis for an authorizing official to render a security accreditation decision."

NIST Special Publication 800-53, Revision 2 *Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems Control CP-4 Contingency Plan Testing and Exercises* states: "The organization: (i) tests and/or exercises the contingency plan for the information system at least annually using tests and/or exercises to determine the plan's effectiveness and the organization's readiness to execute the plan; and (ii) reviews the contingency plan test/exercise results and initiates corrective actions. The organization coordinates contingency plan testing and/or exercises with organizational elements responsible for related plans."

NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 2, *Security C*ontrol CM-5, states the following regarding access restrictions for change, "The organization: (i) approves individual access privileges and enforces physical and logical access restrictions associated with changes to the information system; and (ii) generates, retains, and reviews records reflecting all such changes."

NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 2, *Security Control AC-2 – Account Management*, states: "The organization manages information system accounts, including establishing, activating, modifying, reviewing, disabling, and removing accounts. The organization reviews information system accounts at least annually."

**Recommendations**

We recommend the Peace Corps Director ensure that:

2a. Full certification and accreditation is completed for the Domestic and International Infrastructures that support the financial management system in accordance with Peace Corps policy and OMB Circular A-130 guidance.

2b. The Business Impact Analysis is reevaluated and updated to accurately reflect the current Peace Corps continuity of operations planning and to support disaster recovery planning, testing, and updating for the agency's current environment.

2c. Contingency Plans are developed and implemented for all Peace Corps information systems.

2d. A full Disaster Recovery test is conducted that will ensure all system Contingency Plans are included, as well as testing of system backups to determine if procedures for reconstitution and recovery of the systems are adequate. In addition, ensure training is provided to personnel with disaster recovery responsibilities.

2e. User access request forms for individuals with access to the Odyssey UNIX servers are completed and kept updated according to individual system access rights for each individual with system access.

2f. Odyssey system administrator roles are segregated from functional roles. In cases where management deems it necessary to have certain roles, audit controls for auditing Odyssey user accounts should be documented.

2g. Periodic review of user accounts that violate the Odyssey segregation of duties matrix is implemented and ensure that all activity is monitored.

2h. Procedures are developed and implemented to periodically audit network user accounts to (a) verify that user accounts are still currently being used, (b) verify that there are reasonable justifications for any user accounts that are not being accessed, and (c) disable any user accounts that have not been accessed without reasonable and documented justification.

2i. Logical access controls are implemented to restrict a developer from having access to the production environment of the FOR HQ application. If resources prohibit complete segregation of access, then compensating controls should be implemented to reduce the risk associated with access that is not segregated among environments.

2j. Users with access to the FOR HQ SQL Server and Visual Source Safe are permitted access through the use of a single account.

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

**Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance and Other Matters**

To the Director and Inspector General,
Peace Corps

We have audited the financial statements of Peace Corps as of, and for the year ended September 30, 2009, and have issued our report thereon dated November 12, 2009. We conducted our audit in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards,* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin 07-04, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, as amended.

The management of Peace Corps is responsible for complying with laws and regulations applicable to Peace Corps. As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether Peace Corps' financial statements are free of material misstatements, we performed tests of Peace Corps' compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations, non-compliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts and certain other laws and regulations specified in OMB Bulletin 07-04. We limited our tests of compliance to these provisions and we did not test compliance with all laws and regulations applicable to Peace Corps. Providing an opinion on compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations was not an objective of our audit, and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

The results of our tests of compliance with laws and regulations described in the preceding paragraph disclosed no instances of reportable noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* or OMB guidance.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the management of Peace Corps, the Peace Corps Office of Inspector General, GAO, OMB and Congress, and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP

Arlington, Virginia
November 12, 2009

*Agriculture Volunteer, Belize*

# OTHER ACCOMPANYING INFORMATION

# The Inspector General's Statement on the Peace Corps' Management and Performance Challenges

## The Inspector General's Statement on the Peace Corps' Management and Performance Challenges

*As required by the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 and Office of Management and Budget guidance, I am pleased to submit the following summarizing what I consider to be the most serious management and performance challenges facing the Peace Corps. This statement has been compiled based on Office of Inspector General (OIG) audits, investigations, evaluations and the general knowledge of the agency's operations.*

Sincerely,

Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General
September 30, 2009

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**Challenge** Capacity of Peace Corps Business Operations to Support Growth and Expansion

As a result of the response to the President's "call to service," and as more developing nations request Peace Corps programs it is anticipated the agency will experience significant growth. Such growth will necessitate increased funding levels. Efficient and effective management of the resulting rapid growth and larger budgets will present challenges for agency management.

Peace Corps' current business operations appear to be sufficient for supporting present levels. However, without enhancements to its business processes it will be difficult for the agency to continue providing the same level of Volunteer support based on projected growth. Significant increases in the number of Peace Corps Volunteers will have a major impact across overall operations and cause considerable stress in service delivery capabilities of several key business operations. Operations most impacted include:

- Volunteer Recruitment & Selection
- Volunteer Support Services
- Financial Management
- Information Technology
- Acquisitions & Contracting
- Safety & Security
- Human Resources
- Administrative Services

As a result, we believe it is a management challenge for the Peace Corps to ensure that business operations can respond with an effective level of support in an era of increased volunteerism and resulting rapid expansion of agency programs and/or operations around the world.

### Challenge Information Technology Management

Peace Corps has not established an adequate information technology (IT) strategy and an effective IT governance process as required by the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 and OMB Circular A-130. Also, overall budgeting for IT resources is not effective and has placed the agency at risk. The most significant risks are associated with ensuring that: limited resources will be put to use where most needed; funds spent on contracts consistently meet requirements; and the IT infrastructure effectively supports the Peace Corps mission. Achieving full compliance with federal laws and regulations that apply to managing the Peace Corps IT infrastructure and improving the IT budget process are critical management challenges.

Management continues to make progress in strengthening the Peace Corps' IT architecture and security management. However, there are some issues regarding information security and risk management of system architecture that remain a management challenge. Further, several issues disclosed in prior year audits relating to compliance with the Federal Information Security Management Act have not been fully remediated. The most significant issues follow:

- Five of twelve of the agency's information systems have not received final certifications and accreditations indicating that they are acceptable to use
- Processes for systems configuration management have not been fully or consistently implemented
- Contingency plans were not in place for four of twelve information systems and only one of the eight systems having a contingency plan had been tested in accordance with National Institute of Standards and Technology policy to ensure full recovery following a major disruption of service

### Challenge Acquisitions and Contract Management

Operations relating to Peace Corps' acquisitions and contracting are worldwide in scope adding complexities that are not common to most federal agencies. In FY 2009 the agency expended nearly $80 million for goods and services, or approximately 23 percent of the Peace Corps budget. This figure includes expenditures of about $48.7 million for personal services contracts and just over $31 million for other contracts. Recent White House initiatives implemented through OMB have directed federal agencies to undertake

a number of initiatives relating to acquisitions and contract management. One of these initiatives requires agencies to develop a plan to save 3.5 percent of baseline contract spending in FY 2010, and an additional 3.5 percent in FY 2011. It is unclear at the present time whether agencies not subject to the Chief Financial Officers Act will be required to implement all of the OMB initiatives. However, if the requirement for cost savings of 7 percent through the end of FY 2011 is imposed on the Peace Corps it would pose a significant challenge to the agency since personal services contracts currently represent over 60 percent of overall contract expenditures. Also, as a part of the new initiatives, OMB has directed that federal agencies make improvements in their contracting processes, including reducing the use of high risk contracts such as noncompetitive and cost-reimbursement.

Recent OIG audit work has disclosed that although progress is being made to improve the agency's overall contracting processes; resourcing issues have impacted the ability to quickly implement plans for strengthening contract surveillance; compliance with applicable laws and regulations; and customer support services. Additional requirements imposed upon the Peace Corps' acquisition workforce could potentially challenge already strained resources.

### Challenge Property Management

The FY 2009 (3rd Quarter) Balance Sheet indicates the Peace Corps' general property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) has a net book value of about $31.5 million. Peace Corps' general PP&E includes vehicles, computer equipment, office furniture, software, other equipment, etc. Property management involves organizational activities related to acquiring, tracking, controlling, and disposing these items. Audits and investigations performed over the last 12-months have disclosed that not all Peace Corps property is adequately safeguarded or disposed in accordance with applicable federal and Peace Corps requirements. Significant problems have been noted with accountability of certain assets, managing excess property, and following policies and procedures related to property disposal. For example, during FY 2009 external auditors reported that the agency was not able to accurately track assignment of laptop computers. Other examples of deficient property management includes not disposing of property identified as excess to needs in a timely manner and failing to follow applicable guidance when disposing property through public sales. Ineffective property management unnecessarily exposes the agency to risks associated with fraud, waste, and abuse and drives operating costs up. As a result, improving overall property management and strengthening the system for internal control related to property is a management challenge.

### Challenge Protection of Personally Identifiable Information

The Peace Corps routinely receives, processes, and maintains significant amounts of Personally Identifiable Information (PII). PII includes information that can be used to

distinguish or trace an individual's identity, such as name, Social Security Number, or biometric records. Such information can be used to link to other data such as bank accounts and other financial or personal information that can assist perpetrators in committing crimes associated with identity theft. During FY 2009 a number of cases of PII security breaches involving social security numbers, medical data, and other PII data have been brought to our investigators' attention. For example, an unsecured container with over 500 pieces of sensitive information, including individual medical records and other PII data, was left unattended for about three days in a public area. Other instances include recurring problems involving various breaches in personal medical data. Investigations into these security lapses disclosed numerous internal control weaknesses and failure to follow federal laws and regulations and Peace Corps policy on protecting PII. As a result it is a challenge for management to improve its system for internal control over PII and ensure Peace Corps personnel consistently comply with applicable federal and agency guidance.

# Agency Response to the Inspector General's Statement on the Peace Corps' Management and Performance Challenges

To: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

From: Aaron S. Williams, Director

Date: November 9, 2009

Subject: Agency Response to the Inspector General's Statement on Management and Performance Challenges

Thank you for your September 30 statement addressing the management and performance challenges faced by the Peace Corps, as required by the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 and Office of Management Budget (OMB) guidance.

The agency is pleased to support the work of the Office of the Inspector General as it carries out its work through audits, investigations, and evaluations. The OIG prevents and detects fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. By completing these tasks the OIG promotes economy, effectiveness, and efficiency in government.

I would like to address the areas of challenge identified in your statement. The agency continues to strive for constant improvement as it carries out its worldwide mission.

## Challenge 1: Capacity of Peace Corps Business Operations to Support Growth and Expansion

While preparing for the submission of the fiscal year 2010 President's budget to Congress, the Peace Corps worked closely with OMB to develop a strategic initiative to increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers 25 percent by 2012 and 50 percent by 2016. The goal of this initiative is to provide quality Volunteer growth that is strategic, sustainable, and cost effective.

In preparation for growth in existing Peace Corps countries and in countries that do not currently have a Peace Corps program, all operations within the agency have identified best practices and required resources to ensure that growth occurs in an efficient and cost effective manner. With adequate funds available, several growth initiatives will begin in FY 2010 and expand in FY 2011. Agency growth will emphasize strategic recruitment, sustainable programming, exceptional Volunteer support, and strong leadership.

The Director has allocated significant current funding to begin improving systems and to reorganize and add staff to our recruiting efforts. A Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) Modernization Project that is currently in development will greatly increase the agency's capacity to support growth and expansion by improving and streamlining business operations. All organizations within Peace Corps are participating in the development of a single, innovative, integrated and efficient system that will replace the 35 disparate systems currently utilized across six different operating platforms. The Volunteer Delivery System will incorporate a new electronic health records system and an applicant matching system to better enable the agency to recruit, place, and support increased numbers of Volunteers through the end of their service and beyond.

As the agency seeks to increase the number of Americans serving overseas as Peace Corps Volunteers, additional resources will be required within all offices that assist in the recruitment, selection, and placement of Volunteers and those who provide support to Volunteers during their 27 months of service.

Given adequate funding, the agency will pursue quality growth that places Volunteers strategically, safely, and with sufficient training and support to meet the development needs of the host countries.

### Challenge 2: Information Technology Management

The expansion of the Peace Corps' global footprint and the increased integration of information technology (IT) services delivery at posts and headquarters have impacted the agency's IT strategy, particularly with the budget challenges of the recent past. The agency is in the process of formulating a response and has already begun developing plans to address the gaps identified in the recent IT audit by the OIG.

The agency has an IT governance structure in place and continues to refine its processes and procedures to accommodate the agency's mission and business needs. Peace Corps believes that internal controls are an important and necessary ingredient in the successful implementation of any governance structure. To achieve this, Peace Corps has recently implemented structural changes to ensure appropriate oversight and transparency in all IT projects.

In 2007, the agency implemented an aggressive plan to certify and accredit all Peace Corps systems that require Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) reporting. The plan calls for a rate of three systems a year. Seven systems of 12 have been accredited since 2007, one in 2007, three in 2008, and three in 2009. The agency plans to continue accrediting systems at three per year and is poised to increase the rate should additional funding be available.

The Peace Corps within the last six months has been engaged in setting up a robust IT Disaster Recovery (ITDR) infrastructure capability. The agency considers continuity of operations as its highest priority in the event of a service disruption and has devoted significant efforts in the area of contingency planning this year as a result. As part of this effort, the agency designed and began building the new ITDR facility (85 percent complete) at the Atlanta regional office, is using virtualization technologies to improve IT recovery, and documented and tested all agency mission critical systems against the 72-hour ITDR standard as defined in the last Business Impact Analysis undertaken by the Peace Corps.

The agency also redesigned and implemented a new Peace Corps backup process and adopted a new remote access capability to allow the ITDR team to operate from any Internet-capable location during a service disruption to the headquarters building.

Peace Corps acknowledges the existence of some gaps in our ability to provide contingency plan documentation for applications and systems and is developing a detailed plan to remedy these gaps.

### Challenge 3: Acquisitions and Contract Management

Consistent with the spirit and intent of the new White House contracting initiatives, the Peace Corps has been and is actively pursuing cost savings for the agency. Whether or not the agency is required to

implement all of the OMB initiatives (reducing 3.5 percent of contract spending in FY 2010 and in FY 2011 and reducing 10 percent of new high-risk contracts in FY 2010), the following cost saving initiatives are being pursued. The agency recently completed in-sourcing one IT service contract and is actively pursuing in-sourcing of three more major support service contracts for further savings. In addition, an existing cost reimbursement training services contract will be converted to a firm fixed-price contract to realize further savings. A program to reduce the agency's cost of medical supplies and pharmaceuticals was begun in FY 2009 and will continue throughout FY 2010.

Increased costs worldwide affected operational activities within the agency during FY 2009. However, with the requested level of appropriated funding negotiated with OMB in the President's FY 2010 budget, these resourcing issues should be alleviated.

### Challenge 4: Property Management

The management and control of property, plant, and equipment (PP&E) in more than 70 countries and in multiple sites in the United States has always been a challenge. Peace Corps is developing specific requirements for an agencywide automated inventory system. The planned inventory system will greatly strengthen internal controls and improve overall property management, allowing staff to track, control, and report the acquisition and disposal of inventory items at posts. Additionally, this automated system will allow Peace Corps headquarters to reconcile purchases and disposals throughout the agency.

This year, the agency will pilot a Web-based training tool for proper disposal of assets and an inventory system for furniture and equipment at Peace Corps headquarters. A successful pilot will allow the new automated systems to be expanded to all posts to provide an interim solution until the agencywide inventory system is ready for implementation.

### Challenge 5: Protection of Personally Identifiable Information

Peace Corps has taken substantial and proactive steps to control the use of personally identified information (PII) and to ensure the protection of PII.

The agency conducted a comprehensive evaluation of all Peace Corps forms and reduced the total from 400 forms to 225. The number of forms requesting social security numbers (SSN) was reduced to 36 and these forms now have a Privacy Act statement incorporated into the form.

Peace Corps is also working to reduce the amount of PII in our automated systems and to date we have removed PII from four automated systems and reduced or removed PII from four applications.

The new Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) is an automated system that will track Volunteers from the initial recruiting contact through the whole of their Peace Corps service. This new VDS will consolidate over 35 existing systems and will eliminate the use of SSN in all of them, further reducing the use of PII.

Every new Peace Corps employee undergoes privacy awareness training to emphasize the importance of protecting PII and the proper disposal of sensitive documents. During this training, data breach notifications procedures are explained and potential disciplinary actions for improper use of PII are also covered.

# Summary of Financial Statement Audit and Management Assurances Tables

| Summary of Financial Statement Audit | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Audit Opinion | Unqualified | | | | |
| Restatement | No | | | | |
| Material Weaknesses | Beginning Balance | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Ending Balance |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Total Material Weaknesses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Summary of Management Assurances | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| **Effectiveness of Internal Control over Financial Reporting (FMFIA § 2)** | | | | | | |
| Statement of Assurance | Unqualified | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Material Weaknesses | Beginning Balance | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| *Total Material Weaknesses* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | |
| **Effectiveness of Internal Control over Operations (FMFIA § 2)** | | | | | | |
| Statement of Assurance | Unqualified | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Material Weaknesses | Beginning Balance | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| *Total Material Weaknesses* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | |
| **Conformance with Financial Management System Requirements (FMFIA § 4)** | | | | | | |
| Statement of Assurance | Systems conform to financial management system requirements | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Non-Conformances | Beginning Balance | New | Resolved | Consolidated | Reassessed | Ending Balance |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| *Total Non-Conformances* | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | | | |

## Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)

The Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA) of 2002, Public Law No. 107-300, requires agencies to annually review their programs and activities to identify those susceptible to significant improper payments. No improper payments were identified this fiscal year internally or by the external auditors that would reach the defined IPIA annual threshold of 2.5 percent and $10 million. The Peace Corps has no programs and activities that are risk susceptible to such significant improper payments. The Peace Corps is not identified in Appendix C, OMB Circular A-123 (formerly Section 57, "Programs for which Erroneous Payments Information is Requested," in OMB Circular A-11).

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*Business Volunteers, Niger*

# APPENDICES

# Appendix 1

## Summary of Audit Findings

The FY 2009 financial statement audit report issued by Urbach Kahn and Werlin LLP (UKW) beginning on page 85 indicated two significant deficiencies in control. Those significant deficiencies "Accounting Business Processes Need Enhancement" and "Information System Security Controls Need Improvement" and the specific audit findings that constitute those deficiencies are shown below with an estimated completion date.

**Significant Deficiency 1 – Accounting Business Processes Need Enhancement**

| Audit Recommendations | Estimated Completion |
|---|---|
| Enforce Property, Plant and Equipment (PP&E) policies and procedures to include additions and disposals and designate an IT assets receiving clerk | 3rd Qtr FY 10 |
| Enhance Host Country Contributions internal controls, reporting, and classification | 2nd Qtr FY 10 |

**Significant Deficiency 2 – Information System Security Controls Need Improvement**

| Audit Recommendations | Estimated Completion |
|---|---|
| Complete full certification and accreditation for the domestic and international infrastructures that support the financial management system Odyssey | 4th Qtr FY 10 |
| Reevaluate and update the Business Impact Analysis to reflect the current continuity of operations planning and support disaster recovery planning, testing, and updating | Under Review |
| Develop and implement contingency plans for all information systems | 4th Qtr FY 10 |
| Conduct a full disaster recovery test to ensure all contingency plans are included, as well as test system backups and ensure disaster recovery training is provided | 4th Qtr FY 10 |
| Complete user access request forms for Odyssey UNIX server and keep updated | 2nd Qtr FY 10 |
| Segregate Odyssey system administrator roles and document audit controls for any exception | 1st Qtr FY 10 |
| Perform review of user accounts that violate the Odyssey segregation of duties matrix and monitor activity | 2nd Qtr FY 10 |
| Develop and implement procedures to audit network user accounts | 3rd Qtr FY 10 |
| Implement controls to restrict developer access to the FOR Headquarters application production environment and implement compensating controls for any exception | 3rd Qtr FY 10 |
| Permit user access to the FOR Headquarters server and Visual Source Safe through use of a single account | 2nd Qtr FY 10 |

# Appendix 2

## Glossary of Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| **DOL** | Department of Labor |
| **DOS** | Department of State |
| **FECA** | Federal Employees Compensation Act |
| **FISMA** | Federal Information Security Management Act |
| **FMFIA** | Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act |
| **FSN** | Foreign Service National |
| **FY** | Fiscal Year |
| **HCC** | Host Country Contributons |
| **HCN** | Host Country National |
| **ICT** | Information and Communication Technology |
| **IPIA** | Improper Payments Information Act |
| **IT** | Information Technology |
| **ITDR** | Information Technology Disaster Recovery |
| **MD&A** | Management's Discussion and Analysis |
| **NIST** | National Institute of Standards and Technology |
| **OCIO** | Office of the Chief Information Officer |
| **OIG** | Office of the Inspector General |
| **OMB** | Office of Management and Budget |
| **OPM** | Office of Personnel Management |
| **PCSSO** | Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer |
| **PEPFAR** | President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief |
| **PII** | Personally Identifiable Information |
| **PP&E** | Property, Plant and Equipment |
| **PSC** | Personal Service Contractor |
| **RPCV** | Returned Peace Corps Volunteer |
| **SSN** | Social Security Number |
| **UKW** | Urbach Kahn and Werlin LLP |
| **USAID** | U.S. Agency for International Development |
| **VDS** | Volunteer Delivery System |

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CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION FISCAL YEAR 2009

# Impacting the World *through* Service and Friendship

PEACE CORPS

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION | FISCAL YEAR 2009

*Cover:* Amhara girl from Gojam region of Ethiopia carrying an *ensera* water pot
*Back :* An education Volunteer who started a successful after-school sports program in his community in Micronesia
*Title page:* An education Volunteer in the Philippines and her class

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## PEACE CORPS FY 2009 BUDGET REQUEST

The Peace Corps budget request for FY 2009 is $343,500,000, an increase of $10,000,000 over the FY 2008 appropriation of $333,500,000.[1] The FY 2009 request will enable the Peace Corps to expand the number of Americans serving abroad to 8,100 through September 30, 2009; provide for the safety and security of the Volunteers and staff; open three new country programs; and strengthen activities and strategies established in 2008.

[1] *The FY 2008 appropriation of $333,500,000 was reduced by a rescission of $2,701,000.*

THE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS
WASHINGTON, DC

Dear Member of Congress:

As the agency moves toward its 50th anniversary in the spring of 2011, it has much to be proud of, and I am pleased to submit the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2009 budget request of $343.5 million. This funding level reflects not only President Bush's recognition of the Peace Corps' critical value in the world, but the importance of the agency's role in promoting peace and friendship overseas. The FY 2009 budget will support approximately 8,100 Volunteers in the field in 79 countries by the end of FY 2009.

As of September 30, 2007, 8,079 Peace Corps Volunteers were serving at 68 posts representing 74 countries. This is an increase from FY 2006, when 7,749 Volunteers served, and is the largest number of Americans serving in the Peace Corps since 1970—a 37-year high.

The Peace Corps is one of America's most cost-effective ways to share its ideals and values abroad. Each Volunteer sent out into the field represents another opportunity to dispel myths about the United States; help people of interested countries meet their need for trained men and women, and create bonds of friendship with host country citizens that last a lifetime. Host country governments are thankful for the assistance the Peace Corps provides, and are always requesting more Volunteers. Volunteers share their time in a variety ways, including, as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, agriculture and environmental specialists, and health and HIV/AIDS educators. In many countries, government leaders can point to the English they learned during their youth from Peace Corps Volunteers.

With regard to HIV/AIDS, Volunteers have been working with populations affected by HIV/AIDS for more than two decades. At approximately 93 percent of Peace Corps posts, Volunteers receive training in HIV/AIDS prevention, and in partnership with their communities, they work on a wide range of HIV/AIDS activities focused on building the capacity of host country nationals and local organizations. The ability of Volunteers to learn local languages and implement sustainable and culturally appropriate grass roots interventions gives them a strategic advantage in the fight against HIV/AIDS, particularly in Africa. Through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Peace Corps Volunteers continue to meet the challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic working in 10 of the 15 focus countries. The agency began operations in its 10th PEPFAR country in 2007 when it re-opened a program in Ethiopia.

Other agency highlights include: the Peace Corps' expected return to Liberia in FY 2008 after a 17-year absence through the agency's Peace Corps Response program; the agency's presence in 16 predominately Muslim countries (approximately 22 percent of Volunteers around the world); the opening of a new country program in the Kingdom of Cambodia in 2007; country assessments in Indonesia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone; and an increase in minority recruitment. In fact, minority numbers have reached their highest level since the agency began tracking ethnicity in 1987. Minorities now comprise 17 percent of all Volunteers.

There are also several new initiatives currently underway at the agency focusing on: Strategic Recruitment and Outreach, Measuring Success and Impact, and Promoting Volunteerism. With regard to strategic recruitment, I believe that the 50+ population, with their lifetime of experience, represents a tremendous opportunity for

*Continued on next page*

the Peace Corps, and as such, the regions and headquarters are currently conducting assessments and making recommendations on how to better support the needs of potential 50+ Volunteers. Our medical services team is seeking ways to better process and evaluate 50+ applications, 10 pilot posts are examining changes to their existing pre-service training curriculum, and the Peace Corps' training staff is designing new language learning modules. Currently, five percent of all Volunteers are 50+, and I am committed to increasing this percentage.

Concerning the second initiative, while there is an intrinsic understanding of the great value the Peace Corps brings to the world, the agency needs to better measure its impact in quantifiable ways. To add to its current performance measures and countless stories of individuals influenced by the work of Volunteers who go on to become Presidents, Ministers, and business and cultural leaders in their countries — the Peace Corps is looking to bolster its ability to capture its impact in more measurable terms. As such, the Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning was established in 2007. This office is currently in the process of developing the Peace Corps' new strategic plan for FY 2009–FY 2014 that will better measure the agency's performance.

Regarding the third initiative, I believe the Peace Corps is the gold standard for volunteerism, and it can assist its host country partners around the world in promoting volunteerism among their own people. In June 2007, I created a task force to carry forward the vision of promoting volunteerism in interested countries in which we serve, and to develop a set of best practices on volunteerism. Encouraging less developed countries to establish programs under which their citizens would volunteer is actually a mandate of the agency under the Peace Corps Act, and I am enthusiastic about this renewed effort to support countries that have asked for our assistance in exploring the creation of their own national service corps.

The agency has also seen growth in its Peace Corps Partnership Program which links interested individuals, groups, foundations, service organizations and businesses to Volunteers overseas in order to obtain financial support for community-initiated projects. Projects range from building libraries and latrines to supporting youth camp scholarships and micro-finance enterprises. In FY 2007, the Partnership Program received 5,684 donations totaling $1.4 million that were applied to 429 community-initiated projects in 50 countries.

Finally, the safety and security of our Volunteers remains the agency's highest priority. All trainees, before they are sworn-in as Volunteers, must demonstrate proficiency in key worldwide safety and security core competencies. And, the agency will continue to do its part to ensure that all Volunteers have an extensive support system and a quality Volunteer experience.

I appreciate the on-going bipartisan support that the Congress has provided to the Peace Corps, and look forward to working with you as the Peace Corps seeks to expand its promotion of world peace and friendship in FY 2009. As I have visited with over 1,000 Volunteers and trainees in the field, I am continually amazed at the work they are doing and the impact they are having in communities around the globe. They truly represent the best face of America abroad. Please let me know when your travel plans may take you to a Peace Corps country, my staff would be delighted to arrange a visit with Volunteers during your trip. The Peace Corps is poised to recruit, train, and send out Volunteers to further its expansion efforts and share the generosity of America with its host country partners.

Sincerely,

Ron Tschetter
Director

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Peace Corps provides practical assistance to developing countries by sharing America's most precious resource—its people. The close interaction between Peace Corps Volunteers and local communities has allowed the Peace Corps to establish an admirable record of service that is recognized around the world. For 47 years, Peace Corps Volunteers have helped build the path to progress with people who want to build a better life for themselves, their children, and their communities. Around the world, Peace Corps Volunteers continue to bring a spirit of hope and optimism to the struggle for progress and human dignity. More than 190,000 Americans have served in 139 countries since the agency's establishment.

While times have changed since the Peace Corps' founding in 1961, the agency's mission—to promote world peace and friendship—has not. The three core goals of the Peace Corps are as relevant today as they were 47 years ago:

- To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

In fiscal year (FY) 2009, the Peace Corps will continue to build upon the accomplishments achieved to date by placing 8,100 Volunteers in the field in 79 countries at the close of FY 2009. This expansion will occur primarily in programs in existing countries, along with three proposed new country entries. Additionally, the agency will remain an active participant in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR), serving in 10 of the 15 focus countries (the agency began operations in its 10th PEPFAR country in the fall of 2007 when it re-opened a program in Ethiopia); maintain its presence in predominately Muslim countries; and increase the recruitment of Volunteers from diverse backgrounds, particularly those age 50 years and older.

The proposed budget request of $343.5 million will allow the Peace Corps to make lasting contributions to the United States, the international community, and the American work force. By representing American values and diversity, responding to humanitarian crises and natural disasters, and developing leadership skills among host country nationals, Volunteers will be given opportunities to change the lives of men and women in their host communities through the transfer of tangible skills. They will improve American's understanding of other peoples by increasing the exposure of Americans to other cultures. And, by sharing Volunteer experiences and stories in numerous venues, including the classroom, special events, community visits, and through electronic means, returning Peace Corps Volunteers will continue to spread cross-cultural understanding throughout the United States.

The budget will also be used to further increase the retention level of Americans interested in the Peace Corps by better facilitating the process of obtaining information, applying, joining, and completing volunteer service. Efforts to reduce the overall application time for those applying to the Peace Corps will remain an agency priority, and an anticipated trainee input of approximately 4,369 future Volunteers will be needed to meet the Peace Corps' recruitment goals. Country assessments and new program ramp-up funds will be required for any new country entry or re-entry, if entry is determined to be feasible.

The safety and security of each Volunteer will remain the agency's number one priority, and the staff of the Office of Safety and Security will continue their commitment to research, planning, training, and compliance. The Peace Corps will ensure a quality Volunteer experience by increasing the quality of health care, including the monitoring of Avian influenza, and by managing the safety and security risk factors in each of the communities where Volunteers live.

The Peace Corps will also evaluate the number of Volunteers serving within each region, build on the current Volunteer work satisfaction rate of 90 percent, focus on enhancing communication with Volunteers at post, and further efforts to develop innovative responses to natural disasters and humanitarian crises through its Peace Corps Response program. Peace Corps Response, formerly known as the Crisis Corps, mobilizes Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) to provide short-term humanitarian assistance to countries worldwide. Since its inception in 1996, this program has sent more than 1,000 Returned Volunteers into the field in over 40 countries. The Crisis Corps will be retained as a unique branch within Peace Corps Response, designed for Volunteers who are deployed to crisis and immediate need situations, such as disaster relief following hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, and other catastrophes. Peace Corps Response assignments are short-term, generally lasting three to six months.

Additionally, the FY 2009 budget request will provide the necessary funds to continue the implementation of congressionally mandated upgrades to the Peace Corps' financial system and ensure agency compliance with new auditing requirements and process management. The Peace Corps was pleased to obtain an unqualified financial audit in FY 2007 and looks forward to achieving greater efficiencies in the year ahead. In the area of information technology, notable investments will continue to be made to the Volunteer Delivery System, online Volunteer communication and collaboration tools, and in federally mandated infrastructure security.

Lastly, the budget reflects the reimbursements required to the Department of State for the Capital Security Cost-Sharing Program, increases in expenditures to the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS), and foreign service modernization relating to personnel.

Encouraging service and volunteerism among the American people is part of a long tradition in the United States and of this Administration. Over 100,000 people contact the Peace Corps each year seeking information about serving as a Volunteer. When Volunteers complete their overseas service, many continue their commitment to volunteerism or use their skills and experience to enhance careers and make contributions to our society in virtually every sector. It is the people-to-people relationships that Peace Corps Volunteers forge with their host country colleagues and communities that serve as a crucial foundation for world peace, cross-cultural exchange, and understanding—and make a lasting investment for the United States.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

# THE PEACE CORPS STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPACTING THE WORLD THROUGH SERVICE AND FRIENDSHIP

## Current Plan

In fiscal year (FY) 2009, the agency will undergo a transition period as it moves from its FY 2003 to 2008 strategic plan to a newly crafted six-year strategic plan covering FY 2009 to 2014. This transition will call for the Peace Corps to continue using the FY 2008 indicators from the FY 2003 to 2008 strategic plan with new FY 2009 performance targets, while the FY 2009 to 2014 plans are in development. A driving force behind this transition was the creation of a new Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning to enhance the Peace Corps' strategic planning and reporting, its evaluation and measurement, and its data governance activities. The office was established in May 2007 and is charged with leading the development of content for long-range planning efforts, facilitating the implementation of Peace Corps level program evaluations and improving the use of outcome-based performance measures. For FY 2009, the existing strategic plan not only reflects the agency's long-standing commitment to the unique role that Volunteers perform to further the three goals set forth in the Peace Corps Act, but it institutionalizes a comprehensive safety and security approach and furthers the modernization of the agency's support infrastructure to meet the growing needs of our overseas programs and partners.

## Tweny-first Century Focus

The mission of promoting world peace and friendship, as well as the three goals of the Peace Corps, has remained the same since the agency's inception in 1961. Development indicators, however, suggest that nations on all continents will continue to be challenged in the years ahead by demands for improved development in information technology, agriculture, education, public health, the environment, youth development, and business.

Recognizing the on-going strategic importance of the Peace Corps in this century, President George W. Bush continues to affirm his support of the agency and its three goals. In a 2007 letter to Volunteers, the President states that "[Peace Corps] Volunteers like you are demonstrating the compassionate spirit of America by serving in developing communities, improving education and health care services, and enhancing technology across the globe. ... [Y]our positive influence promotes the cause of world peace and human progress, and your dedicated efforts display the true character of our Nation." It is this commitment to service and cross-cultural exchange that Peace Corps Volunteers embody.

At the close of FY 2007, the Peace Corps had 8,079 Volunteers in the field serving 68 posts in 74 countries. The Peace Corps is pleased with its expansion efforts to date seeing its ranks grow by over 1,400 Volunteers since FY 2002. Thus, in FY 2009, the agency will seek to expand and diversify the number of Volunteers in the field, enter or re-enter three new countries, actively participate in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), assess the placement and possible expansion of Volunteers in predominantly Muslim countries, and continue to develop new programming opportunities in response to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. These objectives will be accomplished as the agency strives to enhance the effectiveness of the service of its Peace Corps Volunteers and focuses on Volunteer safety and security.

## Vision

The vision of the Peace Corps is to assist interested countries around the world while providing an effective and satisfying Volunteer experience for a diverse group of Americans in a safe and secure environment, and to build an operational infrastructure to efficiently and effectively support the Volunteer in the 21st century.

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1 *This number of Volunteers reflects all funding sources and includes 195 Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and nine Volunteers funded by USAID Tsunami funds.*

### THE PEACE CORPS MISSION AND THREE GOALS

*The purpose of the Peace Corps is to promote world peace and friendship*

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

## Mission

The mission, to promote world peace and friendship, and the three goals of the Peace Corps are as vital today as they were 47 years ago.

The Peace Corps combines development with people-to-people relationships that Volunteers forge with host country colleagues and communities. This combination serves as a crucial foundation for peace and friendship for generations to come.

Since its inception in 1961, the Peace Corps has sent more than 190,000 Volunteers to serve in 139 countries around the globe—from Albania to Zambia—promoting the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship. In carrying out the agency's three goals, Volunteers share their time and talents by serving as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, agriculture and environmental specialists, and health and HIV/AIDS educators.

## Strategic Planning Process

The Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) is the Peace Corps' primary strategic planning mechanism. IPBS is consistent with the planning process defined by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). It features a multilevel strategic planning process that requires each Peace Corps office and sub-office to set goals and establish quantifiable objectives and specific tasks—in essence, a performance plan—with related timelines. IPBS incorporates a three-year planning cycle, where every Peace Corps office and overseas post is required to define its goals and objectives and develop a strategic plan and budget that will enable each office to meet them. However, these plans are based on projected levels of funding, which are adjusted accordingly if the funding levels are not realized through actual appropriations. This is possible through the annual update of the three-year plan as well as quarterly reviews and adjustments of office plans to executed actions.

IPBS annually includes an assessment and evaluation of the previous year's plans and projects. It then identifies lessons learned, potential improvements, and plans for the future. IPBS was reengineered in fall 2005 to better align the agency with federal planning and budget mandates and to take full advantage of the agency's integrated financial management system. The reengineered IPBS structure provides appropriate flexibility for all levels of budget holders while demanding increased accountability agency-wide. The system has resulted in effective resource management, transparent decision-making, timely external reporting, and the production of financial statements directly from the financial management system.

The Peace Corps also requires overseas posts to develop plans for their Volunteer projects that describe the goals, objectives, and life span of the project. The status of each project sector's accomplishments is reviewed annually. Each project sector's strengths and weaknesses are assessed, and the plan is reaffirmed or altered based on lessons learned during its actual implementation.

The agency's planning process begins each spring with the issuance of guidance by the Peace Corps Director. In addition to reaffirming the agency's mission and goals, agency offices must specifically address the impact of its plans on the safety and security of Volunteers and staff. Each office aligns its individual plans with the agency's overall direction and then each office's strategic and operating plan submission is presented to the Director and reviewed. After the review activities conclude, each overseas post, sub-office, and major office assembles its respective performance plan with an emphasis on defining the outcome and performance goals together with accompanying performance indicators.

Moreover, the Peace Corps now reports performance results in the annual Performance and Accountability Report (PAR), as well as receives a review via the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART) process. The last PART review was completed in 2005 with the Peace Corps receiving an effective rating. The Peace Corps expects its next PART review to be completed subsequent to the submission of the agency's Strategic Plan for FY 2009-2014 in September 2008. In the PAR, the agency must report and analyze its annual performance results compared to the annual targets. Together, these tools ensure that the agency is monitoring and reporting performance goals and results and continually seeking ways to improve. In 2007, the Peace Corps received an unqualified financial statement opinion from its external auditors (moving from a qualified opinion in FY 2006), which was part of its FY 2007 PAR submission.

## The Peace Corps' Goals for Fiscal Years 2003-2008

Our existing strategic plan continues to present the four strategic goals that the Peace Corps seeks to achieve with specific FY 2009 performance indicators. Each strategic outcome goal is followed by a set of measurable performance goals with accompanying means and strategies; a discussion of the relationship to the agency's annual performance goals vis-à-vis the annual budget; key factors potentially affecting achievement of the stated goals; and the methods used to assess achievement. The four strategic goals are outlined below and brief detail about each goal's outcome measures and performance goals follows.

In FY 2007, the Peace Corps attained the highest number of Volunteers serving across the globe in the last 37 years. While efforts are underway to develop a new strategic plan for FY 2009 to 2014, the agency continues to work under the guidance of the existing plan (FY 2003 to 2008). The agency anticipates submitting the new strategic plan to the Office of Management and Budget in September 2008. In the meantime, we have crafted an updated performance plan to guide our efforts until our final plan is completed.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas; broadening the impact on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills; and helping to promote an understanding of Americans, including representing American diversity, at a rate consistent with annual funding.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Ensure a quality Volunteer experience by increasing the quality of healthcare and managing the safety and security risk factors in each of the communities where the Volunteers live.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Increase the exposure of Americans to other cultures by sharing Volunteer experiences and stories in numerous venues, including the classroom, special events, community visits, and through electronic means, as well as engaging those who have completed their service in ongoing Peace Corps-supported volunteer opportunities.

### STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Increase the retention level of Americans interested in the Peace Corps by better facilitating the process of obtaining information, applying, joining, and completing their Volunteer service.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas; broadening the impact on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills; and helping to promote an understanding of Americans, including representing American diversity, at a rate consistent with annual funding.

### Strategy

The Peace Corps is committed to maintaining the number of Volunteers in the field achieved in FY 2007. This will require modest expansions in trainee input, which is both strategically and incrementally implemented. These input requirements will be balanced with the need to preserve the core values of the Peace Corps and to provide the infrastructure necessary to support the work of the Volunteers and the business of the agency. The Peace Corps will also continue to use data from the Biennial Volunteer Survey and our updated close-of-service survey to assess Volunteer effectiveness and satisfaction.

The Peace Corps continues to receive new requests and perform assessments as it works to broaden its mission and deepen the impact Volunteers have on the men and women of their host countries. Evidence suggests that there is an increasing demand for the Peace Corps and the programs it provides to foreign countries. In FY 2007, the agency conducted three country assessments, re-opened a program in Ethiopia, and initiated plans to begin a Peace Corps Response program in Liberia in FY 2008. Entering or re-entering new countries is always directly tied to the agency's annual appropriations.

With the addition of Ethiopia, the Peace Corps now participates in 10 out of 15 PEPFAR countries. The Peace Corps also expanded its participation in PEPFAR through programs in 12 other nations. This participation is enabling the agency to enhance and expand its contributions to the battle against AIDS. In FY 2007, nearly 93 percent of all Peace Corps posts worked directly or indirectly in HIV/AIDS activities. For the second year in a row, Volunteers assisted approximately 1 million people through their HIV/AIDS prevention and care related activites. The establishment by the Peace Corps of an Office of AIDS Relief to provide overall leadership for the agency's response to the pandemic throughout the world while facilitating the agency's PEPFAR and HIV/AIDS commitments has added to our Volunteers' success.

During FY 2007, traffic to the Peace Corps' website continued to increase. The growing international focus of our society also builds increased awareness of global issues and the Peace Corps is a key means for U.S. citizens to exercise their sense of service and informal ambassadorship overseas. The positive reception of the marketing campaign, Internet resources, and related materials are key indicators of that success.

The Peace Corps plans to continue to track individuals through the online application process and provide them with updates, reminders, and assistance. Additionally, the agency is seeking to strengthen its relationships with national associations and build its community outreach efforts, targeting audiences of diverse ages, including people approaching retirement as part of the Director's 50+ initiative.

### Expansion

#### Peace Corps Response

Peace Corps Response (formerly known as Crisis Corps) is a program within the Peace Corps that mobilizes returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) to provide short-term humanitarian service and technical assistance to countries worldwide. In FY 2007, Peace Corps Response deployed 64 Volunteers into service. Additionally, working through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Peace Corps Response sent nine Americans to provide relief to those affected by the devastation caused by the tsunami in Southeast Asia. They also worked on PEPFAR funded, short-term assignments.

#### Infrastructure Enhancements

Under the direction of the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), the Peace Corps is improving its technical infrastructure to streamline current operational processes that will support Volunteers in the field, reduce administrative burdens, under-gird operational needs of the agency, and improve the security of digital assets. Notable among the infrastructure enhancements is the creation of Magellan, a global IT network that will securely connect posts to the headquarters and regional recruiting offices, continue to improve and enhance the

Volunteer Delivery System, and establish online collaboration tools. Management is also reviewing personnel practices to identify and analyze trends and future needs among Volunteers and staff to determine workforce processes and resource allocations. These analyses will also inform policy decisions and maximize resource efficiency and quality of service.

### Recruitment

While four-year, higher-education institutions have been the main source for Volunteers over the years, the Peace Corps is now working with professional associations to expand recruiting activities to attract mid-career professionals and transitioning older professionals. Assignment areas, such as health and information technology, can often be filled by these professionals who are trained in these qualifying skills.

Efforts to expand the applicant pool also include reaching out to those of diverse age groups and ethnic backgrounds presently underrepresented in the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps continues to identify venues such as national associations, conferences, and publications, and to develop partnerships that will assist with recruitment. In addition, the Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research has developed a "diversity starter kit" to be used in pre-service training to better educate Volunteers about diversity and constructive coping and support strategies to use during their time in the field. Efforts to expand the number of older Americans serving in the Peace Corps include identifying "50+" Peace Corps officials and RPCVs who can be spokespersons at national conferences and other forums. The Office of Medical Services (OMS) is developing materials to inform older Volunteers about issues of relevance to them, such as the impact of serving overseas on retirement benefits, insurance, and medical benefits.

The Peace Corps places significant importance on attracting underrepresented ethnic and age group applicants. The redesign of the Peace Corps website, additional content geared toward underrepresented audiences, and the overall Peace Corps marketing campaign have attracted many new and repeat visitors to the portions of the site devoted to minority groups.

### Communications

The "Life is Calling. How far will you go?" public service campaign continues to grow and reach wider audiences in recruiting applicants for the Peace Corps. In FY 2007, the campaign garnered over $15 million in donated media. Additionally, the agency released 23 new print public service announcements (PSAs) and two new Spanish radio PSAs. These Spanish radio PSAs more than doubled the value of donated media from the previous package in just a few short months of release. Diversity media outlet PSA placements exceeded the agency goal by almost 400 percent for the fiscal year.

The Peace Corps released a new English radio PSA with the voice of actress Ashley Judd in December of 2007, and placements of "Out Of Home" media continue to see strong growth. In the first quarters of 2008, there will be more than 2,150 billboards, airport dioramas, or interior bus/train transit boards in 24 target markets representing worth over $1.9 million in donated media. And, a promising pilot test is underway on 23 college bus systems with over 1,250 interior bus transit boards running during the spring semester.

The agency's website, www.peacecorps.gov, received over 20 percent more visitors in FY 2007 due to expanded content, Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds, and a new "50+" and "teens" section. A new "kids" section, targeted mini-sites, and more video content of Volunteers serving throughout the world are planned for the website in FY 2008 and FY 2009.

The Peace Corps also received the prestigious Telly Award in 2007 for "A Legacy of Service," a video produced in honor of the agency's history of spreading world peace and friendship since 1961.

## Outcome Goal 1.1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas from 7,920 in FY 2007 to 8,100 in FY 2009 at a rate consistent with annual funding.

### Performance Goals

*Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers:*

1.1.1 ... to 7,920 by FY 2007.

1.1.2 ... to 8,000 by FY 2008.

1.1.3 ... to 8,100 by FY 2009.

FIGURE 1.1

*Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers:*

## Outcome Goal 1.2

Broaden the impact of Volunteers on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills, as measured by increasing Volunteers reporting in the Peace Corps close-of-service survey that they were "adequately" to "exceptionally" effective in transferring knowledge and skills to members of their host community to 85 percent by FY 2009.

### Performance Goals

*Incrementally increase Volunteers' skill-transfer effectiveness rating:*

1.2.1 ... to 81% by FY 2007.

1.2.2 ... to 82% by FY 2008.

1.2.3 ... to 85% by FY 2009.

FIGURE 1.2

*Incrementally increase Volunteers' skill-transfer effectiveness rating:*

## Outcome Goal 1.3

Represent American diversity in Peace Corps host communities by increasing the numbers of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people ages 50 and older by 2 percent, from FY 2007 level of 27 percent to 29 percent by FY 2009.

### Performance Goals

*Incrementally increase the percentage of Peace Corps applicants from underrepresented groups:*

1.3.1 ... to 27% by FY 2007.

1.3.2 ... to 28% by FY 2008.

1.3.3 ...to 29% by FY 2009.

FIGURE 1.3

*Incrementally increase the percentage of Peace Corps applicants from underrepresented groups:*

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Ensure a quality Volunteer experience by increasing the quality of healthcare and managing the safety and security risk factors in each of the communities where the Volunteers live.

### Strategy

The Peace Corps will continue to use the results of the biennial Volunteer survey which is conducted during even numbered years, and the close-of-service Volunteer surveys conducted during odd numbered years, to measure performance and to determine if target outcomes are met. If they are not met, the areas noted below will be evaluated to reassess processes and practices and to implement changes to ensure that future targets are achieved.

### Technical Guidelines from the Office of Medical Services

OMS recognizes that technical guidelines are established to provide comprehensive health services and preventative education to Volunteers. These guidelines provide procedures that standardize and monitor healthcare administered by Peace Corps medical officers. These include medical office management, medical logistics, administrative and emergency procedures, ongoing evaluation of medical officers, and recommended current approaches to common medical conditions experienced by Volunteers. Finally, these guidelines ensure that screening policies are based on current research, best practices, and knowledge from the field, all of which are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

### Emergency Care

OMS provides medical evacuation (medevac) and support to Volunteers who require medical and/or psychological care beyond what is available in-country. To achieve this, the medical staff conducts prompt field consults (within 48 hours) and responds to the immediate medical and emotional needs of the Volunteer or trainee in-country. Medically evacuated Volunteers also receive timely and quality medevac care, and, if appropriate, may return to the country of their service.

### Special Services for Volunteers

The Office of Special Services (OSS) provides comprehensive clinical and mental health services for Volunteers. The office also consults with and trains staff to enable them to advocate and promote healthy emotional adaptation by Volunteers to their Peace Corps service. This is critical to ensuring that Volunteers have a positive, productive experience in-country and that there is the support necessary to handle crises and challenging situations.

### Safety and Security Personnel

The Office of Safety and Security, along with regional and post-level safety and security personnel, provides a safety and security framework for Volunteers. This involves training Volunteers to maintain their safety while serving in a foreign country as well as providing assistance with any safety-related issues. When Volunteers are adequately prepared and have access to guidance and assistance from safety and security staff, they are more likely to be safe at home and at work.

### Safety Approach

The safest and most secure Volunteer is one who is at site, well-known, accepted, and integrated into his or her community. This comes by learning the local language and culture, by working in a well-designed project, and by staying close to host families. The safest Volunteers are those who take responsibility for their own behavior and know how to minimize personal risks. According to the 2006 biennial Volunteer survey and the 2007 close-of-service surveys, Volunteers feel safe where they live and work most of the time. The Peace Corps will continue to review and enhance its safety and security policies.

## Outcome Goal 2.1

Increase the percentage of Volunteers indicating feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" satisfied with their in-country healthcare from the FY 2008 level of 82 percent to 85 percent by FY 2009.

### Performance Goals

2.1.1 Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the 2008 biennial Volunteer survey and the 2009 close-of-service Volunteer surveys who rate their healthcare as satisfactory from 82 percent in FY 2008 to 85 percent in FY 2009.

FIGURE 2.1

*Target percentage of Volunteers indicating they are satisfied with their in-country healthcare, as reported in the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey (2008) and the Close of Service Survey (2009).*

## Outcome Goal 2.2

Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteer survey respondents indicating that Volunteers feel safe most of the time ("usually safe" to "very safe") where they live from the FY 2008 level of 88 percent to 90 percent by FY 2009.

### Performance Goals

2.2.1 Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the 2008 biennial Volunteer survey and the 2009 close-of-service Volunteer surveys who feel safe most of the time (usually safe to very safe) where they live from 88 percent in FY 2008 to 90 percent in FY 2009.

FIGURE 2.2

*Target percentage of Volunteers reporting they feel safe where they live most of the time, as reported in the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey (2008) and the Close of Service Survey (2009).*

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Increase the exposure of Americans to other cultures by sharing Volunteer experiences and stories in numerous venues, including the classroom, special events, community visits, and through electronic means, as well as engaging those who have completed their service in ongoing Peace Corps-supported volunteer opportunities.

### Strategy

The Peace Corps achieves its third goal of improving Americans' understanding of other peoples by providing opportunities and resources to RPCVs and educators to teach Americans about other cultures and peoples around the world. The Peace Corps increases these opportunities by encouraging new colleges and universities to participate in the Fellows/USA and Master's International programs, by persuading educators to participate in the Coverdell World Wise Schools program (CWWS), and by seeking donations to Peace Corps Volunteer projects through private-sector donors. This goal is also achieved by ensuring that RPCVs have the information and support they need to engage in third-goal activities.

While previous reporting focused solely on Peace Corps Week activities (which celebrates the anniversary of the agency), regional recruiting offices now highlight other Peace Corps-supported activities that include RPCV interaction with the U.S. public. These include RPCVs giving talks on campuses and at career fairs, in elementary and secondary schools, and at cultural and community fairs. These kinds of interactions all help to raise public understanding of other cultures around the world. RPCVs help educate the American people in many other significant ways, and the Peace Corps is taking steps to better capture these data.

### Coverdell World Wise Schools Program

Established in 1989 by then-Peace Corps Director Paul D. Coverdell, this program provides a variety of free services and materials that help U.S. schoolchildren learn about the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and geography. The World Wise Schools website received nearly 2 million visits in FY 2007.

The World Wise Schools program matches U.S. teachers with Peace Corps Volunteers in the field on a one-to-one basis, enabling them to maintain a vibrant cross-cultural correspondence. World Wise School materials, produced for U.S. classrooms, promote cross-cultural understanding and the ethic of community service. They include writings by Peace Corps Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers supported by standards-based lesson plans, online narrated slide shows, weekly podcasts of Volunteer experiences, a monthly educational electronic newsletter, and award-winning videos about countries served by the agency. Some materials are published in book form; all are available for downloading at no charge from the website at www.peacecorps.gov/wws. Besides being excellent resources for educators, these materials help the agency achieve the Peace Corps' mandated third-goal—helping Americans better understand other peoples.

## Outcome Goal 3.1

Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps-supported activities from 22,606 in FY 2008 to 23,500 in FY 2009.

### Performance Goal

*Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps-supported activities*

3.1.1 ... to 25,844 in FY 2007.

3.1.2 ... to 22,606 in FY 2008.

3.1.3 ... to 23,500 in FY 2009.

FIGURE 3.1

*Number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps-supported activities, FY 2007–2009*

* In early FY 2007 we determined that the previously used methodology to capture this data was labor intensive and did not provide verifiable, optimal results. This was due to the fact that it included an estimate of the number of unregistered returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) that participated in Peace Corps week activities. While there is definitely a number of these individuals that contribute to the attainment of this goal, we have decided to exclude this estimate of unregistered participants in future calculations.

Returned Volunteer celebrating the Peace Corps' third goal with a Girl Scout troop

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Increase the retention level of Americans interested in the Peace Corps by better facilitating the process of obtaining information, applying, joining, and completing their Volunteer service.

### Strategy

The application process to become a Volunteer can be lengthy and the agency continues to look for ways to reduce the application time. However, the Peace Corps must determine if a potential Volunteer is suited for two years of service overseas, so it must assess each applicant thoroughly. These assessments include medical, legal, and psychological screenings as well as comprehensive skills and suitability evaluations. To streamline this process and reduce the application time, the following areas continue to be targeted for enhancement:

#### Application Redesign and Use of Online Application Forms

Online applications have increased dramatically; they currently comprise 93 percent of all applications. The agency continues to review opportunities for more efficiencies and greater user compatibility in its online application process.

#### Medical Screening

OMS and the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) use regionally-assessed medical evaluation and placement teams to better identify matches between future Volunteers and potential countries. OMS and VRS have reviewed and updated the mental health pre-service screening process to reduce evaluation time. The redesigned health status review form and its online availability has significantly reduced processing time. Now nearly 96 percent of all health status review forms are received from applicants online.

#### Retaining Applicants and Volunteers

Significant effort has been made to retain applicants, trainees, and Volunteers from the time that they apply until the time they close their service. The pre-departure online training project provides a means by which applicants can start preparing for their service using online educational tools. During the application process, training modules help them get a head start in learning about culture, languages, and personal responsibility requirements, which will increase their chances for success and satisfaction.

Volunteers are trained to live and work successfully in the context of their assignments and cultural environment. Their satisfaction will be measured by questions in the 2008 Peace Corps Volunteer survey and the redesigned close-of-service survey.

#### Volunteer Delivery System

In early FY 2007, the Director announced the formation of the Volunteer Delivery System (VDS) Steering Committee as a major initiative within the agency's overall strategic planning effort. VDS represents the entire system through which Volunteers are recruited, apply, are invited, trained, and deployed to serve overseas.

The objective of the VDS Steering Committee is for the Peace Corps to optimize the Volunteer Delivery and Support System by leveraging the full force of the agency's organization, management, technology, and fiscal operations to improve and sustain the delivery system holistically. The Steering Committee ensures seamless continuity of operations between offices, a targeted focus on agency resources, and strategic solutions to emerging challenges.

To date, the VDS Steering Committee has focused on new recruiting strategies (including Americans age 50 and over), better messaging of the meaning of service, expediting the process for clearing and inviting applicants, language training, and the development of good sites and projects for Volunteers. Process and system changes are currently under evaluation. Additionally, pilot posts have been identified to evaluate the effectiveness of changes in field operations. The active and important work of the VDS Steering Committee will continue into FY 2008 and beyond as changes are expected to be implemented.

## Outcome Goal 4.1

Improve the responsiveness of the Volunteer application process by streamlining the application process and decreasing the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 7 percent, from 150 days in FY 2007 to 140 days in FY 2009.

### Performance Goals

*Decrease the Peace Corps' response time to applicants:*

4.1.1 ... to 150 days by FY 2007.

4.1.2 ... to 146 days by FY 2008.

4.1.3 ... to 140 days by FY 2009.

FIGURE 4.1

*Decrease in the Peace Corps' response time to applicants, FY 2007–2009*

## Outcome Goal 4.2

Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer resignation rate (with resignation officially defined as a decision made by a Volunteer/trainee that he/she no longer wishes to continue in Peace Corps service) at 10 percent or less.

### Performance Goals

*Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer resignation rate*

4.2.1 ... at 10.0% or less in FY 2007.

4.2.2 ... at 10.0% or less in FY 2008.

4.2.3 ... at 10.0% or less in FY 2009.

FIGURE 4.2

*Overall 12-month resignation rate, FY 2007–2009*

## Conclusion

The agency is proud of the Americans currently serving as Peace Corps Volunteers. By living, working, and integrating into their local communities, Volunteers have a unique role in empowering people in countries throughout the world to take charge of their own futures and to strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding between Americans and the people of other cultures. Through targeted implementation of the FY 2003–2008 strategic plan, and the current development of our 2009-2014 strategic plan, the Peace Corps will continue its leadership, management, and stewardship of resources to enable more Americans to have the opportunity to carry out the Peace Corps' noble mission around the globe.

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## Peace Corps Appropriations Language

For necessary expenses to carry out the provisions of the Peace Corps Act (75 Stat. 612) including the purchase of not to exceed five passenger motor vehicles for administrative purposes for use outside of the United States, $343,500,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010: Provided, That none of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be used to pay for abortions: Provided further, That the Director may transfer to the Foreign Currency Fluctuations Account, as authorized by 22 U.S.C. 2515, an amount not to exceed $5,000,000: Provided further, That funds transferred pursuant to the previous proviso may not be derived from amounts made available for Peace Corps overseas operations.

BUDGET OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, FISCAL YEAR 2009

# BUDGET INFORMATION

## Peace Corps FY 2009 Budget Request by Program Operations

(in thousands of dollars)

| | FY 2007 Actual | FY 2008 Estimate | FY 2009 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **DIRECT VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS** | | | |
| Overseas Operational Management | | | |
| Africa | 68,495 | 72,456 | 76,208 |
| Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia | 45,467 | 48,243 | 50,519 |
| Inter-America and Pacific | 57,904 | 59,511 | 61,494 |
| Peace Corps Response (formerly Crisis Corps) | 916 | 1,135 | 1,207 |
| United Nations Volunteers | 102 | 115 | 116 |
| Subtotal, Overseas Operational Management | 172,885 | 181,461 | 189,544 |
| Overseas Operational Support | | | |
| Volunteer Support Operations | 7,934 | 8,034 | 8,269 |
| Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) | 0 | 10,238 | 10,761 |
| Medical Services Centrally Shared Resources | 8,075 | 9,678 | 11,811 |
| The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research | 6,273 | 6,335 | 6,207 |
| AIDS Relief | 360 | 331 | 366 |
| Volunteer Recruitment and Selection | 14,965 | 14,764 | 14,818 |
| Private Sector Initiatives | 508 | 540 | 597 |
| Centrally Processed Overseas Equipment and Supplies | 5,304 | 4,054 | 5,455 |
| Volunteer Readjustment Allowance | 18,940 | 21,224 | 22,459 |
| Reimbursements to Department of State (ICASS) | 6,129 | 7,600 | 8,400 |
| Subtotal, Overseas Operational Support | 68,488 | 82,797 | 89,143 |
| SUBTOTAL, DIRECT VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS | 241,373 | 264,258 | 278,687 |
| **VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES** | | | |
| Third Goal Programs | | | |
| World Wise Schools | 604 | 598 | 606 |
| University Programs | 564 | 565 | 594 |
| Returned Volunteer Services | 666 | 685 | 730 |
| Subtotal, Third Goal Programs | 1,834 | 1,847 | 1,930 |
| Agency Administration | | | |
| Director's Office, General Counsel, Congressional & Press | 5,555 | 5,574 | 5,912 |
| Communications | 2,381 | 2,526 | 2,500 |
| Safety and Security | 2,680 | 2,561 | 2,710 |
| Office of the Chief Financial Officer | 14,837 | 13,817 | 13,469 |
| OCFO Centrally Managed Resources | 1,755 | 1,781 | 1,795 |
| Acquisitions & Contracts | 1,573 | 1,585 | 1,573 |
| Office of the Chief Information Officer | 9,110 | 8,337 | 8,548 |
| Information Technology Centrally Managed Resources | 13,432 | 8,695 | 8,632 |
| Office of Management | 6,198 | 6,282 | 6,313 |
| Office of Management Centrally Managed Resources | 14,786 | 13,526 | 13,698 |
| Inspector General | 3,408 | 3,637 | 3,783 |
| Subtotal, Agency Administration | 75,715 | 68,321 | 68,933 |
| SUBTOTAL, VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES | 77,549 | 70,169 | 70,863 |

| | FY 2007 Actual | FY 2008 Estimate | FY 2009 Request |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GRAND TOTAL AGENCY** | **318,922** | **334,427** | **349,550** |
| APPROPRIATED RESOURCES | 319,700 | 333,500 | 343,500 |
| AVIAN FLU PREPAREDNESS SUPPLEMENTAL | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TRANSFER FROM FOREIGN CURRENCY FLUC. ACCT | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| RESCISSION | 0 | -2,701 | 0 |
| **TOTAL ENACTED** | 321,700 | 330,799 | 343,500 |
| UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR | 5,459 | 7,619 | 5,350 |
| UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM AVIAN FLU PREPAREDNESS | 622 | 626 | 0 |
| UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM EMERGENCY FUND | 152 | 32 | 0 |
| **TOTAL APPROPRIATED RESOURCES** | **327,932** | **339,077** | **348,850** |
| MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES | 1,660 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| RESERVE FOR UNRECORDED OBLIGATIONS | -2,370 | -800 | -800 |
| TRANSFER TO FOREIGN CURRENCY FLUC. ACCT | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| EST UNOBLIGATED BALANCE (x0100) | -681 | 0 | 0 |
| EST UNOBLIGATED BALANCE AT END OF YEAR | -7,619 | -5,350 | 0 |
| **TOTAL AVAILABLE BUDGETARY RESOURCES** | **318,922** | **334,427** | **349,550** |

*(Detail may not add due to rounding)*

# DESCRIPTION OF THE PEACE CORPS' OPERATIONAL AREAS

## DIRECT VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS

### Overseas Operational Management

*Regional Operations*

Overseas operations are organized and administered through a regional structure composed of three offices: Africa; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia; and Inter-America and the Pacific. These offices provide general oversight and direction to Peace Corps country programs, or posts. Post budgets include Volunteer allowances (living, settling-in, and leave), training for Volunteers, in-country travel for Volunteers and staff, return travel for Volunteers, in-country medical costs including the health unit, and Volunteer safety and security activities.

Before qualifying to serve as a Volunteer, a trainee must participate in a pre-service training of 10 to 12 weeks. This training includes intensive language instruction, cross-cultural training, technical skill enhancement, and training in personal health and safety. Most of the time, this training is contiguous. However, in some situations, a split pre-service training is preferred in which technical skills are enhanced and more detailed training provided shortly after Volunteers have had thorough exposure to their actual work sites. Volunteers also receive training during their service to increase their job effectiveness and satisfaction.

In addition, overseas budgets cover the costs of maintaining the posts: local staff, security, rents, communications, utilities, supplies, and equipment. They also cover the costs to headquarters of managing overseas operations. These costs include salaries and benefits of overseas American and headquarters' regional staff, assignment travel for staff and Volunteers, and certain pre-service training costs borne by headquarters.

*Peace Corps Response*

Peace Corps Response sends extending and former Volunteers on short-term assignments to assist with disaster relief and humanitarian assistance efforts.

*United Nations Volunteers*

The Peace Corps participates in the United Nations Volunteer program by recruiting American Volunteers and providing them with some financial and logistical support.

### Overseas Operational Support

*Volunteer Support*

This office provides medical support for Volunteers, medical screening oversight for applicants, and initial and ongoing training for medical staff and contractors.

*Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)*

Under FECA, the Peace Corps reimburses the Department of Labor for disability payments and medical costs for returned Volunteers and staff who experience service-related injuries or sickness. A vast majority of these costs relate to Volunteers' claims; staff claims are minimal.

*Medical Services Centrally Shared Resources*

These are direct Volunteer medical expenses, including care and travel for medical evacuations and the costs of pre- and post-service physical examinations.

*The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research*

This office supports programming and training in the field. It identifies and disseminates best practices in Volunteer programs and training, and in collaboration with other agency offices develops new training materials for staff and Volunteers. The Center collects and analyzes data from Peace Corps projects, applies technology to the promotion of innovation and learning, manages partnerships and reimbursable agreements with other agencies, provides training and development opportunities to overseas field staff, and manages the pre-departure orientation Volunteers receive in the United States before leaving for overseas pre-service training.

*Office of AIDS Relief*
This office provides agency-level policy, overall leadership, and general supervision, direction, and coordination of all domestic and foreign HIV/AIDS activities relating to agency programs.

*Volunteer Recruitment and Selection*
This office oversees the recruitment of Volunteers through 11 offices across the United States. It assesses the technical and personal skills of applicants and matches qualified persons to specific Volunteer projects. Applicants go through a multifaceted and competitive screening process that includes interviews, evaluations, and reference checks.

*Private Sector Initiatives*
This office manages private sector funds and in-kind contributions received by the Peace Corps. These funds are used to support the Peace Corps Partnership Program projects initiated by Volunteers.

*Centrally Processed Overseas Equipment and Supplies*
Overseen by the Office of Management, this account funds the purchase of vehicles for overseas Volunteer support and supplies for Volunteers such as medical kits, eyeglasses, and mosquito nets.

*Volunteer Readjustment Allowance*
An allowance of $225 per month of service is provided to Volunteers upon termination of service to assist them when they return to the United States.

*Reimbursements to the Department of State (ICASS)*
These are payments the Peace Corps makes to the Department of State for administrative support. Some financial management support is also included here, although the Peace Corps has directly provided most financial management support to its overseas posts since the end of fiscal year 1998.

## VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES

### Third Goal Programs

*Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS)*
This program allows current and former Peace Corps Volunteers to share their overseas experiences with American schoolchildren and young adults. Nearly 3 million students in all 50 states have communicated directly with Volunteers serving in 100 countries since the program's inception in 1989.

*University Programs*
This office manages two partnership programs with universities throughout the United States.

The Fellow/USA program, which began in 1985, provides the opportunity for RPCVs to work toward graduate degrees and to gain professional experience at the same time, in such fields as teacher education, community/economic development, nursing and public health, and environmental studies. In consideration for educational benefits offered by participating universities, Agency Fellows work as teachers or as interns with non-profits or other community agencies.

The Master's International program has been in existence since 1987. Through this program, graduate students incorporate two years of Peace Corps service as a hands-on practicum between an initial year of graduate work and a return to campus to finish their degrees.

*Returned Volunteer Services*
This office assists Volunteers with the readjustment process when they return to the United States by providing job and other practical information. It also serves as a liaison with private returned Volunteer groups and with Peace Corps offices that collaborate with former Volunteers.

## AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

### *Director's Office, General Counsel, Congressional Relations and Press Office*

These offices provide general policy direction, legal advice, and compliance verification to the agency. They also coordinate all external communication and serve as a liaison to Congress and other federal agencies. The Director's Office also includes the American Diversity Program and the Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning.

### *Office of Communications*

This office manages all official internal communications, marketing and advertising, video production and photography, the external website, and agency publications. In addition, the office produces recruitment tools that support the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection.

### *Safety and Security*

This office coordinates and promulgates all world wide Peace Corps safety and security policies except for IT systems security which, by law, is the domain of the Chief Information Officer. Through use of the Volunteer Safety Council, the Crime Statistics and Analysis Unit, and continuing consultation with appropriate federal agencies, Peace Corps regions, and the field, the office institutes, reviews, refines and recommends security policy to the Director of the Peace Corps. The Office also oversees and manages domestic emergency preparedness and physical security, information and personnel security, safety and security of Volunteers and staff overseas, and the collection and analysis of security statistics and trends, and other safety risks to Volunteers.

### *Office of the Chief Financial Officer*

The OCFO oversees all financial management activities relating to the programs and operations of the agency; maintains an integrated agency budget accounting and financial management system; provides financial management policy guidance and oversight; and monitors the financial formulation of the agency budget and the financial execution of the budget in relation to actual expenditures.

### *Office of the Chief Financial Officer Centrally Managed Resources*

These resources are primarily for staff costs such as unemployment compensation, severance pay, terminal leave payments, and overseas staff medical evacuation.

### *Acquisitions and Contracts*

This office is responsible for agency procurement policies and procedures, ensuring compliance with the Federal Acquisition Regulations and the Peace Corps Act. It provides technical guidance and advice to agency staff worldwide on procurement matters and handles all procurement actions for domestic offices.

### *Office of the Chief Information Officer*

This office provides leadership for and management of the development and application of information technology resources and methodologies in support of the Peace Corps' mission at headquarters, U.S. regional offices, and overseas posts. It serves as the primary source of information technology advice and counsel to the agency director.

### *Information Technology Centrally Managed Resources*

These funds include the costs of telecommunications, data center operations, mainframe and distributed computing environments, overseas equipment, disaster recovery, and enterprise information architecture.

### *Office of Management*

This office provides administrative support for headquarters, U.S. field, and international operations through its offices of Human Resource Management and Administrative Services.

### *Office of Management Centrally Managed Resources*

These funds include General Services Administration rent for headquarters and domestic recruiting offices, employee MetroPool benefits, mail services, and building maintenance.

### *Inspector General*

This office fulfills the mandates of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

# Peace Corps Authorizations and Appropriations | FY 1962–FY 2009

(in thousands of dollars)

| Fiscal Year | Authorized | Budget Request [a/] | Appropriated [a/] | Trainee Input | Volunteers and Trainees On Board [b/] |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1962 | $40,000 | $40,000 | $30,000 | 3,699 | N/A |
| 1963 | 63,750 | 63,750 | 59,000 [c/] | 4,969 | N/A |
| 1964 | 102,000 | 108,000 | 95,964 [c/] | 7,720 | N/A |
| 1965 | 115,000 | 115,000 | 104,100 [c/] | 7,876 | N/A |
| 1966 | 115,000 | 125,200 | 114,000 | 9,216 | N/A |
| 1967 | 110,000 | 110,500 | 110,000 | 7,565 | N/A |
| 1968 | 115,700 | 124,400 | 107,500 | 7,391 | N/A |
| 1969 | 112,800 | 112,800 | 102,000 | 6,243 | N/A |
| 1970 | 98,450 | 109,800 | 98,450 | 4,637 | N/A |
| 1971 | 94,500 | 98,800 | 90,000 | 4,686 | N/A |
| 1972 | 77,200 | 71,200 | 72,500 | 3,997 | 6,632 |
| 1973 | 88,027 | 88,027 | 81,000 | 4,821 | 6,194 |
| 1974 | 77,000 | 77,000 | 77,000 | 4,886 | 6,489 |
| 1975 | 82,256 | 82,256 | 77,687 | 3,296 | 6,652 |
| 1976 | 88,468 | 80,826 | 81,266 | 3,291 | 5,825 |
| Transition Qtr | 27,887 | 25,729 | 24,190 | — | — |
| 1977 | 81,000 | 67,155 | 80,000 | 4,180 [d/] | 5,590 |
| 1978 | 87,544 | 74,800 | 86,234 | 3,715 | 6,017 |
| 1979 | 112,424 | 95,135 | 99,179 | 3,327 | 5,723 |
| 1980 | 105,000 | 105,404 | 99,924 | 3,108 | 5,097 |
| 1981 | 118,531 | 118,800 | 105,531 | 2,729 | 4,863 |
| 1982 | 105,000 | 121,900 | 105,000 | 2,862 | 4,559 |
| 1983 | 105,000 | 97,500 | 109,000 | 2,988 | 4,668 |
| 1984 | 115,000 | 108,500 | 115,000 | 2,781 | 4,779 |
| 1984/5 Supp | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | — | — |
| 1985 | 128,600 | 115,000 | 128,600 | 3,430 | 4,828 |
| 1986 | 130,000 | 124,400 | 124,410 [e/] | 2,597 | 5,162 |
| 1987 | 137,200 | 126,200 | 130,760 | 2,774 | 4,771 |
| 1987/8 Supp | 7,200 | — | 7,200 | — | — |
| 1988 | 146,200 | 130,682 | 146,200 | 3,360 | 4,611 |
| 1989 | 153,500 | 150,000 | 153,500 | 3,218 | 5,214 |
| 1990 | 165,649 | 163,614 | 165,649 [f/] | 3,092 | 5,241 |
| 1991 | 186,000 | 181,061 | 186,000 | 3,076 | 4,691 |
| 1992 | — | 200,000 | 197,044 | 3,309 | 4,927 |
| 1993 | 218,146 | 218,146 | 218,146 | 3,590 | 5,414 |
| 1994 | 219,745 [g/] | 219,745 | 219,745 [h/] | 3,541 | 5,644 |
| 1995 | 234,000 | 226,000 | 219,745 [i/ j/] | 3,954 | 5,884 |
| 1996 | — | 234,000 | 205,000 [k/ m/] | 3,280 | 6,086 |
| 1997 | — | 220,000 [l/] | 208,000 [n/] | 3,607 | 5,858 |
| 1998 | — | 222,000 | 222,000 [o/] | 3,551 | 5,757 |
| 1999 | — | 270,335 | 240,000 [p/] | 3,835 | 5,729 |
| 2000 | 270,000 [q/] | 270,000 | 245,000 [r/] | 3,919 | 7,164 |
| 2001 | 298,000 | 275,000 | 267,007 [s/ t/] | 3,191 | 6,643 |
| 2002 | 327,000 | 275,000 | 278,700 [u/ v/] | 4,047 [w/] | 6,636 |
| 2003 | 365,000 | 317,000 | 297,000 [x/] | 4,411 | 7,533 |
| 2004 | — | 359,000 | 310,000 [y/] | 3,812 | 7,733 |
| 2005 | — | 401,000 | 320,000 [z/] | 4,006 | 7,810 |
| 2006 | — | 345,000 | 322,000 [aa/ab] | 4,015 | 7,628* |
| 2007 | — | 336,642 | 319,700 [ac/] | 3,964 | 7,875 |
| 2008 | — | 333,500 | 333,500 [ad/] | 4,120 [est.] | 7,886 [est.] |
| 2009 | — | 343,500 | | 4,369 [est.] | 8,100 [est.] |

* *See note 1, page 2.*

## NOTES:

a/ Starting in FY 1992, funds to remain available for two years.

b/ For FY 1972 through FY 1999, this is the average number of Volunteers throughout the year. For FY 2000 through FY 2004, this is the number of trainees and Volunteers on board on 30 September of the fiscal year, including Crisis Corps and United Nations Volunteers.

c/ Includes reappropriated funds in 1963 ($3.864 million), 1964 ($17 million) and 1965 ($12.1 million).

d/ Includes Trainee Input from Transition Quarter.

e/ Excludes $5.59 million sequestered under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-177).

f/ Excludes $2.24 million sequestered under the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-177) and a $725 thousand reduction related to the Drug Initiative (P.L. 101-167).

g/ Authorization included report language of a $15 million transfer to the Peace Corps from assistance funds for the Newly Independent States (NIS).

h/ In addition, the Peace Corps received a transfer of $12.5 million for assistance to the NIS.

i/ In addition, the Peace Corps received a transfer of $11.6 million for assistance to the NIS.

j/ Appropriation of $219,745 thousand was later reduced by a rescission of $721 thousand.

k/ In addition, the Peace Corps received a transfer of $13 million for assistance to the NIS. An additional $1 million of NIS funds, intended for FY 1996, was received in FY 1997.

l/ In addition, the president requested a transfer of $5 million for assistance to the NIS.

m/ Appropriation of $205,000 thousand was later reduced by a rescission of $296 thousand.

n/ In addition, the Peace Corps received a transfer of $12 million for assistance to the NIS. An additional $1 million of NIS funds, originally intended for FY 1996 in addition to the $13 million received that year, was received in FY 1997.

o/ In addition, the Peace Corps received a base transfer of $3,581 thousand from the Department of State for the Peace Corps' participation in International Cooperative Administrative Support Services.

p/ Appropriation of $240,000 thousand was later reduced by a rescission of $594 thousand. In addition, the Peace Corps received a transfer of $1,269 thousand from Economic Support Funds for security; $7,500 thousand from the FY 1999 Emergency Appropriations Act ($7,000 thousand for security and $500 thousand related to the Kosovo conflict); $6,000 thousand from the Central American and Caribbean Disaster Recovery Fund; and $1,554 thousand from the Business Continuity and Contingency Planning Fund for Y2K preparedness.

q/ Four-year authorization bill by Congress, FY 2000 of $270M, FY 2001 of $298M, FY 2002 of $327M and FY 2003 of $365M.

r/ Appropriation of $245,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $931 thousand.

s/ Appropriation of $265,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $583 thousand.

t/ The Peace Corps received a transfer of $2,590 thousand of Emergency Response Fund monies in support of program evacuations in four countries and the relocation of the New York City regional recruiting office.

u/ The Peace Corps received a transfer of $3,900 thousand of Emergency Response Fund monies in support of potential future evacuations.

v/ Appropriation of $275,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $200 thousand.

w/ Due to the September 11th events, the departure of 417 trainees was delayed from late FY 2001 to early FY 2002.

x/ Appropriation of $297,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $1,930.5 thousand. OMB later reallocated $1,200 thousand in Emergency Response Fund monies from the Peace Corps to another U.S. government agency.

y/ Appropriation of $310,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $1,829 thousand. The Peace Corps received a transfer of $1,131 thousand to implement activities under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

z/ Appropriation of $320,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $2,560 thousand.

aa/ Appropriation of $322,000 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $3,220 thousand.

ab/ In addition, Peace Corps received $1,100 thousand supplemental for Avian Flu Preparedness.

ac/ Revised Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007 (H.J. Res. 20).

ad/ Appropriation of $333,500 thousand was reduced by a rescission of $2,701 thousand.

# SAFETY AND SECURITY

## SAFETY AND SECURITY: THE OVERARCHING PRIORITY

### Office of Safety and Security

While all Peace Corps staff members play a role in promoting safety and security, coordination of these activities is the primary responsibility of the Peace Corps Office of Safety and Security. Established in 2003, this office fosters improved communication, coordination, oversight, and security systems for all Peace Corps safety and security efforts. These include federal employee background investigations, domestic physical security, continuity of operations, crime statistics and analysis, and most importantly, the safety and security of Peace Corps Volunteers and staff overseas.

### The Policy of the Peace Corps on Volunteer Safety and Security

Because Volunteers serve at the grassroots level worldwide, experiencing the broadest range of social and environmental conditions health and safety risks are an inherent part of Volunteer service. Peace Corps staff and Volunteers work together to create a framework that maximizes, to the extent possible, Volunteers' well-being, enabling them to carry out their mission effectively. The Peace Corps incorporates safety and security information into all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service, and ensures that safety and security policies and training curricula are current. Volunteers are asked to do their part by taking responsibility for their behavior at all times and by integrating successfully into their host communities. The safest and most secure Volunteers are those who demonstrate respectful behaviors and who are often at their sites, well-known in their communities, integrated into the culture, able to speak the local language, and who work on well-designed projects.

The Peace Corps takes an integrated approach to Volunteer training. Through language, cross-cultural, and health and safety instruction, Volunteers learn about their new environment and are shown how to effectively cope with the many challenges they will face. They are given tools to adopt a safe and appropriate lifestyle, and instruction about Peace Corps' policies and procedures and their responsibility to abide by them. Throughout pre-service training and regular in-service trainings, Volunteers develop or enhance skills and receive information that helps them understand their surroundings, cope with unwanted attention, and develop personal safety strategies. At the conclusion of pre-service training, every trainee must demonstrate proficiency in key worldwide safety and security core competencies before they are sworn-in as Volunteers. Posts are encouraged to develop additional, locally based training topics to supplement these learning objectives. The Volunteer Safety and Overseas Security division within the Office of Safety and Security manages the integrated facets of safety and security training. Though each post is responsible for training its Volunteers, much of the technical safety and security expertise and staff training is provided by nine regionally-based Peace Corps safety and security officers (PCSSOs), three to each region. PCSSOs provide training to posts in their sub-areas and usually visit each post at least once a year.

In addition to PCSSOs, each post hires a local staff person responsible for coordinating the post's safety and security activities. In spring 2005, the job description for the safety and security coordinator (SSC) was further refined. The Office of Safety and Security provides sub-regional training workshops for every country's SSC every two years, and individual training when required. The office held its most recent SSC workshop in 2007 and will lead this refresher training again in FY 2009 to ensure that all SSCs are receiving continual, uniform training to strengthen their skills and further develop their capacity to support every post's Volunteer security efforts.

An integral part of a post's network for maintaining safety and security is the U.S. embassy. Each Peace Corps country director is a member of the embassy's emergency action committee and a regular participant

in weekly country team meetings. The country director also communicates regularly with the embassy's regional security officer. This officer represents the U.S. government's interests in any safety and security situation and is the first point of contact with local law enforcement officials. The regional security officer reviews with the country director any situation that is deemed of importance to the Peace Corps as well as any travel advisories or other issues of concern.

### Volunteer Crime Incident Analysis

The Office of Safety and Security includes a Crime Statistics and Analysis Unit that continually tracks and analyzes information related to the safety of Volunteers. The unit employs a social science analyst and a safety and security data analyst to develop protocols for reporting violence and other crimes against Volunteers and to compile and analyze the data that are received. Crime statistics for posts are presented to prospective Volunteers at the time of invitation so they can make informed decisions on joining the Peace Corps. Data are published in an annual Safety of the Volunteer report, which provides summary statistics on all assault events against Volunteers for each calendar year as well as information on historical trends in the three Peace Corps regions. The publication's twofold objective is to identify and analyze trends in safety conditions among in-service Volunteers; and to provide useful feedback on noted trends to support the safety and security training and education of Volunteers and staff. Analysis is also used to enhance existing policies and procedures or to develop new procedures as needed.

Improvements in safety reporting have enabled the Peace Corps to profile specific crimes by identifying associated risk factors (e.g., time of day, location, alcohol use, and modes of transportation) and to develop strategies to help Volunteers mitigate these factors. In 2008, the unit will launch an updated crime incident reporting system that expedites the notification of appropriate personnel at headquarters when an incident occurs in the field. A previous enhancement to this system made the definitions of incidents more compatible with national crime categories to allow comparative analyses.

### Emergency Communications and Planning

Most Volunteers live and work in communities at some distance from the Peace Corps post office. Volunteers are expected to stay in touch regularly with the Peace Corps office. They are required to report their whereabouts when they travel away from their sites and to receive the Peace Corps' authorization if they intend to leave the country for any reason.

The Peace Corps addresses larger security concerns through country-specific emergency action plans. These plans, developed to address serious events such as natural disasters or civil unrest, outline the strategies developed by each post to prepare for, respond to, and recover from such crises. The Peace Corps works closely with the U.S. embassy to share information, develop strategies, and coordinate communications in a crisis. If a decision is made to evacuate Volunteers from a country, the Peace Corps commits every available resource to safely move them and staff members out of harm's way. In 2003, the agency established a "situation room" dedicated to handling emergencies as they arise. Located at headquarters, the room includes computer access to emergency contact information and other necessary resources for crisis management support. Staff members are continually trained to support crisis management, using material drawn from the Peace Corps' extensive experience with emergency situations and the agency's *Evacuation Support Guide*. The facility was used on numerous occasions in FY 2007—from evacuating Volunteers due to civil unrest to monitoring the developments following an 8.0 magnitude earthquake in South America.

### Continuity of Operations

The federal continuity of operations (COOP) program ensures that agencies can fulfill their essential functions if offices are forced to close in response to an emergency event. COOP serves as an insurance policy for federal services to the American people and allows each agency to maintain a presence even in the worst natural or manmade emergency scenario. During the past year, the Peace Corps' COOP team has consulted with senior leadership and agency offices to identify essential agency functions and

activities that support these functions. The two functions considered critical to the Peace Corps in a COOP event are: 1) the safety and security of Volunteers; and 2) the recovery of business systems. The Office of Safety and Security developed the Peace Corps' COOP plan, which has been approved by the Peace Corps Director. Additionally, an addendum to the COOP was approved which outlines the specific steps the agency will take in response to an influenza pandemic. The office has also developed several COOP alternate relocation sites using existing Peace Corps resources that will allow the seamless continuation of Peace Corps' programs at a minimal cost.

*Director Ron Tschetter with Returned Peace Corps Volunteers Representatives Sam Farr (D-CA), Tom Petri (R-WI), Jim Walsh (R-NY), and Mike Honda (D-CA) at the annual Peace Corps Capitol Hill Intern and Staff Recruiting Event, July 2007*

THE VOLUNTEER

# Program Priorities: How Peace Corps Volunteers Serve Around the Globe

*Volunteer projects and activities are the primary focus of the Peace Corps program. Volunteers are involved in a variety of host country projects because they speak the local languages, appreciate the cultural traditions, and are eager to respond to local community needs. Currently, the Peace Corps' work worldwide falls into six general sectors: agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. Additionally, Volunteers in all sectors incorporate meaningful work in information and communication technology (ICT), women in development/gender and development (WID/GAD), HIV/AIDS, and youth development into their primary and secondary activities. A discussion of each sector's work objectives and examples of Volunteer activities follow.*

*In FY 2007, there were 8,079 Peace Corps Volunteers from all sectors working directly with more than 2.1 million individuals. Volunteers and their counterparts reached an additional 3 million individuals through the use of mass media technologies (e.g. radio, video, and the Internet.) Volunteers provided training skills to 159,402 service providers, including teachers, health clinic workers, and organization administrators; their efforts assisted 29,093 agencies, organizations, and nongovernmental agencies. Women and girls represented more than half (1.24 million out of 2.1 million) of all individual beneficiaries and service providers assisted, reflecting the agency's commitment to building their capacity.*

## Agriculture

Volunteers recognize that the Earth's resources are finite, and over the past 30 years the Peace Corps has designed agriculture projects that reflect this limitation. Along with their environment-sector counterparts, many agriculture Volunteers help farmers focus on the long term productivity of their fields by maintaining and improving soils and managing water. They demonstrate the importance of working with local, natural inputs to control pests and erosion. Increasingly, Volunteers and their partners are promoting approaches to farming that are both sustainable and organic as they continue to work with a broad range of agricultural products. Volunteers systematically include women and youth into their agriculture-extension activities. Today, a Volunteer is as likely to be working with a women's association or youth club as with a male head of household.

In FY 2007, there were 480 agriculture Volunteers providing assistance through 16 projects.

### Examples of Volunteer work include:

- training farmers and extension agents to develop and disseminate successful farming practices;
- improving traditional field-crop systems by introducing farmers to better practices and technologies such as new soil conservation techniques, crop diversification, and agro-forestry strategies;
- expanding the availability and acceptance of nontraditional crops by promoting strengthening vegetable gardening and fruit tree production while raising awareness about the nutritional value of the foods produced;
- increasing knowledge and skills needed for small-animal husbandry, such as poultry, rabbits, fish, and honey production; and
- helping producers increase the value of their agricultural products by developing new products such as jams and dried fruit; as well as improving storage, increasing distribution, and implementing more effective management and marketing.

## Business Development

Volunteers with a variety of business education and professional experiences are assigned to projects that focus on business, organizational, and communication skills in local government offices, nonprofit agencies, and for-profit businesses. Recently, the focus of work in this sector has shifted from business consulting to more community economic development, emphasizing sustainability, transparency, community volunteerism, and leadership training. In response to the needs of a global economy, the number of business Volunteers continues to grow as efforts intensify to assist underserved communities and to expand entrepreneurial skills for women and youth.

In FY 2007, there were 1,412 business development Volunteers providing assistance through 49 projects worldwide.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- training activities in computer and Internet use;
- training entrepreneurs in marketing, business planning, and bookkeeping;
- helping artisan cooperatives market their handmade goods;
- advising women's groups about access to credit;
- educating young people to enter the workforce and participate in the market economy;
- helping businesses find markets for traditional and value-added products;
- counseling businesses including microfinance on organizational issues;
- teaching financial management to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); and
- working with ecotourism project planning through community-based resource management

## Education

Education remains the Peace Corps' largest program sector; in reality, all Volunteers are, to some extent, educators. Many host country nationals describe how the Peace Corps Volunteer who taught them years ago opened up new vistas for their future and empowered them to make a difference. Education projects include team-teaching courses in math, science, health, environment, and civics or skills-based classes in English and literacy. Education Volunteers strengthen local capacity by training and mentoring teachers in K–12 schools, teacher-training colleges and universities. Based on the needs of host communities, Volunteers support programs for vulnerable, marginalized or other special-needs children; also creating after-school programs, clubs and camps for boys and girls to promote HIV/AIDS prevention and life skills. Education Volunteers train teachers to expand learning opportunities through the use of ICT including radio, video, and computers, which are increasingly important for accessing information, communicating professionally, and equipping students with 21st-century skills. Improved ICT broadens access to education, makes learning more interactive, provides teachers with access to classroom materials, and enables classrooms around the world to communicate and collaborate.

Volunteers are also making significant contributions to girls' education and gender awareness. Around the world, Volunteers promote activities that help expand educational opportunities for females in both formal and non-formal settings. For example, Volunteers conduct summer leadership camps for girls, support community awareness of girls' achievements and potential, encourage their participation in the classroom, establish safe environments for after-school study, and organize career fairs for women. Similarly, Volunteers are working with boys and men to explore gender roles, expectations, and opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

In FY 2007, there were 2,121 education Volunteers providing assistance through 53 projects worldwide.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- teaching English to teachers and students through classes and extracurricular activities;
- mentoring counterparts and training teachers;
- advising in the development of curricula and teaching materials;
- promoting community and school-based resource centers;
- advising school-community organizations, parent-teacher groups, and community development projects;
- supporting adult education;
- promoting distance learning;
- supporting special-needs classes, such as deaf education;
- encouraging early childhood education; and
- working with radio stations to teach English and HIV/AIDS prevention.

## Environment

Volunteers working in environment projects help strengthen a community's ability to conserve and use natural resources sustainably. They work primarily at the grassroots level focusing on human needs and sustainable alternatives. Volunteers focusing on agro-forestry, for example, identify and train local leaders so they can teach other farmers how to use forestry to improve the productivity and resource sustainability of their fields and garden. Similarly, Volunteers implement education activities outside the classrooms through environmental clubs and eco-camps. At some posts, schools and communities are connected for the first time as parents and youth work together to identify joint projects, such as bottle recycling or park cleanup days.

In FY 2007, there were 885 environment Volunteers providing assistance through 35 projects worldwide.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- promoting reforestation and soil and water conservation with individual farmers;
- co-teaching classes in schools, conducting teacher-training seminars, and developing curricula related to environmental topics;
- promoting non-formal environmental education (e.g., summer camps, eco-clubs, Earth Day events, and theater dramas);
- working with entrepreneurs and associations to develop or strengthen alternatives to unsustainable harvesting and cultivation practices, such as generating income from renewable natural resources.

## Health and HIV/AIDS

Worldwide, 20 percent of all Volunteers work in health projects to promote preventive health education with an emphasis on overall health and well-being. The scope of these projects include: hygiene and sanitation; water systems development and enhancement; food security; maternal and child health; communicable diseases; chronic illnesses; healthy lifestyles, exercise, and decision making. Volunteers and their counterparts address these health issues in a variety of ways, including formal classroom instruction from kindergarten to university level; materials development; training for health care providers; and non-formal health sessions using murals, theater, radio, television, and puppet shows.

Many Volunteers focus on HIV/AIDS prevention and care exclusively or as part of a comprehensive community health project. Life skills training continues to be at the center of much of Volunteers' HIV/AIDS prevention work, particularly when targeting youth. Increasingly, Volunteers are assigned to HIV/AIDS-related NGOs and assist in increasing the technical, managerial, and administrative capacities of these groups. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in HIV/AIDS prevention and care because they live and work in local communities and can present information in culturally sensitive ways. The Peace Corps is collaborating with the U.S. Department of State's Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator to support the U.S. government's commitment to worldwide HIV/AIDS care, prevention, and treatment through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The agency is active in 10 of the 15 PEPFAR focus countries. Ninety-three percent of all Peace Corps posts around the world conducted HIV/AIDS activities, benefiting over 1 million people.

In FY 2007, there were 1,666 health and HIV/AIDS Volunteers providing assistance through 53 projects worldwide.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- teaching—formally and informally—about health and HIV/ AIDS prevention and care;
- expanding peer education to urge youth and others to reduce risky behaviors;
- promoting healthy lifestyles, especially for youth;
- supporting youth and orphan activities and care;
- providing nutrition and hygiene education classes in communities;
- promoting education about infectious disease prevention;
- assisting in maternal and child health clinics;
- strengthening NGO health-delivery systems;
- constructing and managing water systems; and
- supporting community sanitation efforts.

## Youth

Since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, Volunteers have had great success working with youth. It is often young people in a community who are the Volunteers' first language coaches and cultural interpreters. In turn, young people value the opportunity to learn from Peace Corps Volunteers. In most of the countries in which Peace Corps works, over 50 percent of the population is under the age of 25. Volunteers in the youth sector are guided by three key principles: promoting positive youth development, facilitating a greater level of youth participation, and approaching community development from an asset-based point of view. Volunteers and their partners integrate these approaches into stand-alone youth development projects and into projects that cross all program sectors. The Peace Corps' approach to youth development supports effective, sustainable work with young people, their families, and their communities. Projects also aim to build the capacity of youth-serving organizations and the host country professionals who work with young people. Critical issues affecting youth throughout the world include successfully making the transition from school to work, developing relevant skills to prepare them for family life, and becoming engaged and active citizens in their communities.

Volunteers also serve a valuable role in reaching special populations such as children orphaned due to HIV/AIDs, street children, and other vulnerable young people. Volunteers work with their partners to improve employment skills for disenfranchised and out-of-school young men and women, and provide support to youth to help avoid drugs and prostitution. Many Volunteers serve as mentors for young people and as counterparts in youth-service organizations. Volunteers are uniquely positioned to provide learning opportunities to girls and boys at the grassroots level. The overarching purpose of youth development work is to help young men and women maintain healthy lifestyles and to prepare them for their roles in the world of work, in family life, and as good citizens.

In FY 2007, there were 466 youth development Volunteers providing assistance through 17 projects worldwide.

Examples of Volunteer work include:

- increasing employability skills, career planning and entrepreneurship training;
- supporting training for computer skills and Internet use;
- developing leadership, communication, and teamwork skills through sports, recreation, drama, and arts opportunities;
- providing environmental education and community service opportunities;
- providing life skills through family life and healthy lifestyles training, including HIV/AIDS prevention;
- promoting positive leadership and citizenship development;
- developing the skills of teachers, youth promoters, and social workers to better facilitate participatory, asset based learning opportunities for youth; and
- working to engage parents and other community adults to support youth priorities.

## Peace Corps Response

Peace Corps Response, formerly known as the Crisis Corps, mobilizes returned Peace Corps Volunteers to provide short-term humanitarian assistance to countries worldwide. Since its inception in 1996, this program has sent over 1,000 returned Volunteers to more than 40 countries.

The title Peace Corps Response better reflects the work of this important department and allows it to broaden its five programming areas to include projects that do not necessarily rise to the level of a crisis. Additionally, the term "crisis" has not always resonated well with possible host countries and partnering organizations, resulting in impeding the development of some much needed assignments.

Peace Corps Response's five main program areas are:

- Humanitarian assistance
- HIV/AIDS (including PEPFAR programming)
- Disaster preparedness and mitigation
- Natural disaster relief and reconstruction
- Post-conflict relief and reconstruction

The Crisis Corps will be retained as a unique branch within the Peace Corps Response program. Its focus will be to mobilize Volunteers to provide disaster relief and other immediate-need assistance to countries affected by hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, and other catastrophes.

In 2007, Peace Corps Response Volunteers worked to mitigate the effects of flooding in Panama; typhoons in the Philippines, and cyclones in Madagascar. In the Eastern Caribbean, El Salvador, and Guatemala—areas prone to cyclical natural disasters—Peace Corps Response Volunteers have been actively engaged in disaster preparedness and mitigation projects. These Volunteers also played a key role in the fight against HIV/AIDS, augmenting the work of Peace Corps Volunteers in nine countries with a high level of technical assistance.

Peace Corps Response draws from a pool of former Peace Corps Volunteers interested in short-term critical work. Peace Corps Response Volunteers have already served as Peace Corps Volunteers, so they come to their posts already in possession of the appropriate language, technical, and cross-cultural skills needed to make an immediate impact. When requests come in for Peace Corps Response Volunteers, a recruitment and placement specialist searches a database of RPCV applicants for candidates with the appropriate skills.

Peace Corps Response assignments are short term, generally lasting three to six months. Specific projects are developed by a partner organization, the Peace Corps overseas office, and the Peace Corps Response office in Washington, D.C. Partner organizations include local and international nongovernmental organizations, international development and relief organizations, government agencies, and United Nations organizations.

A Peace Corps Response Volunteer in the Eastern Caribbean working with youth on disaster planning and preparedness

## Peace Corps Partnership Program

The Peace Corps Partnership Program connects interested individuals, groups, foundations, service organizations, and businesses to Volunteers and their communities in order to obtain financial support for community-initated projects. The mission of the Peace Corps Partnership Program (Partnership Program) is to build enduring financial alliances with the private sector in an effort to connect donors with community-based projects where Volunteers serve. The Partnership Program is administered by the agency's Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI), which oversees and manages all donations to the Peace Corps. One hundred percent of contributions made to the Partnership Program are used for project purposes in host countries.

Donors to the Partnership Program may contribute to a sector fund or to a specific project. Partnership Program sector funds provide a mechanism through which donors in the United States can support a specific area of development in communities served by the Peace Corps. Currently, the sector funds include business development, education, environment, youth, gender development, information technology, health, and HIV/AIDS education. In April 2007 a new drinking water and sanitation fund was added. With the help of the Wallace Genetic Foundation and their generous $25,000 donation—along with a commitment to match the next $25,000 raised—a total of $75,000 has been contributed to this new fund. Now, projects such as building latrines, digging wells, and ensuring water distribution are receiving funding in a timely manner. A list of all current projects seeking funds can be found on the Peace Corps website by clicking on the "Donate Now" tab on the home page.

In FY 2007, the Partnership Program received 5,684 donations totaling $1.45 million, a 31-percent increase over FY 2006. These funds were applied to 429 community-initiated projects in 50 countries. The Partnership Program requires a minimum 25 percent community contribution; in FY 2007, the actual contribution was more than 44 percent, leveraging approximately $643 thousand in cash and in-kind community contributions.

Partnership Program-funded projects have benefited thousands of individuals, ensuring that Peace Corps Volunteers can continue to promote sustainable development, peace, friendship, and understanding in the communities they serve.

In a rural community in Thailand, community members joined with their Peace Corps Volunteer to celebrate the completion of the Partnership Program project that resulted in a playground and clean water at the local preschool

# Volunteer Statistics

## Volunteers by Region

## Volunteer Profile

## Volunteer Projects

*Totals may not add to 100 percent because of rounding.*
*Data current as of September 30, 2007.*

# Number of Peace Corps Volunteers Working in HIV/AIDS Activities

FY 2007

## Africa

| *Country* | *Volunteers* |
|---|---|
| Benin | 43 |
| Botswana* | 105 |
| Burkina Faso | 43 |
| Cameroon | 83 |
| Cape Verde | 54 |
| Ghana** | 140 |
| Guinea | 17 |
| Kenya* | 109 |
| Lesotho** | 39 |
| Madagascar | 23 |
| Malawi** | 92 |
| Mali | 27 |
| Mauritania | 15 |
| Mozambique* | 94 |
| Namibia* | 54 |
| Niger | 47 |
| Senegal | 35 |
| South Africa* | 118 |
| Swaziland** | 63 |
| Tanzania* | 75 |
| The Gambia | 38 |
| Togo | 106 |
| Uganda* | 112 |
| Zambia* | 246 |
| **TOTAL** | **1,778** |

## Inter-America and the Pacific

| *Country* | *Volunteers* |
|---|---|
| Belize | 16 |
| Bolivia | 16 |
| Costa Rica | 15 |
| Dominican Republic** | 53 |
| Eastern Caribbean** [1] | 57 |
| Ecuador | 97 |
| El Salvador | 84 |
| Fiji | 32 |
| Guatemala | 18 |
| Guyana* | 33 |
| Honduras** | 77 |
| Jamaica | 22 |
| Kiribati | 9 |
| Micronesia | 1 |
| Nicaragua | 72 |
| Panama | 49 |
| Paraguay | 70 |
| Peru | 43 |
| Samoa | 22 |
| Suriname | 16 |
| Vanuatu | 7 |
| **TOTAL** | **809** |

## Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia

| *Country* | *Volunteers* |
|---|---|
| Albania | 17 |
| Armenia | 20 |
| Azerbaijan | 1 |
| Bulgaria | 18 |
| Cambodia | 5 |
| China | 26 |
| Georgia** | 15 |
| Kazakhstan** | 49 |
| Kyrgyz Republic | 58 |
| Macedonia | 27 |
| Moldova | 65 |
| Mongolia | 12 |
| Morocco | 74 |
| Philippines | 20 |
| Romania | 10 |
| Thailand** | 75 |
| Turkmenistan | 21 |
| Ukraine** | 45 |
| **TOTAL** | **558** |

**Grand Total: 3,145**

NOTES

* President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) focus countries

** Other countries participating in PEPFAR

[1] Eastern Caribbean includes Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Carriacou, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

# Countries Where Peace Corps Volunteers Serve

**INTER-AMERICA**

1 Belize
2 Bolivia
3 Costa Rica
4 Dominican Republic
5 Ecuador
6 El Salvador
7 Guatemala
8 Guyana
9 Honduras
10 Jamaica
11 Mexico
12 Nicaragua
13 Panama
14 Paraguay
15 Peru
16 Suriname

**Eastern Caribbean:**

17 Antigua/Barbuda
18 Dominica
19 Grenada/Carriacou
20 St. Kitts and Nevis
21 St. Lucia
22 St. Vincent/Grenadines

**AFRICA**

23 Benin
24 Botswana
25 Burkina Faso
26 Cameroon
27 Cape Verde
28 Ethiopia
29 The Gambia
30 Ghana
31 Guinea
32 Kenya*
33 Lesotho
34 Liberia**
35 Madagascar
36 Malawi
37 Mali
38 Mauritania
39 Mozambique
40 Namibia
41 Niger
42 Senegal
43 South Africa
44 Swaziland
45 Tanzania
46 Togo
47 Uganda
48 Zambia

**EUROPE and the MEDITERRANEAN**

49 Albania
50 Armenia
51 Azerbaijan
52 Bulgaria
53 Georgia
54 Jordan
55 Macedonia, Republic of
56 Moldova
57 Morocco
58 Romania
59 Ukraine

**CENTRAL and EAST ASIA**

60 Cambodia
61 China
62 Kazakhstan
63 Kyrgyz Republic
64 Mongolia
65 Philippines
66 Thailand
67 Turkmenistan

**The PACIFIC**

68 Fiji
69 Kiribati
70 Micronesia, Federated States of
71 Palau, Republic of
72 Samoa
73 Solomon Islands*
74 Tonga
75 Vanuatu

** Suspended*

***Peace Corps Response Volunteers to enter summer of FY 2008*

# Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World



**BENIN**
Adja, Bariba, Biali, Dendi, Fon, French, Goun, Idatcha, Lokpa, Mina, Nagot, Nateni, Peulh, Sola, Wama, Yende, Yoruba (Nagot), Zarma

**BOTSWANA**
Setswana

**BURKINA FASO**
Bissa, French, Fulfude, Gurunssi, Gulmancema, Jula, Karunfe, Katsena, Lobiri, Lyele, Mooré, Siamou

**CAMEROON**
Bamun, Bulu, Pidgin English, Fang, French, Fulfudé, Ghom alà, Hausa

**CAPE VERDE**
CV Criolo, Portuguese

**ETHIOPIA**
Amharic, Oromifa

**THE GAMBIA**
Jola, Mandinka, Pulaar, Sarahule, Sererr, Wolof

**GHANA**
Buli, Guruni, Dagare, Dagbani, Dangme, Ewe, Fanté, Ga, Gonja, Hausa, Kasem, Kusaal, Mampruli, Moar, Nankam, Nzema, Sisaali, Taleni, Twi, Waale, Wassa

**GUINEA**
French, Maninka, Pulaar , Soussou

**KENYA**
Kalenjin, Kenyan Sign Language, Kikuyu, Kiswahili, Luo, Luyha

**LESOTHO**
Sesotho

**MADAGASCAR**
French, Malagasy

**MALAWI**
Chichewa, Chilomwe, Chisena, Chitonga, Chitumbuka, Chiyao

**MALI**
Bambara, Bomu, Dogon, French, Fulfudé, Khassonke, Malinke, Minianka, Senoufou, Sonrai, Soninke, Tamashek

**MAURITANIA**
Arabic, French, Hassynia, Pulaar, Soninke , Wolof

**MOZAMBIQUE**
Chuabo, Chopi, Lomwe, Makhuwa, Makonde, Ndau, Nhungwe, Nyanja, Portuguese, Ronga, Sena, Shangana, Shona, Tewe, Tswa

**NAMIBIA**
Afrikaans, Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Otijherero, Rukwangali, Thimbukusha

**NIGER**
French, Fulfudé, Hausa, Kanuri, Tamasheq, Zarma

**SENEGAL**
Diahonke, French, Fula Kunda, Jaxanke, Mandinka, Pulaar du Nord, Pula Fuuta, Seereer, Wolof

**SOUTH AFRICA**
Afrikaans, Isi Ndebele, Isi Zulu, Sepedi, Setswana, Siswati, Northern Sotho, Venda

**SWAZILAND**
siSwati

**TANZANIA**
Kiswahili

**TOGO**
Akebou, Akposso, Balanka, Bassar, Bissa, Ewe/Watchi, French, Gourma, Haoussa, Ifè (Ana), Kabiyé, Kabole, Komkonba, Kotokoli, Lamba, Mina, Moba, Naodem (Losso), Tamberm, Tchamba, Tchokossi (Anoufo)

**UGANDA**
Ateso, Dhopadhola, Luganda, Lugwere, Lumasaaba, Lusoga, Runyakore, Runyole, Runyoro-Rutoro, Uhopadhola

**ZAMBIA**
Bemba, Chisoli, Kaonde, Lunda, Nyanja, Tonga, Tumbuta

# Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

## EUROPE, MEDITERRANEAN, AND ASIA

| | |
|---|---|
| ALBANIA | Albanian |
| ARMENIA | Armenian |
| AZERBAIJAN | Azerbaijani (Azeri) |
| BULGARIA | Bulgarian |
| CAMBODIA | Khmer |
| CHINA | Mandarin |
| GEORGIA | Georgian |
| JORDAN | Arabic |
| KAZAKHSTAN | Kazakh, Russian |
| KYRGYZ REPUBLIC | Kyrgyz, Russian |
| MACEDONIA | Albanian, Macedonian |
| MOLDOVA | Romanian, Russian |
| MONGOLIA | Kazakh, Mongolian |
| MOROCCO | Arabic, French, Tamazight, Tashelheet |
| PHILIPPINES | Aklanon, Bikol-Albay, Bikol-Naga, Cebuano, Hiligaynon Ibaloi, Ilokano, Kankana-ey Kinaray-a, Pangasinan, Tagalog, Waray |
| ROMANIA | Hungarian, Romanian |
| THAILAND | Thai |
| TURKMENISTAN | Russian, Turkmen |
| UKRAINE | Russian, Ukrainian |

# Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

## INTER-AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC

| | |
|---|---|
| BELIZE | Creole, Garifuna, K'ekchi, Spanish |
| BOLIVIA | Ayamara, Guarani, Quechua, Spanish |
| COSTA RICA | Spanish |
| DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | Haitian Creole, Spanish |
| EASTERN CARIBBEAN | English Creole, French Creole (Kweyol) |
| ECUADOR | Kichwa, Spanish |
| EL SALVADOR | Spanish |
| FIJI | Fijian, Hindi |
| GUATEMALA | Kakchiquel, Spanish, Quiché |
| GUYANA | Creole |
| HONDURAS | Spanish |
| JAMAICA | Patois |
| KIRIBATI | I-Kiribati |
| MEXICO | Spanish |
| MICRONESIA and PALAU | Kosraean, Mortlockeese, Nukuoro, Palauan, Pohnepeian, Ulithian, Yapese |
| NICARAGUA | Spanish |
| PANAMA | Embera, Kuna, Ngobe, Spanish, Wounaan |
| PARAGUAY | Guaraní, Spanish |
| PERU | Quechua, Spanish |
| SAMOA | Samoan |
| SURINAME | Aucan, Dutch, Ndjuka, Saramaccan, Sranan Tongo |
| TONGA | Tongan |
| VANUATU | Bislama |

# The Phases of the Volunteer

*How the Peace Corps Supports Volunteers from Recruitment Through Their Two-Year Service and Beyond*

## APPLICANT

### Recruitment

Regional recruiters use marketing strategies to identify and encourage a diverse pool of qualified Americans to apply to the Peace Corps.

### Application

Recruiters interview applicants to assess their motivation, emotional maturity, cultural adaptability, and technical skills. Recruiters convey that Volunteers are expected to adopt safe and culturally appropriate lifestyles to maximize security and minimize risk.

### Clearances

Peace Corps staff ensures that superior candidates meet legal and medical requirements.

### Placement

Placement officers match candidates to countries and projects based on their skills, experience, interests, and host country needs.

## TRAINEE

### Orientation (Staging)

Staff members conduct a two-day staging before trainees depart for their overseas assignments. Safety and security training is woven throughout the orientation.

### Pre-Service Training

Staff prepares trainees for service by conducting two to three months of training in language, technical skills, and cross-cultural, health, and personal safety and security issues. After successful completion of training and testing, trainees are sworn in as Volunteers.

## VOLUNTEER

### Volunteer Assignment
The Volunteer is assigned to a project that has been designed by Peace Corps and host country staff that meets the development needs of the host country.

### Site Selection
The Peace Corps' in-country staff ensures that Volunteers have suitable assignments and adequate and safe living arrangements.

### Living Allowance
The Peace Corps provides Volunteers with a monthly allowance to cover housing, utilities, household supplies, food, clothing, and transportation.

### Health
The Peace Corps' in-country medical officers provide Volunteers with health information, immunizations, and periodic medical exams.

### Volunteer Security
Peace Corps headquarters and post staff work with the U.S. State Department to assess and address safety and security risks and to ensure Volunteers are properly trained in safety and security procedures.

### In-Service Training
Post staff conducts periodic training to improve Volunteers' technical and language skills and to address changing health and safety issues.

### Links With U.S. Students
Established in 1989 by then Peace Corps Director Paul D. Coverdell, the CWWS program provides a variety of services and materials that help American schoolchildren learn about the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and geography. Approximately 400,000 students—in all 50 states—benefit from some aspect of the program.

### Links With the Private Sector
Headquarters staff secures private financial contributions for qualified Volunteer projects and match interested Volunteers with potential donors of textbooks, sports equipment, and other resources.

### Service Extension
A limited number of Volunteers who have unique skills and an outstanding record of service may extend for an additional year.

## RETURNED VOLUNTEER

### Career, Education, and Re-Entry Planning
Information on careers, higher education, and reentry is provided to Volunteers before the end of their service, as well as upon their return.

### Readjustment Allowance
At the end of service, Volunteers receive $225 per month served to help finance their transition to careers or further education.

### Health Insurance
Volunteers are covered by a comprehensive health insurance plan for the first month after service and can continue the plan at their own expense for up to 18 additional months.

### Returned Volunteer Services
Each of Peace Corps' 11 regional offices is equipped with computers and other resources to assist returned Peace Corps Volunteers in obtaining career and educational information. Published twice per month, Hotline contains announcements from employers and educational institutions interested in hiring or enrolling returned Volunteers as well as information about career and job-search workshops. The Career Information Consultants guide contains a listing of more than 800 individuals who offer their assistance to Volunteers seeking information about career fields or employment opportunities.

### Peace Corps Response
Headquarters staff recruits and places experienced Volunteers in short-term disaster relief and humanitarian response positions.

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DOMESTIC PROGRAMS

## DOMESTIC PROGRAMS: "BRINGING THE WORLD HOME"

Long renowned for its international service and its positive representation of the United States overseas, the Peace Corps is also charged with a third goal: to help Americans develop a better understanding of other peoples. As President John F. Kennedy dispatched the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers to Ghana in 1961, he made a prediction: "The logic of the Peace Corps is that someday we are going to bring it home to America."

The Office of Domestic Programs chiefly reflects the third goal of the agency and facilitates the vision that President Kennedy noted through the following program areas:

*Coverdell World Wise Schools Program*

This program produces standards-based classroom resources that promote cross-cultural understanding and community service. Teachers can download visually rich and intellectually stimulating curriculum for classroom use, and prospective applicants can listen to the Peace Corps experience in the voices of current or former Volunteers on-line. A unique aspect of the program is student interaction with current and returned Volunteers.

*University Programs*

The Master's International program is for students who serve as Peace Corps Volunteers as part of master's degree programs and integrate their academic learning with international grassroots development; Fellows/USA is for returned Volunteers who provide service to underserved U.S. communities while pursuing graduate degrees. Two pilot programs are also underway to assist undergraduate students in earning academic credits and acquiring experience that complements Peace Corps service.

*Peace Corps Week*

This annual event brings current and returned Volunteers as well as their family members together with their communities to celebrate the Peace Corps' legacy of understanding between the United States and other nations.

*Returned Volunteer Services*

This office provides career, educational, and transitional assistance to more than 3,500 Volunteers returning to the United States each year.

### Coverdell World Wise Schools Program

Established in 1989 by then Peace Corps Director Paul D. Coverdell, this program provides a variety of services and materials to help American schoolchildren learn about the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and geography. Approximately 400,000 students—in all 50 states—benefit from some aspect of the program. In FY 2007, the Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) website received almost 2 million visits.

CWWS services include programs that link Volunteers and returned Volunteers with American classrooms. Through the Correspondence Match program, current Volunteers communicate with U.S. teachers and students. The program facilitates an exchange of letters, photographs, artifacts, telephone calls, and e-mails. Volunteers often visit the schools during their vacations to the United States and after completing their service. Since its inception, the Correspondence Match program has helped nearly 3 million students communicate directly with Volunteers throughout the world. Currently, about 4,500 Volunteers a year relate their experiences through correspondence exchanges. Additionally, the Speakers Match program connects returned Volunteers with schools and community groups that request information about the Peace Corps experience.

CWWS materials and multimedia publications produced for U.S. classrooms promote cross-cultural understanding and the ethic of community service. They include an award-winning series of country-specific videos and DVDs with accompanying teachers' guides, and Volunteer-written literature

supported by standards-based lesson plans, podcasts, narrated slide shows, a monthly e-newsletter, and an online poster gallery. All materials are available online for downloading at no charge (www.peacecorps.gov/wws). Publications include: *Insights From the Field: Understanding Geography, Culture, and Service; Voices From the Field: Reading and Writing About the World, Ourselves, and Others; Building Bridges: A Peace Corps Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding;* and *Uncommon Journeys: Peace Corps Adventures Across Cultures*. Educators requested nearly 30,000 copies of CWWS publications and DVDs for classroom use during FY 2007.

### University Programs

The Peace Corps' two graduate university programs offer opportunities for graduate education and domestic and international ommunity service to prospective, current, and returned Peace Corps Volunteers. Two new pilot undergraduate programs are also underway. The first program, called the Peace Corps Baccalaureate, offers students with an associate's degree the opportunity to earn credits toward a bachelor's degree at Minnesota's Metropolitan State University while serving in the Peace Corps. The second, Peace Corps Prep is a partnership with Knox College in Illinois designed to allow students to complete a tailored, internationally focused curriculum and engage in community service activities to increase their competitiveness for Peace Corps service. Together, these four programs serve the three goals of the agency's mission.

### Peace Corps Fellows/USA

Peace Corps Fellows/USA develops and maintains educational partnerships that place returned Volunteers in internships in underserved U.S. communities as they pursue graduate degrees. Each year, approximately 400 returned Volunteers pursue graduate degrees at more than 40 partner universities. Financial aid is provided by participating universities, community and government agencies, and private funding entities.

Internships that help underserved populations are at the core of the Peace Corps' Fellows/USA program, as returned Volunteers engage in university communities and at the grassroots level of urban and rural America. Fellows work as interns on projects of critical importance to local communities, typically in nonprofit organizations, or they provide service as public school teachers. Degree opportunities span a wide range of professional fields, including community and economic development, nursing, and environmental education. Fellows use the knowledge, skills, and competencies they developed as Volunteers to benefit the American people.

There are currently Peace Corps Fellows/USA programs in 26 states and the District of Columbia. Since the program's inception in 1985, more than 2,000 Peace Corps Fellows have worked to improve the lives of thousands of Americans and to raise international awareness in the process.

### Master's International Program

Through partnerships with more than 50 colleges and universities, the Master's International (MI) program annually provides approximately 600 students with opportunities to incorporate Peace Corps service into a master's degree in more than 90 different programs. Currently, there are MI partner universities in 28 states and the District of Columbia. Students apply to both the Peace Corps and to a participating graduate school. (They must be accepted by both, and requirements vary by school.) Participating graduate schools establish and monitor academic requirements, and the Peace Corps places MI students overseas as Volunteers. MI students complete one or, in a few cases, two years of course work before starting their Peace Corps assignment. Through the program, MI students graduate with the valuable combination of an advanced degree and two years of substantive professional experience in an international setting.

The kinds of graduate study and assignments are as varied as the Volunteers. Some examples of how MI Volunteers incorporated graduate studies into Peace Corps assignments follow:

• One MI student designed a potable water supply system in rural Honduras, putting engineering into practice while considering the social, economic, and environmental limitations of the developing world.

• Another student, working as an agricultural and environmental extension agent in Togo, taught women how to cultivate and use soybeans in their diet, introduced farmers to inter-cropping with soil-improving plants, and helped start community gardens and tree nurseries.

## Returned Volunteer Services

### Peace Corps Week

The commitment of returned Volunteers to share their overseas experiences at home continues to fulfill the Peace Corps' third goal of helping Americans gain a better understanding of other peoples. Each year during the week of March 1, thousands of returned and current Peace Corps Volunteers—along with their families and friends—commemorate the agency's anniversary during Peace Corps Week. Peace Corps Week provides an ideal opportunity to share how Volunteers have helped, or are helping, people around the world.

During Peace Corps Week 2007, several thousand returned Peace Corps Volunteers gave presentations in schools, to community groups, at their workplaces, or in places of worship. Forty-one U.S. states issued proclamations—many holding proclamation ceremonies or photo-ops with returned Volunteers—in honor of Peace Corps Week. Numerous Members of Congress made remarks in the Congressional Record recognizing the important work and ongoing contributions of Volunteers. Others honored Volunteers from their home states and districts.

### Returned Volunteer Services

In addition to Peace Corps Week, the Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) department provides transition assistance to returning and recently returned Volunteers through career, educational, and readjustment services.

Regional career centers, specialized career manuals and events, and other career resources are coordinated to ensure that the skills and experiences Volunteers gain or develop during Peace Corps service are used most effectively. In addition to working directly with the Volunteers, RVS forms networks and partnerships with employers, Peace Corps country directors, and headquarters staff to create and deliver relevant educational and job-search materials and services.

#### *Mentor Program*

RVS entered into a cooperative agreement with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA)—a national organization for former Peace Corps Volunteers—to pilot a local mentor program for returning Volunteers. The program's goals are to facilitate Volunteers' ability to find employment or educational opportunities; assist in their adjustment back home; and increase the likelihood of their long-term participation in third-goal activities. As a result of the positive feedback from the pilot, the NPCA in cooperation with the Peace Corps is in the process of expanding the mentor program nationally in FY 2008.

#### *Career Centers*

Career centers located in regional recruitment offices around the country offer job postings, resource manuals, computers, fax machines, and phones. RVS coordinates activities with the career centers and tracks each center's use. In FY 2007, more than 2,500 returned Volunteers visited career centers.

#### *Career Manuals*

RVS publishes manuals as reference tools for returned Volunteers to generate ideas, formulate job-search strategies, and identify educational institutions. Current publications include *Business Careers, Careers in Agriculture, Careers in Teaching, International Careers, Environmental Careers, Graduate School Guide, RPCV Handbook,* and the *Career Resource Manual*. The latter two publications are distributed to Volunteers during their close-of-service conference. Additionally, the Career Information Consultants guide lists more than 800 individuals who offer their assistance to current and returned Volunteers seeking information about career fields or employment opportunities within their organizations.

### *Career Events*

Since 1988, RVS has coordinated more than 31 career fairs for returned Volunteers. In 2006, RVS instituted quarterly career events, each featuring career-preparation presentations, interactive job-seeker workshops, targeted panel discussions, and a recruitment fair. In FY 2007, more than 700 RPCVs benefited from this comprehensive suite of career-facilitating services.

### *Self-Assessment Software*

RVS licenses third-party self-assessment software to complement career events and other transition materials. This is to assist RPCVs in translating the entire Volunteer experience into something practical for job, career, or academic exploration. The software is made available to returned Volunteers upon request.

### *Job Bulletins*

Hotline is one of RVS' longest-running and most-used publications. E-mailed twice per month, Hotline contains announcements from employers and educational institutions interested in hiring or enrolling returned Volunteers, information about career and job-search workshops, Fellows/USA program updates, and various third-goal activity information. RVS also subscribes to third-party job bulletins and makes passwords available to returned Volunteers upon request.

### *Close-of-Service Kits*

RVS works closely with Peace Corps headquarters and overseas staff to create and deliver meaningful guidance to Volunteers approaching the end of their service. The office assembles comprehensive kits for distribution at close-of-service conferences and participates in a task force that identifies improvements to close-of-service activities.

*President Kennedy greets the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers in 1961*

## THE PEACE CORPS' EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UNITED STATES

| States | Master's International Colleges/Universities | Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities |
|---|---|---|
| Alabama | University of Alabama–Birmingham | |
| Alaska | University of Alaska–Fairbanks | |
| Arizona | Arizona State University | Northern Arizona University<br>University of Arizona |
| California | California State University at Sacramento<br>Humboldt State University<br>Loma Linda University<br>Monterey Institute of International Studies<br>University of California–Davis<br>University of the Pacific–Stockton | Loma Linda University<br>Humboldt State University |
| Colorado | Colorado State University–Fort Collins<br>University of Colorado–Denver<br>University of Denver | University of Denver |
| Connecticut | | Yale University |
| Florida | Florida International University<br>Florida State University–Tallahassee<br>University of South Florida–Tampa | Florida Institute of Technology |
| Georgia | Emory University<br>Georgia State University–Atlanta<br>University of Georgia–Athens | Georgia College & State University |
| Illinois | Illinois State University–Normal | DePaul University<br>Illinois State University<br>Western Illinois University |
| Indiana | | Indiana University |
| Kansas | | Wichita State University |
| Louisiana | Tulane University | University of New Orleans<br>Xavier University of New Orleans |
| Maryland | Johns Hopkins University<br>University of Maryland–Baltimore County | Johns Hopkins University<br>University of Maryland–Baltimore<br>University of Maryland–Baltimore County<br>University of Maryland-College Park<br>(*in development*)) |
| Massachusetts | Boston University | |
| Michigan | Michigan State University<br>Michigan Technological University<br>Western Michigan University | University of Michigan |
| Minnesota | University of Minnesota–Twin Cities | |
| Missouri | | University of Missouri–Columbia<br>University of Missouri–Kansas City |
| Montana | University of Montana–Missoula | |

## THE PEACE CORPS' EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN THE UNITED STATES

| States | Master's International Colleges/Universities | Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities |
|---|---|---|
| Nevada | University of Nevada–Las Vegas | |
| New Hampshire | Southern New Hampshire University | Southern New Hampshire University |
| New Jersey | Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey–Camden | Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey–Camden |
| New Mexico | | New Mexico State University–Las Cruces<br>Western New Mexico University |
| New York | Bard College<br>Cornell University | Columbia University<br>Cornell Univeristy (in development)<br>Fordham University<br>The New School University |
| North Carolina | Appalachian State University<br>North Carolina A&T State University–Greensboro<br>North Carolina State University–Raleigh | Duke University |
| Ohio | University of Cincinnati | University of Cincinnati |
| Oklahoma | Oklahoma State University–Stillwater | |
| Oregon | | University of Oregon |
| Pennsylvania | | Carnegie Mellon University<br>Duquesne University<br>Seton Hill University<br>University of Pennsylvania |
| South Carolina | | University of South Carolina–Columbia |
| Texas | | University of North Texas |
| Vermont | School for International Training<br>St. Michael's College | University of Vermont |
| Virginia | Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University<br>George Mason University | George Mason University |
| Washington | University of Washington–Seattle | |
| Wisconsin | University of Wisconsin–Madison<br>University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point | Marquette University<br>University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee<br>University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point |
| Wyoming | University of Wyoming | University of Wyoming |
| District of Columbia | American University<br>George Washington University | George Washington University |

# Home States* of Peace Corps Volunteers

as of September 30, 2007

| State | Currently Serving | Total Since 1961 |
|---|---|---|
| Alabama | 52 | 940 |
| Alaska | 36 | 860 |
| Arizona | 146 | 3,015 |
| Arkansas | 38 | 840 |
| California | 943 | 25,832 |
| Colorado | 274 | 6,067 |
| Connecticut | 108 | 2,912 |
| Delaware | 25 | 424 |
| District of Columbia | 51 | 2,103 |
| Florida | 239 | 6,472 |
| Georgia | 157 | 2,699 |
| Guam | 0 | 73 |
| Hawaii | 21 | 1,274 |
| Idaho | 42 | 1,131 |
| Illinois | 367 | 7,287 |
| Indiana | 166 | 2,764 |
| Iowa | 102 | 2,006 |
| Kansas | 102 | 1,480 |
| Kentucky | 65 | 1,279 |
| Louisiana | 27 | 963 |
| Maine | 73 | 1,631 |
| Maryland | 215 | 5,090 |
| Massachusetts | 232 | 7,359 |
| Michigan | 344 | 6,103 |
| Minnesota | 235 | 5,720 |
| Mississippi | 16 | 411 |
| Missouri | 143 | 2,822 |
| Montana | 52 | 1,182 |
| Nebraska | 68 | 1,180 |
| Nevada | 29 | 831 |
| New Hampshire | 62 | 1,451 |
| New Jersey | 183 | 4,324 |
| New Mexico | 61 | 1,941 |
| New York | 429 | 11,793 |
| North Carolina | 225 | 3,429 |
| North Dakota | 26 | 514 |
| Ohio | 292 | 6,072 |
| Oklahoma | 69 | 1,146 |
| Oregon | 237 | 5,282 |
| Pennsylvania | 319 | 6,813 |
| Puerto Rico | 6 | 363 |
| Rhode Island | 36 | 901 |
| South Carolina | 76 | 1,250 |
| South Dakota | 27 | 556 |
| Tennessee | 92 | 1,405 |
| Texas | 382 | 6,048 |
| Utah | 72 | 927 |
| Vermont | 49 | 1,319 |
| U.S. Virgin Islands | 4 | 75 |
| Virginia | 352 | 6,349 |
| Washington | 363 | 7,911 |
| West Virginia | 22 | 584 |
| Wisconsin | 268 | 5,224 |
| Wyoming | 28 | 460 |

** Includes the District of Columbia, as well as the territorties of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Sahel | Cape Verde, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal |
| Coastal West and Central Africa | Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Togo |
| Eastern Africa | Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda |
| Southern Africa | Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia |

AFRICA REGION

## Africa Region

Since 1961, more than 63,000 Peace Corps Volunteers have served in 46 African countries. Today the Peace Corps continues to enjoy strong cooperation and support from the people of Africa. The agency predicts that by the end of fiscal year (FY) 2008, 2,840 Volunteers and trainees will be working in 26 countries in Africa. Programs in Africa cover all six of the agency's program sectors—agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. In addition, many Volunteers are engaged in projects involving information and communication technology (ICT) and girls' education. With real potential for expansion in these sectors and projects, the Africa region is poised for substantial growth. In FY 2007, the Peace Corps received multiple requests from African governments to enter or reenter programs in their countries. A team of Peace Corps Response Volunteers plans to enter Liberia in FY 2008.

Safety and security of Volunteers continues to be the agency's number-one priority. Twenty-nine employees are dedicated strictly to safety and security in the Africa region, and each of the 25 posts has a designated safety and security coordinator. Additionally, the Africa region's safety and security desk officer at Peace Corps headquarters ensures effective communication and compliance related to safety issues. Three additional safety and security officers with subregional responsibilities are located in South Africa, Togo, and Kenya, and they provide advice and support to the country directors.

Africa remains the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic. The Peace Corps has had a strong commitment to fight the spread of this terrible disease since the mid-1980s. Twelve posts are working very closely with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The Peace Corps trains all Volunteers serving in Africa, regardless of their primary assignment, in HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. Volunteers provide AIDS education and prevention messages to schools, out-of-school youth, and communities. They also help build capacity for communities and local AIDS service organizations to care for orphans and vulnerable children, and to support people living with HIV/AIDS. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in HIV/AIDS because they live and work in the communities where they serve. They are trained to communicate AIDS prevention messages in local languages, and they share information in a culturally sensitive way. In addition to French and Portuguese, the Peace Corps provides training for Volunteers in nearly 170 local languages, and in deaf-education and sign language in Kenya and Ghana. This enables Volunteers to effectively live, work, and transfer HIV/AIDS education messages in their communities.

In South Africa, Volunteers work with government officials, communities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are involved in HIV/AIDS prevention and relief. In Mauritania, Volunteers design and implement HIV/AIDS trainings of trainers and launch major HIV/AIDS-awareness campaigns throughout the country through sports, cultural events, and formal training sessions. Together, Volunteers and community members work to develop and facilitate culturally-appropriate HIV/AIDS workshops targeted to young adults.

In health, Volunteers work in 24 countries across the continent to improve child survival, nutrition, disease prevention, environmental health, orphan care, home-based care, youth at-risk groups, and women's health. In Kenya, Volunteers are working with NGOs to teach reproductive health and life skills to youth. Volunteers design peer education training manuals and implement a comprehensive in-school peer education program for primary and secondary schools, as well as a training program for peer education resource teachers.

Peace Corps Volunteers are involved with business development in 13 countries across Africa. Their efforts focus on teaching business skills to youth, farmers, artisans, NGOs, credit institutions, and IT-related businesses. In Burkina Faso, the Peace Corps' small enterprise activities promote business development and agribusiness. Volunteers train entrepreneur associations and cooperative members to market crafts and agribusiness products as well as to promote cultural tours and tourism. Volunteers work with savings and credit clubs, handicraft associations, and agribusiness cooperatives to improve business practices and the viability of commercial activities. Volunteers in

Guinea work to empower youth and small-scale entrepreneurs by strengthening their business management skills. Volunteers conduct business management and entrepreneurship training, create and strengthen market linkages, and help to establish basic accounting systems.

Education remains the Peace Corps' largest program sector in Africa, with education projects in 21 countries. Among the subjects taught by Volunteers are English, mathematics, science, arts, ICT, and life skills. Volunteers use community content-based instruction to incorporate HIV/AIDS, environmental, and gender-specific themes into their lesson plans and presentations. In Namibia, Volunteers enhance educational development through teacher training and support, classroom teaching in science, mathematics, and English, and integration of new ICT materials in the education sector. Volunteers facilitate teacher-training workshops on how to mentor and prepare students for science fair competitions. Schools where Volunteers teach have consistently witnessed verifiable improvement in student performance. In Lesotho, Volunteers teach English language and literature at 33 secondary schools. Volunteers organize debates within their schools and within their districts on HIV/AIDS-related topics that help students improve their vocabularies, develop critical thinking and oral communication skills while promoting HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteers in the agriculture and environment sectors work in 18 countries to improve agricultural practices and promote environmentally friendly approaches. Volunteers and their counterparts address environmental issues by promoting environmental education in schools and by educating farmers. In Mali, Volunteers collaborate with farmers to improve food production for local consumption and income generation. Volunteers serve as technical resources for community members, associations and youth groups on a variety of projects. In Niger, Volunteers help develop local strategies to improve household food production. Volunteers also work directly with farmers in their villages on issues such as water harvesting, crop rotation, soil fertility management, and improved animal husbandry.

Across Africa, youth are a major focus of Volunteer work, not only in education, but also in community health and development, small enterprise development, environmental education, and girls' empowerment. In Tanzania, Volunteers work to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS by empowering young people to make healthy choices about their lives. Volunteers train peer educators to teach other youth about HIV/AIDS awareness using drama, discussion groups, and organized debates. In Uganda, Volunteers provide training to organizations that support orphans and vulnerable children. As a result, the youth gain better access to education, nutrition, water, insecticide-treated bed nets, and psychosocial support. Volunteers use sports to draw youth together for healthy entertainment as well as to share life skills messages.

Volunteers in every project sector use ICT to help improve the training, capacity, and abilities of the African people in all aspects of life. Volunteers in Zambia provide primary education through interactive radio instruction for the growing number of children who do not have access to the formal educational system. Volunteers support learning centers, educate district and provincial leaders about the centers, and help monitor the effectiveness of the centers. They also train coaches in girls' empowerment, HIV/AIDS, and life skills. In Kenya, Volunteers integrate ICT into their work at deaf schools. Volunteers teach computer classes to both the students and teachers, and instruct teachers on how to develop teaching materials and lessons in all subjects. In Cape Verde, Volunteers use ICT to train teachers on the effective use of learning aids, teach literacy, and launch libraries and resource centers. Volunteers also promote e-learning, teach computer skills and assist the private sector in improving their operations.

# EUROPE, MEDITERRANEAN, AND ASIA REGION

| | |
|---|---|
| Balkans and North Africa | Albania, Bulgaria, Republic of Macedonia, Morocco |
| Central and Eastern Europe | Moldova, Romania, Ukraine |
| Middle East and the Caucasus | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Jordan |
| Central Asia | Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan |
| Asia | Cambodia, China, Mongolia, Philippines, Thailand |

## Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region

Many of the countries in the Europe, Mediterranean and Asia (EMA) region are undergoing difficult economic and social changes while striving to play a larger part in the global economy. Challenges to growth include outdated technology and infrastructure, unstable monetary systems, inflation, crime and corruption. Many countries face social issues arising from local, ethnic, or nationalist conflicts; complex demographic factors including emigration and immigration; as well as long-standing environmental problems and the growing pains associated with adapting to free market economies. Volunteers in the EMA region are working to support growth and stability through projects in the areas of business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. More than 51,343 Volunteers have served in the EMA region since 1961. At the end of fiscal year 2007, EMA had 2,386 Volunteers and trainees working in 19 countries.

The safety and security of the Volunteers and staff are top priorities in every EMA country. Training is one of the most important elements of the Peace Corps' process to ensure that Volunteers develop a practical awareness of safety and security risks, and understand the policies and procedures designed to improve their safety. The region emphasizes that Volunteers are safest when they are integrated into their local communities, are respected and protected as extended family members, and are viewed as contributors to the development of the communities where they live and work. Each Peace Corps post monitors safety and security according to agency guidelines.

Volunteers play many roles throughout the EMA region. They serve in a variety of settings, working with communities, schools, clinics, local organizations and host-country governments to promote cross-cultural understanding, and to provide needed technical expertise in areas identified as critical in each host country.

All Peace Corps countries in the EMA region have identified education as a priority. In many countries half the population is under the age of 25. Volunteers are part of national and local efforts to strengthen primary, secondary, and university-level education capacity through classroom instruction, professional development for teachers, and by promoting the development of educational and community resources. Volunteers help students to develop not only their English language abilities, but also their critical thinking skills. Through team-teaching and teacher-training courses and workshops, Volunteers help teachers learn new teaching methodologies and provide ongoing support.

Volunteers and host teachers work collaboratively to develop curricula and materials for special education, health education, environmental awareness, and other content-based courses. They facilitate lessons and extracurricular activities that focus on life skills, decision-making, healthy choices, and the development of personal and professional skills. They work alongside people of diverse ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic status. Volunteers are often catalysts for motivating youth, teachers, and community members to become involved in service learning. Volunteer projects often benefit orphanages, hospitals, minority villages, as well as centers for the displaced, homeless, and those with special needs.

Over the past decade, Volunteer business development projects in the region have evolved from promoting small business start-ups to projects that seek to work across the full range of business issues. Volunteers assist entrepreneurs, governmental and non-governmental agencies, educational institutions, lending and micro-finance institutions, community groups, and motivated individuals. Because Volunteers live as part of their communities for two years, they are uniquely able to integrate themselves and earn the trust and respect needed to be accepted as valued partners and mentors.

Today's Volunteers often come to the field well-versed in various uses of technology. Volunteers are particularly successful in providing guidance and developing implementation models for communities that wish to incorporate information and communication technologies (ICT) into local business, education, and community development projects. Capacity-building efforts concentrate primarily on training people to use basic software applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and Internet applications.

A Volunteer in Azerbaijan secured a small project assistance (SPA) grant to train 16 computer teachers

from 10 schools in her community and its surrounding villages. The project included a 12-week, 70-hour series of "training of trainers" sessions, designed to give the teachers a working knowledge of Microsoft software that they could in turn pass to their students. The sessions also introduced the teachers to new interactive teaching methods, and offered guidance on using new textbooks provided by the government. The teachers gained confidence and understanding of both the theory and the practical use of computers. To demonstrate their skills at the end of their training, each teacher presented a PowerPoint to school directors and the head of the regional Education Department. As a result, the Volunteer's training center and the regional Education Department are collaborating on free, "open door" weekend training sessions for other interested teachers.

Health and HIV/AIDS sector Volunteers in the EMA region continue to educate individuals, households, service providers, and communities about the importance of health promotion and disease prevention. In addition to projects in other sectors that have health components, Albania, Armenia, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, and Turkmenistan all support distinct Volunteer health and HIV/AIDS projects that emphasize healthy lifestyles and improved quality of life. Volunteers and their counterparts work to strengthen different aspects of health education, not only at clinics and hospitals, but also at day care centers, schools and universities; and within local community organizations. Volunteer assignments encompass the design of health-education materials as well as the delivery of these messages with an emphasis on behavior change. Preventive health education topics highlighted this year include pre- and post-natal care, personal and environmental hygiene, nutrition and food security, and prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. Volunteers across the region undertake similar health education activities as secondary projects in their communities, including working with hospitals, clinics, orphanages, and with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

A Volunteer in Ukraine helped a local NGO to open community discussion about the problems faced by people with disabilities. The Volunteer worked closely with the NGO to write a successful Peace Corps Partnership grant proposal. Funds were raised from friends and family of Volunteers in the United States, making it possible to distribute close to 400 items of disability equipment to assistance centers around the city. These items included walking sticks, crutches, shower benches, and canes for the blind.

Working in schools, with youth groups, and with NGOs, environment sector Volunteers in the EMA region promote a greater understanding of local ecology and environmental issues. Although the specific issues addressed in these projects vary from country to country, there is some commonality in types of activities. Volunteers increase awareness through eco-clubs, camps, tree-planting campaigns, and similar community efforts. Volunteers also address ecological issues such as safe water, erosion, and overuse of pesticides or fertilizers. Other Volunteers work to improve cookstoves, train guides in national or regional parks, or improve sanitation.

Youth development activities are increasingly important in the EMA region. Formal projects that aim to develop the capacities and attitudes of young people are underway in Bulgaria, Jordan, Morocco, the Philippines, Ukraine, and Mongolia. Informal youth development projects are in operation in virtually every EMA country.

The need for young people to have positive economic, social, and political opportunities is more critical than ever. Volunteers work to engage and prepare youth for the workforce and to be active and informed citizens. Important areas of program activity include life-skills training for employment and entrepreneurship and leadership training including conflict resolution skills. In all of the areas in which Volunteers work with youth, there is an overall theme of advocating for youth participation in their communities, using effective methods such as service-learning programs.

Many Volunteers work with young people in the classroom or through after-school clubs to support school-to-work transitions and to make learning relevant to real-life priorities. Some Volunteers use English language instruction in camps or clubs as a way to teach important life skills. Other Volunteers work with marginalized young people to build their capac-

ity to create positive futures in a region where human trafficking, drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution, unemployment and lack of schooling plague youth.

Volunteers and their host country partners also focus on projects to empower girls, who are often more disadvantaged than boys, especially in the areas of education, leadership skills, self-esteem and societal valuation. The highest percentage of girls' and boys' leadership camps is in the EMA region. These camps provide a venue for programs promoting broad-based leadership and empowerment activities for girls and boys, and a variety of other topical programs.

Every Peace Corps country in the EMA region suffers from human trafficking, and anti-trafficking efforts are a high priority for most governments in the region. Peace Corps posts in Albania, Macedonia, Moldova and Mongolia have established anti-trafficking committees to assist Volunteers in supporting and contributing to national and international efforts to reduce human trafficking. Volunteers research and promote best practices, and develop programs targeting youth in the country. In Moldova, Volunteers organized youth leadership and healthy-lifestyle summer camps for girls, one component of which was an exposé on the recruiting methods used by prostitution rings and human traffickers in Eastern Europe.

The EMA region continually strives to develop and refine its programs and Volunteer projects to address the current development needs of host countries; to assure that Volunteers gain a broader understanding of other cultures; and to enable other cultures to gain a better understanding of the United States and its people.

President Bush visits with Volunteers in Bulgaria in June of 2007.

| | |
|---|---|
| Central America | Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama |
| Caribbean | Dominican Republic, Eastern Caribbean (Antigua/Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada/Carriacou, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent/Grenadines), Jamaica |
| South America | Bolivia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname |
| Pacific | Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands (suspended in 2000), Tonga, Vanuatu |

# INTER-AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC REGION

## Inter-America and the Pacific Region

Since the Peace Corps' inception in 1961, more than 74,000 Volunteers have served in the Inter-America and Pacific (IAP) region. They have served in more than 32 countries in the Americas and 14 countries in the Pacific Islands. At the end of fiscal year (FY) 2007, 2,659 Volunteers were working in 23 posts in all six of the agency's sectors: agriculture, business development, education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. Additional countries in the region continue to be interested in establishing Peace Corps programs. IAP also actively supports the Peace Corps' 50+ initiative, an effort to recruit more Volunteers age 50 and over. Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Eastern Caribbean, and Panama currently serve as 50+ pilot posts, analyzing the needs of 50+ Volunteers and assessing language training strategies.

The region is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all Volunteers. All IAP posts have trained safety and security coordinators. In addition, three regional Peace Corps safety and security officers, stationed in El Salvador, Fiji, and Peru, help all posts assess risks and ensure appropriate training for staff and Volunteers. Each post has an emergency action plan, which is tested and revised as appropriate at least once every year.

Peace Corps Volunteers and their counterparts in the IAP region have become active, productive participants in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). In the Dominican Republic, Volunteers provide HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention information to youth living in rural communities. Peer educators are trained using a curriculum developed by Peace Corps staff, Volunteers, and their counterparts in the Dominican Republic. The curriculum focuses on strategies to promote healthy decision-making and to effect positive behavioral change among young people.

Volunteers in Jamaica integrate environmental education themes in the formal education system through collaboration with 4-H and the School for the Environment Program. They also work with community-based organizations and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to develop eco-friendly income-generation projects to help promote prudent management of the island's natural resources.

A Volunteer in Bolivia, in collaboration with a local NGO, worked with more than 20 communities to strengthen community water committees, water supply management, and water system maintenance. The Volunteer also assisted in the construction of new drinking water systems, grey water systems, and latrines, and he taught hygiene to children and women's groups.

Volunteers are helping the government of Vanuatu reverse declining health indicators by strengthening village health committees and the capacity of the government to measure the incidence of poor health. Eight Volunteers are helping one province to strengthen its health program by promoting opportunities for communities to improve their water supply and sanitation.

In many IAP countries, the Peace Corps' programs target youth to develop life skills, leadership skills, and employability. In Costa Rica, one Volunteer created a series of freestyle hip-hop workshops for at-risk youth throughout different regions of the country. The workshops provided a safe space for youth to discuss and express their concerns about the social issues they face, including racism, poverty, HIV/AIDS, discrimination, social injustice, drug abuse, and alcoholism.

In 2007, Volunteers helped start more than 30 new businesses in small Ecuadorian communities. Volunteers have also expanded an innovative savings and banking project that has been successful in more than 600 communities. In Ecuador, community banks help people save money, manage their finances, and provide credit to rural families. This past year, Peace Corps/Ecuador organized four community banking workshops to promote the program in local institutions. Fifty new banks were formed and eight institutions introduced the savings-and-credit program to their own organizations.

Volunteers in Nicaragua are also working to teach and promote community banking methodologies. One Volunteer, extended her service for a third year in order to conduct a study of community banks in Nicaragua. The Volunteer surveyed and visited nearly 70 banks and interviewed bank members and Volunteers. Using information collected during her study, the Volunteer

designed a training manual for Volunteers and their community counterparts on how to implement community banks as a sustainable development tool. The manual, written in Spanish, includes activities Volunteers can use to help organize community members, best practice suggestions from current bank members, as well as community banking success stories.

Among Peace Corps/Micronesia's activities in 2007 was a focus on serving in a more environmentally friendly manner. The post converted its fleet of vehicles to run on locally-produced coconut fuel, both reducing dependence on fossil fuels and supporting the local economy. Due to Peace Corps/Micronesia's success in the use of coconut oil, the government of Micronesia mandated in its FY 2008 budget that all new government vehicles must be designed to run on coconut fuel.

United States Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) meets with Peace Corps Volunteers during a trip to Guatemala in November 2007.

*"Every place I go, I talk to the Peace Corps Volunteers. We only have, in the world, a little over 7,000 of them. We should have 70,000 Peace Corps Volunteers."*

The Honorable Harry Reid (D-NV)
Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate
January 2007

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The statistical data in the following country profiles come primarily from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2007*. Additional sources are the Pan American Health Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNICEF, the United Nations Statistics Division, the U.S. State Department, and the World Health Organization.

# Albania

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1992–1997<br>2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Tirana |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,570 |
| GDP growth | 5.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | $262 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 1%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 16 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 97%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 96% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Islam: 70%<br>Albanian Orthodoxy: 20%<br>Roman Catholicism: 10% |
| Official language | Albanian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 70 | 74 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,127 | 2,179 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Albania overwhelmingly approved a new constitution in 1998 as a step toward strengthening democracy. The country has progressed to a democratic, pluralistic system, which led to successful parliamentary elections in June 2005 and to local government elections held in the winter of 2007. The transition to the new government has tested the country's commitment to democracy.

Albania is very poor by European standards and still in the midst of the transition to a more open-market economy. The government is taking measures to curb crime and revive economic activity by integrating western and central Europe into its foreign policy. Major challenges are low living standards, poor infrastructure, and high unemployment. Remittances from Albanians abroad allow many families to survive. Lack of sufficient arable land, land disputes, remote schools and health centers, lack of agricultural technology, poor transportation systems, unreliable electricity, and limited rural credit have led to urban migration, especially among the younger population. Albanian demographics are changing rapidly as the rural population moves to urban areas to seek work and educational opportunities.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps initiated a program in Albania in 1992 with Volunteers serving in business development, education and the environment. In 1997, the program was suspended and Volunteers evacuated due to a breakdown in civil order and public safety. The Peace Corps returned to Albania in 2003, and currently has 74 Volunteers serving in three projects: business development, education, and health and HIV/AIDS. Volunteers serve in towns and in smaller communities, helping local institutions build their capacity to address local issues. Albania is slowly decentralizing responsibilities and resources from the national government to local governments, and communities are gaining control over local water systems, roads, schools, clinics, and public services for the first time. Volunteers work with city halls, community organizations, microfinance institutions, resource centers, universities, schools, and health clinics.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers in this sector work in a project that builds the capacity of community organizations and institutions to promote local development. Volunteers work with local governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and business development organizations to improve their orga-

nizational and management capabilities. Volunteers also promote collaborative activities among local governments, NGOs, businesses, and citizen groups.

Two Volunteers at a World Heritage site of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) collaborated with a local travel business and an international NGO to open the town's first tourist information center (TIC). The TIC offers free informational materials to tourists that were created by staff and Volunteers, including brochures, pamphlets, and maps. The Volunteers have also provided training for TIC staff and community volunteers on tourism development and promotion, marketing, and customer service.

### Education

Education Volunteers teach English as a foreign language in secondary schools and work with the English instructors to improve their teaching skills. A few Volunteers are also placed in universities and schools of foreign languages to prepare future teachers of English, as well as to promote a nascent teacher-training program. English educators develop school and community activities to promote the use of conversational English.

One Volunteer developed a continuing education program for 30 English teachers in her district. Working with her counterpart, the Volunteer organized a series of lectures for the teachers on topics such as English writing skills, grammar, public speaking, critical thinking, and problem solving. The trainings provided the teachers who participated with new ideas and methods to implement in their classrooms.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers promote healthier communities by working with health promotion offices, local clinics, schools, and community groups to provide education on maternal and child health, dental hygiene, water and sanitation, drug awareness, and HIV/AIDS prevention. They also help develop health education programs and materials for use at the local level, and work with local counterparts to improve the delivery of health education.

Working with a local cancer-patient support NGO, and funded by the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation, a team of three Volunteers helped develop and implement a breast cancer awareness campaign in their region. The team designed the campaign, created brochures and posters that provided information on breast health awareness and self-exam, and promoted mammograms. Posters were placed on billboards and buses, and programs on local television and radio discussed the campaign. A health Volunteer placed in a smaller town used the campaign's materials to conduct a training of trainers with local women leaders. Working with a local doctor and cultural center director, she trained the women on topics related to breast health.

One Volunteer worked with orphans and homeless children on small-scale financial management, enabling these older orphans and homeless children to keep financial records for small-scale activities. Another Volunteer worked with a district municipality to carry out a workplace prevalence survey that led to 755 employees attending HIV/AIDS educational sessions; 86 percent of those attending the workshops were tested.

*"I believe that the dedication, commitment, and passion of these Volunteers will be imprinted in the memory of our town like a chronicle in the stone, and will never be forgotten."*

Sadi Petrela
Director, PACKARD Humanities Institute
Gjirokastra Conservation and Development Office
Albania

# Armenia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1992–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Yerevan |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,470 |
| GDP growth | 14.4% |
| Foreign direct investment | $258 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 0%<br>Female: 1% |
| Infant mortality rate | 26 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 90%<br>Measles: 95% |
| Access to an improved water source | 92% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religion | Armenian Apostolic Christianity |
| Official language | Armenian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 80 | 82 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,022 | 2,003 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Armenia was once one of the most industrialized republics of the Soviet Union, exporting industrial and high-technology goods to the other republics. The breakup of the Soviet Union, combined with the collapse of trade and financial systems, dealt a crippling blow to Armenia's industries. Additionally, economic effects from a 1988 earthquake, which killed more than 25,000 people and left more than 500,000 homeless, are still being felt. A blockade resulting from the conflict with Azerbaijan has devastated the economy and intensified Armenia's dependence on external supplies of energy, food, and materials. The combination of these events has caused a 90 percent loss of GDP, by far the largest drop of all former Soviet republics. Though much has improved, half of all Armenians still live in poverty; more than one in six live in extreme poverty.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Armenia is in the midst of historic change. Despite its setbacks, the country is slowly transitioning to a market economy and a democratic society. Private-sector activities are emerging, and wide-scale entrepreneurship needs to be supported through training and education. Armenians recognize the importance of English to link themselves to outside economic, educational, and technological opportunities. More attention is being given to health education and prevention as an alternative to the traditional curative approach. Armenians are beginning to recognize the importance of the environment as a priceless but threatened national resource. The Peace Corps supports Armenia's developmental challenges by providing programs in business development, education, the environmental and health and HIV/AIDS.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

A key challenge facing Armenia is initiating and sustaining new industries and services that grow, attract investments, create new jobs, and allow the country to flourish within a broader regional and international market. Peace Corps Volunteers help develop Armenian organizational and community capacity by providing consulting and technical assistance services to business centers and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Volunteers provide training in project design and management, marketing, finance, organizational development, and project monitoring and evaluation.

One Volunteer, in collaboration with community members, gathered information and pictures of the area's notable historical sites. With this information they redesigned tour-

ism materials for a local tourism center. The Volunteer also worked with local organizations to obtain funding to print 750 tourism maps, 750 brochures, and 150 welcome books. Additional funds were used to provide training in customer service and hospitality for the local tourism industry and to create a tourism website.

### Education

The project that teaches English as a foreign language increases the quality of English education throughout Armenia. Volunteers teach in secondary schools, colleges, universities, training centers, and educational NGOs. Instruction is provided in schools and through nonformal educational activities, such as after-school clubs. Volunteers provide professional development for teachers through team teaching and workshops. Many Volunteers also work on information and communications technology projects.

Several Volunteers helped organize an International Outreach Coalition camp that was hosted in Armenia last summer. The camp's academic curriculum included topics such as civil leadership, country studies, and cultural awareness. Students from Armenia, Georgia, Lithuania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine attended the camp and participated in various activities including model European Union debates.

### Environment

The environmental education project raises communities' environmental awareness. It also introduces experiential learning skills to youth, increasing their appreciation of the environment. Volunteers work with secondary school science teachers and community members at schools and local NGOs. They also work with local counterparts to develop and adapt environmental education learning resources in the Armenian language; run after-school environmental clubs and summer ecological camps for youth; and organize community-wide environmental activities.

With local partners, several Volunteers organized five-day environmental conservation youth camps, which were held throughout Armenia. In addition to teaching youth important lessons about environmental conservation, Volunteers also worked with adult community members to teach them the skills they needed to continue this critical environmental education. Topics such as organizational leadership, budgeting, time management, staff supervision, and managing environmental programs were covered with the adults to enable the camps to continue in the future.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers organize health classes, seminars, community and professional lectures, and discussion groups on topics such as general health and hygiene, women's health, self-esteem, nutrition, exercise, HIV/AIDS prevention, and physical therapy. Volunteers also train health workers in clinics and hospitals, enhancing their professional development.

One Volunteer, working with local healthcare providers, organized a free three-day diabetes diagnostic clinic. Attendees received a free basic health checkup, including height and weight measurements, blood pressure, pulse, body mass index, and blood sugar levels. As a result of this free clinic, five people were newly diagnosed with diabetes, and they were provided with additional care and information about their condition.

*"Peace Corps has been one of the most incredible experiences of my life. My greatest success has been watching my community take over the NGO and make it their own."*

Armenia Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# Azerbaijan

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Baku |
| Population | 8 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,240 |
| GDP growth | 26.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.680 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 1%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 74 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 96%<br>Measles: 98% |
| Access to an improved water source | 77% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Islam: 93%<br>Russian Orthodoxy: 3%<br>Armenian Orthodoxy: 2%<br>Other: 2% |
| Official language | Azerbaijani (Azeri) |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 106 | 121 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,135 | 2,225 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Azerbaijan has one of the world's fastest-growing gross domestic products and is experiencing growing regional influence due to its geographic location and energy resources. Continuing negotiations with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjoining territories remain high on Azerbaijan's political agenda. Other priorities include addressing the problems of a burgeoning economy and preparing Azerbaijan to use revenues from oil and gas reserves that are beginning to flow into the economy. A British Petroleum-led consortium of oil and gas producers is funding development projects along the route of Azerbaijan's newly opened oil pipeline from Baku to the Black Sea.

Presidential elections in 2003 and parliamentary elections in 2005 were improvements from prior years, but irregularities remain, and Azerbaijan has not yet met international election standards. The international community will again scrutinize Azerbaijan's democratic process in the presidential elections scheduled for October 2008.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Current programming includes a business development project, an education project, and a new youth project. In 2005, Volunteers piloted a business development project, and Volunteers have served 37 organizations in 16 regions, building capacity in business and communication skills and assisting with organizational development. To date, five groups of English language teachers have arrived in Azerbaijan since the first group arrived in 2003, serving in 42 regions and at more than 115 schools. Volunteers team-teach with Azerbaijani English teachers, using communicative methods and a variety of resources to enhance their teaching. In late 2007, Peace Corps/Azerbaijan initiated a youth development project in which Volunteers work with youth at the community level in 14 regions throughout the country.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Business development Volunteers serve as business facilitators, advisors, educators, and community development workers at the grassroots level. They serve as resource specialists, trainers, skills specialists, business advisors, and motivators, enhancing the capacity of intermediary organizations to develop businesses, organizations, and communities. Volunteers also initiate and collaboratively implement needs-based community projects. Host organizations include business and marketing centers, nongovernmental business groups, community development programs, agriculture

service centers, information and resource centers, microfinance institutions, and vocational schools.

One Volunteer and her counterpart conducted a training seminar on financial management for 21 agricultural extension agents and staff. Extensionists can now manage their financial records more professionally, and staff members use their new skills to better manage the center's finances. In addition to conveying technical information, the Volunteer introduced her colleagues to new teaching methods that can be used in future trainings.

### Education

English teaching Volunteers are assigned to secondary schools and universities throughout Azerbaijan. Volunteers team-teach with Azerbaijani English teachers, focusing on improving English communication skills of students and teachers and supporting teachers in implementing communicative teaching methodologies. Volunteers also hold after-school conversation clubs and provide support to libraries and resource centers.

In addition to classroom teaching, Volunteers have inventively supported community activities. Through the USAID-supported small projects assistance program, one Volunteer and local counterpart trained 16 computer teachers from 10 schools located in small towns and villages. The course gave the teachers a working knowledge of basic computer programs so they could, in turn, teach their students. Participants were introduced to interactive teaching methods and given guidance on using new government-provided textbooks.

### Youth

Youth development Volunteers work at the community level in cities, towns, and villages throughout Azerbaijan. Volunteers work with youth support organizations at their sites, including schools, resource centers, and local governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Volunteers work with youth, local service providers, parents, and community leaders to create opportunities for young people to engage in activities that help them lead healthier lifestyles and develop their leadership, life, and employment skills.

A Volunteer and a local counterpart developed a youth art exhibit entitled "How Do You See Your World?" There were more than 60 submissions that ranged from anti-drug trafficking and narcotics to world peace and the end of regional conflict. Their artwork helped raise the visibility and understanding of these important issues in the community.

*"Everything I have heard about the progress of the Peace Corps is excellent. These English teachers are doing a wonderful job, and the people of Azerbaijan deeply appreciate their contribution."*

President Ilham Aliyev
Azerbaijan

*The Honorable Anne Derse, the United States Ambassador to Azerbaijan, addresses staff at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C.*

# Belize

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Belmopan |
| Population | 291,800 |
| Annual per capita income | $3,570 |
| GDP growth | 3.10% |
| Foreign direct investment | $126 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 23%<br>Female: 23% |
| Infant mortality rate | 15 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 96%<br>Measles: 95% |
| Access to an improved water source | 91% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 2.5% |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 50%<br>Protestantism: 48%<br>Other: 2% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 67 | 60 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,159 | 2,206 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Although Belize is the most sparsely populated country in Central America, it is rich in cultural and environmental diversity. Many different groups of people, including Mayan, Mestizo, Garifuna, and Mennonite live together peacefully. Historically, agriculture drove the Belizean economy. Today, the government is focused on increasing ecotourism travel to the largest coral reef in the Americas, numerous Mayan archaeological sites, and vast pristine jungles.

Belize celebrated its 25th anniversary as an independent country in 2006. As a young nation, the country continues to have many development needs. In contrast to Latin American trends, Belize's ranking on the United Nations Human Development Index has been declining. One-third of its population lives in poverty; literacy rates have been declining, and access to secondary education is still not universal.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps has been operating continuously in Belize for 45 years and continues to enjoy strong government support. Over the years, programs have adapted to meet the needs of the people of Belize. Today, Volunteers focus their efforts in the areas of business development, education, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers provide critical assistance to fledgling community-based organizations and businesses that are committed to creating local income-generating opportunities. Volunteers assist community businesses, including women's groups, cooperatives, agro-producers, artisans, and ecotourism ventures. Through Volunteer technical support, these organizations are improving their knowledge and use of sustainable business practices. Volunteers also strengthen the leadership and planning skills of the village councils responsible for the economic development of rural communities.

One Volunteer helped a community group write a business plan to provide horse-and-buggy cultural tours for tourists visiting a nearby archaeological site. This new endeavor fills a niche in the ecotourism sector, and it will attract visitors to an otherwise isolated community, where they can experience the rich cultural history of the rural village. These tours also will attract customers to several small businesses in the community, including a local artisan cooperative, butterfly farm, and restaurant.

### Education

Volunteers help the Ministry of Education enhance the skills of untrained primary school teachers. Volunteers create teacher-training programs that build the talents of the teachers with whom they work. They also mentor teachers and administrators on the use of research-based education methodologies which focus on literacy and English language instruction methods to promote student achievement. To support the government's initiative to expand preschool programs, Volunteers train teachers in early childhood education methods. Most Volunteers work directly with a specific school, but others create outreach programs through their work at district education offices in developing appropriate curriculum to reverse declining literacy rates.

One Volunteer provided training and support to five teachers in her community. The training focused on methods to improve student reading and writing skills. The teachers implemented the new methods in their primary school classes and saw great improvement in student reading ability. Students also achieved a higher passing rate for an annual exam given to primary school students.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

People living in Belize's rural communities continue to struggle to meet their basic needs, such as clean water, proper waste management, and healthy living. Volunteers assist families in these communities to enhance hygiene, nutrition, and sanitation through education and gardening programs at schools and in the community. They also help construct and maintain latrines and water systems.

Belize has the highest incidence of HIV/AIDS in Central America. Volunteers support organizations that fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic by creating outreach programs about the disease, its prevention, and its treatment. Volunteers also collaborate with the Ministry of Education to implement its new Health and Family Life Education program with school-age youth.

One Volunteer assisted in the launch of a weekly radio show produced and hosted by young people for young people called *The Real Deal*. These lively discussions encourage living healthy lifestyles with a strong focus on reducing the incidence of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Other topics have included substance abuse, decision making, and discrimination.

### Youth

With nearly three-quarters of the population under the age of 30 and less than half of 13- to 16-year-olds enrolled in high school, youth development is a government priority. Volunteers encourage youth to lead safe, healthy, and productive lives by increasing access to high-quality youth programs. Volunteers strengthen the abilities of organizations and schools to create programs to engage youth in positive social and peer interactions. They also involve youth and youth groups in activities to enhance their life skills and reinforce a positive transition to adulthood.

Other Volunteer programs improve youth job readiness skills. Last year, several Volunteers provided training to more than 125 teachers in 11 schools on facilitating and implementing Junior Achievement programs, which educate youth about small business and entrepreneurship. As a result, nearly 900 students participated in these activities that focused on work readiness and financial literacy.

*"Senator Reid makes it a point on his trips and I make it a point on mine to meet with Peace Corps Volunteers... They are making a difference."*

The Honorable Dick Durbin (D-IL)
Member of the U.S. Senate
January 2007

# Benin

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1968–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Porto-Novo |
| Population | 8 million |
| Annual per capita income | $510 |
| GDP growth | 3.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $21 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 52%<br>Female: 77% |
| Infant mortality rate | 89 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 83%<br>Measles: 85% |
| Access to an improved water source | 67% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.9% |
| Religions | Indigenous beliefs: 50%<br>Christianity: 30%<br>Islam: 20% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 93 | 93 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,151 | 3,212 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

One of the most stable countries in Africa, Benin has held four consecutive successful presidential elections. The last one, conducted in March 2006, led to a peaceful handover from President Mathieu Kerekou to Thomas Boni Yayi. The new government continues to reform the educational system, provide opportunities for private economic initiatives, reduce corruption, improve healthcare delivery systems, decentralize government functions, and implement a broad liberalization program in the cotton sector, Benin's primary source of foreign exchange.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Although the government has improved the well-being of the Beninese people, the country's human and material resources are often insufficient to provide enough qualified teachers, provide adequate health education and HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns (particularly in rural areas), preserve and restore the natural environment, and promote and provide training and credit facilities for small business owners. Volunteers address these needs through a broad range of activities in business development, education, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Regardless of sector, Volunteers receive training on how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and incorporate gender sensitivity into all sector activities.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and micro-entrepreneurs need assistance with basic management skills, and Volunteers work with entrepreneurs, village associations, women, and NGOs to teach marketing, accounting, business management, and organizational techniques. Some Volunteers provide training in savings and financial management to gardening associations of illiterate women. Volunteers also work with communities to create business centers that provide business trainings and consultations for the community workforce.

Benin's information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure is rapidly maturing. Fiber optic lines stretch across the country, Internet access continues to expand, and there is a vast network of mobile phone coverage. Volunteers provide training in website development to entrepreneurs and NGOs. One Volunteer created a computer center and a website to distribute business registration information to entrepreneurs. These services have reduced the high costs of collecting the information required to start

and run a business. The website contains hundreds of documents to help entrepreneurs launch their businesses throughout West Africa.

### Education

Volunteers work in secondary schools teaching English and incorporating development themes into their lessons, such as HIV/AIDS education and prevention, ICT, and environmental stewardship. Volunteers also transfer innovative, participatory methodologies to their colleagues and organize HIV/AIDS training and computer training in their communities.

One Volunteer organized a library and book-lending program at the school where she taught. During the summer, she used the library to develop a reading program to encourage students to read outside of class. Students borrowed books from the library and then had their parents confirm that they had read the books. Prizes were given to the students who read the most pages during the summer break.

### Environment

Peace Corps Volunteers work directly with local governments, NGOs, and community members to address deforestation and rapidly declining soil fertility. Volunteers in Benin work on environmental education, agroforestry, and environmental protection activities. Volunteers are also promoting ecotourism, and they work with NGOs that guide international visitors.

Several Volunteers established environmental clubs to educate and implement environmental protection activities. One Volunteer conducted interactive photography and journalism training with her environment club. Each club member developed an in-depth research project on a relevant environment topic and presented their findings and photographs in two national expositions. Other club activities included producing a bimonthly environmental radio show, creating a mural that encourages tree planting, and planning a community waste management day.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers collaborate with social service and health centers throughout Benin to conduct health education focused on maternal and child nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Volunteers assist in prenatal and post-natal consultations by providing life-saving maternal and infant nutritional counseling. Volunteers initiate child-growth monitoring programs, such as weekly weigh-ins and vaccination campaigns, in remote areas where there have been no previous means to track child nutritional status. Volunteers also promote essential hygiene and sanitation behaviors. Volunteers work with peer educators from their communities in an ongoing HIV/AIDS peer-education program.

Two Volunteers helped a Beninese NGO secure funding to improve services of a rural health center located near their community. With grants provided by the Peace Corps Partnership Program, the NGO hired additional health-care providers, including a midwife, to staff the center. The extra staff enabled the health center to treat the nearly 150 patients who seek care for problems stemming from malaria, childbirth, and infections each month.

*"I believe my biggest impact on Benin and Benin's biggest impact on me will be the handful of deep friendships that I've had here. It was also those same friendships that allowed me to reach hundreds of artisans and small entrepreneurs and teach them basic financial planning and responsibility. My personal relationships will continue, and if even a few of those artisans keep using what I taught them then I believe we've achieved the Peace Corps mission."*

Benin Volunteer
Business Development Sector

# Bolivia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1971<br>1990–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | La Paz |
| Population | 9 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,010 |
| GDP growth | 4.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | (-$277 million) |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 7%<br>Female: 19% |
| Infant mortality rate | 52 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 81%<br>Measles: 64% |
| Access to an improved water source | 85% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religion | Predominantly Roman Catholicism |
| Official languages | Spanish<br>Quechua<br>Aymara |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 157 | 160 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,975 | 3,061 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Juan Evo Morales, a member of Bolivia's indigenous Aymara and a populist, assumed the presidency of Bolivia in January 2006. Since then, he has implemented policies such as the establishment of a constitutional review process targeted toward nationalization, increased taxes, land reform, literacy campaigns, and increased medical services to rural areas.

Bolivia's economy remains dependent on foreign aid from multilateral lenders and foreign governments. Bolivia's principal exports are natural gas, soybeans and soy products, crude petroleum, zinc ore, and tin. Bolivia had a record six percent fiscal surplus for 2006, and the country benefits from the loan forgiveness programs of the Group of Eight, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank. In 2005, the GDP per capita was approximately $2,700 (USD), which is one of the lowest in Latin America. The United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index ranks Bolivia as the least developed country in South America.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since the initial opening of the program in 1962, more than 2,500 Volunteers have served in Bolivia. After a nearly 20-year hiatus, the government of Bolivia formally requested the Peace Corps return to Bolivia, and the Peace Corps resumed operations in 1990. Today, there are approximately 140 Volunteers in-country, working in agriculture, business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Where appropriate, the Peace Corps integrates information technology into projects to expand technology access for Bolivian youth, farmers, entrepreneurs, and municipalities.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Bolivia's farmers face serious challenges in meeting basic needs for adequate nutrition and income. Agriculture Volunteers help farmers gain skills in sustainable farm practices, improving crop yields, product storage, and product transformation, as well as agricultural business and marketing practices. Volunteers also help farmers with beekeeping and fish farming.

One Volunteer works with a small technical university, teaching business and marketing classes and product transformation, including how to make peanut butter and jams. He is also working on a community fish farming project, which has grown to 10 working fish ponds. The yield of these ponds will be dedicated to local consumption and sale to increase family incomes.

### Business Development

To address rural poverty, Volunteers help communities develop business skills and income-generating activities. This includes training local artisans, improving micro-enterprise practices, teaching basic business skills, and facilitating the development of local tourism plans.

One Volunteer is teaching daily computer classes to girls in an orphanage; teaching micro-enterprise classes to university students and women's groups, and supporting two artisan groups to improve business and marketing practices. In addition, he helped to secure 12 computers to start teaching computer classes at a technical institute, and is training teachers to run the center after he completes his service.

### Education

Volunteers help improve the self-esteem and health of rural families by providing training and promoting activities related to nutrition, self esteem, and family health. Volunteers also train educators in participatory teaching techniques, development of active teaching materials, ways to incorporate health education curricula in the classroom, initiating or expanding computer skills, and creative nonformal education techniques.

One Volunteer helped establish a school library in her community. She sought book donations, set up a cataloging system, and trained a community member to be the librarian. Nearly 500 students in her area now have improved access to books and other educational materials.

### Environment

Bolivia faces rapidly deteriorating natural resources from destabilizing mineral extraction and agricultural practices. The natural resource management project aims to protect the environment and create an ethic of good stewardship. Volunteers work with communities on soil conservation, watershed management, and re-vegetation activities. Youth conservation clubs and teacher training help expand positive conservation practices.

One Volunteer, working with the municipal government and superintendent of schools, regularly conducts training sessions to help teachers understand and incorporate environmental principles and activities into their curricula. She has formed youth eco-clubs, and she coordinated an environmental fair, which was financed by the municipality and attracted more than 2,000 participants. She is also developing a school recycling initiative.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Access to potable water and waste disposal systems is a major development challenge in Bolivia. Partnering with local and national organizations, Volunteers improve rural household water availability and sanitary conditions and habits. Volunteers promote the design and construction of water systems and bathrooms, organize and train local water boards, train hygiene education workers, and help communities to improve solid-waste management, recycling, and composting practices.

Collaborating with a local nongovernmental organization, one Volunteer works with more than 20 communities on water issues, strengthening community water committees and training them in administration, water management, and water system maintenance. The Volunteer also assists in the construction of new drinking water systems, grey water systems, and latrines, and he teaches hygiene to children and women's groups.

*"The Peace Corps Volunteer's work was excellent. She was always willing to help and to cooperate; she is a very kind person, and through herself and her work, I learned more about Peace Corps."*

Dr. Edgar Valdez Carrizo
Director, Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano SidAccion
Bolivia

*Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) visits with Volunteers and host-country staff in Bolivia, December 2006*

# Botswana

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1966–1997<br>2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Gaborone |
| Population | 2 million |
| Annual per capita income | $5,590 |
| GDP growth | 6.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $279 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 20%<br>Female: 18% |
| Infant mortality rate | 87 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 97%<br>Measles: 90% |
| Access to an improved water source | 95% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 37.3% |
| Religions | Christianity: 60%<br>None: 20%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 6%<br>Other: 4% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 56 | 59 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,712 | 1,748 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Republic of Botswana has enjoyed a stable and progressive political climate since independence in 1966. Although it is a multiparty democracy, its politics have been dominated by the Botswana Democratic Party, which has won every presidential election for the past three decades—from the first president, Seretse Khama, through the second, Quett Ketumile Masire, to the third and current one, Festus Mogae. The vice president, Ian Khama, is waiting in the wings for his presumed ascendancy in March 2008.

Through fiscal discipline and sound management, Botswana has transformed from one of the poorest countries in the world into a middle-income country. However, despite its high GDP, Botswana has high unemployment and income disparity. Revenue from diamonds and profits from the large foreign-exchange reserves of the Bank of Botswana have largely sheltered the country from recessions that have hurt most other countries in the region.

With a population of only 1.8 million people, Botswana is experiencing the impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic not only as a health problem, but as a development problem affecting every aspect of the lives of the Batswana people.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

From 1966 to 1997, Peace Corps projects touched nearly all aspects of Botswana's development, with Volunteers working in business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Because of Botswana's economic success, the Peace Corps program closed in 1997.

In 1998, the government of Botswana declared HIV/AIDS a national crisis, and President Mogae dedicated his first five years in office to fighting HIV/AIDS, poverty, and unemployment. In 2001, President Mogae asked President Bush to reestablish the Peace Corps program to assist with the pandemic. Following an assessment by the Peace Corps in 2002, the program reopened, and the first group of Volunteers dedicated to combating HIV/AIDS arrived in March 2003.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Health and HIV/AIDS

As one of only three Peace Corps programs worldwide focused exclusively on HIV/AIDS activities, Volunteers in Botswana collaborate with the government of Botswana and nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners in a multifaceted approach to fight the disease. Under the guidance of the National AIDS Coordinating Agency, the Peace Corps began its activities in 2003 in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government (MOLG), specifically with its AIDS

coordinating unit. As part of the national campaign, this unit mainstreams HIV/AIDS education and programming at the national, district, and village levels.

Additionally, all government-sponsored development programs are to include HIV/AIDS training and education for the workforce and the recipient community.

Volunteers work as counterparts to AIDS coordinators at health districts throughout Botswana. They provide assistance to the district AIDS committees in developing multisector, district-wide responses to HIV/AIDS. They also help develop village AIDS committees; monitor, evaluate, and document HIV/AIDS programming and its impacts; facilitate district plans to ensure that HIV/AIDS activities are integrated into all development projects; and help form and train support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS.

In 2004, Peace Corps/Botswana, again in partnership with MOLG, assigned Volunteers to help build community capacity to address high-priority HIV/AIDS-related challenges. Volunteers work with social worker counterparts at the village level to build capacity for home-based care clients as well as for orphans and vulnerable children. Other Volunteers collaborate with the ministry of health to support healthcare professionals at village clinics that provide services to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

In conjunction with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Peace Corps posts Volunteers at fledgling community-based organizations, particularly those helping orphans and vulnerable children. Examples of Volunteer activities in this program include forming abstinence clubs for youth, training peer educators, and teaching NGO staff to write effective proposals.

Last year, four Volunteers supported the Ministry of Education in rolling out a life-skills curriculum. Building on that project, 15 new life-skills Volunteers are expected to arrive in April 2008.

*"It is with the greatest humility and respect that I, on behalf of a grateful nation, commend the Peace Corps, past and present, for being amongst those members of the human race who have decided, not in exchange for any material reward, to make a positive difference to the lives of others."*

President Festus Mogae
Botswana

*President Mogae addresses returned Volunteers, dignitaries, and staff at headquarters in Washington, D.C., 2007*

# Bulgaria

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1991–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Sofia |
| Population | 8 million |
| Annual per capita income | $3,450 |
| GDP growth | 5.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | $2.614 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 1%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 12 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 90%<br>Measles: 81% |
| Access to an improved water source | 99% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Bulgarian Orthodoxy: 83%<br>Islam: 12%<br>Others: 4%<br>Protestantism: <1%<br>Roman Catholicism: <1% |
| Official language | Bulgarian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 161 | 144 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,377 | 3,284 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since 1990, when peaceful public protest changed Bulgaria's political structure and direction, Bulgaria has continued to transform its political, economic, and social systems. Bulgaria has made exceptional progress toward creating a more stable environment and a market-oriented economy, particularly in urban areas. Membership in NATO and admission to the European Union (EU) in January 2007 bode well for the development of civil society. Despite these major accomplishments, much work remains to be done, particularly with underserved populations and in rural communities.

Even as national economic statistics and structural reforms have raised hopes, progress has been frustratingly slow for many Bulgarians, who still feel the effects of the economic collapse of 1996. Ethnic minorities, people in rural communities, and the elderly often struggle near the bottom of the social and economic order, a development gap that is rapidly widening.

Bulgaria's position in southeastern Europe makes it a bellwether for regional stability in the Balkans. If Bulgaria can evolve into an open and prosperous nation, this will demonstrate to other countries in the region that societies committed to openness and ethnic tolerance achieve more—economically, socially, and politically.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps serves Bulgaria through programs in business development, education, and youth. Volunteers partner with change agents in their communities to identify local needs, create development strategies, transfer skills, and build civil society through community cooperation.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers help build cooperation at the grassroots level, and they encourage cooperation among local governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), entrepreneurs, and civic groups.

Volunteers help communities conduct needs assessments and create programs to address these needs. They promote volunteerism, assist with local economic development, teach management and organizational skills, facilitate environmental education, and help communities recognize their strengths and assets.

One Volunteer helped the tourist information center in her area develop and produce training for local business owners and youth. The training focused on improving customer service, developing ecotourism, protecting the environment,

and promoting tourism sites, including Roman ruins and mineral springs. Additionally, she organized a group to produce and install multilingual signs for the town's most popular tourist attractions. Service in the town's tourism sector has notably improved, and the information center will offer ongoing tourism training to strengthen this promising local business sector.

### Education

English language education is a national priority. Bulgaria is now a member of the EU and is striving to become fully active in the global community. The Peace Corps helps address this need by providing Volunteers in primary and secondary schools to help both students and teachers with English language acquisition. Education Volunteers also work on community projects, including youth camps, adult English courses, and minority integration training. Volunteers work with students and counterparts on business skills, peer education, HIV/AIDS awareness, and human trafficking prevention.

In addition to teaching English in a small mountain town, one Volunteer partnered with community members to convert an unused classroom into a multimedia conference room by adding computer equipment, an overhead projector, and wireless Internet access. The Volunteer trained teachers at the school to use this equipment, and they now effectively incorporate videos and other multimedia assets into their lesson plans. The room is also used as a movie theater once a week, and donations collected from moviegoers will be used to purchase additional multimedia equipment.

### Youth

Youth development offers the Peace Corps the opportunity to invest in Bulgaria's future community and national leaders. Volunteers support three national initiatives: provide all youth with greater opportunities for personal development; improve the conditions of the more than 30,000 children living in orphanages and other state institutions; and contribute to the national effort to combat human trafficking in Bulgaria. Volunteers work with disabled youth, orphans, youth parliaments, and European-integration centers. Volunteers help local partners organize camps and after-school programs in leadership, career development, community service, and tolerance-building.

One Volunteer worked with an NGO focused on Roma community development to help create a community center. The center offers classes in English for youth and women, leads youth and sports camps, and conducts life skills classes for women to help improve Roma participation in mainstream Bulgarian society.

*"Peace Corps Volunteers' dedication to this noble cause is impressive. Across thousands of kilometers, they build stable bridges between the two cultures and peoples through mutual respect and understanding."*

Daniel Valtchev
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Education and Science
Bulgaria

# Burkina Faso

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1966–1987<br>1995–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Ouagadougou |
| Population | 13 million |
| Annual per capita income | $400 |
| GDP growth | 4.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $19 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 71%<br>Female: 85% |
| Infant mortality rate | 96 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 88%<br>Measles: 78% |
| Access to an improved water source | 61% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.8% |
| Religions | Islam: 55%<br>Christianity: 25%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 20% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 101 | 110 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,282 | 3,373 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Burkina Faso, formally known as Upper Volta, gained independence from France in August 1960. In 1966, the civilian government was overthrown by a military coup, which then characterized the mode of government for the next 25 years. In 1984, the country's name was changed to Burkina Faso, which means "Country of the Upright/Honorable People." In 1991, a former military ruler, Blaise Compare, was the sole candidate and won the presidency; he was reelected in 1998 with nearly 90 percent of the vote and elected again in 2005. Since 1991, the country has experienced a high level of stability. The majority of its population engages in subsistence agriculture, which is hampered by frequent droughts. Though foreign investment and private-sector development are increasing, healthcare remains inadequate and conditions such as malaria and malnutrition are endemic.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps entered Burkina Faso in 1966. Though the program phased out in 1987, Volunteers returned to Burkina Faso in 1995 as part of a newly established health project. One year later, the Peace Corps established a secondary education project, and in 2003, the Peace Corps introduced a small business development project to complement the government's poverty-reduction and private-sector promotional programs. In 2005, the Peace Corps started a girls' education project to increase girls' access to education. This was identified as a priority by the Burkina Faso government and the Millennium Challenge Corporation.* All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Peace Corps/Burkina Faso works to promote business development and agribusiness. Volunteers work with entrepreneur associations and cooperatives to market crafts and agribusiness products as well as to promote cultural tours and tourism. Volunteers work with savings and credit clubs, handicraft associations, and agribusiness cooperatives to improve business practices and the viability of commercial activities.

One Volunteer worked with an association of handicapped artisans to build a workshop with a sales area. He also provided training for members in accounting and marketing and helped in outreach activities to inform both the community and tourists about the center.

### Education

Volunteers in the secondary education project work in underserved middle and high schools as math and science teachers. Teachers typically have large classes, sometimes with more than 100 students, and they teach up to 20 hours per week. Volunteers teach all classes in French, and they work with their counterparts to build students' capacities for critical thinking and problem solving, and to gain important life skills.

One Volunteer taught his ninth-grade biology students about volcanoes by having them construct their own models. The artificial volcanoes were made from mud, baking soda, vinegar, liquid soap, tissue, and water. This creative lesson plan provided the students with a hands-on learning opportunity and also provided the Volunteer's teaching colleagues with new and innovative teaching ideas.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers are assigned to village health and social promotion centers. They work with communities to strengthen local health management committees and help develop health-promotion programs that address childhood communicable diseases, malaria, HIV/AIDS, and nutrition.

Volunteers have successfully built the capacity of community-based organizations (CBOs) to take a leadership role in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Volunteers collaborated with counterparts to train more than 80 CBOs in educating their communities about HIV/AIDS and other health issues including malaria, polio, tuberculosis, and family planning.

One Volunteer worked closely with a community theater group that used theater as a way to conduct health education activities. Based on their successful performances, the health district of Zabré has contracted the group to perform UNICEF-sponsored education activities for the entire district on preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

### Youth

Volunteers in the girls' education and empowerment project increase the enrollment, retention, and transition rates of girls from primary to secondary school. They work with communities and schools to promote the value of education and to design and implement activities such as girls' clubs, sports groups, study groups, theater groups, life-skills training, girls' camps, self-esteem and leadership games, and exchanges through the Coverdell World Wise Schools program.

One Volunteer organized a week-long girls' camp to encourage girls to stay in school, give them an opportunity to discuss health concerns, and enhance their self esteem and leadership skills. Participants visited women in the workplace to discuss the women's education, career path, and obstacles they had encountered. Through the camp experience, the young girls broadened their ideas about women's roles and opportunities as well as the obstacles they may confront to succeed.

*"Living in Burkina Faso, I have had the opportunity to discover that there is something far greater than nationality, ethnicity, race, or religion; that we are all members of a global community and it is within this community that we work together to better ourselves as human beings."*

Burkina Faso Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

* *Launched by President George W. Bush, with bipartisan Congressional support, the Millennium Challenge Corporation was established by Congress in 2004 to administer the Millennium Challenge Account, an innovative foreign assistance program designed to make U.S. aid more effective by rewarding countries with sound policies and good governance.*

# Cambodia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 2006–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Phnom Penh |
| Population | 14 million |
| Annual per capita income | $448 |
| GDP growth | 13.4% |
| Foreign direct investment | $379 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 15% |
| | Female: 36% |
| Infant mortality rate | 58 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 82% |
| | Measles: 79% |
| Access to an improved water source | 41% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.6% |
| Religions | Theravada Buddhism: 95% |
| | Christianity, Islam |
| Official language | Khmer |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 59 | 68 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,422 | 1,574 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Cambodia is a tropical country about the size of Minnesota dominated by the Mekong River and its floodplain. The government is a constitutional monarchy and, since the 1993 United Nations-supported elections, enjoys a multiparty system. The chief of state is King Norodom Sihamoni, and the head of state is Prime Minister Hun Sen.

Cambodia faces significant challenges in its efforts to spur economic growth. Roughly 80 percent of the population is engaged in subsistence agriculture, a sector with insufficient productivity to provide jobs for a labor force that is growing at more than five percent a year. Garment manufacturing and tourism are the two major cash industries and growth sectors, but they employ only one-tenth of the labor force. The government encourages the development of small and medium enterprises, but expertise and capital are extremely limited.

Cambodia is ethnically homogeneous. More than 90 percent of the population is ethnic Khmer; the remainder is Chinese, Vietnamese, Cham, Khmer Loeu, and Indian. Theravada Buddhism, suppressed by the Khmer Rouge but now revived, is the dominant religion, but Islam and Christianity are also practiced.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Royal Government of Cambodia first invited the Peace Corps to open a program in November 1992. The agency sent an assessment team the following year and a country agreement was signed in October 1994. However, the political situation at that time was deemed too unstable for the agency to send Volunteers. A second assessment team visited in 1996. Although improvements in the political and safety situation were noted, additional concerns remained.

In 2004, Cambodia's Ministry of Education again expressed an interest in establishing a Peace Corps program. The Peace Corps sent an assessment team, which found improvements in the administrative and security infrastructures and opportunities for Volunteers to work safely and effectively. The Peace Corps office officially opened in 2006.

Education is highly valued in Cambodia. Unfortunately, the entire educational system was dismantled by the Khmer Rouge, which from 1975 to 1979 targeted anyone with an education for elimination. Although investments were made in basic education in the 1980s, gaps in teacher training have still not been addressed. The initial focus of the Peace Corps program is secondary-level English teaching and teacher training. Since their swearing-in in April 2007, Volunteers have had a positive impact on their co-teachers, students, and their communities.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

The first 30 Peace Corps Volunteers in Cambodia arrived in early 2007. The Peace Corps program emphasizes English teaching and English teacher training, with secondary projects in life-skills development. Most education agencies and nongovernmental organizations in-country focus on primary and lower secondary education to support Cambodia's goal of universal ninth-grade education for all Cambodian children.

The education project is geared toward classroom teaching of English at the upper high school level. Volunteers support high school English teachers in Cambodian provinces and districts to improve their English language and English teaching skills. Volunteers also collaborate with community groups and individuals to enhance the quality of life through developing community-initiated projects, promoting life-skills development; and introducing sustainable community activities.

All education Volunteers work on community projects throughout their service. They work with community members and other development partners to help design, plan, and implement small-scale sustainable projects to address community-identified priorities. They work closely with community partners in all phases of project implementation to ensure skills transfer, cross-cultural exchange, and project sustainability. As secondary projects, Volunteers work with youth in their communities to improve their knowledge about nutrition, disease prevention, HIV/AIDS, and other health issues.

Two Volunteers inspired the students and faculty of the Kampong Leav Upper Secondary School in Prey Veng province to complete a 9- by 18-foot world map. All funding for this project was raised by the school's students and teachers. Students did the drawing and painting, and the completed project is a source of great pride to the students and faculty.

*Volunteer in Cambodia*

*"Peace Corps Volunteers will make significant contributions to Cambodia. Volunteerism will start again in the younger generation of Cambodians. We welcome the culture of volunteerism and hope this will link to the volunteerism that formerly existed in Cambodia."*

Kol Pheng
Senior Minister of Education, Youth and Sport
Cambodia

# Cameroon

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Yaounde |
| Population | 16 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,000 |
| GDP growth | 2.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $18 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 23%<br>Female: 40% |
| Infant mortality rate | 87 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 73%<br>Measles: 64% |
| Access to an improved water source | 66% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 5.5% |
| Religions | Christianity: 53%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 25%<br>Islam: 22% |
| Official languages | French<br>English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 154 | 156 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,510 | 3,534 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Cameroon continues to move toward democracy. Political reforms are having a positive effect and the nation's multiparty system is enabling elections to become more competitive. Agriculture is the mainstay of Cameroon's economy; it provides a living for 80 percent of the population and accounts for one-third of GDP and more than one-half of all export earnings. Cocoa and coffee are the main cash crops; other exports include timber, aluminum, cotton, natural rubber, bananas, peanuts, tobacco, and tea.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps entered Cameroon in 1962 with 20 math and science Volunteer teachers. Currently, the Peace Corps operates within four project sectors in 10 provinces of Cameroon: agriculture, business development, education, and health and HIV/AIDS. All projects have four common themes—counterpart involvement, Volunteer competence, HIV/AIDS awareness and mitigation, and organizational professionalism.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Increasing competition for land has led farmers to cultivate on steep hillsides and in ecologically important forested areas. Volunteers are establishing a network of farm leaders who understand the benefits of agroforestry and permanent farming systems and can promote these techniques and benefits to other farmers. Volunteers have trained farmers in agroforestry techniques and established demonstration plots. They have helped farm families establish 100 nurseries that produced more than 90,000 seedlings and cuttings while maintaining 40 active seed banks.

One Volunteer mobilized her village to become involved in the conservation of a forest that has high tourism potential. She guided her community through the process of establishing the forest as a recognized park by the Ministry of Forest and Wildlife. She also helped establish a park management committee and helped train 18 members of the community as tourist guides. In the first year, more than 30 tourists visited the park, which generated extra income for the community.

### Business Development

Business development Volunteers provide technical assistance to microfinance institutions and small enterprise development organizations. Thousands of Cameroonians participated in meetings, workshops, and other training sessions organized by Volunteers to improve business, credit, and loan portfolio management skills. Volunteers have promoted the prudent use of credit and the importance of loan recovery. As a result 2,300 Cameroonians can better provide credit management and counseling to entrepreneurs and assist financial institutions in providing secure loans with a minimal delinquency rate.

One Volunteer helped a credit union in her community computerize files and develop electronic financial and membership databases. She also provided computer literacy training to staff and streamlined processes, which gave staff more time to focus on loan recovery, risk assessment, account analysis, and management responsibilities. Most importantly, the computerization has created more transparent financial operations.

### Education

Education Volunteers have taught computer literacy, English and didactics, math, and science to more than 198 student teachers in teacher-training colleges and approximately 18,000 secondary school students. Volunteers developed school-based libraries and teaching materials applicable to Cameroonian institutions. Health and environmental education curricula were integrated into daily lessons.

One Volunteer organized a leadership seminar for youth at a community library. Topics included communication, personal budgeting and finance, small project implementation, professionalism, and leadership. The Volunteer also provided information sessions on how to use library resources, basic computer skills, and Internet research.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a major public health concern in Cameroon. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in prevention, mitigation, and behavior change strategies for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Volunteers also receive training in Cameroon's National AIDS Control Plan to facilitate their participation in local strategies. Last year, Volunteers trained more than 500 peer educators on HIV/AIDS and STD issues and educated nearly 13,000 community members on the prevention of HIV and STDs. Volunteers also trained more than 950 adolescents in life skills, enabling them to make positive choices and live healthier lifestyles.

One Volunteer worked with a local doctor to plan and implement volunteer counseling and testing interventions in her community, including one specifically for high school students. The Volunteer facilitated a week-long education program for 350 students on HIV prevention/transmission and living positively with HIV/AIDS. At the end of the program, free testing and pre- and post-test counseling were offered to all students. One hundred and ninety students were tested and approximately 65 percent collected results. The Volunteer is working to establish an annual education and testing program at the high school.

*"Applying to the Peace Corps was the best decision I ever made. I entered the country eager, yet timid. Now, in my third year, I am strong minded and determined. The Peace Corps is like nothing else you will ever experience."*

Cameroon Volunteer
Education Sector

*Children in Cameroon*

# Cape Verde

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1988–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Praia |
| Population | 506,800 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,980 |
| GDP growth | 11.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $54 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 24% |
| Infant mortality rate | 26 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 73%<br>Measles: 65% |
| Access to an improved water source | 80% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Protestantism<br>Roman Catholicism |
| Official language | Portuguese |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 52 | 52 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,935 | 1,943 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Cape Verde is a stable, transparent democracy. The African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde governed the country as a one-party state from Cape Verde's independence in 1975 until its first democratic elections in 1990. The Movement for Democracy Party won the 1990 and 1995 elections, but was defeated in 2000, when the former ruling party, renamed the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), regained control. PAICV won national elections again in 2006.

Economic reforms were launched in 1991 to develop the private sector and attract foreign investment, and by 1998, Cape Verde's constitution was changed to remove state control from the main productive sectors of the economy. The economy is mainly service-oriented, and commerce, transport, and public services account for almost 70 percent of its GDP. In July 2005, Cape Verde signed a five-year $110-million compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation* for infrastructure improvements to support increased economic activity and provide access to markets, employment, and social services. Today, Cape Verde has a relatively high per capita GDP due, in large part, to increased foreign investment in tourism, transportation infrastructure, and emigrant remittances. Cape Verde is graduating from least-developed to lower middle-income country status.

In spite of these advances, Cape Verde's semi-arid climate and poor natural resource base are especially susceptible to the serious water shortages caused by periods of long-term drought. About 90 percent of Cape Verde's food supply is imported, while the potential of the fishing and service industries have yet to be fully exploited.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The government of Cape Verde invited the Peace Corps to participate in the nation's development efforts in 1987, and the first group of Volunteers arrived in 1988. Volunteers work on eight of the nine inhabited islands—all except Brava. Cooperating closely with the government's development goals, Volunteers work as English teacher trainers, secondary school English teachers, and vocational education teachers. They also work to develop capacity at municipal levels, and they implement youth development initiatives that include information technology, small business and credit, leadership training, and life-skills enhancements. Volunteers are an important part of the nation's program to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in HIV/AIDS education, actively participating in World AIDS Day and other events.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers continue to promote information technology as a tool to implement sustainable, small-scale community development projects. Volunteers have trained community members, among them students and businesspeople, in basic computer applications, built and repaired computer networks for cybercafés, and taught professionals how to use design and drafting software. Volunteers also advise small businesses to increase their profitability, viability, and access to credit. One Volunteer living in a remote village on Santiago helped establish and train a women's cooperative. The cooperative now produces, markets, and sells high-quality jelly and jam products, becoming the main source of income for 50 poor rural families.

### Education

The education project provides English teachers, English teacher trainers, and vocational education teachers. These Volunteers work in classroom instruction, teacher training, and skills transfer, and they enhance teaching materials, lesson planning, and community programs. Volunteers address the needs of those with limited access to educational resources and opportunities as they seek sustainable results that complement other development efforts using local participants as partners.

Two Volunteers assisted in the opening of a library at the English Studies Center, which is part of the National Teaching Institute. The Volunteers also helped raise funds to provide computers and other necessary supplies, such as books and shelving. The library is a significant resource for students, providing them with access to written materials and the Internet so they can further improve their English language skills.

### Youth

Since more than 60 percent of Cape Verdeans are under 25 years old, and 40 percent are under 15, working with youth is a major focus for Volunteers. Volunteers work in national youth centers, where they mobilize youth by promoting sports and cultural activities as a strategy to launch discussions about issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention, alcoholism, and teen pregnancy. Volunteers train youth in computer use, English, music, leadership, and life skills. They also help center staff enhance their organizational development.

One Volunteer, in addition to her regular teaching commitment, organized a beach clean-up project that she called the Corpo das Praias (Beach Corps). Students were recruited from five high schools, youth associations, and churches. The Volunteer coordinated weekend cleanups for three of the most polluted beaches in her community. Her project received support from the local municipal government, the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, and various nongovernmental organizations. During the day, students learned environmental lessons as they removed trash from the beach. During an overnight stay on the beach, the youth participated in activities that promoted team building and leadership skills.

*"We recognize that English is the language of commerce, education, and international relations. Without the presence of Peace Corps in Cape Verde we could be severely handicapped in reaching our goal of securing Cape Verde's place in the globalization process."*

Victor Borges
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Cape Verde

* *Launched by President George W. Bush, with bipartisan Congressional support, the Millennium Challenge Corporation was established by Congress in 2004 to administer the Millennium Challenge Account, an innovative foreign assistance program designed to make U.S. aid more effective by rewarding countries with sound policies and good governance.*

# China

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–2003<br>2004–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Beijing |
| Population | 1.305 billion |
| Annual per capita income | $1,740 |
| GDP growth | 10.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $79.1 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 5%<br>Female: 13% |
| Infant mortality rate | 23 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 91%<br>Measles: 84% |
| Access to an improved water source | 77% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Taoism<br>*(Officially atheist)* |
| Official language | Mandarin |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 118 | 120 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,980 | 2,057 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

China has been reforming its economy since 1979. The Chinese leadership has adopted a pragmatic approach to many political and socioeconomic problems, sharply reducing the role of ideology in economic policy. Political and social stability, economic productivity, and public welfare are paramount. The government has emphasized raising personal income and consumption, and it has introduced new management systems to help increase productivity. It has also focused on foreign trade as a major vehicle for economic growth. Although these reforms have opened China to global markets, rapid economic development has left behind many Chinese without the skills to participate in the new economy.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Chinese government first expressed interest in establishing a Peace Corps program in 1988. The first group of 18 Volunteers arrived in 1993 as part of a pilot education project in the Sichuan province; they were called "U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers." In 1998, an official country agreement formalized the program's expansion into more areas. Volunteers have served in the Sichuan, Guizhou, and Gansu provinces, as well as the Chongqing municipality. The program was temporarily suspended in April 2003 following an outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome. The Peace Corps returned to China in the summer of 2004.

English teaching remains a top priority in China, and Volunteers help teach English as a foreign language at teacher colleges, universities, and vocational colleges. Volunteers teach English, Western culture, and content-based English in fields such as business, science, and tourism. They continue to be called U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Development of English language skills is an integral part of China's plan to modernize and participate in the global community. Learning English facilitates greater access to information available internationally and provides expanded opportunities for the Chinese to learn technical skills, conduct business, and fulfill research projects. Peace Corps Volunteers provide this training to both Chinese educators and students.

Volunteers teach English to students being trained as middle school English teachers in the rural areas, and they train English instructors at the university level. Volunteers also teach specialized courses in Western culture, history, lit-

erature, linguistics, and critical theory; and they enhance problem-solving skills among their students and teacher trainees. Volunteers work closely with Chinese colleagues to exchange ideas and teaching methodologies. Daily contact with native English speakers helps Chinese teachers become more proficient in English and more confident in using English in their classrooms. Volunteers introduce other issues into their classroom teaching, including HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, environmental protection, and diversity. Discussing these themes promote students' awareness and develop creative and critical thinking skills.

Volunteers have organized and facilitated workshops for Chinese English teachers that focus on current teaching methodologies. They have also started English language drama clubs for their students, created student English newspapers, established resource centers, and offered community lectures on Western culture. One popular communication venue is the "English Corner," where speakers of English gather on street corners, parks, hallways, and anywhere else they can find room to accommodate a group of people and simply speak English for an hour. All English-teaching Volunteers participate in these weekly forums.

In 2007, a group of 47 Volunteers participated in a two-week teacher-training project organized by provincial leaders from western China. This project encompassed seven communities in three provinces and one municipality. In the workshop, 610 Chinese English teachers from middle and primary schools received training in improving pronunciation skills, increased confidence in speaking English, and an introduction to new teaching methods. Volunteers shared language teaching methodologies, classroom management skills, and student-centered learning activities. Chinese teachers were able to practice incorporating the new methodology, skills, and activities into their own teaching styles. Volunteers also introduced the teachers to HIV/AIDS education and Western culture through content-based English.

*Peace Corps Volunteers bring English language training to the citizens of the world's most populous country*

*"Peace Corps Volunteers have made remarkable contributions to the English education development in Chongqing municipality. Their dedication and effective work have won them wide recognition... I witnessed and was moved by their spirit. Since then I've been proudly telling people that Volunteers are great!"*

Fu Minghua
Standing Deputy Director of International Cooperation
Department of Chongqing Municipal Education Commission
China

# Costa Rica

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | San José |
| Population | 4 million |
| Annual per capita income | $4,700 |
| GDP growth | 5.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $861 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 5% |
| Infant mortality rate | 11 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 90%<br>Measles: 88% |
| Access to an improved water source | 97% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.6% |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 69%<br>Protestantism: 18%<br>None: 12%<br>Others: 1% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 89 | 83 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,203 | 2,223 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Costa Rica has maintained democratic institutions and an orderly, constitutional system for leadership succession throughout its history. Several factors have contributed to this stability, including enlightened government leaders; comparative prosperity; flexible class lines; educational opportunities, which have created a stable middle class; and general access to potable water, electricity, and basic health services.

While Costa Rica has made impressive gains in many social areas, such as life expectancy, education, and health-care, many families and communities in both urban and rural areas do not benefit from these social gains.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps program has changed to respond to the needs of Costa Rica and its people. In his inaugural speech, President Óscar Arias identified his priorities for Costa Rica: creating more and better jobs for Costa Ricans, especially youth; reducing poverty; providing universal secondary education, increasing economic support from the state to the poorest families so adolescent children stay in schools; protecting the environment, and increasing sustainable development. Peace Corps/Costa Rica's programs respond to growing social needs and align with government priorities with projects that focus on issues of business development, education, and youth development. Since 1963, more than 3,000 Volunteers have served in Costa Rica in a variety of projects, and throughout the program's history, Volunteers have been well-received by Costa Ricans and counterpart agencies.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

The business development project strengthens the capacity of micro-enterprises, micro-entrepreneurs, cooperatives, and communities to promote locally driven projects and income generation. Volunteers collaborate with individuals, professionals, non governmental organizations, and communities to strengthen and improve businesses by increasing knowledge and skills in business planning and basic business management practices. They help build the capacities of micro-enterprises and rural community groups to promote responsible ecotourism and to raise awareness of environmental conservation.

One Volunteer organized English language lessons for a group of at-risk women and single mothers. The Volunteer also helped the women open a small ice cream parlor in their

community. With a grant from the Costa Rican government and equipment and monetary donations from an American based ice cream maker, the women are generating additional income to support themselves and their families.

### Education

Most Volunteers in the education program teach English as a second language, nutrition, and self-esteem to school students and adult groups in their communities. They assist with basic community development projects, including developing computer labs in schools and helping to construct health centers.

Volunteers work on project planning and community development to help communities combat the growing gap between the rich and poor and the high levels of poverty in rural areas. Volunteers collaborate with the National Office on Community Development on several activities. Their work addresses organizational development of local associations and governmental and nongovernmental organizations, income generation for small businesses and households, and formal and nonformal education.

One Volunteer worked with his local community development association to repair and improve the gravity-based aqueduct system that provides running water to his area. This project improved the overall health of the community by providing a much-needed source of clean water. Community members provided most of the labor and the sustainable project was funded by private donations and community resources.

### Youth

The youth program promotes a national culture in which all children, youth, and families are respected and granted basic human rights. Volunteers address the needs of youth and families living in marginal communities by providing skill-building and remediation programs to students and family members, and they help strengthen the capacity of the Costa Rica Child Protection Agency.

Volunteers promote and support a variety of educational programs, organize academic support programs for students such as tutoring, and work with schools to build their capacity to seek needed resources.

One Volunteer created a series of freestyle hip-hop workshops for at-risk youth throughout different regions of the country. The workshops provided a safe space for youth to discuss and express their concerns of the social issues they face, including racism, poverty, HIV/AIDS, discrimination, social injustice, drug abuse, and alcoholism.

*"We have been working with Peace Corps Volunteers since 1991 in the youth project, and there is not a single Volunteer we have forgotten. They have left their mark on our agency and with every child they have worked with while here. Their creativity and dedication to children teach us so many things. If we could have an entire office full of Volunteers, we would take them all."*

Ana Lucia Gomez
Head of Puntarenas Regional Office
PANI (Patronato Nacional de la Infancia)
Costa Rica

*Volunteer with host-country youth, Costa Rica*

# Dominican Republic

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Santo Domingo |
| Population | 9 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,460 |
| GDP growth | 9.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.023 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 13% |
| Infant mortality rate | 26 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 71%<br>Measles: 79% |
| Access to an improved water source | 95% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 95% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 196 | 190 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,550 | 3,642 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Dominican Republic occupies the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean. A country with a relatively stable political environment, it has, in the recent past, experienced peaceful transitions following democratic elections. The presidential inauguration in August 2004 brought Leonel Fernández—president from 1996 to 2000—back into power. His policies have inspired confidence in the population and economic markets, which has led to increased investment and growth. Inflation has remained stable, although poverty in rural and peri-urban areas remains a significant challenge.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since 1962, 4,400 Volunteers have provided development assistance to the people of the Dominican Republic. The Peace Corps enjoys strong support from the Dominican government and its people. Volunteers and staff are committed to contributing to areas identified by the government as priorities. Peace Corps in-country programming focuses on business development, education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. All Volunteers, regardless of project, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers partner with farmers' associations and agricultural cooperatives in the areas of coffee, cocoa, and fruit production to improve quality and to seek export markets. In tourist areas, Volunteers partner with handicraft-producing groups and tour operators to strengthen customer service, safety, and overall competitiveness. Volunteers promote sustainable economic growth by providing training in accounting, organic certification, and marketing.

Last year, three of five coffee associations supported by Volunteers took prizes at the first annual Specialty Coffee Awards in Santo Domingo. Volunteers helped these associations improve their business administration and coffee quality through fair trade and organic certification. Volunteers have also partnered with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to develop the "Build Your Dreams" national youth business plan competition.

### Education

Volunteers partner with the Ministry of Education, the Office of the First Lady, and Codetel, the Dominican Republic's telephone service provider, in computer centers to train teachers and students in computer use. They also form youth technology clubs and promote community access to technology. Three Volunteers have used student-run newspapers and yearbooks to train students in software applications and basic computer use. These activities have opened communication and promoted creativity among youth, and the publications highlight local issues and promote social discourse in the communities served.

In the special education project, Volunteers train teachers and school counselors to improve teaching methods and classroom management in schools that serve students with special needs. One Volunteer with a hearing impairment started a small school for the deaf in his community. The school focuses on teaching families of deaf children basic sign language and other communication skills. As part of the project, the Volunteer also acquired 60 hearing aids that were donated to the hearing impaired in his community.

### Environment

Volunteers participate in conservation, environmental education, and ecotourism. Volunteers promote environmental conservation practices with local environmental NGOs and government representatives. They teach basic conservation principles in schools, protected areas, and national parks. Volunteers have created more than 50 Brigada Verde (Green Brigade) youth groups that train community members in principles and practices of environmental conservation, and their activities promote volunteerism in rural communities. The groups have completed community clean-up activities, and they have planted thousands of trees throughout the country.

One Volunteer helped a youth group develop an ecotourism operation with a local hotel. The group provides eco-friendly guided tours and hikes for visiting tourists. The project is an income-generating opportunity for the youth and serves as a strong incentive for them to protect their local environment.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers provide assistance in improving sanitation, reducing diarrhea (the leading cause of child mortality), and increasing HIV/AIDS awareness. The HIV/AIDS program benefits from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief support to train youth as peer educators to reduce HIV/AIDS infection among young people. It forms one of the three strategies in the Healthy Families project; the other two strategies are nutrition education, including production of nutritious foods, and maternal-child health.

### Youth

Volunteers partner with organizations as they promote the healthy physical, social, and cultural well-being of marginalized youth in rural and urban communities. The project strengthens youth, their families, and communities in a manner that enhances knowledge and skills, facilitates healthy relationships, and creates potential for positive impact within the community.

*"When I arrived... I met this distinguished young woman who greeted me as a representative of the Peace Corps who has been here in Las Taranas for one and a half years dedicated to teaching English and computers... with this extraordinary school that we have here with representatives of the United States, with computers, with Internet, with access to knowledge, I imagine that the next ministers and presidents of the Republic will come out of Las Taranas."*

President Leonel Fernández
Dominican Republic

# Eastern Caribbean

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1961–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Capitals | Antigua and Barbuda: | St. John's |
| | Dominica: | Roseau |
| | Grenada/Carriacou: | St. George's |
| | St. Lucia: | Castries |
| | St. Kitts and Nevis: | Basseterre |
| | St. Vincent and the Grenadines: | Kingstown |

| | |
|---|---|
| Avg population | 98,864 |
| Avg annual per capita income | $5,893 |
| Avg GDP growth | 3.72% |
| Avg foreign direct investment | $52.6 million |
| Avg adult illiteracy rate | 7% |
| Avg infant mortality rate | 15 per 1,000 live births |
| Avg immunization rate | DPT: 94%<br>Measles: 98% |
| Access to an improved water source | 95.7% |
| Avg HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Protestantism, Roman Catholicism |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 122 | 117 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,542 | 3,618 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The six island nations (Antigua and Barbuda; Dominica, Grenada/Carriacou; St. Lucia; St. Kitts and Nevis; and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) comprising the Peace Corps/Eastern Caribbean enjoy political stability. Notwithstanding, the islands face special development challenges because of their small domestic markets, scarcity of trained labor, absence of raw materials, and vulnerability to natural disasters.

With a combined population of approximately 590,000, the per-capita cost of economic and social infrastructure is high for each island nation. They are poised for technological innovation, yet hampered by limited economies subject to changes in the global economy. Hurricanes and floods regularly reverse economic gains by destroying fixed investments and disrupting economic activities, particularly in the agriculture and tourism sectors. The drastic decrease in banana exports and a large disenfranchised youth population has resulted in a critical need for economic reform and diversification.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps began working in the Eastern Caribbean in 1961 when St. Lucia became one of three pilot posts worldwide. Since then, more than 3,500 Volunteers have served on various island nations throughout the region. Many social and economic problems face Eastern Caribbean youth, who make up about 65 percent of the population. Consequently, Peace Corps programs focus on their educational, health, employment, and life-skills needs. Programming focuses on business development, education, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. All Volunteers, regardless of project, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers help nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), village councils, and other community-based organizations develop business plans and improve management, communication systems, and entrepreneurial and marketing training. Volunteers focus on innovative ways to build capacity and transfer skills. Volunteers help young people improve their skills in using computers, thereby enhancing their employment opportunities.

A Volunteer in Dominica worked to expand an indigenous model village that celebrates the culture and history of the Carib Indians. With his counterparts, they developed a

marketing strategy and business plan to increase tourist traffic to the area. To provide additional income, plans were also made to sell locally produced artisan crafts to tourists visiting the site.

### Education

Volunteers have furthered special education availability on the islands. There are now classes for those with learning disabilities and other special needs, and government ministries specifically recruit special education staff. Volunteers transfer teaching techniques and methodologies to their counterparts in schools and provide support to parents. They work with youth outside of school through school-based programs, such as 4-H and Junior Achievement, and with out-of-school youth in NGO programs, community centers, and vocational schools.

A Volunteer in St. Lucia introduced the "Character Counts" program, which focuses on developing life skills in youth. The Ministry of Education embraced the program and supported teacher-training workshops throughout the island. The workshops helped teachers address conduct, discipline, and educational challenges at all age levels, and students, teachers, and administrators have praised the program's results.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work with ministries of health to develop national HIV/AIDS policies. In primary healthcare centers, Volunteers train health professionals and develop health education materials to address primary healthcare and HIV/AIDS. Other Volunteers develop life-skills materials to help students with issues such as assertiveness, decision making, behavior modification, and HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Volunteers from throughout the region helped produce a user-friendly manual that addresses methods to educate for behavior change.

Several Volunteers joined together on St. Vincent to produce colorful costumes and other items related to HIV/AIDS education and prevention for the island's annual Carnival celebrations. The creative, attention-grabbing materials successfully conveyed critical information about living healthy lifestyles and HIV/AIDS awareness.

### Youth

Many communities are predominantly composed of out-of-school and out-of-work youth. Volunteers provide life skills to these youth, capturing their imagination and energy through after-school programs. On Antigua, Volunteers work with the Big Brother/Big Sister program, promoting mentoring throughout local communities to raise the self-esteem and self-confidence of youth and to improve their interpersonal skills. Volunteers train youth in drug prevention education, life skills, and peer counseling. Males are increasingly marginalized throughout the region, and Volunteers on Dominica engage young men in constructive activities through vocational education, sports, and culture.

*"Since Peace Corps began in 1961, year after year enthusiastic persons like you have arrived on our shores and quietly gone into every corner of our islands making invaluable contributions in community development, sports, education, health, and other social issues. All of these have touched the lives of so many St. Lucians in such positive ways."*

Janice Compton
First Lady
St. Lucia

*Education Volunteer, Eastern Caribbean*

# Ecuador

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Quito |
| Population | 13 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,620 |
| GDP growth | 4.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.646 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 8%<br>Female: 10% |
| Infant mortality rate | 22 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 90%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 94% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.3% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 95% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 154 | 150 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,166 | 3,239 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since becoming a democracy in 1979, Ecuador has experienced political instability, with an average of about one president per year. Despite the political unrest, the Ecuadorian government focuses on poverty alleviation, economic reforms, and anticorruption efforts. The government faces an array of challenges, including the impact of Colombia's civil war on the country's northern border and the need for serious fiscal and governmental reforms.

The Ecuadorian economy is based on petroleum production and exports of bananas, shrimp, cut flowers, and other agricultural products. A severe economic and financial crisis in 1999 and the resulting dollarization of Ecuador's economy exacerbated chronic problems of underdevelopment. Large sectors of the population suffer from nutritional deficiencies and a high infant mortality rate. An estimated 88 percent of the rural population lives at or below the poverty level.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Ecuador first welcomed Peace Corps Volunteers in 1962. In response to the economic crisis facing most Ecuadorians, the Peace Corps has redoubled its efforts in sustainable agriculture, business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. Moreover, the Peace Corps has integrated income generation and business-development activities into all of its projects.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Volunteers train farmers to adopt environmentally sound land-use practices, and they train farm families in small-animal husbandry practices to meet nutritional and economic needs. To address the eroding income of rural families, Volunteers help farmers and cooperatives improve their business and marketing skills. The most important program strategy is supporting projects to increase value-added processes. For instance, Volunteers and staff created a cocoa sub-program to increase the organic cocoa offered for export and to make final products.

Two Volunteers supported a quinoa project that produces organic and fair trade-certified quinoa for export to the United States, France, and Italy. As quinoa becomes increasingly popular as a health food, Volunteers are playing an important role in helping to keep up with the increased demand.

### Business Development

Last year, Volunteers helped start more than 30 new businesses in small Ecuadorian communities. Volunteers have helped expand an innovative community savings/banking project to nearly 600 communities. Community banks help people save and manage their finances, and they provide credit to rural families. This past year Peace Corps/Ecuador organized four community banking workshops to promote the program in local institutions and communities. Fifty new community banks were formed and eight institutions adapted the savings and credit program for their own organizations.

### Environment

To address the high rate of environmental degradation, Volunteers work in three key areas: sustainable community management of natural areas, environmental education, and income-generation activities. Volunteers promote responsible management of natural areas by stakeholders, promote native species of flora and fauna, provide environmental education in and out of schools, and help develop income-generating activities that benefit thousands of Ecuadorians. Seeking an alternative to exploitive fishing practices, one Volunteer helped execute an aquaculture project consisting of 11 native fish ponds. The project has helped to conserve aquatic resources, provide food security, and generate household income in the five participating communities.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Despite many improvements in key health indicators in the country, there is still a weak public health system, especially in rural areas. The most relevant health problems are malnutrition and diarrhea among children under five, an increasing trend of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies, tuberculosis, malaria, and dengue. Working closely with local health promoters, teachers, women's organizations, and youth groups, Volunteers engage in health promotion and disease prevention activities to promote healthy lifestyles and behaviors.

### Youth

Volunteers work with youth and families in marginalized neighborhoods to address high school dropout rates, illiteracy, drug abuse, gangs, and unemployment. They strengthen youth organizations and provide youth with employment and leadership training. In 2007, Volunteers worked with nearly 700 Ecuadorians on human rights and anti-trafficking in persons (TIP) issues through life-skills training. Volunteer-led TIP prevention workshops have been successfully held throughout the country.

One Volunteer led a TIP task force that networked with national and international organizations and provided TIP training in schools, nongovernmental and governmental sectors, and at the grassroots level. Participants learned about human rights, the risks of migration, and important life skills.

*"A local radio announcer and I designed a radio program:* La Salud esta en tus manos *(Health is in your hands). The radio program addresses several health issues such as the cycle of violence, types of violence, vaccines, discipline, nutrition, and rabies. Not only do I have fun doing this, but I usually get stopped in my town to answer more questions about a health issue we have presented on the show."*

Ecuador Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# El Salvador

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1979<br>1993–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | San Salvador |
| Population | 7 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,450 |
| GDP growth | 2.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $517 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 22% |
| Infant mortality rate | 23 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 90%<br>Measles: 93% |
| Access to an improved water source | 84% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.7% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 55% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 159 | 148 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,773 | 2,801 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The government of El Salvador is pursuing a program of decentralization that places more responsibility on municipal leaders. As part of this effort, the government has requested the Peace Corps' assistance in improving municipal services and increasing community awareness and participation. Volunteers coordinate with local municipalities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and community groups to develop better water systems, make health and sanitation improvements, provide environmental education, and assist in business development projects.

El Salvador, the smallest, most densely populated country in Central America, faces tremendous economic, social, and environmental challenges.

In addition to chronic deforestation and poor land management, disasters such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and major earthquakes in 2001 resulted in loss of fertile topsoil, decreased crop yields, and displaced communities. These natural disasters have negatively impacted healthcare, sanitation, infrastructure, and waste management systems.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The program in El Salvador, which began in 1962, was one of the Peace Corps' earliest efforts. The program was closed in 1979 because of civil war and reopened in 1993 after the war ended. Currently, 146 Volunteers work in agriculture, business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development .

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Deforestation and the resulting soil erosion have affected more than 80 percent of El Salvador, decreasing the availability and sustainability of arable land. Volunteers educate farmers about sustainable soil conservation and integrated pest management practices that incorporate environmentally sound and organic applications.

A Volunteer couple planted a demonstration plot in their backyard with a variety of vegetables to teach organic farming techniques to their community. There has been such interest in these practices that the Volunteers have added several species of flowers to the garden to introduce cut flower production as a new income source for the community.

### Business Development

Volunteers continue to strengthen El Salvador's nascent democracy by working with municipal governments to increase citizen participation, helping to improve the effi-

ciency of local government institutions, and working with local development associations on community initiatives. These initiatives include efforts to pursue small infrastructure projects, encourage local economic development, and encourage women and youth to participate in the civic life of their communities.

One Volunteer worked with municipal government representatives, volunteers from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, and a local development association to hold a 10-day project design and management workshop. During the workshop, participants identified top development priorities for their communities and learned how to prepare project plans and proposals needed to secure funding. Using the skills developed in the workshop, a community group created a plan to expand their local school and was successful in winning funding for their project.

### Environment

Volunteers work with the government, NGOs, and community organizations to teach Salvadorans environmentally sound practices. Volunteers give presentations to teachers and students on community environmental assessment; sources and impacts of air, water, and soil contamination; and trash and recycling. Volunteers plan environmental protection activities with youth ecological clubs and teach about flora and fauna, protected national parks, and reforestation.

One Volunteer worked with six rural schools, the local mayor's office, and several community organizations to organize an Earth Day celebration, which attracted 2,000 attendees. During the event, community members and students asked the mayor about environmental issues such as garbage collection and disposal and the contamination of a local lake from poor agricultural practices. This event had special significance as it was the first time local and regional officials participated in a public question-and-answer session on these topics.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers improve community health by increasing access to, and knowledge about, water and sanitation services. Through participatory activities, Volunteers educate community groups about maintaining, managing, and monitoring water systems and latrines and proper hygiene practices. Volunteers also create communication and cooperation networks among national and international agencies to share best practices and improve future efforts to provide water and sanitation systems to the most vulnerable communities.

El Salvador is a potentially high-risk AIDS nation, and youth in rural communities have little reliable information about the spread of HIV/AIDS. To address these concerns, HIV/AIDS has been added as a component of the rural health and sanitation project. Working with rural health promoters from the Ministry of Health and local NGOs, Volunteers develop educational materials, provide organizational support, conduct home-health visits, and assist with seminars on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

One Volunteer created a first aid manual for illiterate women in her community. With her Ministry of Health counterpart, she then trained seven groups of women in six communities in basic first aid. The first group of Volunteer-trained women are now training women in surrounding communities.

### Youth

Volunteers in El Salvador work to prepare youth to face the challenges of life. They promote life-skills training, organize cultural and recreational activities, teach English as a second language, and provide information technology training to teachers.

*"The myriad emotions we experience while working in grassroots development can be difficult to describe at times. These moments, good or bad, are to be treasured, stored in some compartment of our mind or held close to our heart. They are what make us unique in this increasingly homogenous world."*

El Salvador Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# Ethiopia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1977<br>1995–2000<br>2007–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Addis Ababa |
| Population | 71.3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $160 |
| GDP growth | 10.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $265 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 57% |
| Infant mortality rate | 78 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 69%<br>Measles: 59% |
| Access to an improved water source | 22% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.4% |
| Religions | Sunni Islam: 45%<br>Ethiopian Orthodoxy: 40%<br>Other: 10%<br>Protestantism: 5% |
| Official Language | Amharic |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 8 | 21 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,007 | 1,130 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ethiopia is the oldest independent country on the continent of Africa and, despite a five-year occupation by Italy during World War II, has never been colonized. Ethiopia defeated Italian troops with Britain's help in 1941, and the two nations enjoyed a strong friendship for the next 20 years. After the last emperor, Haile Selassie, was dethroned by Marxist rebels in 1974, the Ethiopian government and military were influenced and supported by the Soviet Union. In the 1970s and 1980s, much of the Ethiopian population was on the brink of starvation due to widespread famine and drought. The government of then President Mengistu Haile Mariam was unable to address the crisis and was overthrown in 1991. Eritrea won its independence in 1993, leading to border disputes in the northern part of the country. The current government is headed by President Woldegiorgis Girma and by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who was reelected in 2005. After the collapse of the military dictatorship in 1992, Ethiopia saw a major policy shift towards democracy and economic development.

Ethiopia has the second-largest population in Africa and is a poor country confronted by many of the issues affecting developing countries, including drought. Ethiopia's economy relies heavily on agriculture and coffee exports, which are impacted by poor rainfall. Approximately 80 percent of the population farms 15- to 20 percent of the arable land, and much of the population depends on international food aid. Approximately two-thirds of the adult population is illiterate. Rates of HIV infection are rising, and the pandemic has become a critical issue in the country.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps entered Ethiopia in 1962, but left in 1977 due to political instability. It returned in 1995, but closed in 2000 as a result of Ethiopia's war with Eritrea. Volunteers served in agriculture, business, education, and health.

The Peace Corps reentered Ethiopia in 2007 with 42 Volunteers working solely in the health and HIV/AIDS sector. Volunteers work under the Ministry of Health to support and strengthen the delivery system to fight HIV/AIDS. The government of Ethiopia is strongly committed to a unified national HIV/AIDS action framework and is moving all of its HIV/AIDS coordinating bodies under the direction of the Ministry of Health.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Peace Corps/Ethiopia administers one of only three programs in the world focused exclusively on HIV/AIDS activities. Volunteers are engaged in a multifaceted approach in close collaboration with the government of Ethiopia and nongovernmental organization partners.

Volunteers support the government of Ethiopia in the development of national prevention, care, and treatment guidelines and protocols for HIV/AIDS. They assist communities to improve the health status of their members by providing adequate health education. Volunteers also work with the Ministry of Health and several international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to support and strengthen the health service delivery system in the area of HIV/AIDS along the continuum of prevention, care, and support services.

In Ethiopia, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is in urban areas and among young people and women. To reach these vulnerable populations, Volunteers work with government agencies and NGOs to develop and implement effective HIV/AIDS prevention programs. Volunteers carry out prevention activities with youth groups focusing on behavior change and life skills programs. Additionally, they train youth to serve as peer educators and to promote HIV/AIDS awareness in their communities.

Volunteers also work with community and NGO partners to strengthen the capacity of local organizations to provide care to people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. They organize support groups, help link individuals with service providers, and develop income-generating activities for those affected by HIV/AIDS. It is estimated that there are more than five million orphans in Ethiopia, nearly 15 percent of which have lost their parents as a result of HIV/AIDS. In conjunction with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Volunteers also help communities to develop the capacity to support the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.

*"By living and working amongst Ethiopians you will ... offer a great deal in helping us improve the health competencies of Ethiopian families, leaving them with the hope that they can through their collective efforts make a difference."*

Ato Mekele
Deputy Director, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Office
Ethiopia

*Peace Corps Volunteers in Ethiopia at their swearing-in ceremony, December 2007*

# Fiji

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1968–1998<br>2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Suva |
| Population | 847,000 |
| Annual per capita income | $3,170 |
| GDP growth | 0.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | (-$4.0 million) |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 7% |
| Infant mortality rate | 16 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 75%<br>Measles: 62% |
| Access to an improved water source | 47% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Christianity: 52%<br>Hinduism: 33%<br>Islam: 7% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 48 | 50 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,873 | 1,895 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

For several years following its independence from Britain in 1970, Fiji was cited as a model of human rights and multiracial democracy in the Pacific region. Subsequently, a succession of coups—in 1987, 2000, and 2006—left Fiji struggling to regain its political and economic stability. Much of the turmoil has been tied to ethnic tensions between indigenous Fijians and the Indo-Fijian descendants of indentured laborers. Indigenous Fijians control land rights and are guaranteed political authority by the current constitution; most entrepreneurs and sugar cane farmers are Indo-Fijians, and they have great influence on the economy and politics. Notwithstanding the tensions, rule of law is still firmly established. Elections were held in May 2006, after which both groups agreed to work to reconcile political differences and reinvigorate the economy. Unfortunately, a December 2006 coup impeded whatever progress had been made.

Although Fiji has one of the most developed economies in the Pacific, political instability and fluctuations in world sugar markets have impeded economic growth. Since the coups, Fiji has suffered a high rate of emigration of skilled and professional personnel, which has caused shortages in the service sectors and in the areas of education and healthcare. Half of the population lives below or close to the poverty line, particularly in rural areas. Over-fishing and environmental degradation have reduced food security from traditional sources.

While revenues from tourism, expatriate remittances, and exported sugar and garments remain the largest contributors to the economy, Fiji also has timber and mineral reserves. Fishing is an important export revenue generator and has contributed in domestic consumption and commerce. Long-term problems include a potential collapse of the sugar industry, unsustainable use of imported petroleum-based products, continued low foreign investment rates, and uncertain property rights.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps has a long history of service in Fiji. More than 2,200 Volunteers served from 1968 to 1998. The program reopened in late 2003; currently 48 Volunteers are serving throughout the country. Ample programming opportunities exist, but current projects primarily address nonformal education needs in the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Environment

Volunteers live and work in communities with existing environmental projects to provide technical assistance. A predominant concern is the degradation of the marine and terrestrial environments, which is jeopardizing traditional food supplies in many parts of the country. A focus on long-term stewardship and management of environmental resources will increase food security, improve diet and nutrition, raise awareness and involvement from women and youth in environmental projects, and increase income generated from sustainable ecotourism.

One Volunteer started a waste management system at a school in his community. The Volunteer taught proper recycling practices through demonstrations and a film on recycling. The school hosted tours of their recycling program, which led to the development of recycling programs in schools across the southwestern portion of the island.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers, in partnership with Fijian health educators, provide rural health education and promotion activities related to non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS education and prevention, nutrition, and life skills for youth. Volunteers focus on skills transfer and capacity building for newly created health-promotion units at regional and sub-regional health centers. They also provide village-based health education to build local capacity to respond to basic health issues.

Health Volunteers have trained more than 600 people on HIV/AIDS education and prevention. In commemoration of World AIDS Day, one Volunteer worked with a youth soccer team to create and perform a drama at local carnival. The skit provided an opportunity to promote healthy lifestyle choices and awareness of HIV/AIDS to the local community.

### Youth

Youth development activities focus on life skills, information technology, and income generation. Volunteers partner with local service organizations to engage Fijian youth in activities that enhance life skills for their future roles in their families, communities, and society. Among the topics presented are leadership, decision making, healthy lifestyles, information technology, career planning, civic responsibility, and income generation. Volunteers also help build organizational capacities and improve outreach programs conducted by local and international youth-related service providers.

*"Peace Corps provided me with the skills and insights needed for my job. Now, in my own village I am able to identify needs and can then encourage people to work together to better our community."*

Emosi Racule
Development Planning Officer
Ministry of Cooperatives
Fiji

# The Gambia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Banjul |
| Population | 1.5 million |
| Annual per capita income | $290 |
| GDP growth | 5.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $52 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 62% |
| Infant mortality rate | 97 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 92%<br>Measles: 90% |
| Access to an improved water source | 82% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.2% |
| Religions | Islam: 95%<br>Christianity: 4%<br>Animism: <1% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 112 | 115 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,037 | 2,135 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since its independence from Great Britain in 1965, The Gambia has had a series of stable governments. This stability was temporarily interrupted by a military coup in 1994, which overthrew the party that had been in power since independence. President Yahya Jammeh first ruled as the head of the military junta. He then retired from the military, ran for office, and won as a civilian in democratic elections in 1997. He won a subsequent democratic election in 2001 and was reelected in September 2006.

The Gambia has no important mineral or other natural resources and has a limited agricultural base. Seventy-five percent of the population depends on the agriculture and natural resource sectors for its livelihood. However, production of cash and food crops has steadily declined during the past two decades because of environmental degradation. Small-scale manufacturing includes processing peanuts, fish, and animal hides. Growth in the tourism industry is being planned.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps' relationship with The Gambia dates back to 1967, when the Peace Corps signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of External Affairs. Volunteers began working in The Gambia later that year, initially serving as mechanics and teachers. The Peace Corps' work addresses the development priorities of the Gambian government in the areas of education, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. An important focus in the education sector is information and communication technology (ICT). All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. Volunteers in all sectors participate in HIV/AIDS initiatives, and many focus activities on girls, women, and youth.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Education Volunteers build the capacity of teachers, teach math and science, introduce student-centered teaching techniques and the effective use of learning aids, teach literacy, and launch libraries and resource centers. Volunteers also promote e-learning, teach computer literacy, and assist the private sector in improving their operations. Due to the importance the government attaches to these efforts, the Department of State for Higher Education, Research and Technology was created. This department gives tertiary education the attention it deserves and also provides the department with the opportunity to enhance basic and secondary education. Additionally, while teachers are receiving

more targeted pre-service and in-service training, steps are also being taken to positively impact classroom teaching and improve the performance of students. Volunteers are involved in all of these activities as they now work at the planning unit of Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education, assisting with the administration of the Education Management Information System and training staff. They are also engaged in capacity-building activities at five tertiary institutions including the University of The Gambia.

### Environment

Volunteers work on a variety of environmental education projects that focus on natural resource management, small enterprise development, wildlife protection, and biodiversity conservation. Some Volunteers work with community groups to establish tree nurseries and commercial fruit orchards. They also work to protect the environment by promoting national tree-planting campaigns in schools. Other Volunteers work with women and schoolchildren on community garden projects.

Volunteers have held many beekeeping workshops in villages nationwide, attracting more than 100 community members. The workshops teach rural Gambians to construct and maintain beehives and to secure revenue. Volunteers have also worked to promote seed diversity by training locals to grow soy or drought-resistant rice. They work in wildlife protection by developing and working with education and ecotourism centers to protect The Gambia's vulnerable indigenous diversity. Volunteers have worked to procure funds to construct and maintain primate enclosures for a national park, and a national biodiversity education center for a wildlife refuge area. Volunteers have also worked to fund libraries, solar energy projects development, the installation of low-impact water lifting devices.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Most Gambians live in small communities in rural areas and are engaged in subsistence farming. Volunteers work with these communities to design and implement activities that raise awareness of common health problems. Volunteers craft strategies to promote good health and prevent disease, and provide training on income-generating activities to improve living standards. One Volunteer project was to improve the dilapidated condition of the community's mother-and-child health clinics building. Its condition was of great concern to his community. Working with the village development committee, the Volunteer and community members were able to secure financing for the project; the village contributed 75 percent of the necessary funding. The villagers served as the carpenters and masons, and provided all the labor to collect sand and gravel.

Another Volunteer organized a workshop on home management for common health problems—colds, malaria, and diarrhea—for 19 women. At the end of the workshop, each woman was tasked with returning to her community and educating five other women.

*"I want to applaud the significant contribution made by Peace Corps in The Gambia... we are proud to be part of that legacy initiated by the visionary late President John F. Kennedy."*

The Honorable Fatou Lamin Faye
Secretary of State for Basic and Secondary Education
The Gambia

# Georgia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 2001–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Tbilisi |
| Population | 4 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,320 |
| GDP growth | 9.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | $450 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | <1% |
| Infant mortality rate | 41 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 86%<br>Measles: 78% |
| Access to an improved water source | 82% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Georgian Orthodoxy: 65%<br>Islam: 11%<br>Russian Orthodoxy: 10%<br>Armenian Apostolic Christianity: 8%<br>Other: 6% |
| Official language | Georgian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 90 | 96 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,127 | 2,165 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Republic of Georgia, with its long history and strong culture, is located between the Black Sea and Azerbaijan to its west and east, and Russia and Armenia to its north and south.

In January 2004, Mikhail Saakashvili was inaugurated as Georgia's president. Saakashvili's election followed the Rose Revolution, and heralded a new day for many Georgians. The presidential elections were held after President Shevardnadze resigned on November 23, 2003, in response to mass demonstrations protesting the results of parliamentary elections.

Also, in 2004, the Russian-leaning, self-proclaimed president of the Adjara region, Aslan Abashidze, left the region, allowing Peace Corps Volunteers to expand their presence in-country in 2005. Georgia still faces the possible loss of two autonomous regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, because of ethnic separatists, poor governance, and pro-Russian elements. These factors prevent the government from exerting effective control over all its internationally recognized territory. Due to the 1992-1993 civil war in Abkhazia, Georgia has a large internally displaced population—more than 80 percent of the population fled Abkhazia during and after this war.

Prior to independence in 1991, Georgia was economically one of the most prosperous republics of the former Soviet Union. Political turmoil after independence led to a decline in GDP of more than 70 percent between 1990 and 1994. Currently, the largest share of Georgia's GDP is produced by agriculture, followed by trade, manufacturing, and transport. The years just prior to the Rose Revolution were marked by rampant cronyism, corruption, and mismanagement. Since then, the Saakashvili government has reoriented the government and the economy toward privatization, free markets, reduced regulation and control of corruption. In a 2007 report the World Bank recognized Georgia as the world's fastest reforming economy, ranking it with countries such as France, Slovakia, and Spain.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps began operations in Georgia in 2001 with an education project. The program focuses on English language skills and new teaching methodologies and is implemented in secondary English language education, a university program, and teacher training. Volunteers also work with community members on various projects identified as priorities by their communities.

A business development program focusing on business skills in nongovernmental organizations (NGO) began in 2004. The program provides organizational support to local

NGOs, encourages accountability and transparency to target communities, and assists NGOs in using skills acquired through USAID-funded trainings.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers provide technical assistance in improving skills in business plan development, marketing, public relations, project planning, fundraising and resource identification, and networking. To date, 30 NGOs have received trainings and attended seminars conducted by Volunteers. Twenty organizations have received grants to conduct projects such as a Global Youth Service Day celebration, youth camps, trainings for disabled children and their parents, entrepreneurial skills development, and tourism development. One Volunteer planned and implemented a honey festival with the honey producers and beekeepers in his community. Community members displayed honey and beeswax products. The festival was attended by international organizations, businesses, and potential buyers. As part of the event the Volunteer and honey producers discussed problems and challenges facing the industry, future opportunities, and new technologies for honey and other bee products.

### Education

Placed in rural and urban communities throughout the country, Volunteers provide English language instruction to Georgian students and community members. Their primary activities are team teaching with Georgian teachers and initiating and implementing extracurricular activities for schools and local communities. As a result of Peace Corps activities, 63 public schools in nine regions have received assistance implementing a new national curriculum in English. Volunteers have trained more than 230 Georgian English teachers in new approaches to teaching, including interactive teaching methodologies and improved assessment and evaluation techniques. More than 25 schools opened English resource rooms and language labs, 15 schools established school and community computer centers, and almost 90 percent of the schools started after-school English clubs for students and interested community members. Volunteers arranged summer schools, Girls Leading Our World camps, and ecology camps in which more than 350 girls and boys received training in leadership, life skills, critical thinking, environmental awareness, and conflict resolution. Several Volunteers collaborated with local NGOs to start life-skills trainings for community youth groups. Volunteers also assisted public schools in building and renovation projects. In 2007, Volunteers began working in predominantly ethnic minority regions and at vocational education schools for the first time, demonstrating the Peace Corps' response to the changing needs of the Georgian people.

The Writing Olympics is a writing competition for students created in 2003 by a Volunteer serving in Georgia. It has grown into a popular annual event and has expanded into other countries in the region. Now, Volunteers in Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia use the competition to encourage more than 2,000 student participants to practice English and to think creatively.

*"If the people of Georgia want to know what the priorities of the Ministry of Education and Science are, they only need to look to Peace Corps/Georgia."*

Kakha Lomaia
Minister of Education and Science
Georgia

# Ghana

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1961–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Accra |
| Population | 22 million |
| Annual per capita income | $450 |
| GDP growth | 5.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $107 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 34%<br>Female: 50% |
| Infant mortality rate | 68 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 44%<br>Measles: 80% |
| Access to an improved water source | 75% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 2.2% |
| Religions | Christianity: 69%<br>Islam: 16%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 9% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 185 | 180 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,141 | 3,138 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ghana celebrated 50 years of independence on March 6, 2007. The country's political environment is stable despite instability in other parts of West Africa. The government remains committed to strengthening democratic institutions, and civil society organizations are becoming active participants in framing the country's policy agenda. Parliament's prominence is growing, and the press is free and vibrant. The next presidential election will occur in December 2008.

The economic environment is generally stable; however, rolling blackouts caused by shortfalls in electrical generation capacity have negatively impacted businesses and the general population. Ghana has recently announced education reforms, and modest gains in access to primary school education are evidenced by increased enrollment. There is a deficit of teachers in mathematics, science, and computer technology, particularly in rural areas. Deterioration of the environment from deforestation and drought has also impacted social and economic demographics. Ghana's HIV/AIDS infection rate is just below three percent. Access to clean water remains a challenge, and Guinea worm is still a problem in Ghana.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since 1961, when Ghana became the first country to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers, nearly 4,500 Volunteers have served here. The government regards Volunteers' work as a significant and positive contribution to community and national development. Many senior-level government officials and industry leaders were taught either by Volunteer teachers or had a Volunteer in their community during their youth. The Peace Corps participates in Ghana's economic recovery and in the protection and promotion of its human and natural resources. All Volunteers promote HIV/AIDS awareness. Ghana's transitional economy demonstrates an increased demand for business development opportunities. Information and communications technology (ICT) remains an expanding sector in Ghana.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers provide training in ecotourism, small business and micro-business development, financial management, marketing, product quality, and credit availability for small entrepreneurs. They work in urban and rural areas with international and local nongovernmental agencies, local governments, and private-sector associations. They orga-

nize youth clubs to build self esteem, organize income-generating projects with people living with HIV/AIDS, and teach HIV/AIDS awareness seminars to youth and adults. Volunteers are helping develop tourism destinations and products focused on the cultural and historical value of bead making and *kente* weaving (a fabric of interwoven cloth strips native to Ghana). Volunteers have also helped organize small cooperatives in which groups of women have established small commercial bakeries.

### Education

Volunteers teach science, math, ICT, and visual arts to 7,600 students in public junior and senior secondary schools and in schools for the deaf. With Ghanaian teachers, Volunteers develop teaching resource manuals; establish science resource centers, laboratories, and art studios; and help identify and acquire computer and library resources for schools. They also help strengthen parent-school and school-community relationships. One group of Volunteers organized an annual national conference in which students from all 10 regions of Ghana gather for a week of workshops and youth leadership activities.

### Environment

Persistent environmental issues in Ghana are deforestation, diminished soil fertility, erosion, and disappearance of naturally occurring bodies of water. Volunteers reduce environmental degradation through partnerships with governmental and nongovernmental agencies. As agroforestry managers, they facilitate the planting of almost 600,000 seedlings each year at community schools, clinics, churches, community forest reserves, and wood lots. Volunteers have developed community environmental groups in 65 communities, and they have transferred management skills for natural resource-based income-generating projects.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers promote behavior change to reduce water- and sanitation-related diseases and to create HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Volunteers help communities acquire, operate, and manage water and sanitation facilities, and they extend health knowledge to their communities through school health education. Volunteers have created HIV/AIDS awareness training for men, women, and children. Last year, Volunteers organized a four-day AIDS awareness bike-a-thon, which reached more than 10,000 residents. Additionally, half of all health Volunteers are working to eradicate the debilitating Guinea worm disease.

*"We cannot thank President Kennedy enough for this programme. We should also thank successive American presidents and the people of America for sustaining it. The encounter between American youth and peoples of other nations through the Peace Corps programme can only yield positive results through mutual understanding, respect, and goodwill for the promotion of peaceful coexistence in the world."*

President John Agyekum Kufuor
Ghana

*Representative Nita Lowey (D-NY), Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA), Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), and Representative Gwen Moore (D-WI), meet with Volunteers during a CODEL to Ghana in August 2007*

# Guatemala

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Guatemala City |
| Population | 13 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,400 |
| GDP growth | 3.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $208 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 25%<br>Female: 37% |
| Infant mortality rate | 32 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 84%<br>Measles: 75% |
| Access to an improved water source | 95% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.1% |
| Religions | Protestantism<br>Roman Catholicism<br>Traditional Mayan |
| Official languages | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 179 | 189 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,782 | 3,936 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Guatemala is a democratic republic with separation of powers and a centralized national administration. Since the signing of peace accords in 1996, democracy has strengthened, but many national problems remain. Guatemala's complex topography and its cultural and linguistic diversity—more than 20 indigenous languages are spoken—complicate efforts to expand education and health services. The country's unique biodiversity offers considerable potential for further development of new products, crops, and ecotourism, but environmental degradation is rampant and few protective measures are in place.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The program in Guatemala, which began in 1963, is one of the Peace Corps' oldest. Since 1963, more than 4,500 Volunteers have served in-country, and throughout the years, the Peace Corps has been a significant resource in grassroots development. More than 150 Volunteers are serving in projects related to agriculture, business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Many Guatemalans have agriculture-based jobs. Due to rural malnutrition and poverty, demand is high for improved agricultural methods that increase production and protect limited farm resources. Farmers also seek assistance from the Peace Corps to find new opportunities under the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Volunteers work to diversify agricultural production, better manage harvests, and promote post-harvest marketing, home-based agroprocessing, and small-animal production. Volunteers also train Guatemalans in information and communications technology.

One Volunteer worked with a coffee farmers' association to help farmers learn about organic certification, export marketing, and how to find international buyers.

### Business Development

Volunteers work with youth and adults to improve the overall profitability of small businesses, and they work with women-owned businesses and in schools teaching practical skills to encourage entrepreneurial activity and teamwork.

One Volunteer worked with strawberry producers to help them gain legal status as an association and to find ways to reduce pesticide applications and residues on their crops. The association has gained access to new market opportunities,

especially in the United States, where excessive pesticide residues are closely monitored.

Volunteers also help strengthen the capacity of municipal authorities to deliver quality services, to enhance municipal planning, and to increase citizen participation. They involve community members in planning, implementing, and monitoring their own development projects. Volunteers are assigned to municipal planning offices around Guatemala, placing them on the front lines of Guatemala's decentralization process.

### Environment

The rapid deterioration of Guatemala's natural resources is undermining its rich biodiversity and limiting its potential for economic development. Volunteers work in environmental conservation activities to decelerate environmental degradation in protected areas and municipal nature reserves.

One Volunteer helped a community association establish its community as an ecotourism destination. The area has many beautiful sites, including one of Central America's tallest waterfalls. The Volunteer and community members worked to develop the infrastructure to host tourists and to advertise their tourist attractions. Income generated from the ecotourism provides an alternative to logging nearby forests for wood and agricultural purposes.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The poor health of many rural families is often related to poor personal hygiene, respiratory problems resulting from indoor cooking fires, and lack of access to safe drinking water. Volunteers work with teachers and students to improve the health of rural elementary school students through education and improved school, community, and household sanitation. In addition, Volunteers introduce a variety of low-cost technologies to improve family health, including wood-saving stoves, latrines, rope pumps, solar water heaters, water-catchment systems, water tanks, and grain storage silos.

Volunteers developed inventories of both the educational resources and existing groups working in Guatemala to prevent HIV/AIDS. Volunteers in several projects use this material to give presentations and talks on HIV/AIDS to youth groups in their communities. Several Volunteers developed practical materials and methodologies on HIV/AIDS prevention, which all Volunteers can now use to train community leaders in their areas.

### Youth

More than half of Guatemala's population is younger than 24, underlying the importance of involving youth in the development of the country. Volunteers work with youth through activities in life-skills development, environmental education, entrepreneurship, and the Healthy Schools program.

One Volunteer worked with teachers to introduce lesson plans and activities into the curriculum to provide students with important life skills. Lessons included information about living safe and healthy lifestyles and how to participate in community development, as well as activities to prepare for the job market.

*"What makes exceptional Peace Corps Volunteers is the initiative they have to get involved in the community and know the local customs. Once they adapt to the culture they can lead, organize, and share their knowledge and innovations."*

Omar Juarez
Park Director, Municipality of Lanquin
Alta Verapaz, Guatemala

*Volunteer in Guatemala*

# Guinea

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1966<br>1969–1971<br>1985–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Conakry |
| Population | 9 million |
| Annual per capita income | $420 |
| GDP growth | 3.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | $102 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 57%<br>Female: 82% |
| Infant mortality rate | 97 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 33%<br>Measles: 69% |
| Access to an improved water source | 50% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 3.2% |
| Religions | Islam: 85%<br>Christianity: 8%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 7% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 54 | 108 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,206 | 2,559 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Guinea gained independence in 1958 under the leadership of Sekou Touré. The current president, Lansana Conté, took over through a coup following Toure's death in 1984. The current constitution was put to popular vote at the end of 1990 and, in 1991, a multiparty system was legalized and a timetable for future elections set. In 1993, President Conté was elected in Guinea's first multiparty elections; he was reelected at the end of 2003 in an uncontested election.

Despite its mineral resources, Guinea is one of the poorest countries in the world. This tropical country's economy depends primarily on agriculture. Leading crops are rice, coffee, bananas, palm kernels, and pineapples. Rich deposits of iron ore, gold, and diamonds exist. Bauxite sales provide Guinea with more than 90 percent of export revenues; Guinea has about 30 percent of the world's known bauxite and ranks second only to Australia in production.

In January 2007 general strikes were organized, which led to civil unrest. Volunteers were evacuated to Mali and the program was temporarily suspended. Volunteers returned to post in July 2007.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since 1962, more than 1,200 Volunteers have served in Guinea. The Peace Corps enjoys strong support from all levels of government and the people of Guinea. An increasing number of international, national, and local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are collaborating with Volunteers. Schools, health centers, and rural communities continue to request Volunteers, and demand continues to exceed supply. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Though many Guineans are involved in small-scale income-generating activities, few have access to business advisory services to help them expand a simple income-generating activity into a business. Volunteers have been working in the business development sector since 2004. Their work empowers youth and small-scale entrepreneurs by strengthening business management skills. Volunteers conduct business management and entrepreneurship training, create and strengthen market linkages, and establish basic accounting systems. The project supports three major cross-sector initiatives: empowering women, working with youth, and integrating information and communications technology.

One Volunteer worked with boutique managers to create an inventory management system that accommodated multiple products and artisans. With the Volunteer's guidance and supervision, an effective system for tracking merchandise was implemented.

### Education

Volunteers have worked in Guinean secondary schools since 1986. In line with the country's priorities, Peace Corps/Guinea's education sector focuses on four areas: fostering student access and performance, building teacher capacity, improving school resources, and enhancing community self-reliance. Volunteers teach English, math, chemistry, and physics. Volunteers incorporate gender-equity values into their daily teaching and give remedial instruction to girls in their schools. Many secondary projects help women cope with the educational and developmental problems they face.

One Volunteer identified that many of his community's problems were because youth did not understand the concept of personal responsibility. Consequently, the Volunteer helped community teachers create the "Academy of Excellence." This group has focused its activities on increasing student participation in the community. As a result of this organization, educational materials have been developed to help increase student participation in school and community activities.

### Environment

Approximately 80 percent of Guineans derive their living from agricultural activities. Volunteers work with counterparts, water and forest technicians, and primary school teachers to raise environmental awareness and to promote sound agroforestry practices. The program boosts farm yields, enhances food security, helps with income generation, and incorporates environmental protection and restoration.

One Volunteer worked with local farmers from eight villages to introduce and harvest an improved variety of rice. Farmers were trained in new farming techniques to maximize the benefits of the new rice. The Volunteer also taught the farmers how to teach other farmers how to grow the rice.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work as public health extension agents in rural communities, directly supporting the Ministry of Health's priority activities. These activities address diarrhea control, malaria control, reproductive health, nutrition, and vaccinations. Volunteers design educational projects for their communities and transfer skills to their Guinean counterparts. Volunteers and their counterparts also participate in an annual HIV/AIDS workshop that provides participants with tools to carry out effective HIV/AIDS education work.

One Volunteer conducted training sessions for peer educators. Providing interactive sessions on malaria, nutrition, family planning, and HIV/AIDS, the Volunteer also included training on project design and funding. After these trainings, the peer educators were able to design and implement effective health programs.

*"...These Volunteers, as true ambassadors of the American people, contribute in a substantial manner to the implementation of our program of sustainable development..."*

Madame Sidibé Fatoumata Kaba
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Guinea

# Guyana

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–1971<br>1995–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Georgetown |
| Population | 751,200 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,020 |
| GDP growth | -2.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $77 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 3.5% |
| Infant mortality rate | 48 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 93%<br>Measles: 92% |
| Access to an improved water source | 83% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 2.4% |
| Religions | Christianity: 57%<br>Hinduism: 33%<br>Islam: 9%<br>Other: 1% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 51 | 52 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,702 | 1,822 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Guyana has a population of approximately 700,000 people, largely confined to a narrow coastal strip where sugar and rice cultivation is concentrated and where the nation's capital, Georgetown, clusters at the mouth of the Demerara River. There is a great diversity of racial and ethnic groups in Guyana. People of African descent constitute 35.6 percent of the population; people of East Indian descent, 49.5 percent; and people of Portuguese, Chinese, Amerindian, or mixed descent, 15 percent. The two main political parties are divided along racial lines. This division is one of Guyana's greatest challenges.

Three major river systems, the Demerara, the Berbice, and the Essequibo, together with innumerable smaller rivers and creeks, drain this "Land of Many Waters" and link its vast forest and savannah interior to the coast. Agriculture and mining are Guyana's most important economic activities, with sugar, bauxite, rice, and gold accounting for roughly 70 percent of export earnings. As one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere, Guyana continues to face major impediments to economic growth. Significant emigration since the 1960s has caused critical shortages of teachers and healthcare workers, among other groups.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

At the request of the Guyanese government, the Peace Corps returned to Guyana in 1995 after a 24-year absence. Since the initial opening of the program in 1967, more than 400 Volunteers have served in Guyana. The reentry was initiated in response to the government's desire to improve its healthcare system in rural communities and to respond to the needs of a growing youth population with limited employment and educational opportunities. Volunteers address these needs by providing health education in collaboration with relevant ministries and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). They help facilitate community involvement, train service providers, and introduce new training and teaching methodologies. Additionally, the education project incorporates an information technology component that responds to a request from the Ministry of Education and community-based organizations to enhance computer training for students, educators, and others.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers in Guyana work to raise levels of literacy and numeracy. They teach life skills, special education, environmental education, and physical education; they train teachers in curriculum development, methodologies, and instruction.

Guyana has many needs in the areas of parental education, strengthening community-school linkages, social and sensitivity issues, and counseling. Volunteers work with youth organizations and the Ministry of Education to provide at-risk youth with educational, personal, and life-skills development opportunities. This helps them to meet the challenges of adolescence and contribute positively to their communities. Through teacher-training activities, Volunteers also work with educators on participatory teaching methods and life-skills training. They provide training in computer literacy to Guyanese teachers and training in literacy, remedial reading, and information and communication technology to students. Volunteers help students with career preparation, teaching them how to develop résumés, complete applications, create personal job networks, and establish goals and plans. Several Volunteers coordinate with an international NGO to provide literacy training to the teachers at their schools.

One Volunteer organized a parenting skills program that focused on strategies to help children learn to read. The Volunteer taught parents how to use phonics to help improve reading skills and discussed methods to encourage children to practice reading. The Volunteer also used a Small Project Assistance grant to help build a computer lab and library in the community.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Guyana's general health indicators are among the lowest in the Caribbean region. The government has implemented a national health plan, and its first-order priorities are the prevention of malaria, sexually transmitted diseases, acute respiratory infections, immunizable diseases, and prenatal problems. Second-order prevention priorities are malnutrition and diarrheal disease. Volunteers work directly with health centers, NGOs, and communities to identify local and national resources, conduct community health assessments, design and implement health education, and train health-center staff and community leaders. Volunteers address Guyana's high HIV/AIDS rates in their training and outreach efforts. They provide health education sessions on HIV/AIDS prevention to youth in collaboration with NGOs. Peace Corps/Guyana has strengthened and expanded its collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Agency for International Development in addressing HIV/AIDS. Guyana is one of the focus countries in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

Two Volunteers, with money from a local fund-raiser, helped their community purchase seeds and plant home vegetable gardens so that families could supplement their diets with more nutritious food. There are currently 10 home gardens in the community. Residents plan to expand the program to include local youth and to develop income-generating opportunities by selling excess vegetables.

One Volunteer transformed the record-keeping section of the regional hospital by installing a simple, user-friendly database to store records. The staff found they were able to work more effectively and efficiently.

A Volunteer worked with her school and community, the Department of Education, and the PEPFAR program to provide access to the internet in the student computer lab. Students now access career opportunities and search for HIV/AIDS-related information.

*"Learning to grate coconut to make* salara *and buns in my community helped me to understand how hard the women in the community worked and challenged me to take action to make their lives better."*

Guyana Volunteer
Education Sector

# Honduras

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Tegucigalpa |
| Population | 7 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,120 |
| GDP growth | 4.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $464 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 20%<br>Female: 20% |
| Infant mortality rate | 31 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 89%<br>Measles: 92% |
| Access to an improved water source | 87% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.8% |
| Religion | Protestantism<br>Roman Catholicism |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 167 | 166 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,637 | 3,757 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

From the late 1960s to the early 1980s, the military was the principal political force in Honduras, governing directly, influencing general policy, and controlling national security affairs. The Honduran constitution of 1982 provided a foundation for democracy, which continues to evolve. In elections considered free and fair, José Manuel Zelaya Rosales of the Liberal Party became president in 2005.

Honduras is one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America. Current Honduran initiatives for economic expansion include tourism—focused on the Caribbean coast, the Bay Islands, and the Mayan ruins of Copán.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

During the past four decades, the Peace Corps has helped Honduras create and implement a national park system, include environmental education in its national education curriculum, reduce infant mortality through education, and construct effective water and sanitation systems. Honduras is currently the largest program in the Inter-America and Pacific region, with more than 180 Peace Corps Volunteers working in agriculture, business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development. More than 5,000 Volunteers have served in Honduras since 1963.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Excessive use of slash-and-burn agriculture and poor soil conservation techniques on the hillsides of Honduras have caused a severe loss of quality topsoil, diminishing crop yields. Lack of crop diversification, poor management skills, and few small-scale agribusiness initiatives have exacerbated this problem. Consequently, farmers have difficulty generating and managing extra sources of income or food for their families. Volunteers train farmers in sustainable production techniques to improve soil conservation and increase and diversify crops for greater food security and higher family incomes.

Six Volunteers planned and held a "Women in Agriculture Leadership Conference," which included training on gender equity, self esteem, women's rights, leadership skills, and the construction of water reservoirs. After the conference, the women trained others in their own communities. As a result, more than 40 reservoirs have been built in six different communities.

### Business Development

Lack of basic business skills limits economic opportunities for many low-income Hondurans. Volunteers help the poorest communities by identifying local employment opportunities, improving business management practices, and training micro-entrepreneurs in basic business skills. Volunteers also develop information technology training programs to help business owners and Honduran government agencies become more efficient.

One Volunteer helped a group of students enter a business plan competition sponsored by a national agricultural university. The student team won third place and received a $2,500 grant for their business plan.

### Environment

Honduran forest reserves and coastal areas are at risk of overexploitation. Urbanization threatens watersheds and protected areas throughout the country. Volunteers work with the National Forest Service and local nongovernmental organizations to promote environmental awareness, sound micro-watershed management practices, and ecotourism among farmers and schools in communities adjacent to protected areas.

Several Volunteers worked with their counterparts to introduce bio-digester systems in their communities. These systems use domestic animal manure and cooking waste to produce fuel that can be used in small cooking stoves by farming families. The systems reduce dependency on firewood and pollution to water sources, and prevent the incidence of respiratory disease from smoke inhalation.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

In rural Honduras, the lack of knowledge about proper hygiene practices, sanitary waste disposal, and the protection of water sources cause widespread disease and malnutrition. Volunteers train communities in water-source rehabilitation, expansion, and construction; and in the construction of fuel-efficient wood-burning stoves. In 2007, Volunteers helped rehabilitate, expand, and construct potable water systems in 89 communities, benefiting close to 76,000 people.

A group of health Volunteers produced a manual to strengthen support groups that serve people living with HIV/AIDS. The manual addressed psycho-social aspects of support groups, adherence to treatment, and other topics such as healthy lifestyles and small business creation. Last year, the manual was used to train 124 people who worked with 25 support groups that benefited more than 550 people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.

### Youth

Many Honduran youth face limited prospects of good employment, a sound financial situation, and stable family relationships. Volunteers work with youth, adults, and agencies to identify and initiate positive activities for young people to help them develop as individuals, citizens, family members, and professionals.

Increasing civic education and making youth aware of their rights and duties as Honduran citizens is very important. In conjunction with the Center for Civic Education in the United States, five Volunteers tested a pilot program called Project Citizen with high school students.

*Agriculture Volunteer, Honduras at work on a bee-keeping project*

*"We are lacking in knowledge, and the Peace Corps Volunteers have it. Without them we would not have had the results we have had. They are professional, and we appreciate their training."*

Guillermo Díaz
Mayor, Sabanagrande
Francisco Morazan, Honduras

# Jamaica

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Kingston |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $3,390 |
| GDP growth | 1.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $682 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 26%<br>Female: 14% |
| Infant mortality rate | 17 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 77%<br>Measles: 80% |
| Access to an improved water source | 93% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.2% |
| Religions | Christianity<br>Judaism<br>Rastafarianism |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 94 | 78 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,859 | 2,931 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Jamaica is striving to strengthen its economy and escape its burden of debt. The government must set aside 70 percent of the annual national budget to service the national debt, and yet must continue to borrow to meet vital national needs. About 20 percent of Jamaicans live below the poverty line, and the government struggles to provide the services and education that would improve the standard of living and promote productive enterprise. Social problems are considerable; creating economic and educational opportunities for marginalized youth in urban areas is a major concern. With a serious lack of employment opportunities in Jamaica, many Jamaicans emigrate, leaving an underproductive and insufficient labor force in agriculture, and creating a "brain drain" in the health, education, and information and communication technology (ICT) sectors. Remittances from overseas (25 percent of the gross domestic product) continue to be the largest source of net foreign exchange, ahead of tourism and bauxite mining.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Jamaica is famous for its green mountain landscapes, beaches, and biological diversity, but the country faces many challenges. The country continues to grapple with underdevelopment, unemployment, and environmental degradation; marginalization of youth (especially males); a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection (1.2 percent adult prevalence); a lack of potable water; and poor sanitary practices. Enrollment rates in primary and lower-secondary schools remain high, but the enrollment rate of 17- to 19-year-olds continues its sharp decline. High levels of crime, violence, and drug trafficking, especially in inner-city communities, further deteriorate living conditions and have a negative impact on foreign investment.

The Peace Corps addresses Jamaica's development priorities through its programs in the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Environment

Volunteers are engaged in two important aspects of sustainable development: integrating environmental education themes in the formal education system through collaboration with 4-H and the School for the Environment Program; and working with community-based organizations and environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to develop eco-friendly income-generation projects, while assisting in institutional strengthening. These projects help nurture the

development of a national environment ethic and promote prudent management of the island's natural resources.

One Volunteer worked with the Office of the Parish disaster coordinator on a disaster- and hazard-mapping project. Using geographic information system technology, the Volunteer assisted in the production of maps to be used in disaster response and management. One such map charted the location of emergency responders, hospitals, and shelters. Another identified flood zones and landslide-prone areas, which can complicate disaster response.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The sanitation system in Jamaica is increasingly inadequate. Volunteers help design and install wastewater treatment facilities and implement rural water systems that supply safe, reliable water to communities. Using an integrated health promotion approach, Volunteers improve basic hygiene and the maintenance and usage of latrines. They collaborate with teachers to develop health and hygiene curricula for schools; work in rural, urban squatter, and underserved settlements to facilitate broad-based community development activities; and strengthen community-based organizations that support health projects. Through their secondary projects, Volunteers engage community groups in income-generating ICT activities, and in targeted community mobilization using sports, music, education in schools, life-skills training and other modalities to address the HIV epidemic.

As a part of a National Rural Water Program, three Volunteers are piloting four community water projects. The Volunteers provide technical expertise, organizational strengthening, and educational support. The water projects will provide 11 rural communities with potable and piped water systems, and will be owned and operated by the more than 7,000 beneficiaries.

### Youth

The youth project was recently renamed "Youth as Promise" to reflect the agency's efforts to promote positive youth development. Volunteers collaborate with the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Culture, and with NGOs, community groups, and community health centers to strengthen programs that build skills and self-esteem in youth. Volunteers work with their sponsoring agencies to implement reading and computer tutoring programs, youth entrepreneurship, employability programs, HIV education/prevention, and life-skills training. At the community level, Volunteers may also work together with youth workers, teachers, and parents.

A Volunteer assigned to a small, rural school taught basic computer skills to students. The students learned word processing and research methods, and practiced reading and writing skills using educational software. The students advanced enough that the Volunteer was able to assist them in producing a school newspaper.

*"The Volunteer couple assigned to my agency has taken the Red Cross to higher heights of effectiveness with their efficiency and availability. We welcome them, they are outstanding."*

McArthur Collins
Chairman, Red Cross Mandeville
Jamaica

*Education Volunteer and host-country counterparts, Jamaica*

# Jordan

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1997–2002<br>2004–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Amman |
| Population | 5 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,460 |
| GDP growth | 7.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.532 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 5%<br>Female: 15% |
| Infant mortality rate | 22 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 95%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 97% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Sunni Islam: 95%<br>Christianity: 4%<br>Other: 1% |
| Official language | Arabic |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 56 | 64 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,782 | 1,846 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Jordan is a small country with limited natural resources. Agricultural production is affected by drought and the lack of arable land. Traditionally, Jordan's economy has centered on phosphates, potash, fertilizer derivatives, overseas remittances, tourism, and foreign aid. In 2001, Jordan entered into a free-trade agreement with the United States, and it has signed trade liberalization agreements with the European Union. Tourism has been intermittently affected by political tension in the region.

Due to security concerns, the Peace Corps suspended its program and withdrew its Volunteers in November 2002. In June 2003, a Peace Corps assessment team, working with the U.S. embassy and Jordanian officials, deemed the security situation stable. The program resumed in 2004.

Jordan's King Abdullah II leads his kingdom with a sustained commitment to economic and social reform. Numerous development challenges face Jordan, among them rural poverty and unemployment, and ambitious growth goals in education and primary healthcare—all areas of Peace Corps programming and collaboration.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since 2000, Jordan has launched social and economic initiatives to raise the standard of living, develop human resources, promote rural development, and increase participation in civil society and governance. High among the king's priorities is addressing human capacity requirements through improved early childhood, primary, and secondary education, with specific emphasis on English fluency and computer literacy.

Volunteer projects focus on English education; special education, especially for the mentally challenged; and youth development. Project plans are developed with Jordanian partners, including the Ministries of Social Development and Education and the Higher Council for Youth.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers assigned to rural primary and secondary schools enable Jordanian students, educators, and community members to improve their English proficiency. This increases access to higher education and employment. Careful screening of underserved communities ensures that Volunteer contributions are focused on maximizing Volunteers as resources, as native speakers, and as models of innovative, interactive teaching methods. Volunteers consult on the design and delivery of regional teacher-training workshops,

conduct English clubs and camps for students, and teach groups such as women's clubs and youth centers.

Special education Volunteers have been particularly welcome as they serve small- to medium–sized communities, often working with charitable- or parent-founded centers. The devotion of these families and communities to their disadvantaged members sets the tone for a remarkable atmosphere of contribution and success. Volunteers are placed at rural and urban special education centers under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development.

To encourage students and teachers to use their language skills, two Volunteers and their counterparts planned and implemented an English camp for students and teachers in their region. They also developed a guide called "Young Leaders for Our Jordan," which includes a step-by-step template to use for future English camps.

Responding to her community's desire to build a therapeutic playground, one Volunteer secured a grant for a playground so all local children would have a safe and quality area to play. The new playground motivated members of the girls' youth center in the village to volunteer to paint and beautify the playground.

### Youth

Jordan's youthful population represents both its greatest asset and its most pressing challenge. More than 31 percent of Jordanians are between 15 and 29 years old; 38 percent are younger than 15. The Higher Council for Youth works closely with the Peace Corps to develop and enhance life skills for youth. The government has established a national youth strategy, which includes a focus on healthy lifestyles. Peace Corps Volunteers promote youth leadership and empowerment while centering on lifestyle and education issues.

One Volunteer, who recognized the need to increase young peoples' access to information and educational resources, worked with his community to renovate a public library and community meeting room. This fully operational, self-sustainable facility now includes educational CDs and other audiovisual resources, as well as a digital library database.

*"After seeing our Jordanian youth carrying out the peer educators' camp themselves, we feel the impact Peace Corps Volunteers had on our youth in Jordan."*

Ahmad Nawaf
Director of Youth Affairs, Higher Council for Youth
Jordan

*Representative Betty McCollum (D-MN) meets with Peace Corps Volunteers in Jordan, December 2007*

# Kazakhstan

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Astana |
| Population | 15 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,940 |
| GDP growth | 9.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.975 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 63 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 82%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 86% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.2% |
| Religions | Sunni Islam: 47%<br>Russian Orthodoxy: 44%<br>Other: 7%<br>Protestantism: 2% |
| Official languages | Kazakh<br>Russian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 184 | 185 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,940 | 2,998 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This year, Kazakhstan celebrates its 16th year of independence and the 12th anniversary of its constitution. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has been a constitutional republic led by Nursultan Nazarbayev, its only president to-date. The country is proceeding along the complex path of reforming and building an open democratic society with a market economy. Driven by vast reserves of natural resources, including oil and gas, Kazakhstan has experienced strong growth in its GDP and the World Bank classifies it as a country with above-average income. Transitioning to a civil society, securing basic human rights, and distributing the economic gains across the population have proven to be a more arduous task. With little experience in citizen participation to promote local community change, Kazakhstan's fledgling civil society and nonprofit sectors are beginning to be recognized by the government as viable avenues for community development. English is seen by the government as a vehicle to economic growth in the international economy.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Not long after the country declared its independence, President Nazarbayev invited the Peace Corps to help strengthen Kazakhstan's human resource base. Since the program opened in 1993, the people and government of Kazakhstan have strongly supported the Peace Corps' role in development. Government programs are driven by President Nazarbayev's theme, "Prosperity, Security, and the Ever Growing Welfare of All Kazakhs," a program commonly called "Kazakhstan 2030." The program calls for consistently improving standards of life, health, education, and opportunities of the Kazakhs as well as improving the country's natural environment. Peace Corps Volunteer activities are closely aligned with the president's vision.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers promote the development of civil society by working with host organizations, counterparts, and community volunteers throughout Kazakhstan to improve the capacity of communities to meet their needs, particularly in HIV/AIDS, youth, environment, women, and economic development. Volunteers are placed in towns and at the grassroots level to educate, train, and assist host agency staff in leadership, business development skills, transparent accounting, grant writing, and strategic planning. Last year four Volunteers conducted a four-day business skills workshop with 20 regional participants. They covered leadership and business

topics as well as selecting and managing local volunteers and integrating these volunteers into overall programming strategies.

Another Volunteer, working with a local HIV/AIDS prevention center, designed outreach activities with staff to educate the general population about HIV/AIDS, prevention options, and links with intravenous drug use. The program included training in media outreach and designing informational brochures.

### Education

One of Kazakhstan's main goals is to become one of the 50 most competitive countries within the world market economy. As English is the language of international communication, the Ministry of Education requested assistance from the Peace Corps in English language teaching, teacher training, and educational resource development, particularly in rural secondary schools. Many rural schools are understaffed with outdated and often ineffective textbooks, limited teaching resources, and teachers with limited English fluency. In addition to team teaching to address daily classroom teaching methodologies and communicative approaches, Volunteers conduct teacher-training workshops for village teachers throughout Kazakhstan to improve their English teaching skills. One Volunteer conducted a no-cost training seminar for 70 local teachers serving in village schools. In two other towns, 22 teachers from rural schools participated in a training to promote the use of information and communications technologies in the classroom and to provide training to teachers in the use of computers and the Internet.

Volunteers also organize numerous community projects, including business, technology, and environmental clubs, and HIV/AIDS awareness activities.

In addition to their formal roles as teachers in academic settings or as trainers in host agencies, Volunteers enthusiastically participate in summer camps across Kazakhstan. Building on the summer camp tradition that existed in the former Soviet Union, Volunteers work with local counterparts to provide campers with enriching, invigorating camp experiences. As a result of this work, counterparts improve their English ability as well as their planning, organizational, and leadership skills. Campers participate in activities enhancing their critical thinking skills and improving their knowledge of, and respect for, the environment. More than 40 Volunteers organized and participated in camps throughout Kazakhstan last summer. One Volunteer who worked with the nongovernmental organization Society for Disabled Youth planned a series of summer camps for children with physical and mental disabilities and youth leaders.

*"...The Peace Corps is a valued partner, and I welcome this chance to commend the Volunteers working in educational institutions throughout this country. I pledge my full support and the full support of my ministry and promise a strong and continuing collaborative relationship."*

Zhanseit Tuimebayev
Minister of Education and Science
Kazakhstan

# Kenya

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1964–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Nairobi |
| Population | 34 million |
| Annual per capita income | $540 |
| GDP growth | 5.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $21 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 22%<br>Female: 30% |
| Infant mortality rate | 79 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 76%<br>Measles: 69% |
| Access to an improved water source | 57% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 6.1% |
| Religions | Protestantism: 40%<br>Roman Catholicism: 30%<br>Islam: 20%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 10% |
| Official languages | English<br>Swahili |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 147 | 146 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,309 | 3,313 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Kenya's founding president, Jomo Kenyatta, led the country from its independence in 1963 until his death in 1978. President Daniel Arap Moi succeeded Kenyatta, stepping down in December 2002. Mwai Kibaki assumed the presidency in 2002. On December 27, 2007, presidential and parliamentary elections were held. At the time of this publication, the election results in Kenya were being contested due to reported voting irregularities. As a result, protests and unrest have occurred. Government and opposition leaders have met in an effort to find a political solution to the election crisis. Peace Corps/Kenya has been temporarily suspended, all Volunteers have safely left the country. The Peace Corps intends to return Volunteers to Kenya when the security environment has improved.

Kenya experienced real economic growth after independence until the 1970s, but over the succeeding two decades, its economy declined. In 2006, however, Kenya's economy grew by 6.1 percent. Agriculture is the main source of employment, with approximately 60 percent of the population engaged in farming. Kenya is the world's largest exporter of tea, which, together with coffee and horticultural products, constitutes more than half of the country's merchandise exports. Tourism is also a key economic driver.

As the regional hub for trade and finance in East Africa, Kenya has been hampered by corruption and by reliance upon several primary goods whose prices have remained low. A severe drought from 1999 to 2000 compounded Kenya's problems, causing water and energy rationing and reducing agricultural output. Despite the return of strong rains in 2001, weak commodity prices, endemic corruption, and low investment limited Kenya's economic growth. In the December 2002 elections, Daniel Arap Moi's 24-year reign ended, and a new opposition government took on the economic problems facing the nation. In 2003, progress was made in rooting out corruption and encouraging donor support. Since then, the Kibaki government has been rocked by high-level graft scandals. The World Bank suspended aid for most of 2006, and the IMF delayed loans pending further action by the government on corruption. The scandals have not seemed to affect growth, with GDP growing more than five percent in 2006.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since 1964, more than 5,000 Volunteers have helped the people and government of Kenya meet their development needs. The work of Volunteers is well-regarded by government officials at both the national and district levels, as well as by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community

members. Peace Corps/Kenya has adapted its projects over the years to fit the country's changing needs. Volunteers currently work in business development, education, and health. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Kenya also has a unique deaf education program, which includes 16 deaf education Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers work with Kenya's ministries of Labor and Human Resource Development to help Kenyans start enterprises and other income-generating activities, and to provide training and technical assistance. Volunteers also help establish local businesses to improve product quality and access to business support services, like financial credit. Volunteers help Kenyan entrepreneurs improve their productivity through the use of computers, as well.

One Volunteer in a small coastal town is assisting a wood-carvers cooperative to successfully export their crafts. The Volunteer provided extensive training to members on cooperative governance, quality assurance, and merchandising. He is working with other Volunteers to create a website for the cooperative, and has connected the cooperative with international fair trade organizations to enhance the marketability of their crafts and promote eco-friendly wood harvesting practices. Through the Volunteers' efforts, the cooperative has secured several large orders and is now operating a $500,000-a-year (USD) business.

### Education

Volunteers teach biology, chemistry, mathematics, and physics in rural secondary schools. They train teachers in these schools to expand their range of educational approaches and practices in teaching math and science subjects. Volunteers teach in primary schools for deaf children and train teachers who are instructing deaf students. They also conduct community outreach programs to educate parents and guardians about deafness and the importance of providing support for deaf children.

One Volunteer helped construct a computer lab at a school for the deaf through Peace Corps Partnership funding. The school serves 165 deaf students from all regions of Kenya and from other countries in East Africa. The lab has 20 networked computers and is ready for future Internet use. The Volunteer teaches computer classes to students and teachers, and instructs teachers how to use computer programs to develop their teaching materials. The Volunteer also uses the lab to promote HIV/AIDS awareness by helping students use the computers to design posters and presentation materials.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, address key public health challenges through attitude and behavior change in communities. Their collective goal is to reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS, waterborne diseases, and to prevent malaria. Volunteers assist communities to prioritize their health needs; work with community groups to strengthen their ability to provide home-based care for people living with AIDS and orphans; and educate health service providers on malaria prevention techniques, water-borne diseases, and nutrition. In the last fiscal year Volunteers provided HIV/AIDS prevention training to more than 27,305 youth in 134 community groups.

One Volunteer assigned to a Kenyan NGO works to promote healthy lifestyles among youth. Together with other Volunteers and NGO staff, the Volunteer designed a peer-education training manual and implemented a comprehensive in-school peer education program for primary and secondary schools. The Volunteer participated in a training program given to more than 80 peer education resource teachers and Ministry of Education officials. Additionally, the Volunteer organized and supervised a series of week-long residential camps, each of which trained approximately 50 student peer educators from 10 different schools.

*"The Ministry of Health and Peace Corps Kenya have an excellent collaborative partnership... Peace Corps Volunteers assist in the development and implementation of activities that respond to needs of Kenyan communities for HIV/AIDS prevention, environmental health, hygiene promotion, and malaria control and prevention."*

The Honorable Charity Kaluki Ngilu
Minister for Health
Kenya

# Kiribati

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1973–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Tarawa |
| Population: | 98,000 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,170 |
| GDP growth | (-2.0%) |
| Foreign direct investment | Not available |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Not available |
| Infant mortality rate | 48 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 62%<br>Measles: 56% |
| Access to an improved water source | 62% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 53%<br>Kiribati Protestantism: 39% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 20 | 39 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,240 | 1,491 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Kiribati (pronounced Kir-ee-bus) is a small, isolated group of islands in the central Pacific that straddles the equator and the international dateline. The country has three island groups: the Gilbert Islands, the Line Islands, and the Phoenix Islands. It consists of 33 coral atolls scattered over more than 2 million square miles, yet its total land area is only 264 square miles. Kiribati gained independence from Britain in 1979 and is now a stable, democratic republic.

Kiribati has few natural resources and a limited economy. Its main sources of revenue are the export of dried coconut, fish and the sale of fishing rights. Agriculture is limited because of poor soil and scarce rainfall. Kiribati's poor resource base makes it difficult for the government to raise revenue for development programs, particularly in education, natural resource management, youth development, and health. Many of the country's educated and trained workers leave the country, making it a challenge to find people with the skills needed to implement successful development programs.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps began placing Volunteers in Kiribati in 1973, and Volunteers now work throughout the Gilbert Islands group. Most Volunteers work on outer islands, which lack services and educational opportunities because of their distance from the main island of Tarawa.

The Peace Corps' current program strategy supports the Kiribati government's efforts to address the key development areas of education in English, health promotion, and community development. Volunteers support the national plan to enhance the English language and classroom skills of I-Kiribati teachers. Kiribati's geography makes it difficult for the government to provide health services and education to citizens in more rural, isolated villages. Thus, Volunteers provide outreach to villages and develop awareness campaigns to inform youth and adults about important health issues. Volunteers also collaborate with individuals and groups to support community-initiated projects and activities that enhance the quality of life of village members.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers support the efforts of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports to prepare students to continue their education or to enter the workforce. They enhance teachers' professional development, improve classroom environments, and increase learning opportunities for outer island communities. Volunteers work in primary and junior secondary

schools to augment the English language and overall teaching skills of teachers. They do this by delivering in-service training workshops and by transferring teaching and lesson planning skills through co-teaching activities. Volunteers also work at the national teacher-training college teaching English, math, science, accounting, crafts/creativity, and physical education, as well as new teaching methodologies. They contribute to school administration, develop classroom materials, and coach sports teams.

One Volunteer assigned to a primary school on the remote island of Nikunau worked with counterparts to build the island's first school library and to supply it with books. Together, they arranged for community donations of time and labor to construct the library using locally available materials. They obtained book donations for the library from the United States and other sources.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers in the health and HIV/AIDS sector support the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Internal and Social Affairs through activities that promote the health and well-being of outer island community members. Volunteers collaborate with a variety of government employees, including medical assistants, field nurses, island community workers, island project officers, and community development officers. They work directly with men, women, boys, and girls; with families and schools; and with women's, youth, church, and village welfare groups. Volunteers educate their communities on preventing common health problems and diseases, targeting such areas as smoking and alcohol abuse, diabetes, hypertension, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. They encourage healthy behavior, addressing issues of nutrition, exercise, clean water and sanitation, life skills, and reproductive health.

One Volunteer collaborated with the medical staff on her island of Beru to organize an island-wide HIV/AIDS awareness campaign during Global AIDS Week. The Volunteer and her partners formed a task force to coordinate all eight villages on the island to ensure island-wide coverage. Working closely with the Ministry of Health they gathered relevant resources and statistics and prepared and presented a series of comprehensive HIV/AIDS workshops to nearly 300 people.

*"Volunteering with the Peace Corps in Kiribati is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The only thing that can match its uniqueness is the incredible hospitality of the people themselves."*

Kiribati Volunteer
Education Sector

*Children in Kiribati*

# Kyrgyz Republic

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–2001<br>2002–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Bishkek |
| Population | 5 million |
| Annual per capita income | $450 |
| GDP growth | (-0.6%) |
| Foreign direct investment | $43 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 1.3% |
| Infant mortality rate | 58 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 99%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 77% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Islam: 75%<br>Russian Orthodoxy: 20%<br>Other: 5% |
| Official languages | Kyrgyz<br>Russian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 100 | 110 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,016 | 2,043 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Kyrgyz Republic declared its independence from the Soviet Union in August 1991. After parliamentary elections in 2005, which were widely viewed as fraudulent, the government was overthrown and a new president elected. Although the Kyrgyz Republic is viewed as one of the most democratic of the former Soviet republics, corruption continues to impede the country's development.

The collapse of the Soviet Union dealt a severe blow to the Kyrgyz economy. Between 1991 and 1995, the country's gross domestic product (GDP) shrank in half. Reforms to create a market economy that began in 1993 have started to improve the situation; however, GDP growth has averaged only five percent per year since 1996, with particular impact on the important agriculture and mining sectors. In 1998, the Kyrgyz Republic became the first central Asian republic to join the World Trade Organization, though it remains one of the poorest countries in the world.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in the Kyrgyz Republic in 1993. After a temporary suspension of the Peace Corps program following the events of September 11, 2001, the program reopened in 2002.

Since independence, the Kyrgyz Republic has demonstrated a commitment to participate fully in the global market. The government has been eager to assist in the difficult transition from a state-controlled economy to a market-based one. To promote sustainable development and poverty alleviation, a key area of focus for the Peace Corps program has been strengthening indigenous nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

The Kyrgyz Republic has placed a high priority on English education, and the government has requested assistance to increase English competency among secondary and university students and to improve Kyrgyz teachers' level of English competency and training.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

The business development project places Volunteers directly at the grassroots level. Volunteers help community-based NGOs become more sustainable, participatory, and effective. They help improve access to information at the local level and work with NGOs to develop effective networks and programs consistent with each organization's mission and community needs. These NGOs help communities develop sustainable rural tourism and handicraft projects, increase economic

opportunities for women, and assist small-scale farmers in marketing their goods.

One Volunteer, working with agricultural cooperatives to build organizational capacity and economic opportunities, conducted classes in management, project design, and implementation. To meet the development needs expressed by his community, the Volunteer arranged for experts on honey production and orchard management to give presentations. Additionally, the Volunteer produced a document on NGO management that the cooperatives can use for internal training.

### Education

The education project helps students and English teachers improve their English language competency. Volunteers are assigned as English teachers to secondary schools in rural towns and villages and to institutes of higher education throughout the Kyrgyz Republic. Volunteers introduce communicative teaching methodologies and critical thinking skills. They also help enhance students' computer and Internet skills and develop libraries and resource centers. Volunteers have formed English clubs, helped their students participate in local debates, and worked with local English teachers to develop effective lesson plans. Improved English skills have helped both students and teachers win scholarships to study abroad.

One Volunteer helped organize a sports education summer camp with local community members. The camp provided community members an opportunity to see how to organize activities with very limited resources. The children learned a variety of games, including baseball, football, and freeze tag, and the informal environment encouraged them to practice their English in a fun way. The interaction with Volunteers also let the children learn more about Americans. The Volunteer also provided management training to community members who helped organize the event.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Health Volunteers work at the regional and grassroots level to provide basic health education, promote good sanitation and hygiene practices, and raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Their activities include developing health campaigns; helping create health education materials that target adults, youth, and children; delivering campaigns to schoolchildren and community members; and helping communities take more responsibility for their own healthcare.

The health project increases awareness and understanding of healthy lifestyles and practices. By building the professional capacity of trained health educators, access is improved to health information, education, and community awareness-raising programs. The project also supports government and nongovernmental initiatives that promote healthier lifestyles and preventive health practices.

One health Volunteer initiated a health education project for pregnant women. Expectant mothers received information about nutrition during pregnancy and classes on how and what to cook for infants older than six months. The Volunteer also received a small grant to test community members for HIV and to pay for supplies for HIV/AIDS educational activities. She is currently developing resources for other Volunteers to use at camps, trainings, and seminars in their own communities.

*"The greatest success I have had is hearing my students talking to each other in English. When I hear a student ask another student, 'Do we have homework?' it is very rewarding."*

Kyrgyz Republic Volunteer
Education Sector

# Lesotho

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Maseru |
| Population | 2 million |
| Annual per capita income | $950 |
| GDP growth | 1.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $92 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 26%<br>Female: 10% |
| Infant mortality rate | 102 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 78%<br>Measles: 70% |
| Access to an improved water source | 79% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 28.9% |
| Religions | Christianity: 80%<br>Hinduism<br>Indigenous beliefs<br>Islam |
| Official languages | English<br>Sesotho |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 83 | 85 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,497 | 2,540 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Lesotho became a British protectorate in 1868 after a series of territorial wars in the mid-19th century that cost the country much of its best agricultural land. It gained its independence in 1966, by which time it had been forced into a state of economic dependence on South Africa. While in the country's recent history there have been some periods of political transition, constitutional reforms have since restored stability. King Letsie III, who succeeded his father, Moshoeshoe II, remains the head of state. Parliamentary elections were held in May 2002 and February 2007. The government of Lesotho is confident that the country will remain politically stable.

Lesotho is a small, landlocked, mountainous country. Its economy is highly dependent on small-scale agriculture, livestock, remittances from miners employed in South Africa, and a rapidly growing apparel-assembly sector. Nearly half of all households live below the national poverty line. Recent poor harvests have required Lesotho to depend on food assistance and imports from South Africa. Lesotho has the world's third-highest HIV infection rate.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps was invited to work in Lesotho in 1967; since then, nearly 2,000 Volunteers have served in this southern African country. Peace Corps/Lesotho's primary program focus is on rural development. Volunteers serve in all 10 districts of the country, concentrating in the rural areas where 85 percent of the population resides. Volunteers work to strengthen the capacity of individuals to take control of their own lives by providing training in education and health and HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers work as resource teachers in early childhood and primary education programs, and as secondary-education English teachers. Volunteer resource teachers work with the Ministry of Education and Training to upgrade teacher skills through teacher-training workshops, materials development, and by working one-on-one with teachers. Volunteers also work with their counterparts to integrate special education into the mainstream curriculum. Given the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the general population, Volunteers integrate HIV/AIDS age-appropriate messages into classroom sessions and after-school activities.

Volunteers provide classroom instruction in English language and literature at the secondary school level. During

fiscal year 2007, Volunteers taught English language and literature to approximately 3,600 boys and girls in 33 secondary and high schools. A group of Volunteers organized a series of debates at their schools and within their districts on HIV/AIDS-related topics. As a result, over 1,000 students improved their English vocabularies, critical thinking skills, and oral communication skills while promoting HIV/AIDS prevention messages.

One Volunteer worked with a youth group in his community to establish a youth-run library. With books donated from a nonprofit group, the youth are providing an important service to their community while learning business skills and gaining management experience.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers focus on preventing and mitigating the effects of HIV/AIDS, strengthening community-based organizations, promoting youth development and skills, and enhancing business promotion and economic development. Volunteers work at the village and district level to provide nutrition information and HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs.

Volunteers work to lessen the risk of HIV infection in youth. Volunteers train as peer educators those youth who are either in school or have completed their secondary education, but are currently unemployed. Volunteers also help local youth identify and implement small- and micro-business activities.

One Volunteer assisted a school youth organization in building a four-acre vegetable garden complete with irrigation and water-pumping systems. The produce from the garden has been used to improve village health and nutrition and any extra produce has been sold at a nearby market, providing extra income for the organization.

Volunteers work with local chiefs to assess the needs of orphans and vulnerable children in communities. They work with support groups for people living with HIV/AIDS to help establish sustainable income-generation activities for families affected by the pandemic and lessen the stigma of HIV/AIDS in communities. Volunteers also work with youth who are either in school or have completed their secondary education, but are currently unemployed, lessening their risk of HIV infection by training them as peer educators. These Volunteers also help local youth identify and implement small- and micro-business activities. Volunteers help organizations and groups mobilize resources and community support for needed food security and HIV/AIDS-mitigation programs. They help communities develop cultural tourism markets, such as guided horseback riding tours, and they provide technical assistance to producer groups on product diversification, quality control, and marketing.

*"Throughout my primary and secondary school years I was taught English, mathematics and science by Peace Corps Volunteers. They were some of the best teachers I ever had and thanks to their teaching, I was able to go on to university and beyond."*

Semano Sekatle
Minister of Public Service
Lesotho

# Liberia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1990<br>*Expected return 2008* |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Monrovia |
| Population | 3.3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $120 |
| GDP growth | 5.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | $194 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 80% |
| Infant mortality rate | 157 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 87%<br>Measles: 94% |
| Access to an improved water source | 61% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Christianity: 40%<br>Animism: 40%<br>Islam: 20% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 18 | 18 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,569 | 1,267 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Liberia, which means "land of the free," was founded in the early 1800s by officials of the American Colonization Society (ACS) as a settlement for freed slaves from the United States. The capital was originally named Christopolis but later changed to Monrovia, in honor of U.S. President James Monroe.

Between 1821 and 1847 the ACS resettled more than 10,000 African Americans and several thousand Africans from interdicted slave ships in Liberia. These settlers, who came to be called Americo-Liberians, declared independence from the ACS in 1847 and organized the Republic of Liberia.

Since its early years of existence, Liberia has faced a number of challenges stemming from tensions between Americo-Liberian settlers and indigenous Africans.

From independence in 1847, Americo-Liberian elite monopolized political power and restricted the voting rights of the indigenous population until April 12, 1980, when Samuel K. Doe, an indigenous leader, seized power in a coup.

Over time, the Doe government, made up of members of Doe's ethnic group, came to dominate political and military life which increased ethnic tensions and caused frequent hostilities.

In December 1989, a small band of rebels led by Charles Taylor entered Liberia in an effort to challenge the Doe government. From 1989 to 1996 Liberia was ensnared in a civil war that claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Liberians and displaced a million others into refugee camps in neighboring countries.

In July 1997, after years of fighting, rebel groups agreed to a special election. Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Party won by a large majority. For the next six years, the Taylor government did little to improve the lives of Liberians. Taylor's misrule led to the resumption of armed rebellion among his former adversaries. In 2003, after intense international pressure, Taylor resigned from office and was exiled to Nigeria. For the next two years a transitional government, created as part of the comprehensive peace agreement signed after Taylor's departure, governed Liberia.

In October 2005, presidential and legislative elections were held and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf became Africa's first democratically elected female president. These elections were deemed the most free, fair, and peaceful in Liberia's history.

The political situation has remained stable since the 2005 elections and the government of Liberia has made positive strides aimed at political stability and economic recovery. President Sirleaf's government includes many experienced and technically competent senior officials, and consequently the public has much higher confidence in her administration than in any of its recent predecessors. Current government priorities include creating jobs, attracting investments, and providing education and other essential services for the Liberian people.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps originally entered Liberia in 1962, but closed the program in 1990 due to the outbreak of civil war. During the 27 years that the Peace Corps was in Liberia, over 4,400 Volunteers served in nearly every facet of Liberia's development efforts. Initially, Volunteers focused on education, but projects were expanded to include agriculture, forestry, and health.

The Peace Corps plans to reenter Liberia in the fourth quarter of FY 2008 with a team of Peace Corps Response Volunteers. Two additional teams of 18 are scheduled to follow in FY 2009.

Peace Corps Response, formerly known as the Crisis Corps, mobilizes returned Peace Corps Volunteers to provide short-term humanitarian assistance to countries worldwide. Peace Corps Response Volunteers have already served as Peace Corps Volunteers, so they come to their posts already in possession of the appropriate language, technical, and cross-cultural skills needed to make an immediate impact. Peace Corps Response Volunteers will work in the area of education. Program focuses will include teacher training, curriculum development, and classroom teaching.

*Peace Corps Respose will re-enter Liberia in the summer of 2008 after a 18-year hiatus*

*"...the Liberian people are very thankful...They want the simple things in life; send their children to schools, have jobs, be able to give their families a square meal at the end of the day, be able to get around... We thank you for what you have done to put us on this path."*

Liberian President Johnson-Sirleaf thanked President Bush during a meeting at the White House
February 2007

# Macedonia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1996–1999<br>1999–2001<br>2002–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Skopje |
| Population | 2 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,830 |
| GDP growth | 2.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $100 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 2%<br>Female: 6% |
| Infant mortality rate | 15 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 94%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 85% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Eastern Orthodoxy: 65%<br>Islam: 29%<br>Roman Catholicism: 4%<br>Others: 2% |
| Official language | Macedonian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 112 | 102 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,048 | 2,020 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The objectives of Macedonia's government are to develop a multiethnic democracy; provide economic opportunities for its citizens; and move toward NATO and European Union (EU) integration. Despite some economic progress, the unemployment rate remains high. The Ohrid Framework Agreement, a peace agreement ending ethnic fighting in 2001, placed that conflict firmly in the past. The peaceful parliamentary elections of 2006 took Macedonia a step closer to membership in NATO and the EU, which eventually will improve regional and international trade ties and increase political cooperation.

Decentralization reforms have reduced municipalities from 124 to 84, and moved authority to local government for education, healthcare, infrastructure, and other services. Financing these now local-level responsibilities will be critical to the success of these reforms. Security within the country has improved since the Ohrid Agreement, and, in January 2004, the EU's military force was replaced by a mostly unarmed EU police mission. In cooperation with the U.S. embassy and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the EU police mission trains and advises the multiethnic Macedonian police force.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps program was established in 1996. Seven Volunteers were assigned to the Ministry of Education and Science and worked in the secondary school English education program. Subsequently, the program included business development within municipalities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and environmental education and management. Despite early successes, the program did not fully develop because of regional political instability and the program was suspended twice between 1999 and 2001. Since the Peace Corps returned in November 2002, there has been significant progress in the two current program areas—business development and education—and youth development and information technology are integrated into both program areas.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

As government structures devolve from the centralized system, local officials must learn how to operate effectively. Most municipalities have limited budgets and little experience in addressing their increased responsibilities. Peace Corps Volunteers strengthen the capacity of local/municipal

governments and NGOs by creating training programs and establishing projects that include more responsive management styles. Local organizations have a great need for expertise in strategic planning, project management, and sustainability planning, and Volunteers provide host organizations with organizational and management assistance. They conduct computer skills training; share expertise in fundraising methods, project planning, and management; conduct community outreach in human rights, health, and environmental awareness; and initiate small project assistance.

One Volunteer worked with an organization overseeing a large government land disbursement program to build agriculture industry capacity. The Volunteer planned economic education seminars focused on selecting the best products and practices for farming in the region, business development planning, and product export for more than 500 farmers.

### Education

The Ministry of Education and Science places a high priority on English language education as a way for Macedonians to improve their place in the global community. The ministry is refining its curriculum and making concerted efforts to improve teachers' skills, particularly in smaller towns and rural villages where needs are greatest. The Peace Corps' involvement in this endeavor is twofold: to improve the effectiveness of English language instruction through teacher training and resource center development; and to help students improve their skills in English language communication, critical thinking, and independent life-long learning. Volunteers serve as English language resource teachers in primary and secondary schools. They also work on summer projects, including boys' and girls' leadership training camps, and they organize after-school English clubs, often incorporating information technology skills into the clubs as well as classrooms.

One Volunteer worked with her English students to put on a nine-minute version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The production presented an opportunity for the students to practice their English speaking more creatively and preparations for the play provided important life lessons for the students, including goal setting, leadership, and responsibility.

*"The coordination between a public school and a private-sector NGO sparked a positive response culminating recently in a formal ministerial visit from Kosovo to study the success of our community in addressing cultural and educational issues relating to [the] Roma population in the Balkan region."*

Macedonia Volunteer
Business Development Sector

# Madagascar

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Antananarivo |
| Population | 19 million |
| Annual per capita income | $290 |
| GDP growth | 4.6% |
| Foreign direct investment | $29 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 23%<br>Female: 35% |
| Infant mortality rate | 74 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 61%<br>Measles: 59% |
| Access to an improved water source | 46% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.7% |
| Religions | Indigenous beliefs: 47%<br>Christianity: 45%<br>Islam: 7% |
| Official languages | French<br>Malagasy |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 143 | 144 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,494 | 2,520 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

An independent kingdom until 1896, Madagascar was colonized by France until adopting a constitution and declaring full independence in 1960. During 1992-93, free presidential and National Assembly elections were held, ending 17 years of single-party rule. In 1997, Didier Ratsiraka, the leader during the 1970s and 1980s, was returned to the presidency. The 2001 presidential election was contested between the followers of Didier Ratsiraka and Marc Ravalomanana, nearly causing secession of half of the country. In April 2002, the High Constitutional Court announced Ravalomanana the winner.

The economy of Madagascar is dominated by agriculture, which employs 80 percent of the population. Agriculture, including fishing and forestry, contribute 26 percent of GDP; industry, 16 percent; and services, 56 percent. Major exports include coffee, vanilla, cloves, shellfish and sugar. Madagascar's natural resources are severely threatened by deforestation and erosion, aggravated by the use of firewood as the primary source of fuel. A great need continues for teachers, health specialists, and environmental counselors, particularly in rural areas.

The government of President Marc Ravalomanana has created the Madagascar Action Plan (MAP) which serves as a roadmap for all agencies and partners to assist in economic growth and poverty reduction and is committed to fighting environmental degradation, poor health and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Numerous international development agencies and volunteer organizations have been welcomed to Madagascar, joining the growing number of Malagasy nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working with the people of Madagascar with their development efforts. Madagascar is ranked 143 of 177 countries on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The first education Volunteers arrived in 1993. In subsequent years, the Peace Corps initiated programs in ecological conservation and community health education. Today, Volunteers work in the education, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS sectors. Some Volunteers concentrate on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; others teach English and train teachers. Volunteers also work with communities and national parks to find ways to balance human needs with environmental conservation. Shortly, the Peace Corps/Madagascar will expand its programming into the business development sector to boost nascent entrepreneurialism. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers are posted in rural communities and work with students, teachers, and the larger community to raise teaching standards, develop teaching resources, and strengthen links between schools and communities. Middle- and high school students are taught English through both traditional classroom lessons and by non-traditional methods such as songs, drawing, poetry, and drama. Volunteers transfer teaching skills to Malagasy English teachers to increase their capacity to plan lessons and create classroom resources. Volunteers and their counterparts use English as a vehicle to promote community programs such as girls' camps, HIV/AIDS prevention, and tree plantings.

One Volunteer launched a national HIV/AIDS awareness campaign. The campaign had over 2,000 students submit designs to create a women's wrap featuring HIV/AIDS awareness messages. This activity had the added benefit of challenging students to further develop their English vocabulary and messaging skills. Through public/private cooperation, over 5,000 of these wraps were manufactured and are being worn daily throughout the country.

### Environment

Working with the government, NGOs and local communities, Volunteers train managers of protected areas, community members, and groups to improve their skills in environmental conservation, natural resource management and sustainable agroforestry and agriculture. More than 400 communities have learned about environmental conservation through theater projects, videos and workshops.

One Volunteer and his counterparts organized a sea turtle protection and egg monitoring seminar. Over 1,000 people in the surrounding communities learned how to manage the protection of this endangered reptile.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The Peace Corps helps communities address health issues through behavioral change methodologies and by effectively disseminating health messages. Volunteers concentrate on preventing the main life-threatening childhood illnesses; helping mothers understand basic maternal health issues such as how to ensure safe pregnancies; and providing the general population with information about preventing HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Through their outreach programs, Volunteers provide vital health information to more than 400 communities each year.

One Volunteer was able to leverage the funds generated by the sale of malaria-prevention mosquito netting into the establishment of a rural radio station that used to transmit messages of improved health and HIV/AIDS awareness to remote areas of the island.

*"The Peace Corps Volunteers are not here to replace any existing efforts, rather they are here to work with our communities as models and examples to encourage all. They can help us see possibilities, not just problems."*

Dr. Jean Louis Robinson
Minister of Public Health and Family Planning
Madagascar

# Malawi

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–1969<br>1973–1976<br>1978–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Lilongwe |
| Population | 13 million |
| Annual per capita income | $160 |
| GDP growth | 2.6% |
| Foreign direct investment | $3 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 25%<br>Female: 46% |
| Infant mortality rate | 79 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 89%<br>Measles: 80% |
| Access to an improved water source | 73% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 14.2% |
| Religions | Protestantism: 55%<br>Roman Catholicism: 20%; Islam: 20%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 3%; Other: 2% |
| Official language | English<br>Chichewa |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 130 | 126 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,339 | 2,368 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1994, after 30 years of one-party rule dating back to independence from Britain, Malawi peacefully elected a new government; a parliamentary government with a president as the head of state, and committed to multiparty democracy. Malawi held subsequent peaceful presidential elections in 1999 and in 2004. The government continues to focus on its policy of decentralization, implemented after the election in 1994 and strengthened by the Cabinet in 1998. This program was intended to alleviate poverty and promote good governance by shifting governmental responsibilities and resources from the national to the district level. It is regarded as being in the early stages of implementation. Malawi is on a path of social, political, and economic reform, but Malawians continue to face the challenges of environmental degradation, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and poverty.

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, accounting for nearly half of the GDP. Tobacco generates more than 60 percent of export earnings. The agricultural sector employs nearly half of those formally employed and directly or indirectly supports about 85 percent of the population. Malawi has a narrow economic base with little industry and no known economically viable deposits of raw materials. As a landlocked country, its transport costs make imported goods expensive.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The change of government in 1994 allowed Volunteers to be placed at the community level for the first time, and the Peace Corps began working with counterpart ministries to identify appropriate areas for program involvement at the community level. Currently, Volunteers work in education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

In 1994, the government implemented free primary education that swelled the ranks of schools and seriously strained the country's resources. To support the government's initiative, the Peace Corps focused its efforts on community day secondary schools in rural areas, where skills transfer and capacity building have the greatest impact. Currently, Volunteers help educate students, promote teacher-to-teacher collaboration, and encourage the exchange of experience and knowledge to improve teaching methods. Volunteers work with their counterparts by sharing lesson plans, discussing strategies

for teaching, evaluating students, and preparing exams. They also use locally available resources to produce innovative, participatory teaching materials. Volunteers help their schools acquire new textbooks and equipment, and work to establish reference libraries, science- and computer labs, so that students can more actively participate in learning.

The education program introduced a teacher-development component that focuses on secondary schools grouped into clusters. This project helps teachers improve their teaching skills and produce teaching materials using local resources.

### Environment

The environment project works with communities surrounding protected areas to help them use local natural resources more sustainably. Volunteers partner with Malawi's Department of National Parks and Wildlife, the Department of Forestry, and selected non-governmental organizations. Volunteers work in communities on conservation and resource use, including agroforestry, income generation, small-scale irrigation, and extension training. Volunteers help increase the productivity of fish farming and beekeeping, and have taught sustainable farming approaches, including propagating trees and other plants critical to the rural farming system. Volunteers have supported official village natural resource management committees and village forest areas, and have fostered conservation education with local schools.

Volunteers have assisted communities in gaining long-term economic viability by strengthening current practices and supporting sustainable agroforestry. Two Volunteers collaborated to increase food security and income-generation activities through crop diversification and expansion. Another Volunteer helped members of his community start a business that sells improved varieties of fruit trees better suited to grow in Malawi's environment. The Volunteer also provided trainings on topics such as organizational development, growth and marketing.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Malawi is severely affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and many other serious health conditions. The community health project works with the Ministry of Health and community based organizations to address health issues in rural parts of Malawi. Volunteers work in HIV/AIDS education, orphan care, home-based care, child survival, nutrition, disease prevention, environmental health, and women's health. Many work with youth and other at-risk groups. The projects focus on behavior change and integrate education on other health concerns linked with the HIV/AIDS epidemic, such as sexually transmitted diseases. A health personnel development project helps community nursing colleges fill the acute countrywide shortage of healthcare workers by providing direct teaching and teacher training.

One Volunteer worked with a support group for women living with AIDS to increase their ability to generate income. Members met weekly to discuss ideas, and chose a chicken-rearing project to provide eggs for nutrition. The women sell excess eggs to others in the community to generate income for group members.

*"We appreciate the efforts of the Volunteers in rural health centers and hospitals who provide Malawi with qualified and skilled assistance at a time when demand for high quality health care has grown and our country is facing an acute shortage."*

Louis Njaya
Principal Officer, Ministry of Health
Malawi

# Mali

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1971–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Bamako |
| Population | 14 million |
| Annual per capita income | $380 |
| GDP growth | 6.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | $159 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 73%<br>Female: 88% |
| Infant mortality rate | 120 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 76%<br>Measles: 75% |
| Access to an improved water source | 50% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.9% |
| Religions | Islam: 90%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 6%<br>Christianity: 4% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 127 | 129 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,941 | 4,109 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mali achieved independence from France in 1960. Between 1968 and 1979, a military government ruled the country in a period known as the "second republic." In 1991, after a period of civil unrest, a transitional government ruled until elections were held in 1992. Mali is a young, growing democracy, which has held two national elections since 1992. The government continues to promote democratization and administrative decentralization and has become a model in the region.

Mali is among the poorest countries in the world, and ranks 175 of 177 on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index. As a landlocked country with 65 percent of its land desert or semi-desert, Mali is dependent on its neighbors for port facilities. Economic activity is largely confined to the area irrigated by the Niger River. Eighty percent of the labor force is engaged in farming and fishing, while industrial activity focuses on processing farm commodities. Mali is heavily dependent on foreign aid and vulnerable to fluctuations in world prices for cotton, its main export. The country is not self-sufficient in food production, a problem exacerbated by frequent droughts and a rapidly increasing population that strains the natural resource base.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The first Volunteers arrived in Mali in April 1971. Peace Corps/Mali assists the government of Mali in addressing multiple development challenges. Currently, Volunteers emphasize projects in the areas of agriculture, business development, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. A new government initiative promotes decentralization so that local communities assume responsibility for development projects. Many communities, however, lack the skilled personnel needed to identify, plan, and implement such projects. Volunteers will work with counterparts to teach community members the skills necessary to lead development projects at the local level. An expanded HIV/AIDS awareness program began in 2001, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Many Malian farmers, especially women, engage in vegetable gardening and small animal husbandry as an alternative means for improving household nutritional status, as well as providing an additional source of income. To support these efforts, Volunteers collaborate with Malian farmers to build the local capacity of individuals and organizations in the areas of food production for local consumption and income

generation. Volunteers serve as technical resources for community members, associations, and youth groups on a variety of projects. These include animal husbandry, vegetable gardening, irrigation systems, and experimental farming with sorghum, millet, and peanuts. The goals of all agriculture Volunteers in Mali are to improve agricultural practices that will help increase food production, and to increase access to resources that can help local communities generate income and improve their diets.

One Volunteer helped her village establish a women's community garden. The Volunteer helped organize the women and selected an appropriate plot of land for the project. She also provided training in gardening techniques and showed the women how to incorporate vegetables from their gardens in their daily diet.

### Business Development

Volunteers work closely with government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and micro-finance institutions. They help small businesses improve the management capabilities of entrepreneurs and increase financial and technical resources. Volunteers also help micro-finance institutions establish management systems, loan-tracking systems, business education programs, and awareness campaigns about the importance of savings and available credit. Other Volunteers work to strengthen existing computer centers and to set up Internet cafés.

### Environment

The need to better manage natural resources and conservation has grown with Mali's increasing environmental problems. Volunteers assist Malians in their efforts to use natural resources in more sustainable manners, improve agricultural production, and increase awareness about environmental issues among the general population. Volunteers train people to understand their environment and how to conserve natural resources.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Health Volunteers play an active role in the ongoing restructuring of the public health sector through their work with health care providers, local associations, and individual community members. Volunteers work to raise awareness among Malians of health issues and promote preventive care measures, such as balanced nutritional practices, weaning, breast-feeding, and promoting prevention measures, such as diarrhea and disease control, polio eradication, vaccinations, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Health Volunteers also serve as extension agents with local communities and individuals in well construction and repair, improved latrine and soak pit construction, small-scale irrigation, hygiene education, and environmental sanitation efforts. Volunteers seek to increase safe drinking water sources and encourage the proper disposal of wastewater and solids.

One health Volunteer worked with the community health center in her area to create an infant growth monitoring program. The Volunteer traveled regularly to each of the 11 villages that the health center covered to introduce the baby weighing sessions and present information on other health topics including proper nutrition for infants. Through baby weighing sessions the Volunteer was able to identify under and malnourished children and include them in a two-week long intensive nutrition intervention program which she developed with the help of the health center staff.

*"The volunteer experience with the Peace Corps is all-encompassing - giving one a unique opportunity to create a home and form lasting friendships amongst welcoming and open people, and obtain a genuine understanding of a different culture and way of life."*

Mali Volunteer
Agriculture Sector

# Mauritania

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967<br>1971–1991<br>1991–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Nouakchott |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $580 |
| GDP growth | 5.4% |
| Foreign direct investment | $115 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 40%<br>Female: 57% |
| Infant mortality rate | 78 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 70%<br>Measles: 64% |
| Access to an improved water source | 53% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.6% |
| Religion | Islam |
| Official language | Arabic |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 131 | 143 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,968 | 3,160 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

From its independence in 1960 until 1978, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania was governed by a civilian regime. A number of military governments followed until 1991, when political parties were legalized and a constitution was approved. In August 2005, a bloodless military coup d'état brought to power the Military Council for Justice and Democracy. The military junta oversaw the establishment of a new constitution and legislative elections before turning power over to a democratically-elected president in April 2007. Conflict between Moor and non-Moor ethnic groups centering on language, land tenure, and other issues has been a problem in the country since its independence. Sparsely populated, with most of its land covered by the Sahara Desert, Mauritania is one of the least-developed countries in the world. It ranks 153 of 177 on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index. Besides mining, the only commercially viable industry is fishing; Mauritania also has limited offshore oil reserves.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since the 1980s, Volunteers have worked in agriculture, environmental conservation, cooperatives, health education, and Guinea worm eradication. In the 1990s, the Peace Corps merged its agriculture and environmental conservation projects into an agroforestry project; cooperatives became small business development; and the Guinea worm eradication project developed into community health, water/sanitation, and disease control. In 2000, Peace Corps/Mauritania reinstated English as a second language and created a new environmental education project. Girls' education and information and communication technology (ICT) projects were created in 2001. Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. As of September 2007, Volunteers are serving in 12 of the 13 regional provinces.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

In Mauritania's informal economic sector, Volunteers transfer basic business skills to cooperative members and micro-entrepreneurs of all ages and genders. Basic skill development for host country trainers and participants includes planning, financial management, marketing, computing, and artisan training. Volunteers also educate business owners and cooperative members on issues of credit and savings to help create new business opportunities and expand existing ones. Several Volunteers work directly with mayors' offices in

smaller towns on tourism and community economic development issues. Other Volunteers work in regional capitals with vocational or high school students on basic business or computing skill sets. ICT is an increasingly important part of the business development sector incorporating areas such as multimedia and Internet use.

One Volunteer applied her combined interest in design, textiles, fair trade, and business to help a local women's tie-dye cooperative market their product to a Los Angeles-based designer. The designer incorporated the locally-produced fabric into clothes sold to department stores in the United States.

### Education

Volunteers teach English throughout Mauritania at the middle- and high-school level to students ages 13–20. They work with their host colleagues to improve English teaching skills, helping teachers become more qualified, creative, and effective in a work environment with limited resources. Volunteers also work with designated technical institutions in the capital city of Nouakchott and in small regional towns to provide input on teacher training and the development of English teaching materials.

Volunteers also organize education-related projects focusing on girls' education and empowerment. Working with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Volunteers and their community partners increased the number of girls' mentoring centers in the country to 19. This same partnership brought together girls from across the country to participate in a week-long education conference in the capital. The girls were paired with female university students who encouraged them to continue their education so that they might attend university themselves.

### Environment

Volunteers are part of an integrated development effort to improve agricultural and forestry practices throughout rural Mauritania. They work to improve the capacity of local farmers to produce more nutritious food, while protecting and preserving the environment. They also teach improved gardening skills, fruit tree cultivation, and tree planting.

One Volunteer worked with her local mayor's office to establish an annual waste-management education program for their small town. The month-long campaign sought to educate the local community on the importance of—and health benefits resulting from—proper sanitation. The project resulted in the establishment of a local landfill; led to a reduction in the use of plastic sacks by local merchants; and helped in the development of organizational leadership capacity within the community.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers strive to improve the health of the rural population by providing communities with the necessary analytical and technical skills to reduce the incidence of water-borne and hygiene-related diseases such as malaria and diarrhea. Activities include teaching community-based health workers and equipping them with tools to better face the challenges of working with limited resources; training youth associations to be HIV/AIDS peer educators; and combining regional malaria campaigns to familiarize communities with protection techniques, mosquito repellent creams, and specific techniques for the treatment of mosquito netting with insecticide. They also promote access to potable water, including building and maintaining wells.

Volunteers have designed and implemented HIV/AIDS trainings of trainers; and, launched major HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns in different regions of Mauritania through sports, cultural events, and formal training sessions. A Volunteer worked with a group of local religious leaders to develop a culturally-appropriate HIV/AIDS workshop targeted to young adults. The local religious leaders along with the Volunteer and his counterpart facilitated the workshop discussing basic facts about HIV/AIDS.

*"The past two years have truly tested my commitment and fortitude. I leave knowing that my village is a little better off as a result of my time there. I also know that I can never repay my Mauritanian friends for the enormous gift of understanding that they gave me by allowing me into their lives."*

Mauritania Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# Mexico

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 2004–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Environment |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Mexico City |
| Population | 107 million |
| Annual per capita income | $7,310 |
| GDP growth | 3.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $18.7 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 8%<br>Female: 10% |
| Infant mortality rate | 22 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 98%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 97% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.3% |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 89%<br>Protestantism: 6%<br>Other: 5% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 61 | 63 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,958 | 2,008 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

As a nation of 107 million people, Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. A large percentage of the population lives in poor rural areas, but rural-to-urban migration, as well as migration to the United States, continues to grow rapidly because of rural poverty.

Over the past decade, despite the serious divide between rich and poor, substantial progress has been made in building a modern and diversified economy, improving infrastructure, and tackling the causes of poverty. Educational levels in Mexico have improved in recent decades, and education remains one of the government's highest priorities.

In July 2000, Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (PAN) was elected president. This marked the first time since the Mexican Revolution that the opposition defeated the party in power, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). In July 2006, Felipe Calderón, also of the PAN, was elected after a hotly disputed election. Since his inauguration in December 2006, the Calderón government appears to have stabilized the political situation and has introduced several reform efforts with broad support from the public.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps program in Mexico is a unique partnership that provides an opportunity for the Peace Corps to recruit highly specialized, technically trained, and experienced Volunteers to work alongside Mexican counterparts. The Peace Corps first began exploring the possibility of entering Mexico after Presidents George W. Bush and Fox announced the Partnership for Prosperity initiative during their summit in September 2001. The full partnership accord was signed in November 2003, and the first Volunteers arrived in Mexico in October 2004.

Peace Corps/Mexico seeks to provide top-quality technical assistance by assigning highly experienced Volunteers to help strengthen Mexico's ability to provide jobs to Mexicans and foster economic growth.

Currently, Volunteers work as technical advisors at scientific and research centers of Mexico's Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT). The centers are located mainly in central Mexico, but also in the southernmost state of Chiapas. Volunteers' work with CONACYT has encompassed water and environmental engineering, knowledge management, information and communications technology (ICT), business development, and advanced English teaching.

After a successful start-up phase, the Peace Corps was approached by Mexico's Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) in late 2005 to consider a

similar technical cooperation agreement. After negotiations, an identical agreement was signed in Mexico City on June 13, 2006, between the Secretary of SEMARNAT and the Director of the Peace Corps. In the early stages of the program, SEMARNAT requested that the Peace Corps focus its program on the national forest commission and the national commission for natural protected areas. Volunteers in the environment sector are assigned to these commissions and work primarily in the central region of Mexico.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers are assigned to one of several CONACYT and SEMARNAT entities, where they provide advice and training to help CONACYT become less dependent on federal government funding while better addressing the needs of the private sector. Volunteers work closely with Mexican firms to improve their competitiveness, particularly of small- and medium-sized businesses. Volunteers collaborate in improving business processes, accounting and finance, marketing, and production/operations management.

Volunteers teach English to staff at CONACYT centers to improve their conversational, writing, and technical language skills. In some cases, Volunteers help prepare technical presentations and research findings. The English students include engineers, interns, and CONACYT students involved in research projects.

Volunteers also work in knowledge management to use the most appropriate systems, software, and computer technology to meet data management and information needs. One Volunteer is working with his counterpart to upgrade a data management system so it can be used to produce updated national vegetation maps and forest inventories.

### Environment

Volunteers work with CONACYT centers and their clients in activities related to water supply, wastewater treatment, and reducing industrial pollution. Volunteers assess industrial pollution and recommend mitigation strategies and technologies; promote improved hazardous waste-management strategies; assist cities with the planning, design, and implementation of water and sanitation projects; assess and recommend alternative cost-effective water supply and treatment systems; promote watershed protection and management; and seek financial support for pilot projects.

Volunteers working with SEMARNAT focus on alleviating deforestation, forest fires, and soil erosion. They also work on preservation of natural habitats, national parks management, and biospheres. Due to Mexico's critical environmental needs, many state government affiliates of SEMARNAT have also requested to have a Peace Corps Volunteer placed in their agency.

One Volunteer couple is promoting environmental awareness among municipal workers and enhancing the capacity of municipalities to use geographic information systems technology, a computer-based program that assists in resource management, land-use planning, and environmental impact assessments.

*"I am using all the experience and knowledge from my previous work in the United States in my Volunteer assignment with my Mexican colleagues. I'm learning as much from them as they are from me. Together, we are producing more energy-efficient industries with less contamination, less discharges, and safer conditions for the people who live here."*

Mexico Volunteer
Environment Sector

# Micronesia, Federated States of and Palau

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1966–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education |

| | FSM | Palau |
|---|---|---|
| Capitals | Palikir: | Melekeok |
| Population | 110,500 | 20,100 |
| Annual per capita income | $2,390 | $7,670 |
| GDP growth | 1.5% | 5.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | Not available | |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 9% | 8% |
| Infant mortality rate *per 1,000 live births* | 33 | 10 |
| Immunization rate | | |
| DPT: | 94% | 98% |
| Measles: | 96% | 98% |
| Access to an improved water source | 94% | 85% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available | |
| Religions | Protestantism, Roman Catholicism Modekngei (Palau only) | |
| Official languages | English | |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 76 | 80 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,933 | 2,026 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Both the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Palau are democratic republics, modeled on the U.S. federal system, and each country has a state government. The states of FSM and Palau are highly autonomous, exercising great independence from the federal government. Both countries have economies and governments that are dependent on U.S. Compact of Free Association funds and U.S. foreign aid, which are scheduled to be reduced over time. Both countries lack self-sustaining programs to provide for the needs of their people.

Most people of FSM and Palau have subsistence lifestyles, few private-sector jobs exist, and basic infrastructure, education, and health services are underdeveloped. The new compact agreements require greater accountability for funds and focus on helping FSM and Palau become self-reliant. Developing viable industries and exporting are challenging because of the geographic isolation and small size of FSM and Palau. Additionally, the nations' fragile natural resources are in danger of exploitation.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The focus of the program is to build the capacity of the people so they can provide for their own needs, appreciate and preserve their environment, and provide opportunities and healthy surroundings for youth. Volunteers teach English in schools and work with communities to address locally identified needs. In an effort to give the most disadvantaged students the greatest opportunities for success, Volunteers are placed in schools on remote islands that have the least access to student and teacher resources.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers work in the classroom at the primary and secondary school levels. They teach English as a second language to students and help team teach with local teachers. Volunteers promote a content-based English teaching curriculum that emphasizes current international, national, and island-specific social issues that focus on youth, health, and the environment. Outside the classroom, Volunteers work with host country counterparts to develop teacher-training resources and to conduct workshops to improve teachers' skills and abilities in the classroom.

Additionally, Volunteers work with local youth and community groups on after-school projects involving sports, environmental education, life skills, peer education, and health education with a focus on nutrition-related issues.

Volunteers help develop youth clubs and peer education groups, including summer camps for island youth.

In addition to teaching at a secondary school, one Volunteer started a successful after-school sports program in his community. Beginning with just a handful of children, the soccer program has grown to include more than 100 children. As popularity of the program grew, adults in the community became interested and volunteered as coaches. The village now has a well-established after-school program with local leadership capable of managing and sustaining the program.

Another Volunteer, working in a very remote island within the State of Yap, teaches at a school that had not had a student pass the national high school entrance exams for more than 10 years. Since the Volunteer began working with students, the school has achieved the number-one ranking in Yap. The school director and community members cite the work of the Volunteer and her inspiration to fellow teachers to excel in their efforts, as the reasons the children performed so well.

*"Palau has enjoyed a wonderful relationship with the Peace Corps over the years. Palauan students have benefited greatly from the work of Peace Corps Volunteers teaching English, math, and science to students in rural elementary schools. It's been working, it's been with us for 40 years, and I hope that it will continue to be around for a long time to come."*

President Tommy E. Remengesau Jr.
Palau

*Micronesian child at play*

# Moldova

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Chisinau |
| Population | 4 million |
| Annual per capita income | $930 |
| GDP growth | 7.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | $199 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 1%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 14 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 98%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 92% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.2% |
| Religions | Eastern Orthodoxy: 98%<br>Judaism: 1.5%<br>Other: .5% |
| Official language | Moldovan |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 118 | 109 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,344 | 2,284 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Moldova is one of the poorest nations in Europe, though upon independence it was a middle-income country. Rapid rises in energy costs and a ban by Russia on importing Moldovan wine have significantly impacted the local economy and it is one of the region's most heavily indebted countries. Separatist forces in the Transnistrian region along the Ukraine border have prevented the government from exercising full control over its territory, exacerbating economic difficulties. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the support of the U.S. embassy in Moldova, is seeking a solution to the Transnistrian conflict. Though President Vladimir Voronin has publicly expressed the desire to move toward European Union (EU) membership, the Transnistrian issue must first be resolved. In 2005, Moldova held peaceful parliamentary elections, and the new parliament reelected President Voronin.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Moldovan government is concerned that a lack of English proficiency among its people will inhibit economic contact with the West, and its educational system needs qualified English teachers. The government also recognizes a need to focus on preventive health, though there are no institutions to train health educators and basic healthcare services have deteriorated considerably in recent years. Privatization of the large agricultural industry and dissolution of the centralized control over many aspects of community life have left Moldovans with many needs but lacking some of the skills and approaches needed to make use of available resources and opportunities. Volunteers address these issues with their primary projects; they also work in secondary projects, such as creating information technology centers; leading sports activities, summer camps, and model United Nations programs; and combating human trafficking.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers work with rural business support organizations, farmers, and entrepreneurs to increase income by improving information dissemination channels, enhancing consulting and training centers, and introducing networking and marketing opportunities. Volunteers assist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with strategic planning and organizational management. They provide training in basic farm management, business planning and financial analysis, and they work to enhance computer literacy.

Two Volunteers helped a local microcredit agency establish a partnership with a large international microcredit institution, resulting in additional funds for projects in the community. Since the partnership began, 83 farmers and rural entrepreneurs have successfully received and repaid their loans.

### Education

Volunteers assigned to the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) program work with students, teachers, and institutions. Volunteers help students improve their skills in the English language, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making, and they help foster greater environmental awareness. Working with their teaching colleagues, Volunteers lead workshops to train teachers in using content-based instruction in the classrooms. At the institutional level, Volunteers work with schools and communities to improve the quality and the quantity of resource materials available for teaching and learning English. Volunteers also promote the use of information and communications technology inside and outside the classroom.

Two TEFL Volunteers organized a series of seminars to train teachers to use word processing software to create tests and other activities. The seminars also introduced participants to a Volunteer-developed website in which the teachers could find and share lesson plans and other classroom resources.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers works with partner agencies, schools, and healthcare providers to promote health education in Moldova. In schools, Volunteers co-teach health education classes to more than 30,000 students for a minimum of eight hours per week. They also work intensively with students to develop peer-education activities focused on life skills and HIV/AIDS and substance abuse prevention.

One Volunteer collaborated with community partners to conduct lessons and seminars on HIV/AIDS and organized a benefit concert to collect donations for children with HIV.

### Youth

Volunteers in the youth sector work with NGOs, local governments, and social service agencies. They focus on organizations that promote sustainable community development, especially in the social welfare field, with activities focused on youth and marginalized groups, such as minorities and the disabled. Volunteer activities range from conducting needs assessments with their organizations to building local bases of resources to implementing community projects.

Several Volunteers designed and implemented a training program for youth camp counselors. The program provided nearly 300 counselors with new tools and techniques to organize youth and leadership development programs.

*"The Ministry of Education highly appreciates the activity of Peace Corps Volunteers in achieving our goals for building a democratic society, based on human rights, respect and principles of freedom."*

Ludmila Pavlov
Chief, Department of International Relations and European Integration
Ministry of Education and Youth
Moldova

*Moldovan school children in the classroom*

# Mongolia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1991–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Ulaanbaatar |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $690 |
| GDP growth | 6.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $182 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 2%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 39 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 99%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 62% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Tibetan Buddhist Lamaism: 94%<br>Islam: 6%<br>Shamanism |
| Official languages | Khalkha Mongol<br>English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 109 | 130 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,028 | 2,127 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the late 1980s, Mongolia committed to democratization and a free-market economy. While this commitment has remained firm, changes have strained the economic, social welfare, and education systems. Although English language acquisition is important to citizens and the government, most schools do not have enough qualified teachers and resources. The health system faces challenges as it moves from an emphasis on Soviet-style curative treatment to a preventive approach. With 66 percent of the population under 30 years of age, Mongolia is rich with human resources eager to improve quality of life and the future of the country.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps/Mongolia program began with an English education project in 1991 and has since expanded to include programs in other sectors directly relevant to national development priorities. Volunteers focus on sharing skills and knowledge to build local capacity and to assist Mongolians in achieving their development goals.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers assist Mongolia's transition to a free-market economy by building capacity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Mongolian citizens in business skills and knowledge. Volunteers increase management and strategic planning skills of business owners and transfer knowledge of accounting, bookkeeping, customer service, and information and communication technology. Volunteers have organized seminars on networking, and cost-benefit analysis, and helped rural business owners identify new markets.

One Volunteer consulted with a manager of a rural agribusiness support project on using effective management practices and improving branch operations. Their meetings increased the manager's capacity to effectively serve his clients and provided him with new ideas to develop business and marketing plans as well as negotiate small business loans

### Education

In spring 2005, the government named English the official second language of Mongolia. Volunteers build capacity by teaching English to students of secondary schools, colleges, universities, as well as community members. They strengthen educational institutions by training Mongolian English teachers and by developing English education resources.

Volunteers establish libraries and develop audiovisual aids, curricula, and English language newsletters alongside

their Mongolian counterparts. They also work on other activities based on a community's expressed needs, such as life-skills training, literacy, computers, health, ecology, and trafficking in persons.

Twelve Volunteers working with the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture organized a summer camp program for Mongolian English teachers. The camps provided an opportunity for the teachers to learn new teaching techniques and to improve their English language skills. One hundred and fifty Mongolian English teachers, representing six regions of Mongolia, participated in the program.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The community health project educates and trains students, community members, and health service providers on disease prevention and public health issues. Volunteers partner with provincial health departments, NGOs, and international agencies to promote public awareness of issues such as sexually transmitted illnesses, including HIV/AIDS, and life skills for Mongolian youth. Volunteers design and implement health education outreach activities and encourage healthy lifestyles.

Volunteers are also developing counselor training curriculum for health service providers, and they help with first aid and CPR training. Volunteers work with the media to disseminate health messages to youth and adults, design training programs in both Mongolian and Kazakh, provide education on nutrition and gardening, and develop health fairs.

A Volunteer working with the Bayankhongor Health Department developed a project to promote basic hygiene and initiated a hand washing program in local kindergartens. To teach the children about hygiene, she wrote a short story in Mongolian about a little boy who did not want to wash his hands until his older brother convinced him. Volunteers and counterparts also modeled hand washing to children and their teachers and parents. After training, follow-up surveys showed that the children, teachers, and parents had learned the lesson well. The project was successfully implemented throughout all local kindergartens in the province.

### Youth

Launched in 2005, the youth development project builds the capacity of youth-serving agencies and supports implementing youth development policies in Mongolia. Volunteers work at local branches of the National Authority for Children, the government body responsible for youth issues in Mongolia. Volunteers are also assigned to nonformal education centers, where school dropouts can receive alternative education.

Volunteers team up with area youth councils, school social workers, NGOs, and other organizations to constructively engage Mongolian youth. In the past few years, Volunteers have initiated numerous projects, including life skills clubs, mentoring and sports programs, and international information exchanges.

*"I have always been quite impressed when I came by Peace Corps Volunteers in my travels in the countryside. Peace Corps Volunteers live under difficult circumstances, just like Mongolians."*

President H.E. Nambaryn Enkhbayar
Mongolia

# Morocco

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1991<br>1991–2003<br>2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Rabat |
| Population | 30 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,740 |
| GDP growth | 1.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.552 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 34%<br>Female: 60% |
| Infant mortality rate | 36 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 97%<br>Measles: 95% |
| Access to an improved water source | 81% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.1% |
| Religions | Islam: 99%<br>Christianity, Judaism |
| Official language | Arabic |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 235 | 235 |
| Program funds ($000) | 4,028 | 4,105 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Morocco faces issues typical of most developing countries, including restraining government spending, reducing constraints on private activity and foreign trade, and achieving sustainable economic growth. Morocco remains vulnerable to drought, as rainfall is key to the performance of the agriculture-dominant economy. Financial reforms have been implemented, but long-term challenges remain, such as servicing the debt, improving trade relations with the European Union, increasing education and job prospects for youth, and attracting foreign investment.

Morocco hopes to attract 10 million tourists by 2010 to support small businesses and reduce unemployment. Until then, the government aims to produce quality crafts and to market and export products made by artisans. The kingdom has moved firmly into the reformist, liberalizing camp in the Islamic-Arab world, and has adopted a new family law. The law, considered revolutionary in the Arab and Muslim world, promotes women's rights and places wives on a more equal footing with their husbands.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Nearly a quarter of Moroccans living in rural areas are poor, and literacy rates are low, particularly among girls. Maternal and child health remains a major concern as maternal and infant mortality rates are high. While sexually transmitted diseases are widespread, reports of HIV cases remain low. Climatic swings hamper harvests, while drainage of wetlands, deforestation of public areas, and erosion in national parks present continuing challenges. High unemployment and low wages have limited opportunities for entrepreneurs to access capital, disadvantaging them in a rapidly evolving global economy. Accordingly, Volunteers are assigned to projects in business development, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Peace Corps Volunteers assist the government in implementing its new small business development strategy at the local level, especially in rural areas. The potential for success of this initiative is based on developing human capital, and Volunteers help with this through participatory training and direct skills transfer. They assist local artisans and build their capacity to be successful in business management, entrepreneurship, organizational development, and computer literacy.

One Volunteer organized a five-day workshop for nearly 30 artisans on using natural dye. Training was provided by a nongovernmental organization that specializes in this technique. The workshop introduced artisans to locally available plants that they can now collect for free from the areas surrounding their communities.

### Environment

This project reinforces the government's conservation initiatives and helps rural populations achieve a higher standard of living. Volunteers work with government representatives, youth groups, and environmental interest groups. They assist local organizations, located within national parks and areas of biological and ecological importance, to promote ecotourism and other income-generating activities.

One Volunteer helped 10 women in her community form an agricultural cooperative that produces walnut oil and dried apples, which are sold to tourists. By connecting their agricultural production with local ecotourism, the women are generating income to educate their children and to purchase clothing and medicine for their extended families.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Morocco's high infant mortality rate reflects living conditions associated with poor water quality and inadequate sanitation. Volunteers focus on education for maternal and child health and about safe water. They collaborate to increase community access to health services and assist in educational activities conducted by health officials. With their counterparts, Volunteers have developed and delivered informal after-school health and hygiene lessons and activities for schoolchildren. Volunteers have also organized HIV/AIDS awareness activities in youth centers, high schools, and health clinics.

Seven Volunteers organized a week-long health hike to remote villages to disseminate health information to local women on topics such as water treatment, basic hygiene, HIV/AIDS, nutrition, and vaccinations. Some Volunteers on the hike worked with village leaders to train community members in water treatment procedures that use chlorine provided by local clinics.

### Youth

Volunteers encourage youth to attend citizenship and leadership-building activities. They teach content-based English at local youth and women's centers and implement extracurricular activities, such as organizing sports teams, mentoring youth, and teaching computer skills. The Ministry of Youth has made educating girls a priority, so Volunteers and their partners address the needs of local girls, working with teachers, women's centers, and development associations.

Forty Volunteers collaborated to develop and implement a curriculum for English language immersion camps, which were attended by more than 2,500 Moroccan youth. In addition to language instruction, the camps provided participants with valuable lessons on health and leadership.

*"English language summer camps have become more significant and valuable in terms of the variety of activities and their content and structure. Our Moroccan youth are exposed to diverse skills in leadership, citizenship, team building and other life skills... ."*

Mohamed El Gahs
Secretary General in Charge of Youth
Morocco

# Mozambique

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1998–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Maputo |
| Population | 20 million |
| Annual per capita income | $310 |
| GDP growth | 7.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | $108 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 53.6% |
| Infant mortality rate | 100 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 72%<br>Measles: 77% |
| Access to an improved water source | 43% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 12.2% |
| Religions | Indigenous and other beliefs: 45%<br>Christianity: 30%<br>Islam: 17% |
| Official language | Portugese |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 155 | 149 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,727 | 2,714 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mozambique finally achieved a lasting peace in 1992 after nearly 28 years of war. Since its first democratic elections, the government of Mozambique has encouraged development and a free-market economy by privatizing formerly state-owned enterprises, respecting freedom of the press, and promoting the development of an active civil society. In its third general election, conducted in 2004, President Joaquim Chissano stepped down and was succeeded by Armando Guebuza, who had won the popular vote. Since assuming office, the Guebuza government has taken steps to increase educational opportunities, reduce corruption, and support a sustained and energetic campaign to educate Mozambicans about HIV/AIDS and combat the pandemic.

In spite of its low position on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index—ranking 168 of 177—Mozambique is making progress in developing agricultural, hydropower, and transportation resources. Economic improvements include linking secondary urban centers throughout the country to the power grid of the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric dam; constructing a natural gas pipeline to South Africa; restoring factories; and increasing investment and development in coal and rare-minerals mining. Even with these economic improvements, however, Mozambique is still plagued by extensive rural poverty, poor infrastructure, dispersed population, low education levels, and high rates of HIV/AIDS. Treatable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and respiratory infections remain the most common causes of premature deaths, particularly of children and infants.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

In the education sector, the Peace Corps assists Mozambique in secondary-level English and science teaching and primary school teacher training. In the health and HIV/AIDS sector, Volunteers work with international and Mozambican organizations in the countrywide struggle to educate the population about HIV/AIDS and reduce the prevalence of the disease and its devastating effects. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers provide English and science instruction to students in secondary and technical schools. Last school year, 61 Volunteers taught 19,000 students in English and biology. Additionally, Volunteers support Mozambican teachers in

expanding teaching methodologies, improving English communication skills, and developing educational materials. Volunteers work in training institutes to help future teachers develop resources to create effective visual aids for their classes.

One Volunteer compiled an easily reproducible Portuguese-English dictionary with the most commonly spoken words in Mozambique. This dictionary is now used by Volunteers, teachers, and students in many schools across the country. In addition to their primary assignments, Volunteers promote education outside the classroom with activities such as tutoring, coaching, organizing school libraries, guiding boys' and girls' clubs, organizing inter-school science fairs, promoting community projects, and organizing national boys' and girls' leadership conferences. Volunteers are also trained to be advocates and educators for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Last year, Volunteers hosted a large science fair, bringing together counterparts and students from schools across five provinces. The Regional Science and AIDS Awareness Fair, attended by nearly 1,000 people, showcased student science projects and incorporated educational messages about HIV/AIDS.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers serve across the country to help build the capacity of small organizations and community groups to combat HIV/AIDS. Volunteers help their counterparts improve planning and management; train youth groups on life skills so young people learn to make better health choices; support groups for persons living with HIV/AIDS; provide technical training to staff and community volunteers; and help develop new strategies, ideas, and materials, such as HIV newsletters and radio campaigns. With training and materials supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Volunteers provided care for orphans and vulnerable children, offered palliative care to those infected by HIV/AIDS, and educated high-risk groups.

Volunteers helped organize national youth leadership conferences in 2007, which were attended by boys and girls, Mozambican teachers and students from all of the regions of the country. Participants discussed critical issues for young women and men, including gender roles, HIV/AIDS awareness, healthy behaviors, and men's and women's roles in HIV prevention. The students received training in creative HIV/AIDS awareness activities to use in their own communities after the conference, including theater, journalism, photojournalism, and art/mural painting. Volunteers support these micro-projects by helping to obtain funding and by providing technical assistance.

One Volunteer designed a peer education program for girls in her community ages 15 to 20. The girls participated in peer education and health training and then continued with weekly meetings on HIV/AIDS, health, and life skills. The girls in turn facilitated HIV/AIDS and life skills activities and sessions for more than 3,000 community girls. Another Volunteer provided organizational support and training in small business skills to a new women's association. The Volunteer worked with the organization to design and implement a sustainability plan for income-generating activities. The sustainability plan included intensive education components in language, health, life skills, and technical skills.

*"My project and my experience in Mozambique has been an awesome learning experience and very worthwhile. It is obvious from the dedication of the leaders in my community that the project that I helped launch will continue long after my Peace Corps service has ended."*

Mozambique Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# Namibia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1990–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Windhoek |
| Population | 2 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,990 |
| GDP growth | 3.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | Not available |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 13%<br>Female: 17% |
| Infant mortality rate | 46 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 81%<br>Measles: 70% |
| Access to an improved water source | 87% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 21.2% |
| Religions | Christianity<br>Indigenous beliefs |
| Official languages | English<br>(Afrikaans) |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 87 | 83 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,749 | 2,743 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since independence in 1990, Namibia has established sound political and economic frameworks that make it one of the most stable countries in Africa. Namibians are encouraged to participate in shaping laws and government policies. Namibia also invests heavily in the social sector, including education, rural development, and the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Reflecting its political maturity, Namibia completed without incident its first change of top political leadership since independence when Hifikepunye Pohamba was elected president in November 2004. The economy is growing at an encouraging rate, but serious challenges remain to Namibia's continued progress. The disparity between rich and poor is one of the highest in the world. The apartheid system of job allocation and education continues to negatively influence employment in all economic sectors, with overall unemployment in excess of 30 percent. Namibia has also been devastated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and infection rates are some of the highest in the world. Encouragingly, the government is aggressively implementing efforts to contain the threat.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Immediately after Namibia's independence in 1990, the Ministry of Education began to reform the apartheid-based educational system and to introduce English as the medium of instruction. The first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in Namibia several months after independence and, since then, Volunteers have continued to strengthen these educational reform measures. Peace Corps/Namibia still collaborates extensively with the Ministry of Education and the education program remains the principal platform for the Peace Corps' contribution to Namibia's economic and social development.

In the fight against HIV/AIDS, the Peace Corps has increased its cooperation with Namibia's ministries of Health; Youth and Sports; and Education, along with Namibian faith- and community-based organizations. In collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and USAID/Namibia, Volunteers directly support government ministries and faith- and community-based organizations through operational capacity building and by providing community-level training in AIDS prevention, positive living, and home-based care. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Peace Corps/Namibia contributes to educational reform and development through teacher training and support, classroom teaching (science, mathematics, and English), and by promoting new information and communication technologies. One Volunteer provided teacher-training workshops to train teachers on how to mentor and prepare their students for science fair competitions.

Volunteers are also working to open up the "world beyond the village" for their students. One Volunteer organized a field trip for a school girls club, which for many was their first trip to the capital. The girls shadowed different professional women for a day in occupations ranging from work at a printing press, to an environmental consulting group, and even the assistant to the Chief Justice at the Supreme Court.

Volunteers are also working directly with the Ministry of Education to support systemic change. In one example, a Volunteer is working with the ministry to organize a mobile computer lab to bring computer awareness and basic computer skills to isolated schools. Another Volunteer, located in the north, is working with the ministry to develop math reference and examination preparation books to distribute to math students throughout the region. Many Volunteers also organize and stock school libraries and create programs to interest children in reading. One Volunteer organized a "bookmobile" to travel to rural schools that do not have access to a library.

All education Volunteers in Namibia now integrate HIV/AIDS information into their classrooms and their secondary projects. One Volunteer worked with a school AIDS club to plan and implement an HIV/AIDS awareness week that included marches, an assembly program, and the distribution of informational brochures on HIV/AIDS.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The involvement of Volunteers in HIV/AIDS prevention is expanding. Volunteers are working to strengthen the operational capacity of HIV/AIDS programs in both the government and the community- and faith-based sectors. For example, one Volunteer, a lawyer by training, worked with the Legal Assistance Center on HIV/AIDS law. She prepared a resource book on AIDS law in Namibia. The book is being published and will be distributed to judges and lawyers, and will also be made available to all organizations working in the field of HIV/AIDS. This will provide much needed access to information on the rights of individuals infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, under Namibian law.

Volunteers are also directly involved in youth outreach and HIV/AIDS prevention activities through community mobilization programs, rural HIV/AIDS workshops, and the establishment of youth clubs with an HIV/AIDS focus. One Volunteer organized a youth wilderness camp for a group of orphans and other vulnerable children. The camp provided these children with an opportunity to learn about HIV/AIDS prevention in a safe and supportive environment.

*"I want to mention in particular the role played by the U.S. Peace Corps. We honor the sacrifices they [Peace Corps Volunteers] make in always being prepared to serve even in the very remotest areas of our country, where modern facilities are non-existent. I want to take this opportunity, therefore, on behalf of the Government of Namibia, to thank the young Volunteers for the unwavering service they are rendering to the Namibian people."*

The Honorable Lempy Lucas, MP
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
Namibia

# Nicaragua

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1968–1979<br>1991-present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Managua |
| Population | 5 million |
| Annual per capita income | $950 |
| GDP growth | 4.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $241 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 23%<br>Female: 23% |
| Infant mortality rate | 30 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 84%<br>Measles: 66% |
| Access to an improved water source | 79% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.2% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 85% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 205 | 198 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,874 | 2,959 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy with executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The president and members of the unicameral National Assembly are elected to concurrent five-year terms. Though the turbulent events of the past few decades have been widely reported, Nicaragua has become the newest democracy in the Americas. The latest presidential elections resulted in Daniel Ortega's return to power. Mr. Ortega served as Nicaragua's president from 1985 to 1990.

Nicaragua has the appropriate soil, climate, and altitude for cultivating a wide variety of crops and livestock. Its rivers, volcanoes, coastlines, timber, and mineral resources present impressive economic potential as well as a great challenge to sound environmental management.

More than half of Nicaragua's population is underemployed or unemployed. The country has suffered from repeated catastrophic natural disasters that have compromised the fragile food security of many rural areas. Limited access to healthcare and health education has led to a high infant and maternal mortality. More than one-fourth of young women have their first child by age 19. Economic development is critically impaired by the limited availability of business education and poor access to credit.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps' program works to help Nicaraguans respond to the challenges of economic development and improve their quality of life through projects in agriculture, business development, education, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

The agriculture project focuses on raising the standard of living of rural farming families by increasing food security, generating income opportunities, and fostering community development. Volunteers work closely with field technicians from the National Agricultural Technological Institute, development organizations, and community leaders, to assist rural households develop various skills, including gardening.

In collaboration with community leaders, one Volunteer helped build a footbridge over a stream that swells during the rainy season, isolating the community. The new bridge provides year-round access to neighboring schools, health facilities, and markets, which in the past had been inaccessible during the rains.

### Business Development

The business development project focuses on the nation's youth, providing them with business and life skills to enhance their capacity to gain meaningful employment and to increase their economic opportunities. In a creative business course, primarily in secondary and vocational schools, Volunteers teach all phases of business enterprise development. Volunteers also provide basic business consulting advice to small business owners in their communities.

One Volunteer worked with her Nicaraguan counterpart to deliver the creative enterprise course to 28 11th-grade students who needed to fulfill a requirement for high school graduation. As part of the course, the students formed four businesses, one of which participated in a fair hosted by the Nicaraguan Rural Development Institute (IDR). The student-run business was well-received and students were invited to apply for a micro-business loan from IDR to formalize their business.

### Education

Education sector projects focus on strengthening capabilities and skills of Nicaraguan English teachers. Working directly with the Ministry of Education (MINED), Volunteers build capacity of secondary school English teachers through team teaching and teacher-training activities in urban and rural communities of selected departments. In addition to their work in schools, Volunteers also offer English classes to community members, including nongovernmental organization staff, adolescents, and younger children.

### Environment

Volunteers in the environment project have worked with MINED to create and publish an environmental education guide for primary schools. Volunteers assigned to rural school districts work with at least three elementary schools in their respective districts and use interactive, student-centered methods and community efforts to address local environmental concerns.

One Volunteer, who worked on environmental initiatives in a rural community, used her past experience working with the deaf to include a group of local deaf children in lessons and activities. The Volunteer taught environmental education lessons to the children using sign language and also provided sign language lessons for hearing members of the community so that they could better communicate with the deaf children.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers teach community members basic prevention techniques that will help them avoid or diminish the effects of some devastating but controllable diseases. Volunteers in the health and HIV/AIDS project works directly with the Ministry of Health and focuses on hygiene education, nutrition, adolescent health, and maternal and infant health. Volunteers also conduct HIV/AIDS prevention activities with youth and at-risk populations.

A Volunteer and his ministry counterpart worked with a youth group to produce a student-run call-in radio show. The show provides a venue to communicate important health messages, such as HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, to a large, diverse audience.

*"My service as a Peace Corps Volunteer has allowed me to look at the world in a new way and learn more than I ever thought possible about myself and the world around me. In short, my eyes are a little wider, my vision a little bit deeper, and my heart more open. I have truly become part of a new and different culture and impacted people like I never thought possible."*

Nicaragua Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector

# Niger

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Niamey |
| Population | 14 million |
| Annual per capita income | $240 |
| GDP growth | 4.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | $12 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 57%<br>Female: 85% |
| Infant mortality rate | 150 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 25%<br>Measles: 35% |
| Access to an improved water source | 46% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.2% |
| Religions | Islam: 95%<br>Indigenous beliefs<br>Christianity |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 141 | 154 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,098 | 3,310 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1960, Niger became a constitutional democracy with an elected president and national assembly, but it was not until 1993 that the country held free and fair elections. A military coup occurred in 1996, but in late 1999, democratic elections were held again. Since then, Niger has remained politically stable. The last elections were held in December 2004, and incumbent President Mamadou Tandja won a second term. The next scheduled elections in Niger are to occur in 2009.

Niger remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 177 out of 177 on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index. Natural impediments include its landlocked position, its limited arable land, and the drought susceptibility of its agriculturally-based economy. These obstacles are compounded by a large population with limited skills, rapid population growth, intense exploitation of fragile soils, and insufficient health services. According to a 2006 survey by Famine Early Warning System, 30 percent of Niger's population (about 3.6 million people) is malnourished with many more considered vulnerable to malnutrition. The inability to produce, access, and use adequate quantities of food is the central concern for most Nigerien households as well as for the government of Niger.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps entered Niger in 1962 with seven Volunteers teaching English as a foreign language. Volunteers now work in agriculture, business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS to help Nigerien communities. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Agricultural production is Niger's number-one concern. The agriculture project, in conjunction with the Ministries of Planning, Agricultural Development, and Animal Resources, helps develop local strategies to improve household food production. Volunteers work directly with farmers in their villages on issues such as water harvesting, crop rotation, soil fertility management, and improved animal husbandry.

One Volunteer lived and worked in a small rural community of 50 households near an ancient underground river. The Volunteer helped the women and children build a community garden and set up a community vegetable seed bank so community members could sustain the garden well into the future.

### Business Development

The business development project supports the Nigerien government's priority of decentralization and local governance. The project was launched in 2005 with the Ministry of Community Development and Territorial Management and local government councils. Volunteers organize local governance trainings for council members in their communities to help improve local governments through capacity building of the citizenry and public services.

A Volunteer assisted the new municipal government in his area to develop, plan, and conduct their first community census. The Volunteer also helped plan and implement a workshop on local governance procedures and governmental decentralization for 47 new municipal government leaders.

### Education

In 2000, the Nigerien Ministry of Education began a 10-year education program designed to ensure access to quality education for all Nigeriens. In 2003, in direct response to the emphasis the government of Niger put on the development of its education system, Peace Corps/Niger reentered the education sector by inaugurating a community- and youth-education project.

Volunteers work with local counterparts to strengthen the capacities of teachers and vocational trainers to work with youth; increase awareness of girls' education at the community level; and teach English as a second language to community members.

A Volunteer and his counterpart organized a workshop for 37 English teachers to expose them to new teaching methodologies, lesson planning strategies, and classroom games. Other sessions covered incorporating HIV/AIDS-related material into lessons and improving classroom management skills. During this workshop, the teachers increased their teaching skills, motivation, and self-confidence.

### Environment

In Niger, where food production is a primary concern, the environment and natural resources are often overexploited. Land degradation, the second-highest population growth rate in the world, and diminishing natural resources are critical problems. Volunteers implement land reclamation/anti-erosion activities, organize tree plantings, and conduct environmental education and awareness sessions.

Three Volunteers participated in the annual census count of the last group of wild giraffes in West Africa. They collected data, documented increases in numbers, and developed conservation strategies with local wildlife agents. They also educated local communities on the importance of a healthy giraffe population and habitat, which helped improve eco-tourism in the area.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Niger has one of the world's highest infant mortality rates. More than 40 percent of children under age five are chronically malnourished. The primary focus of the health project is to promote good nutrition skills and practices among mothers.

In a successful Guinea worm eradication project, Volunteers educated people in endemic zones and treated infested ponds. Peace Corps/Niger also promotes HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention through an annual AIDS bike ride that reaches several thousand people every year.

One Volunteer, in collaboration with the nongovernmental organization Action Contre la Faim, taught 188 women and 203 girls about basic nutrition at centers in five villages. Knowing that many relief-oriented NGOs do not have the time to focus on basic nutrition education, the Volunteer has worked to assure that the families served by the NGO also benefit from learning how to keep their babies healthy with food they can provide themselves.

*"During my time as a Volunteer here in Niger, I have learned patience, how to laugh, and how to make the best of what you've got. It is an experience I wouldn't trade for the world."*

Niger Volunteer
Agriculture Sector

# Panama

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–1971<br>1990–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Panama City |
| Population | 3 million |
| Annual per capita income | $4,630 |
| GDP growth | 6.4% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.027 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 7%<br>Female: 9% |
| Infant mortality rate | 19 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 99%<br>Measles: 72% |
| Access to an improved water source | 90% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.9% |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 84%<br>Protestantism: 15%<br>Other: 1% |
| Official language | Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 178 | 196 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,263 | 3,436 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Panama's history has been shaped by globalization and the ambitious dreams of Europeans and Americans. The achievements of the Panama Canal and the construction of skyscrapers in Panama City obscure the reality that nearly 40 percent of Panamanians, particularly members of indigenous groups, live in poverty. Panama is also threatened by a rising incidence of HIV/AIDS.

Panama's greatest resource—and foundation for future success—is its environment, which is in peril. Poor management of natural resources has led to alarming rates of deforestation, erosion, and pollution. Panama's famed biological diversity is threatened as ecosystems, including coastal and marine systems, are degraded. As Panama looks to expand tourism and the Panama Canal, these natural resources are more important than ever.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps works in Panama's poorest rural and indigenous areas to identify, develop, and promote sustainable development projects. The combined effect of these projects leads to greater income-generation opportunities, increased food security, more efficient use and conservation of natural resources, greater environmental stewardship, and improved health and sanitation in Panama's poorest areas. Volunteers partner with the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, and Education, as well as with the National Environmental Authority, indigenous councils, and many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Traditionally, Panamanian agriculture has been based on slash and burn land-clearing techniques, which cause extensive soil erosion and habitat loss. The sustainable agriculture systems project works to preserve natural resources while increasing viable income sources for farmers. Volunteers work with subsistence farmers to increase production using new agriculture methods and principles. Volunteers also work to promote small-scale agribusiness, and they have helped create integrated farm plans, resulting in experimental vegetable plots, irrigation systems, improved pasture grasses, increased production and sales of cacao, new coffee plant nurseries, and reforestation with native tree species.

Three Volunteers worked with local cacao experts to design and implement seminars for small organic cacao and banana producers. Led by the Ministry of Agriculture and two other local organizations, the eight-seminar series

provided 30 farmers with training in improved methods of production and management. Attendees also received a manual containing the information presented at the seminar, enabling them to return to their communities and share the new techniques with other farmers.

### Business Development

Volunteers help increase household and community incomes by supporting community cooperatives, community-based tourism initiatives, and youth and information technology programs. To further support youth development and employability, Peace Corps/Panama supports Junior Achievement programs in schools. Volunteers help establish computer centers and training in schools and communities interested in increasing computer literacy to prepare youth for work.

Volunteers are working on projects that focus on preparing rural communities to participate in tourism, the fastest growing sector of Panama's economy. Volunteers increase the capacity of community groups to manage tourism locally while developing infrastructure and providing training in customer service. Additionally, Volunteers partner with the Ministry of Education to provide assistance in teaching English as a second language to both students and adults, increasing their ability to converse with tourists.

### Environment

Volunteers help protect Panama's imperiled environment by working in and around priority protected areas, including the Panama Canal watershed. Volunteers work with community-based conservation groups to promote the use of appropriate technologies that conserve resources and increase the quality of life. Volunteers also work in schools and with youth groups to teach environmental conservation and promote greater environmental stewardship.

Five Volunteers developed an environmental campaign with the Ministry of Education based on the *Captain Planet* television series. The campaign encourages elementary school students to participate in educational games and activities based on the elements of water, air, earth, and fire.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The health project addresses health and sanitation issues in the poorest indigenous communities, as well as HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. With a focus on access to potable water, availability of proper sanitation services, and improving hygiene, Volunteers help the Ministry of Health develop action plans, design infrastructure, and identify needy communities.

Working with the Ministry of Health, a group of Volunteers facilitated workshops for 10 community water committees. The workshops covered watershed management, water committee management, and properly managing water fees.

*Volunteers work with children to educate them about their environment*

# Paraguay

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Asunción |
| Population | 6 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,040 |
| GDP growth | 2.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $64 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 7%<br>Female: 10% |
| Infant mortality rate | 20 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 76%<br>Measles: 89% |
| Access to an improved water source | 86% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.5% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 90% |
| Official languages | Guaraní<br>Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 179 | 183 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,309 | 3,396 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Paraguay has labored under serious economic challenges for the past decade, aggravated by inadequate government policies. The current government administration, elected in August 2003, has attempted to tackle the country's problems, but social and economic development continue to be difficult challenges. The next presidential elections are scheduled for April 2008.

Paraguay has a predominantly agricultural economy and vast hydroelectric resources. Its main exports are soybeans, sesame seed, cotton, grains, cattle, timber, sugar, and electricity. Imports account for the vast majority of industrial products. The market economy contains a large informal sector that features re-exporting imported goods to neighboring countries and activities of thousands of micro-enterprises and street vendors.

Limited access to land resources and economic opportunities cause significant migration of the predominantly rural population to Paraguay's urban centers and to neighboring countries. Subsequent urban unemployment and underemployment are pressing challenges for the government.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps opened its program in Paraguay in 1967; since that time more than 3,000 Volunteers have served in this South American nation. To help address Paraguay's critical needs, Volunteers are assigned to projects in the areas of agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Farming employs 45 percent of the labor force, but the country is experiencing decreased agricultural productivity because of soil erosion and poor pest control practices. Volunteers work with small-scale farmers to improve soils, diversify crops, seek new markets, and identify income-generating activities. Projects promote horticulture and food crops for domestic consumption, reducing dependence on cotton as the single cash crop and increasing nutritional levels in the diet of Paraguayans. Volunteers have assisted farmers with procuring technical information and seeds for farm diversification efforts, provided orientation in planting new crops, and helped organize farmer's markets.

### Business Development

Volunteers provide technical training and assistance to rural agricultural cooperatives and farmers' associations to increase income and job opportunities. They work with cooperatives to improve their administrative and organizational operations, management, accounting, and marketing efforts. Volunteers help cooperatives diversify their services in credit and provide technical assistance to farmers and consumer clubs. They provide computer training courses to cooperative employees, members, and their families. Volunteers also collaborate with municipal governments to improve the planning and delivery of services to underserved communities, and they help municipalities modernize their data-collection techniques and services. Volunteers also help train neighborhood commissions on project design and management and civic education.

One Volunteer worked with his municipality to develop a database to track property ownership in the district. The database will improve the municipality's ability to collect property tax payments, and resulting increased revenues will be used to improve services for community members.

### Education

Volunteers train kindergarten through third-grade teachers in improved communication and math-teaching techniques. They also help teachers develop lesson plans that incorporate health, hygiene, nutrition, and gender equality issues. Volunteers implement community education projects during summer and winter vacations and assist families and schools in supporting children with special needs. Volunteers also work with community organizations, including health posts, municipalities, neighborhood commissions, nongovernmental organizations, youth, and women's groups in specific community projects. Several Volunteers have been assigned to teacher-training colleges to strengthen student teachers' skills.

One Volunteer planned a career day for girls between the ages of 8 and 12. The girls, from rural communities, traveled to the departmental capital to shadow professional women in their jobs for a day, and they participated in several leadership and self-esteem building activities.

### Environment

Environmental degradation is increasing in Paraguay dramatically. Much of the deforestation, contamination, and inappropriate land use are due to lack of knowledge of the environment's importance and the impact that human activity can have on it. Volunteers help to increase crop diversity through the integration of important forestry species on fragile deforested farmland. They also work with farmers to incorporate green manure and other soil-conservation techniques. Volunteers incorporate environmental education into school curricula and participate in village-based projects to support the Ministry of Education's reforms.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work with the Ministry of Public Health to promote preventive healthcare practices among nurses, parents, and community members. In addition, Volunteers work with various national and international agencies such as Paraguay's National Environmental Sanitation Service, Children's Ministry, Plan International, and UNICEF. They focus on dental health, parasite prevention, HIV/AIDS awareness, and nutrition education. They also help construct brick ovens, protect and decontaminate water sources, and construct and improve sanitary latrines.

One Volunteer in collaboration with the Paraguayan National Children's Ministry, held two workshops that taught 100 youth to be peer health educators. Each participant has promised to peer educate 100 other youths, and eventually, more than 10,000 youth will receive education about values, communication, self esteem, and sexually transmitted diseases.

### Youth

Volunteers live in marginal urban communities and work to form or strengthen youth groups associated with a variety of formal and informal institutions. Some Volunteers also work with street children. By integrating life-skills education into various organized activities, Volunteers help Paraguayan youth develop appropriate social and job skills, which, in turn, promote community service. Volunteers also help improve youth employment prospects by teaching basic computer skills and other skills to strengthen their employment potential.

# Peru

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1975<br>2002–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Lima |
| Population | 28 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,650 |
| GDP growth | 6.4% |
| Foreign direct investment | $2.519 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 7%<br>Female: 18% |
| Infant mortality rate | 23 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 89%<br>Measles: 87% |
| Access to an improved water source | 83% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.5% |
| Religion | Roman Catholicism: 90% |
| Official languages | Quechua<br>Spanish |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 182 | 200 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,359 | 3,518 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Peru has significant development challenges. Some 46 percent of the population lives below the official poverty line ($58 per month), with 19 percent living in extreme poverty (under $32 per month). Peru is plagued by severe unemployment and underemployment, and a significant portion of economic activity occurs in the informal sector. Large segments of the population suffer from nutritional deficiencies and limited access to basic health care services. However, under the leadership of former President Alejandro Toledo and current President Alan García, economic and social programs have been implemented to address these issues, and an array of local and international development agencies are working with the Peruvian government to support these initiatives.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Peru was one of the first countries to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers. Since 1962, more than 2,500 Volunteers have served in-country. Volunteers worked in grassroots health, agriculture, education, and business development projects until the program closed in 1975. Returning in 2002, Peace Corps/Peru is responding to the national development goals of strengthening civil society, reducing poverty, and building human capital. The program has projects in business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

To address the critical issues of poverty and underemployment, Volunteers help farmer associations, artisan associations, and other small businesses improve their income and profitability through new marketing approaches, and better administrative and organizational practices. Volunteers are also engaged in linking these small businesses to world markets through information and communication technology.

Last year, 35 Volunteers and 59 Peruvian counterparts participated in an artisan fair sponsored by Peace Corps/Peru and held at the U.S. Embassy in Lima. The fair provided artisans and farmers the opportunity to display and sell their wares to a diverse group of attendees. Participants also attended educational workshops on marketing and product design led by Volunteers.

### Environment

Despite a wealth of natural resources and biodiversity, there is a marked lack of environmental awareness among the general population. Rapid urbanization has bought about the loss of fragile ecosystems, problems with waste disposal, and water use issues. In more remote areas, unsustainable exploitation of resources is occurring, and only a small percentage of Peru's territory is protected. Volunteers are helping to build sustained environmental awareness and practices in rural and small urban communities. In cooperation with the public sector and nongovernmental organizations, Volunteers are giving classroom sessions; forming environmental youth clubs; encouraging community members to engage in environmentally sound income-generating activities; training residents in proper forestry and water use techniques; working with authorities on appropriate trash disposal activities; and promoting ecotourism.

A Volunteer worked with the local municipal government to institute a solid-waste management program that included recycling. With the Volunteer's assistance, the municipality established a sanitary landfill, regular trash pickup, and a recycling center. The municipality has been recognized by the national government as being one of only 20 rural communities in the country to institute an effective waste management program, and the program has been used as a model for other communities.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Peru has high incidences of preventable illnesses. In rural areas, there is considerable infant mortality and chronic child malnutrition. Working with the Ministry of Health and nongovernmental organizations, Volunteers carry out health promotion activities with youth, women's groups, and a variety of community organizations. They cover topics such as HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, upper respiratory infections, proper hygiene, and improved nutritional practices. Volunteers work with school-aged children to teach them the importance of hand washing; train community leaders on the importance of clean drinking water; and help establish school and family gardens. Increasingly, Volunteers and their counterparts are using radio and television for their health promotion activities.

### Youth

Over 50 percent of the children in Peru live below the poverty line. Many children are sent to the streets to sell candy or find other ways to earn a few coins a day. Facilities that serve orphaned, abandoned, or abused children provide little more than food and shelter, and the residents have almost no chance of finding employment when they must leave at age 18. Among less disadvantaged low-income youth there are significant issues with self-esteem, drug abuse, crime, and unemployment.

Working with Peruvian counterparts, Volunteers teach vocational and life skills, encourage healthy and principled habits, and build self-esteem.

One Volunteer collaborated with the community health center in her area to teach teen mothers healthy lifestyle skills and to assist them in developing small business skills and projects. Traditionally, the vast majority of teenage mothers drop out of school and lose the opportunity to develop a career. These young mothers are now able to make informed decisions regarding their future goals and to become more financially independent.

*"The Peace Corps provides an experience that is rich in ways that were previously unimaginable to me. I am continually awestruck by my townspeople's resourcefulness and attentiveness to what is truly important in life. What wonderful Peace Corps Volunteers they would make!"*

Peru Volunteer
Youth Development Sector

# Philippines

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1961–1990<br>1992–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Environment<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Manila |
| Population | 83 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,320 |
| GDP growth | 5.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $1.132 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 7%<br>Female: 7% |
| Infant mortality rate | 25 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 79%<br>Measles: 80% |
| Access to an improved water source | 85% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Roman Catholicism: 85%<br>Protestantism: 9%<br>Islam: 5%<br>Buddhism and other: 1% |
| Official languages | English<br>Filipino (based on Tagalog) |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 117 | 124 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,673 | 2,682 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Over hundreds of years, interactions of migrants and indigenous people in the Philippine Archipelago created a culture that is uniquely Filipino while encompassing Indo-Malay, Chinese, Pacific, Roman Catholic, Muslim, Spanish, and American elements. In the past century, many Filipinos have had complex and deep associations with the United States. Americans in the Philippines experience a high level of amity that has few rivals across the world.

Philippine politics are very active at national, regional, and local levels. Government structures include a constitution, presidential executive, bicameral legislature, and independent judiciary.

Significant debt service requirements and low levels of effective tax collection leave relatively few government resources for development. Persistent problems of corruption and frequent natural disasters further drain resources that are urgently needed to cope with rapid population growth, declining services, and lagging job creation. An estimated 14 percent of Filipinos—more than 11 million people—live in extreme poverty, while a small elite enjoy an opulent, privileged lifestyle. Millions of Filipinos work overseas, and wage remittances are crucial for the survival of many families.

English and Tagalog are official languages. Historically, a large English-speaking Filipino population helped attract foreign investment. More recently the promotion of Tagalog and a sustained decline in public education have led to widespread loss of English fluency. This is threatening economic development for the Philippines and causing great alarm among business and political leaders.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The program in the Philippines is the second oldest in the Peace Corps. It began with the arrival of 123 education Volunteers in October 1961. Since then, more than 8,000 Volunteers have served in the Philippines. In June 1990, the program was suspended because of communist rebel activity; it resumed in 1992.

Volunteers address the development priorities of the Philippine government through projects in education, the environment, and youth development.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers are assigned to primary and secondary schools as resource teachers for English, math, science, information and communications technology (ICT), and special education. They help Filipino teachers improve English language fluency and introduce new teaching methods. At universities, Volunteers teach classes and work with student teachers and staff. Volunteers and communities improve learning by enhancing school libraries and by developing low-cost instructional materials. Volunteers also organize teacher-training programs to provide professional development for Filipino teachers. In one teacher-training program, more than 900 teachers have traveled to the island of Cebu, where Volunteers provide training in English, content-based instruction in math and science, and ICT.

Recently, the Philippine Education Department has asked the Peace Corps to play a larger role in its efforts to reverse the downward trend in English fluency among Filipinos. In response, Volunteers have introduced new methods to assist students in achieving and retaining English fluency.

### Environment

Volunteers promote restoration and conservation of coastal ecosystems through fish censuses, coral reef surveys, and fish-catch monitoring. They restore degraded coastal and marine habitats, facilitate environmental camps and clubs, author brochures and educational materials, and help municipal authorities formulate conservation policies and reforms. Volunteers emphasize coastal resource management improvements through cooperation with provincial and local governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). They directly impact the livelihood of the people who depend on the sea to support their families.

### Youth

Volunteers work in government and nongovernment centers to provide life-skills training for at-risk children and youth and professional skills training for the centers' personnel. Volunteers enrich staff capacities and skills in care, counseling, and center administration. They develop Philippine youth organization networks and offer training in healthy lifestyles and in preventing family violence and trafficking in persons. Volunteers also give livelihood-skills training, including sewing, gardening, food preparation, marketing, and computer knowledge, and they organize environmental education camps for youth. Volunteers contribute to developing models of proactive programs that can be replicated throughout the Philippines.

Two Volunteers designed and piloted an early childhood learning program which was eventually incorporated by the Philippine Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) in centers for orphans and other at-risk children. More than 150 DSWD centers and DSWD-accredited NGOs that support children and youth have benefited from this program.

*"Ultimately in your own way, your volunteering can make a difference in our efforts to build a just, caring, and self-reliant society. The examples you set will always remain to renew our commitment to the age-old Filipino tradition of community cooperation called bayanihan."*

Joselito De Vera
Director, Philippine National Volunteer Service Coordinating Agency
Philippines

# Romania

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1991–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Bucharest |
| Population | 22 million |
| Annual per capita income | $3,910 |
| GDP growth | 4.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | $6.630 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 2%<br>Female: 4% |
| Infant mortality rate | 16 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 97%<br>Measles: 97% |
| Access to an improved water source | 57% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Orthodoxy: 87%<br>Roman Catholicism: 5%<br>Other Protestantism: 5%<br>Greek Catholicism: 1%<br>Judaism: <1% |
| Official language | Romanian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 147 | 140 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,476 | 3,466 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Romania is a politically stable member of NATO and the European Union (EU), committed to institutionalizing civil liberties, human rights, freedom of the press, and other democratic principles. To meet qualification standards of these international institutions, Romania has actively pursued administrative, economic, and social reforms. The country has experienced rapid economic growth during the past several years as a result of these reforms and its increased international profile.

Although Romania has received recognition by the EU's European Commission as a "functioning market economy," the country's transition continues to be challenged. Foreign investment is growing, and development aid is readily available through the EU and other sources, provided that Romania can develop and manage effective infrastructure. Although the country has strong potential for growth, access to development resources, poverty, and marginalization of ethnic minorities, youth, and people with disabilities persists.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps is helping Romanians meet many development needs. Program sectors address the country's educational priorities and help build local capacity and sustainability. As Romania seeks to remove social and economic barriers as part of its EU membership, the Peace Corps program focuses on business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Established in 1993 to work with business advisory centers, the business development project has broadened to encompass community economic development and local capacity building. All project-related activities are conducted with Romanian partner agencies. The project provides assistance in business and nongovernmental organizations(NGO) management, as well as education, agribusiness, and urban development. Volunteers work with a range of economic development organizations, including local and regional agencies, educational institutions, and NGOs.

One Volunteer helped his rural community improve its quality of life by assisting with a grant proposal to bring a water system in the community, helping to introduce a garbage collection system, and training community members to introduce different crops and production methods to generate income. The Volunteer is also encouraging major

industrial farmers in the area in sponsoring community-based development projects.

### Education

The education project addresses Romania's expressed need for improved English language instruction. With English as a requirement for many jobs within Romania and internationally, the demand for native-speaking English teachers has escalated. Volunteers work in more than 70 communities with students and teachers to develop their English communication skills. They also organize and participate in a variety of community and summer activities, including writing and drama courses, and environmental, sports, and leadership camps.

One Volunteer assigned to a village in eastern Romania worked with his counterpart and a local NGO to produce eight half-hour video English lessons called "Hello English." The program has been offered to cable companies and television stations around Romania to broadcast in their communities at no cost. Sales of the videos and accompanying manuals have generated income for the NGO to develop additional educational projects.

### Environment

Romania's environment suffered considerably during the rapid, unregulated industrialization of the Communist era. Volunteers help Romanian organizations address the challenges resulting from years of disregard for the environment, enhancing public awareness of sustainable environmental management that is compatible with economic development. Volunteers work with environmental NGOs, schools, and governmental institutions.

One Volunteer helped organize a five-day environmentally themed summer camp for high school students. The camp was located in the Bucias Wilderness Preserve, and the students participated in various nature activities and interacted with forest rangers, increasing their awareness of environmental issues. Additionally, camp activities provided the attendees an opportunity to participate in team-building exercises.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Health and HIV/AIDS sector projects improve the quality and impact of services for at-risk youth and other marginalized populations by establishing and strengthening local institutional capacity. National and local government agencies cannot effectively meet the needs of these populations, so social services are largely left to NGOs. NGO beneficiaries include ethnic minorities, HIV-positive children, people with physical disabilities, orphaned or abandoned children, and the elderly.

Working with a NGO for people with intellectual disabilities, one Volunteer organized a walk-a-thon to raise community awareness of this issue. To generate interest in the event, he facilitated a partnership with an American sports equipment company that donated shirts and caps to participants. The event was covered by the local press, gaining support for the NGO and lessening the stigma of being disabled in the community.

*"I wondered what this lawyer-turned-Peace Corps Volunteer could accomplish... especially since I had never worked with persons with intellectual disabilities. Fairly soon, though, I realized that I did not need a Ph.D. or a long list of professional achievements to accomplish something. I just needed my eyes and ears, and my heart and mind."*

Romania Volunteer
Business Development Sector

# Samoa

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Apia |
| Population | 187,000 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,840 |
| GDP growth | 2.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | Not available |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 1% |
| Infant mortality rate | 24 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 64%<br>Measles: 57% |
| Access to an improved water source | 88% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religion | Christianity: 99.7% |
| Official languages | English<br>Samoan (Polynesian) |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 49 | 45 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,493 | 1,518 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1967, five years after independence and after experiencing a devastating cyclone, the government of Samoa invited the Peace Corps to enter its country. The first Volunteers worked in rural villages leading health and hygiene projects for the Department of Health. While Volunteers have served in most sectors and departments during the Peace Corps' 40-year history in Samoa, the largest numbers have served via the Department of Education as classroom teachers and trainers.

Samoa's agriculture-based economy focuses primarily on crops such as cocoa, copra, and bananas. Other crops, such as kava and nonu, recognized for their medicinal value, have recently gained economic importance as well. The fishing industry also plays a significant part in Samoa's export economy. Tourism may soon overtake these sectors in overall economic importance, though Samoa continues to rely heavily on remittances from its citizens living and working overseas.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Volunteers work with communities to identify development priorities and to provide training in skills required to implement community-designed projects that address priorities in business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers, in conjunction with the Future Farmers of Samoa and crop extension officers, provide agribusiness training to youth groups and encourage young people to consider agriculture as a viable career option. Young farmers have developed market gardens and improved practices on banana and taro plantations. Volunteers are also working to plant community gardens, and participants learn progressive planting and to reinvest profits into seeds and other materials.

Volunteers also work with community members to prioritize and develop business project areas. Once projects are identified, Volunteers conduct project design and management workshops that strengthen the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of these projects. These workshops have helped establish preschools, women's committee houses, home economics and handicraft centers, homework centers and libraries, improved water and sanitation systems, and income-generating community gardens.

### Education

More than half of all Volunteers serve in information and communication technology by mentoring teachers and government officials, and by teaching computer skills to their communities. Several Volunteers teach formal computer courses at various grade levels in schools. Volunteers also work on curriculum development and peer mentoring and facilitating capacity building through skills transfer.

Several Volunteers are assisting with a national communications pilot project that has created community Internet and media centers in 11 women's committee houses. These centers offer residents in rural communities the ability to get acquainted with newer technologies and to improve communication with relatives overseas. The centers also provide educational materials for the community, and new opportunities for small income-generating projects and businesses.

Volunteers with experience in special needs education, such as autism, speech, and language therapy, are working as teacher trainers. They ensure that primary school teachers receive the training necessary to appropriately manage special needs students in their regular classes.

### Environment

Volunteers work with environmental and marine nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to improve management of Samoa's water-based resources. Through an integrated coastal management project, Volunteers help communities better manage their environmental resources. Their work includes environmental cleanups and fisheries and marine protected-area management for villages near water.

In collaboration with a local NGO, a Volunteer worked closely with one community to remove several tons of garbage from a nearby marsh, including discarded car batteries, appliances, and tires. To prevent further dumping, the community constructed 20 trash stands and coordinated with the national trash collection service to regularly empty the trash stands.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Though Samoa has very few documented HIV/AIDS cases, more NGOs are becoming involved in awareness and prevention outreach for HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Several Volunteers working in rural schools have collaborated with community counterparts to initiate activities in their schools and communities to educate people about HIV/AIDS and STD prevention.

Several Volunteers assist the Samoan AIDS Foundation and other health-related NGOs by building websites, creating awareness materials, and organizing local fundraisers. Volunteers also work in their communities to promote health education by organizing trainings for health professionals and community members on basic hygiene, sanitation, and nutrition practices.

*"Peace Corps Volunteers have been excellent educators and development workers for Samoa in different sectors of its development since 1967. Current and former Volunteers can reflect back with pride on their great contributions to the youth and future leaders of Samoa."*

Tautapilimai Levaopolo Tupae Esera
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
Samoa

# Senegal

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1963–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Dakar |
| Population | 12 million |
| Annual per capita income | $700 |
| GDP growth | 5.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | $54 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 49%<br>Female: 71% |
| Infant mortality rate | 61 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 87%<br>Measles: 57% |
| Access to an improved water source | 76% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 0.8% |
| Religions | Islam: 95%<br>Christianity: 4%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 1% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 187 | 187 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,850 | 3,915 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Senegal has the distinction of being an African state that has never experienced a coup, and has maintained a stable political climate, a free society, and viable democratic institutions. The government is committed to democracy, permits a flourishing independent media, oversees a generally tolerant sociopolitical culture free of ethnic or religious tensions, and provides a resilient base for democratic politics.

Senegal is one of the world's least developed countries, ranking 156 out of 177 on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index. Rural migration to urban areas has increased rapidly and the population has more than doubled since 1975. Unemployment is very high (close to 40 percent of the active population) and illegal migration to Europe is rising. Drought has recurred over three decades and agricultural production has declined. Seventy percent of Senegal's population lives in rural areas and is highly vulnerable to variations in rainfall and fluctuations in global commodity prices. Agriculture now represents less than 20 percent of GDP, reflecting continued decay of this once-vital sector. Fishing generates most foreign exchange earnings, followed by phosphate production and a growing tourism industry. Senegal's resource base is pressured by a growing population and the impact of climate change.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

In Senegal in 1963, the first Peace Corps Volunteers taught English. Volunteers now work in critically-underserved rural areas, in the areas of agriculture, business development, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Volunteers also promote skills for income diversification. They help individuals and communities sustainably address their priority development needs and encourage girls' education in their assigned communities. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Volunteers work in agroforestry, sustainable agriculture, improved crop production, and urban agriculture, assisting communities and groups to improve soil fertility and production. They help farmers increase production through improved seed variations and agricultural techniques, and train them in management and conservation methods.

One Volunteer assisted farmers to double their production capacity and develop an effective network of distributors for the chickens they raise. The Volunteer also helped the farmers initiate a project to produce their own chicken feed. As

a result, farmers cut their own costs and were also able to generate additional income by selling excess feed to other farmers in the community.

### Business Development

Volunteers provide training and assistance in management, marketing, and finance. They promote business awareness and teach customer service, accounting, and marketing to entrepreneurs, groups, and individuals. They work in traditionally underserved towns and villages, providing information to create business services. In larger towns, Volunteers work with business trainers to expand business services to poorer segments of the population.

Volunteers serve as grassroots counselors, offering business advice and training for entrepreneurs and groups in need. They help build capacity in business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs, including women and youth, and provide understanding of information technology to increase business profitability and facilitate linkages between entrepreneurs and financial resources. One Volunteer taught a class on how to plan and start a business at a vocational center run by the Ministry of Youth. The class provided instruction on business planning, marketing, and accounting.

Volunteers also facilitate the delivery of computer literacy classes for hundreds of individuals (mostly women and young people) on a number of subjects, including basic computer maintenance, various software applications, the Internet, and website creation. Volunteers have helped entrepreneurs use information technology to improve the management of their businesses.

Working with the Tourism Ministry and National Park Service, Volunteers are also active in ecotourism projects. Placed near national parks and protected areas, these Volunteers advise tourism management committees and village representatives on developing ecotourism products and services that can generate income and improve their ability to conserve the environment. They also provide training on business planning, accounting, marketing, and management to individuals and associations in their communities. They have presented training programs, assisted in developing tourist brochures and interpretive guides, and improved marketing of sites as tourist destinations.

### Environment

In rural schools, Volunteers work with community leaders to increase environmental awareness. They help teachers design curricula to teach environmental lessons and work with students and community members to teach practical methods linked to classroom activities.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers educate people in primary healthcare, enabling them to avoid or treat common illnesses. Volunteers train community partners who then train other members of the community. Volunteers train Senegalese in disease prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness using informal education techniques that include art, music, and theater.

One Volunteer developed two lesson plans on malaria, covering malarial symptoms, and breeding places for mosquitoes. The Volunteer also planned malaria-related activities for the village, including a village clean-up day to fill in areas of standing water and bury garbage, and a mosquito net dipping day.

*"I have worked with many productive and effective Volunteers throughout my career, and I am happy to have the opportunity to collaborate with Peace Corps again. Peace Corps has given me the opportunity to develop warm personal relationships with a number of Americans."*

Ibrahima Ka
Chief of the Local Development Support Agency
Fimela, Senegal

# Solomon Islands

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1971–2000 *(Program suspended in 2000)* |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Honiara |
| Population | 552,438 |
| Annual per capita income | $560 |
| GDP growth | 4.7% |
| Foreign direct investment | (-0.8%) |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 23.4% |
| Infant mortality rate | 20 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 82%<br>Measles: 72% |
| Access to an improved water source | 94% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religions | Christianity: 95% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 0 | 0 |
| Program funds ($000) | 26 | 26 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the 1890s, the United Kingdom established a protectorate over the Solomon Islands, in part, due to the practice of "blackbirding"—the often brutal recruitment of laborers for the sugar plantations in Queensland and Fiji.

The Solomon Islands were the scene of some of the most severe land, sea, and air battles of World War II from 1942 to 1945. One of the most furious sea battles ever fought took place off Savo Island, near Guadalcanal, in August 1942. By December 1943, the Allies were in command of the entire Solomon Islands chain. Following the end of World War II, the British colonial government returned and the capital was moved from Tulagi to Honiara to utilize the infrastructure left behind by the U.S. military.

In 1974, a new constitution was adopted establishing a parliamentary democracy and ministerial system of government. Self-government was achieved in 1976 and independence followed two years later on July 7, 1978. The Solomon Islands is a democracy within the British Commonwealth, with a unicameral Parliament. The British monarch is represented by a governor-general, chosen by the Parliament for a five-year term. The Parliament has 50 members, each elected for four-year terms.

Widespread civil unrest significantly undermined the country's stability in 2000. As a result, the Peace Corps reviewed the security climate, especially in and around the capital of Honiara, and temporarily suspended its program. The Peace Corps continues to monitor the security climate; and although conditions have improved, the agency has not yet made the determination to renew the program in-country.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Approximately 700 Peace Corps Volunteers served in the Solomon Islands from 1971–2000. At the time the program was suspended in June 2000, approximately 60 Volunteers were serving in the youth and education sectors.

The Peace Corps program was suspended due to intensification of the intermittent fighting between rival militia from the provinces of Guadalcanal and Malaita. While the conflict did not affect all provinces of the Solomon Islands, the capital of Honiara was unstable and the ability to travel safely in and out of the country was difficult. The agency decided to maintain an office in Honiara with a skeleton staff to facilitate the return of the Peace Corps when conditions improved.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers provided instruction in math, science, business studies, and environmental education at national and provincial senior secondary boarding schools in remote areas. Volunteers were also assigned to rural training centers, often on remote outer islands. These training centers acted as vocational boarding schools for students who did not pass the examination necessary to advance to the secondary school level. The curriculum of these centers focused on subjects such as small engine mechanics, woodworking, agriculture, crafts production, and small business management.

Volunteers worked as advisors to local leaders to strengthen community education programs and rural development projects. Volunteers assisted in the coordination of training events to help communities enhance the management of small-scale development projects, such as the introduction of improved poultry-raising techniques and beekeeping projects.

### Youth

Due to inadequate classroom space, large numbers of Solomon Island children were unable to complete high school. In response to this, Peace Corps/Solomon Islands developed a youth project focused on engaging youth in community service activities as a means to discover their self-worth, build confidence, and acquire practical and leadership skills that could be used to find employment. Volunteers worked with the Department of Youth and Sport, the Ministry of Education, and local youth and community leaders to facilitate workshops to provide a forum to discuss at-risk youth issues and create collaborative working relationships and action plans.

*United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon addresses Peace Corps staff in Washington in October 2007*

# South Africa

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1997–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Pretoria |
| Population | 47 million |
| Annual per capita income | $4,770 |
| GDP growth | 4.9% |
| Foreign direct investment | $6.3 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 16%<br>Female: 19% |
| Infant mortality rate | 55 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 93%<br>Measles: 81% |
| Access to an improved water source | 98% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 15.6% |
| Religions | Christianity; Indigenous beliefs; Islam<br>Hinduism; Judaism |
| Official languages | Afrikaans; English; Ndebele;<br>Pedi; Sotho; Swazi; Tsonga;<br>Tswana; Venda; Xhosa; Zulu |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 127 | 121 |
| Program funds ($000) | 3,863 | 3,880 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Now in its second decade as a democracy, South Africa has emerged as a leader on the African continent, with political, economic, and cultural ties around the world. The country's first democratically-elected government under its first president, Nelson Mandela, achieved significant progress on issues of nation-building and reconciliation. South Africa's second president, Thabo Mbeki, has focused on economic growth and ensuring that government services have a direct impact on poverty.

South Africa has a productive, industrialized economy with robust manufacturing, electronics, commerce, service, and agriculture sectors. However, the country continues to struggle with the legacy of apartheid and the challenge of achieving its full social and economic development potential. Despite the nation's abundant wealth, half the population lives below the national poverty line and 40 percent are unemployed. Creating jobs, developing human resources, and tackling HIV/AIDS are three of the most pressing challenges the nation faces.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The government is committed to strengthening the educational system and is very supportive of the Peace Corps. Volunteers work with government officials, teachers, and communities to instill a culture of learning and service as well as to ensure the delivery of quality education, based on a revised national curriculum, in schools and rural communities. The education project operates in predominantly black, rural, primary schools. The health and HIV/AIDS project helps develop the capacity of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to better support community responses to the pandemic. South Africa has more people who are HIV positive or living with AIDS than any other country in the world. Volunteers play a significant role in developing the human and organizational capacity of NGOs and community-based organizations to make meaningful contributions to this pressing development issue. Recent policy changes and the advent of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief have created new partnerships for Volunteers in this project. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers work as subject matter specialists at educational development support centers. They conduct workshops for teachers from as many as 50 schools in their geographical jurisdiction. Volunteers assigned to primary schools work with teachers to improve the quality of math, science, life skills and English instruction.

South Africa's Department of Education has mandated that, beginning in fourth grade, instruction in all subjects is to shift from the local language to English. Because many teachers are not comfortable using English for instruction, this provides a significant opportunity for Volunteers to assist them in the classroom and in their teaching preparation.

Volunteers are valued for their ability to secure resources and create teaching materials. Several Volunteers have been able to obtain for their schools free computers and software from donors such as the Dell Foundation and Microsoft. Volunteers also help teachers incorporate contemporary community issues and locally-available resources into their lesson plans to make sessions more relevant. This practical orientation—using bottle caps for math or native plant specimens for biology—adds considerable value to the quality of teaching that otherwise tends to favor memorization and theoretical learning.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

In addition to working with community-based organizations on HIV/AIDS prevention and relief, Volunteers also work with officials from the Department of Social Development, which is actively addressing the pandemic in rural areas. Volunteer projects benefit youth, orphans, vulnerable children, and their often elderly caretakers, who are innocent victims of the pandemic. Volunteers also excel in linking organizations and mobilizing youth and leaders in the community to support HIV prevention and relief activities.

Last year, Volunteers reached 2,260 youth through community outreach activities promoting abstinence; trained 160 peer youth educators and adults in HIV prevention approaches; provided direct support to 850 orphans and vulnerable children; trained 70 caretakers of orphans, and provided technical assistance in strategic planning to 16 community-based organizations involved in HIV/AIDS work.

*"As long as you continue to search, believe, and remain open to possibility in spite of all the setbacks, you will ultimately find exactly what you were looking for... and a whole lot more."*

South Africa Volunteer
Education Sector

*President Bush presents Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Angela Haerre An the President's Volunteer Service Award in May 2007*

# Suriname

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1995–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Paramaribo |
| Population | 449,200 |
| Annual per capita income | $2,540 |
| GDP growth | 5.1% |
| Foreign direct investment | Not available |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 10% |
| Infant mortality rate | 30 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 91%<br>Measles: 83% |
| Access to an improved water source | 92% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.9% |
| Religions | Hinduism; Islam; Roman Catholicism<br>Dutch Reformed; Judaism; Baha'i;<br>several other Christian denominations |
| Official language | Dutch |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 43 | 41 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,791 | 1,817 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Suriname installed a freely elected Parliament and inaugurated a democratically chosen president in 1991. In August 2005, the National Assembly elected Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan as president for a five-year term. Suriname hopes to increase international investment to generate greater economic opportunities and employment. Suriname's centralized system of government has traditionally focused on the capital of Paramaribo, generating dependency among the indigenous and tribal peoples of Suriname's Amazon region. However, decentralization efforts by the new government and international and nongovernmental organizations are focusing attention on the sustainable development of the country's remote interior.

Suriname is sparsely populated, with most of its inhabitants living in urban and semi-urban areas along the coast. Approximately 72,000 Maroons and 18,000 Amerindians—the principal inhabitants of Suriname's interior rain forest—face many challenges to their socioeconomic development. Principal among these challenges is the lack of infrastructure for communication and transportation.

The economy is primarily based on resource extraction. Suriname's main exports are gold, bauxite, timber, fish, and bananas. While the economy has experienced promising steady growth over the past few years, more than 85 percent of Surinamese still live below the poverty line.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

In 1995, the government of Suriname requested the Peace Corps' assistance in rural community development. Since that time, more than 250 Volunteers have served in Suriname. During the past 11 years, the Peace Corps programs have addressed broad development issues, including community development and nonformal rural community education. Currently, the program focuses on business development and health and HIV/AIDS. The Peace Corps provides assistance in urban, rural, and the Amerindian and Maroon communities in the interior. Volunteers work in community organizing, resource identification, project planning, income generation, life skills, adult education, and capacity building for local nongovernmental organizations.

In 2006, Upper Suriname was devastated by flooding, affecting more than 35,000 people. Because of their organizational abilities, knowledge of the area, and language and cross-cultural skills, Volunteers were requested by the government to assist with relief efforts. Volunteers helped identify community needs and documented the disaster's impact through photographs. This information was crucial

to the work of the Suriname's national crisis team and the International Red Cross.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers support income-generating activities for individuals and organized groups and work to strengthen business practices such as simple bookkeeping and organizational structure.

Volunteers also assist their communities in attracting tourists as Suriname becomes an increasingly popular tourist destination. One Volunteer helped his community open a gift shop that caters to the many tourists visiting that region of the country.

Another Volunteer worked with a women's group in a region without industry to create an income-generating project by importing bread from the capital city. The group members attended a series of bookkeeping classes taught by the Volunteer, and the Volunteer helped the women apply for grants to build their own bread ovens so they could begin to sell bread directly.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers support various health-sector providers in carrying out health education and prevention, including HIV/AIDS awareness. Peace Corps/Suriname collaborates with the Ministry of Public Health, which is responsible for overall health planning and services. Volunteers also work with quasi-governmental groups such as the Medical Mission and the Regional Health Service, which have primary responsibility for serving the healthcare needs of the interior and coastal populations of the country respectively. Volunteers support information technology planning in the health sector, and help the Medical Mission distribute health information throughout the interior.

Recently, a group of Volunteers provided health education lessons about personal hygiene, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention, and other life skills to more than 400 schoolchildren. Another Volunteer helped a group of schoolchildren create and perform a skit for a contest to increase HIV/AIDS awareness. The schoolchildren won the contest and used the prize money to create two murals in the community about HIV/AIDS prevention.

*"What I have found most amazing about living in a community as a Peace Corps Volunteer is how a foreign land with a foreign culture and a foreign language somehow becomes, over a short period of time, familiar and indeed cherished to the point where every time you return, you're coming home."*

Suriname Volunteer
Business Development Sector

# Swaziland

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1969–1996<br>2003–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Mbabane |
| Population | 1 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,280 |
| GDP growth | 1.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $68 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 19%<br>Female: 22% |
| Infant mortality rate | 110 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 83%<br>Measles: 70% |
| Access to an improved water source | 87% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 38.8% |
| Religions | Protestantism: 35%<br>Zionism: 30%<br>Roman Catholicism: 25%<br>Other: 9%<br>Islam: 1% |
| Official languages | English<br>siSwati |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 40 | 39 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,861 | 1,882 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Swaziland became independent on September 6, 1968. Though Swaziland's first post-independence elections were held in May 1972, King Sobhuza II repealed the constitution and dissolved parliament in 1973, imposing a state of emergency in which he assumed all powers of government and prohibited all political parties and trade unions from operating. In January 1979, a new parliament was convened, chosen partly through elections and partly through direct appointment by the king. Following King Sobhuza II's death in August 1982, power was concentrated in the Liqoqo, a traditional advisory body. The current monarch, King Mswati III was enthroned in April 1986. Shortly thereafter, he abolished the Liqoqo, and in 1987, a new parliament was elected and a new cabinet appointed. An underground political party, the People's United Democratic Party, emerged in 1988 and called for democratic reforms. In response to this political threat and to growing calls for greater government accountability, the king and prime minister initiated an ongoing national debate on the political future of Swaziland. In 2005, King Mswati III ratified Swaziland's first constitution in over 30 years, which went into effect in February 2006. Although steady external and internal pressure has been exerted on the king, he continues to hold supreme executive, legislative, and judicial powers and is one of the world's few absolute monarchs.

In this small, landlocked country, Swazis traditionally have been subsistence farmers and herders; some now work in the growing urban economy and in government. Manufacturing consists of a number of agro-processing factories, and more recently, garment and textile factories. Exports of soft-drink concentrate, sugar, wood pulp and lumber are the main sources of hard currency. Tourism is also important economically, attracting more than 424,000 visitors annually. Swaziland is heavily dependent on South Africa, from which it receives most of its imports. South Africa and the European Union are the major customers for Swazi exports.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps was invited to work in Swaziland in 1969, a few months after the country gained independence from Great Britain. Over the next 28 years, 1,400 Volunteers served in Swaziland, working in the education and agriculture sectors. The Peace Corps closed its program in Swaziland in 1996.

In light of the devastating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic on the people of Swaziland, the Peace Corps reentered Swaziland in 2003 with a program focusing on

HIV/AIDS prevention and impact mitigation. In 2006, the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS among pregnant women was 39.2 percent. Approximately 70,000 children have been orphaned as a result of AIDS and life expectancy has dropped to about 33 years of age. Despite King Mswati III's declaration of AIDS as a national crisis, there is no evidence of a reduction in the infection rate. It is estimated that Swaziland's HIV prevalence rate is the highest in the world.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The health and HIV/AIDS program assists the government of Swaziland in HIV/AIDS risk reduction and impact mitigation, with a focus on youth. Volunteers assist Swazi teachers in primary and secondary schools. Classes are conducted in HIV/AIDS prevention through life-skills curriculum developed by Volunteers. The curriculum emphasizes goal-setting, decision-making and peer pressure avoidance. Volunteers also use sports, drama, music and art to engage and instruct Swazi students.

Volunteers plan and implement week-long day camps that recruit community young people who are out of school. The camps provide educational sessions on HIV/AIDS, arts and crafts activities, and involve guest speakers from the community; Discussion periods on topics like assault prevention provide young girls, in particular, with valuable information and resources.

The devastation of AIDS is seen most clearly in the faces of Swaziland's orphans. Volunteers are active at neighborhood care points where orphans and vulnerable children receive a daily meal of donated food. Volunteers have initiated vegetable gardening projects to supplement the staple maize meal provided to these young people; they also teach the basics of trench gardening to enable communities to sustain vegetable yields during times of drought.

Volunteers are actively involved in community capacity building. They partner with KaGogo ("Grandmother's house") center managers to transfer critical management, problem solving, and data processing skills. They work closely with the managers to compile HIV/AIDS statistics on the community and use that data to plan and implement appropriate prevention interventions.

Volunteers are also active in community mobilization. Volunteers facilitate visits by mobile voluntary testing-and-counseling vans, and assist those who test positive to initiate anti-retroviral therapy by linking them to services. Volunteers encourage open dialogue to oppose the prevailing stigma and denial surrounding AIDS.

Peace Corps/Swaziland participates in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Last year, Volunteers worked with groups of in- and out-of-school girls and boys to assist them in HIV prevention activities and life skills. In conjunction with the mentoring, Volunteers conducted a national youth conference themed "Behavior Change for an HIV-Free Youth". It featured inspirational Swazi speakers, a poetry contest, and entertainment focusing on HIV prevention messages for an audience of about 200.

*"We are indeed humbled by the continued response, willingness and readiness of our Peace Corps colleagues towards offering us support and encouragement, especially during these trying times in our history."*

Her Royal Highness Inkhosikati Make LaNtenteza
Swaziland

# Tanzania

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–1969<br>1979–1991<br>1991–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Dar es Salaam |
| Population | 38 million |
| Annual per capita income | $340 |
| GDP growth | 7.0% |
| Foreign direct investment | $473 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 22%<br>Female 38% |
| Infant mortality rate | 76 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 95%<br>Measles: 94% |
| Access to an improved water source | 92% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 7.0% |
| Religions | Islam: 45%<br>Christianity: 45%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 10% |
| Official languages | Kiswahili<br>English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 147 | 169 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,831 | 2,952 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Tanzania has made some progress in restoring macro-economic stability during the past several years, but widespread and persistent poverty is still a challenge. Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 162 out of 177 on the 2006 United Nations Human Development Index. Once poverty was concentrated in rural areas, but urban poverty is now increasing. The rising rates of HIV infection and an unpredictable influx of refugees have aggravated the situation, and more than 36 percent of Tanzanians live below the poverty line. There is a small, but growing manufacturing sector and agricultural products account for approximately 85 percent of exports. Inefficient land and labor markets, deteriorating environmental conditions, slow progress in improving infrastructure, and limited human capacity continue to be major challenges.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps arrived in Tanzania in 1962. Since then, Volunteers have served in agriculture, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Their work continues to be highly regarded by the government, and is seen as an important contribution to Tanzania's efforts to achieve community and national development. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Tanzania has a shortage of math and science teachers. Volunteers are helping address this critical need with their work in secondary schools, teaching science, mathematics, and information and communication technology to students and, recently, in teacher colleges as well. Volunteers prepare students for national examinations and promote the development of critical thinking skills. They collaborate with teachers to develop subject resource materials; organize math and science clubs; facilitate HIV/AIDS seminars and girls' empowerment workshops; and promote environmental awareness in schools.

One Volunteer, in addition to teaching advanced-level physics, also coordinated a makeover of his school's library. Working with teachers and students, the Volunteer helped redesign the library to accommodate a larger percentage of the school population. The Volunteer also led an effort to acquire new books and computers, which were placed in the library for both student and teacher use.

### Environment

Volunteers raise awareness of environmental conservation; assist village communities in effectively managing their natural resources; and promote sustainable agriculture practices. They teach soil improvement techniques, agroforestry (including tree planting and conserving indigenous community natural forests), beekeeping, and fish farming. They work to improve vegetable gardening, and encourage live fencing (planting trees around home gardens instead of using wooden fencing or other nonsustainable methods). Volunteers teach farmers how to construct and use appropriate technologies, such as energy-efficient stoves. They also promote improved livestock practices, including raising goats, cows, and pigs.

Volunteers engage youth in environmental education activities through school clubs, eco-camps, and experiential education. Particular emphasis is given to working with women and youth. Several Volunteers teach the principles of permaculture. These practices encourage rural communities to develop and maintain well-managed, intensively prepared garden beds near their households. The goal is to provide each household a means of producing most of their daily requirement of vitamins and minerals. Volunteers also work toward poverty alleviation by introducing small-scale, income-generating activities to communities.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

The health and HIV/AIDS education project was initiated as a way to help Tanzanians to reduce the spread of the pandemic. The project empowers young people to make healthy choices about their lives. Volunteers train Tanzanian teachers and community leaders in life skills and HIV/AIDS awareness using content and participatory methods, increasing their ability to effectively teach about these critical issues. Volunteers also train peer educators who, in turn, work with other youth to foster increased HIV/AIDS awareness using drama, discussion groups, and organized debates.

Volunteers celebrate international commemoration days in their communities such as the annual World AIDS Day candle-lighting ceremony. Volunteers have also formed support groups for people living with AIDS and conducted trainings to show group members how to improve nutrition through the use of permaculture and home-gardening techniques.

One Volunteer recruited 13 nurses and one doctor from the village's health center to promote health information to various groups throughout the community. The doctor and nurses presented information on health issues to women's groups and to students at school events. These information sessions provided an opportunity for community members to ask the medical staff questions outside the formal clinic setting.

*"I am happy that I had an opportunity to work with the Peace Corps as a Volunteer. It has been an amazing experience visualizing how I have contributed to the efforts improving my rural community and their livelihoods."*

Tanzania Volunteer
Environment sector

*Peace Corps Volunteers experience diverse people and landscapes around the world and bring those experiences home to the United States*

# Thailand

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Bangkok |
| Population | 64 million |
| Annual per capita income | $2,720 |
| GDP growth | 4.5% |
| Foreign direct investment | $4.5 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 5%<br>Female: 9% |
| Infant mortality rate | 18 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 98%<br>Measles: 96% |
| Access to an improved water source | 95% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.5% |
| Religions | Buddhism: 94%<br>Islam: 4%<br>Brahmanism; Christianity;<br>Hinduism; Other |
| Official language | Thai |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 93 | 86 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,404 | 2,404 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Thailand has a constitutional monarchy. The king has little direct power, but he has great moral authority and is a symbol of national identity and unity. Thailand's 76 provinces include the metropolis of greater Bangkok. While Bangkok's governor is popularly elected, leaders in the remaining provinces are career civil servants appointed by the Ministry of Interior. Thailand has a free-enterprise economy and welcomes foreign investment. Thailand's economy continues its robust recovery from the Asian financial crisis in 1997.

While the political system has been relatively stable for the past decade or so, Thai leadership of the country at the national level has experienced considerable turmoil over the past two years. Following months of political unrest, the Thai military staged a coup on September 19, 2006, and a military junta assumed control of the government and installed an appointed prime minister. A new constitution was drafted, and a national election was held in December 2007 to elect a civilian government. The election, deemed free and fair by international observers, resulted in the People's Power Party winning a simple majority of the seats—but not the minimum number required to form a new government. Negotiations are ongoing to form a coalition government. The Thai National Election Commission anticipates that the new government will be seated in early 2008. These developments are not expected to have a negative impact on the Peace Corps' program.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps has collaborated with the Thai government and Thai communities for over 45 years. Volunteers have worked in education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, the environment, and rural community development. Currently, Volunteers are assigned to projects in business development and education. Volunteers also helped with post-tsunami reconstruction efforts in 2005 and 2006.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

The Thai government initiated historical change in the local government administration system in 1994, when it passed the Tambon Council and Tambon Administrative Organization Act. This initiative decentralized power and supported initiatives to promote greater economic development at the local community level.

To support the government's initiative, in 2003, the Peace Corps developed a community-based project to help rural communities develop income-generating enterprises through the Tambon Administrative Organization; the program was reviewed and revised in 2007. Volunteers share experiences, strategies, and resources with communities at the grassroots level. They focus on capacity building within community groups, including small business groups, women's groups, youth groups, and farmers' groups to improve the quality of products and services.

One 50+ Volunteer worked with the people of her isolated mountain community to transform their annual cultural festival into a tourist attraction. She helped translate and prepare books, pamphlets, and a museum exhibit on the history of the festival; her later efforts helped further develop and sustain the community's potential as a unique tourist destination.

### Education

To address Thailand's expressed needs in education, Peace Corps/Thailand initiated a teacher collaboration and community outreach project in 2003. This project focuses on reforming education and improving the quality of life through sustainable community development initiatives. Volunteers and their Thai co-workers collaborate in English language classrooms to support the government's 1999 National Education Act, and they help develop and enhance teachers' student-centered instruction skills.

Another 50+ Volunteer, a highly experienced teacher, worked with school leaders in her area to reduce class sizes so students could receive more individual attention. She also worked with her counterpart teachers to devise more effective ways of teaching by developing creative teaching aids.

*"I would like to congratulate the government and people of the United States for the Peace Corps/Thailand 45th anniversary celebration, the collaborative endeavor which continues to strengthen the ties that bind our two nations."*

HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn
Thailand

*Peace Corps Volunteers have the opportunity to share in the rich cultures and traditions of the countries in which they serve*

# Togo

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1962–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Lomé |
| Population | 6 million |
| Annual per capita income | $350 |
| GDP growth | 2.8% |
| Foreign direct investment | $3 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 31%<br>Female: 62% |
| Infant mortality rate | 78 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 71%<br>Measles: 70% |
| Access to an improved water source | 80% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 4.1% |
| Religions | Christianity: 47%<br>Animism: 33%<br>Islam: 14%<br>Other: 6% |
| Official language | French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 140 | 135 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,900 | 2,945 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Togo attained independence from France in 1960. The first elected president was killed in a coup d'état in 1963. In 1967, General Gnassingbé Eyadéma became president until his death in 2005. A power struggle gripped Togo. On May 2, 2005, Faure Gnassingbe, the son of the previous president, was declared winner of the presidential election. In 2006, the government and opposition parties signed an agreement to form a national unity government. Togo held legislative elections on October 14, 2007. The elections were declared peaceful and transparent by international observers, a prerequisite for restoration of relations with the European Union and other donor countries.

Togo remains a poor nation, ranking 142 of 177 countries on the 2007 United Nations Human Development Index. The economy suffers from the aftermath of political instability. Signs of revival are present, but more is needed to move the economy to stable footing. Its coastal location, harbor, and infrastructure in the capital, Lomé, hold potential for economic growth. Agriculture contributes nearly 40 percent of the country's GDP and employs 70 percent of the workers. Corn, sorghum, millet, cassava, yams, cowpeas, and rice are the major food crops. Cash crops include coffee, cocoa, and cotton. Industry and manufacturing account for a quarter of Togo's GDP.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps began its work in Togo in 1962, and more than 2,300 Volunteers have served since the program's inception. Volunteers have a successful history of collaboration and involvement with the Togolese people at all levels. Their efforts build upon counterpart relationships and emphasize low-cost solutions that make maximum use of local resources. Partnering with local and international organizations is an important component of Volunteer project activities. Volunteers work to promote self-sufficiency in business development, education, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Togo's informal sector offers the best opportunity for economic development. The business development project improves basic business and entrepreneurial skills, fostering opportunities for job creation and growth. Volunteers are assigned to local credit unions or nongovernmental

organizations (NGOs) and offer business training and consulting to members to improve their business skills. Workshops covering accounting, finance, marketing, and feasibility studies are offered to groups of tailors, retailers, and other business people. Working with youth and women are also program priorities.

One Volunteer worked with a community development association to help the staff improve project organization, development and implementation. The association provides programming such as assistance to women's groups, computer training, HIV/AIDS education, and a savings and loan program. By concentrating on building organizational capacity, the association was able to more effectively serve the community.

### Education

Women are severely underrepresented in the country's development process. Volunteers work with community groups to develop an understanding of the importance and benefits of girls' education to increase their access to formal and nonformal education. They work with teachers to improve retention rates for female students. The project also addresses the educational needs of apprentices and the trafficking of children.

One Volunteer, in collaboration with representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, created a mentoring center for school-aged girls. At the center, girls received training in study skills and life skills as well as opportunities to participate in income generating activities.

### Environment

While the Togolese economy is based on agricultural production, traditional farming practices cannot meet the needs of Togo's growing population. Soils are severely degraded and increasing demands for fields and fuel wood are resulting in the removal of trees and vegetation from the land. Volunteers work with farmers, youth and NGOs to introduce sustainable farming practices that will improve farm yields and reduce environmental degradation. Volunteers are also working with their communities on reforestation and tree nurseries.

One Volunteer established 11 tree nurseries, which assisted 12 different communities to increase the rate of tree planting and better understand the consequences of deforestation.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers train and supervise community health workers and peer educators focusing on preventive health practices. They help local health personnel promote community health activities that address HIV/AIDS, malaria, nutrition, and community management of rural pharmacies. Activities addressing HIV/AIDS have grown from awareness raising and prevention to include palliative care for persons living with HIV/AIDS and care for orphans and vulnerable children. Projects include constructing family latrines, wells, and health huts—small dispensaries created in remote villages to help with simple health issues and childbirth.

One Volunteer worked with community members to create a sports center at which to provide lessons in Aikido, a Japanese sport and nonviolent form of self-defense. The young people who participated in the Aikido program taught lessons on life skills, the prevention of HIV/AIDS and were also trained to serve as peer educators and role models in the community.

*"The Peace Corps has given me firsthand perspective on how others in the world live. I feel that through this experience I have been endowed with a sense of responsibility—which I gladly accept—that wherever I am or whatever I am doing, a part of my life must be given towards helping those less fortunate than I."*

Togo Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS sector

# Tonga

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1967–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Nuku'alofa |
| Population | 102,300 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,970 |
| GDP growth | 2.3% |
| Foreign direct investment | 5 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | 1% |
| Infant mortality rate | 20 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 99%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 100% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religion | Christianity |
| Official languages | English<br>Tongan |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 38 | 48 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,485 | 1,564 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since the adoption of its constitution in 1875, the Kingdom of Tonga has been a hereditary monarchy. The past few decades have seen the biggest changes in Tonga, especially in its international status. In 1975, Tonga developed economic and political ties with the European Economic Community (now the European Union); in 2000, Tonga became a full member of the United Nations and adopted the Millennium Declaration; and in June 2007, Tonga became the 151st and newest member of the World Trade Organization. These events led to an inflow of foreign aid from developed nations and international agencies, enabling the country to improve social services and build essential infrastructure.

Most Tongans are dependent on subsistence agriculture and fishing, which they supplement with remittances from relatives abroad. Reliance on agriculture and fishing depletes already scarce natural resources and degrades topsoil, rain forests, coastal reefs, and freshwater supplies. With almost 40 percent of its population under age 14 and a sluggish economy, Tonga faces many challenges in providing its youth with educational and economic opportunities. The government of Tonga is heavily dependent on development support for capital investments. With the sharp increase in government operating costs due to increased salaries for civil servants, it will have even fewer internal resources available for infrastructure development.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

At the request of the Ministry of Education, Peace Corps projects focus on preparing Tongan youth to become productive members of their communities. The education sector programs work primarily in rural areas with primary school students, teachers, and community associations to strengthen English literacy and support educational outreach. Business development programs address the needs of out-of-school youth, entrepreneurs, and community associations by building capacity to initiate and manage small businesses. Both programs help prepare young people by improving educational and professional opportunities through English literacy, leadership, and business and information and communications technology.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers work with students, business owners, service providers, and schools to establish and manage small businesses to generate income. Through the support of Volunteers,

these small businesses are developing improved business practices, better products, and greater community employment.

One Volunteer collaborated with the Ministry of Labor, Commerce, and Industries and the Tongan Chamber of Commerce to establish a jointly administered business development services unit (BDS). The BDS is strengthening existing small businesses and promoting development of new businesses. BDS has established coordination among existing suppliers and users of business advisory services, and it has developed subsidized basic business advisory services for micro-enterprises and new entrepreneurs.

The BDS also connects individuals in the private sector with those in the government. This facilitates greater participation in the regulatory reform process that addresses legislative issues that are impeding new business startups. In one instance, a Volunteer identified a restriction in new legislation that prohibited any youth under the age of 18 from obtaining a business license. This rule conflicted with the Tongan government's desire to promote youth micro-enterprise. Through the BDS, the Volunteer brought this issue to the attention of the Ministry of Youth, Training, Employment, and Sports.

### Education

Volunteers are assigned to mostly rural areas throughout Tonga to provide direct instruction to preschool and primary school students. They also co-plan and co-teach with village teachers. They obtain, develop, and apply culturally appropriate English language instruction materials, and they design and implement activities that encourage students to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Volunteers also engage students, schools, and community partners in participatory processes to identify and mobilize resources to support community-driven development initiatives.

One Volunteer, in collaboration with the primary school teachers in his village, developed a resource guide for Tongan teachers to prepare sixth-grade students for the national secondary school entrance exam. To date, Tongan teachers in more than 20 schools in Vava'u and Tongatapu have implemented lessons using this resource guide to improve the English communication and comprehension skills of more than 500 Tongan students.

*"The Peace Corps experience is different for everybody, and that is the beauty of it. I would not trade this experience for any other at this point in my life, so many doors have opened for me, but most importantly I realized what really matters to me."*

Tonga Volunteer
Business Development Sector

# Turkmenistan

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–2001<br>2002–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Ashgabat |
| Population | 5 million |
| Annual per capita income | $8,500 |
| GDP growth | 6% |
| Foreign direct investment | $62 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 1%<br>Female: 2% |
| Infant mortality rate | 81 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 97%<br>Measles: 97% |
| Access to an improved water source | 93% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | <0.1% |
| Religions | Islam: 89%<br>Eastern Orthodoxy: 9%<br>Other: 2% |
| Official language | Turkmen |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 96 | 104 |
| Program funds ($000) | 1,961 | 2,029 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since Turkmenistan's independence in 1991, the country has been controlled by the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan. Saparmurat Niyazov (Turkmenbashi), the appointed leader for life, died on December 21, 2006, with no predetermined successor. Former Minister of Health Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov assumed the interim leadership position, and was the favorite among five other candidates leading up to the February 2007 election. While the presidential election was the first ever with more than once choice on the ballot, only candidates approved by the regime competed. As anticipated, Berdymukhammedov won the election and was inaugurated on February 14, 2007. Turkmenistan's new leader is expected to keep Turkmenistan's officially declared neutral status, though Berdymukhammedov has promised to reverse some of the most unpopular decisions made by Niyazov, particularly in healthcare, education, and access to information. Turkmenistan's economic future under new leadership likely will continue to have Soviet tendencies, as major industries and public services are almost entirely provided by government-controlled entities. Though Turkmenistan is one of the world's largest producers of cotton and reportedly has one of the largest reserves of natural gas, developing these natural resources remains challenging due to continued dependence on Russian ownership of gas pipeline export routes and weak cotton harvests.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Since gaining independence in 1991, Turkmenistan has experienced broad political, economic, and social changes, prompting the need for international assistance in training its professionals. Currently, Peace Corps Volunteers work in two projects: education, which provides training to English teachers and schoolchildren; and health and HIV/AIDS, which trains health professionals and grassroots communities.

The Peace Corps program was suspended following the events of September 11, 2001, but after a favorable reassessment in February 2002, Volunteers returned to Turkmenistan in April 2002 to complete their service. Currently, Volunteers are placed at sites throughout the country serving in schools and clinics and working with a broad base of community members.

Recently, the president proclaimed that all schools must teach English beginning in the 2007-2008 academic year. To date, the government has proposed more rural site placements for Volunteers in underserved schools just beginning their English-teaching curricula.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Volunteers focus on teaching English as a foreign language, including working in classrooms and training teachers. Many Volunteers have regular classroom hours co-teaching with their host country counterparts and others help lead after-school English clubs.

Several Volunteers helped coordinate an English teachers' conference, which was held during summer vacation. The community-led conference convened English teachers from all five provinces to share and discuss new methods to improve the English curriculum in their local schools.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

A lack of supplies, training, and technology has contributed to a decline in basic healthcare services since Turkmenistan's independence. Most Volunteers work at local clinics in rural and city settings, developing trainings on a wide variety of topics, including healthy lifestyles, communicable disease prevention, and maternal and child health.

One Volunteer helped her community design and paint 10 large wall panels. Each panel depicted various scenes involving proper infant healthcare. The panels were assembled into a mural and installed on walls surrounding the outside of the local health clinic where the Volunteer works. The mural has increased traffic to the clinic; individuals now come from all over the village to view the mural and then come into the clinic to talk to the doctors and to get more information.

*"Implementation of [Peace Corps] programs occupies a significant place in the bilateral cooperation of Turkmenistan and the United States of America and in the friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries."*

President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov
Turkmenistan

*Education Volunteers teach English to students in Turkmenistan*

# Uganda

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1964–1973<br>1991–1999<br>2000–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Education<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Kampala |
| Population | 29 million |
| Annual per capita income | $280 |
| GDP growth | 6.6% |
| Foreign direct investment | $257 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate | Male: 23%<br>Female: 42% |
| Infant mortality rate | 79 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 87%<br>Measles: 91% |
| Access to an improved water source | 60% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 4.1% |
| Religions | Christianity: 66%<br>Indigenous beliefs: 18%<br>Islam: 16% |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 95 | 96 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,438 | 2,322 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In Uganda, economic change has accompanied political reform. In 2006, the country held its first multi-party presidential elections since President Yoweri Museveni rose to power in the mid-1980s. The government's strong efforts to reform Uganda's educational system, promote sustainable growth in key sectors, and move to a more liberalized, private sector-driven market economy have, over the past decade, encouraged international investment and involvement from international development agencies. Corruption is an increasingly significant issue with the potential to slow economic growth as investors and donors turn to more transparent economies.

Uganda has substantial natural resources, including fertile soils, regular rainfall, and sizable deposits of copper and cobalt. Agriculture is the most important sector of the economy, employing more than 80 percent of the workforce. Coffee is the primary export crop, accounting for more than half of export revenues. Since 1987, the government—with the support of donors—has rehabilitated and stabilized the economy by undertaking currency reform, raising producer prices on export crops, increasing prices of petroleum products, and improving civil service wages. The policy changes are intended to reduce inflation and boost production and export earnings. Significant donor assistance has been vital in supporting growth policies.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Currently, Peace Corps/Uganda has an education project and a health project focusing on HIV/AIDS. These projects are based on the interests and needs expressed by the government of Uganda and the communities where Volunteers work. In response to the AIDS pandemic, the Ugandan government and civil society groups launched a nationwide, multi-sector effort to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. Uganda has more than one million AIDS orphans, and two million additional children have parents who are HIV positive. Thus, Volunteers partner with Ugandans both on HIV/AIDS education and prevention and on providing community support and care to those affected by the disease. All Volunteers in Uganda are trained to support HIV/AIDS initiatives.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Education

Improving the quality of education, especially at the primary school level, has long been a priority of the government. With the introduction of universal primary education, the demand for primary teachers has doubled and, in some locations, even

tripled. Each Volunteer works with a Ugandan counterpart to train teachers in teaching methodology, train school administrators in effective instructional leadership, and work with school communities to improve community and school relations. More broadly, Volunteers help improve the education of students by establishing children's clubs, conducting teacher workshops, and working with teacher and community organizations. Volunteers have worked to mobilize communities to connect with and support their primary schools, and they help develop links between schools and their communities through a variety of projects with a particular emphasis on providing support to orphans and vulnerable children and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Volunteers assist the Ministry of Education to develop and support information and communications technology infrastructure at teachers' colleges, in schools, and in their communities. Overall this effort has resulted in the establishment of new computer centers at two colleges, six primary schools, and two community centers.

Fourteen Volunteers and their counterparts worked with over 75 school administrators to develop school improvement plans and other projects. Sixty-four school and community development projects were initiated and 24 were completed. Seventeen Volunteers worked with 161 school administrators on developing skills in supporting teachers to be better educators.

Volunteers also work with different organizations to provide support to people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, and vulnerable children. Last year, Volunteers provided training to almost 300 people living with HIV/AIDS on ways to generate additional income for themselves and their families. Nearly 800 orphans and vulnerable children benefited from Volunteer projects that focused on improving both health and educational opportunities for these children.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers are assigned to small, community-based organizations, hospitals, and government health centers. They help these organizations provide information and support to people, families, and communities infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work on basic health promotion and HIV/AIDS prevention, provide holistic care to orphans and vulnerable children, and those living with HIV/AIDS; and they organize support groups for women and youth. This comprehensive project also works to develop income-generating projects and activities, particularly for individuals in rural areas who have been impacted by HIV/AIDS.

Volunteers and their counterparts are all trained in organizational development and strategic planning. This training, along with ongoing support by Volunteers, has improved the capacity of at least 12 organizations to provide better care and support to orphans and vulnerable children. Volunteers and their counterparts have worked together to provide nearly 3,000 of these young people with better access to schools, nutrition, water, and insecticide-treated bed nets. Volunteers and their counterparts use sports, including soccer, baseball, and softball as a means to draw youth together for healthy entertainment. These activities provide Volunteers and their counterparts an opportunity to share important life skills and HIV/AIDS-awareness messages with large groups of youth. Volunteers and their counterparts also host life-skills day camps to teach youth how to pursue healthy and proactive life styles. These camps reached nearly 2,800 youth with life skills and HIV/AIDS prevention messages.

*"I'm excited to see the difference between the Uganda I found when I arrived and the Uganda that I will leave after my service. I hope the work that I have done will have had a hand in changing Uganda for the better."*

Uganda Volunteer
Education Sector

# Ukraine

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1992–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Business Development<br>Education<br>Youth |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Kiev |
| Population | 47 million |
| Annual per capita income | $1,520 |
| GDP growth | 2.6% |
| Foreign direct investment | $7.808 billion |
| Adult illiteracy rate | <0.5% |
| Infant mortality rate | 13 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 99%<br>Measles: 99% |
| Access to an improved water source | 100% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 1.4% |
| Religions | Ukrainian Orthodoxy<br>Ukrainian Greek Catholicism<br>Judaism; Roman Catholicism; Islam |
| Official language | Ukrainian |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 334 | 294 |
| Program funds ($000) | 5,352 | 5,178 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

With a population of 48 million, Ukraine is Europe's second largest country. Following its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, successive Ukrainian governments allowed sporadic growth of civil society and the development of some democratic institutions. This process peaked in late 2004 with the Orange Revolution, a series of protests and political events resulting from the 2004 elections. Since the new government assumed power in January 2005, Ukrainian society has become more open in press freedom, tolerance of criticism of the government, and rights of opposition political parties to operate. However, the election results of March 2006 have cast uncertainty on the future of Ukraine's integration into the European Union (EU).

In villages and urban centers, millions of Ukrainians lack dependable supplies of water, heat, and electricity. They also lack access to quality educational, social, and medical services. People throughout Ukraine are affected by poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, and the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

The Peace Corps program helps communities build necessary skills as they seek possible integration into the EU and the broader global economy. Volunteers teach English, share effective business practices, and develop greater opportunities for young people. Their work positively affects Ukrainians' readiness to build democracy and a market economy and to communicate and transact business on a global scale.

Working in more than 226 Ukrainian communities with youth, teachers, activists, and businesspeople, Volunteers challenge their students and colleagues to think independently, and they facilitate community improvement projects that address critical needs. In response to Ukraine's HIV epidemic, and with funds from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Volunteers and their counterparts are creating HIV prevention programs for young people in 32 highly affected communities across Ukraine.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Business Development

Volunteers help establish and strengthen cooperation among community members and groups, enabling them to effectively plan and implement social and economic development. Volunteers organize trainings on marketing, sales techniques, advertising, and public relations for entrepreneurs and business students. These help businesses to improve profitability

and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to achieve sustainability and expand services. Citizen involvement in local governance is encouraged through programs on inclusive budgeting processes, citizen information bureaus, community forums, and cooperative investment strategies.

One Volunteer, in collaboration with a local NGO, helped establish a store for community artisans to sell their products. Located near a popular tourist site, the store has enjoyed a steady stream of customer traffic. Recently, the president of Ukraine visited the store and expressed his enthusiasm about the development of such an endeavor to support the arts and preserve the traditional handicrafts of the region.

### Education

Volunteers work in educational institutions as English secondary school teachers, university teachers, and teacher trainers. By creating an interactive learning environment and by using contemporary methods and materials, Volunteers enhance students' and teachers' communication skills and encourage independent thinking and problem solving.

The priorities of the teaching English as a foreign language project focus on three aspects: teaching English to students at secondary schools; teaching English and other content-based courses to students at teaching colleges and universities; and providing in-service training for secondary school teachers on the job and at in-service teacher-training institutes and district education departments.

Secondary school Volunteers and interested village teachers hold regular professional trainings to improve language skills and promote communication-based methods in classroom teaching.

During the last school year, 50 Volunteers facilitated biweekly methodological trainings for inexperienced village English teachers, exposing them to effective new methods of teaching English. Volunteers received positive feedback and have been invited by the teachers to observe how the new methods are being used in the classroom.

### Youth

Currently 72 Volunteers work on youth development projects to help youth from disadvantaged communities develop skills to improve their ability to lead healthy lives, obtain gainful employment, and be active and responsible citizens. In May 2007, a memorandum of cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine; the Ministry for Family, Youth, and Sports; and the Peace Corps was signed, officially registering the project until 2013. Youth development Volunteers are assigned to 69 communities across Ukraine, working with schools and cooperating with youth centers, social services entities, youth NGOs, and orphanages. Volunteers also organize summer camps that promote active citizenry, initiate journalism programs, and implement Big Brother/Big Sister programs to mentor orphans and disadvantaged youth.

In collaboration with Ukrainian counterparts, one Volunteer founded a youth center to promote healthy lifestyles, meaningful recreation, and entrepreneurship in a small town in western Ukraine. The center provides a safe and healthy environment for educational and recreational activities for more than 2,500 youth from the town and four neighboring villages.

*Education Volunteer in the classroom in the Ukraine*

# Vanuatu

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1990–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Business Development<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Port Vila |
| Population | 211,400 |
| Annual per capita income | $1,620 |
| GDP growth | 2% |
| Foreign direct investment | 13 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate: | 26% |
| Infant mortality rate | 31 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 66%<br>Measles: 70% |
| Access to an improved water source | 60% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | Not available |
| Religion | Christianity |
| Official languages | Bislama; English; French |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 106 | 100 |
| Program funds ($000) | 2,560 | 2,605 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Vanuatu is an independent republic consisting of 83 islands in the Southwestern Pacific Ocean. Beginning in 1906, Vanuatu was governed under a special agreement between the British and the French, which divided the country and created separate systems of government and education. Upon gaining independence in 1980, the country united under one democratic government. However, with more than 100 local languages and a population spread over 65 inhabited islands, Vanuatu struggles to provide public services and education to its people.

The economy of Vanuatu is based primarily on subsistence or small-scale agriculture, which provides a living for most of the population. Copra and beef exports, fishing, offshore financial services, and tourism are the other main sources of revenue. Economic development is hindered by dependence on relatively few commodity exports, low market prices, vulnerability to natural disasters, long distances between main markets, and poor infrastructure. Although most of Vanuatu's population still lives in isolated rural areas, urbanization is increasing.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Peace Corps Volunteers contribute in very important ways to Vanuatu's national goal of increasing opportunities for Ni Vanuatu, particularly those living in rural areas. They support the work of development partners that include government departments and non-governmental organizations, as well as local institutions and communities. Ni Vanuatu counterparts work with Volunteers to build capacity and to make projects sustainable beyond the service of the Volunteer.

At the request of the government of Vanuatu, the Peace Corps is helping teachers implement improved methodologies for teaching literacy at the early primary school level. The program also provides teachers with training for nonformal community education and development activities. These activities focus on generating income, food security, sustainable agriculture and management of natural resources, conservation, promoting profit and nonprofit enterprises, and youth development. The Peace Corps is now in its third year of implementing a community health project, which focuses on developing health strategies at the community level, thereby reducing the need for costly curative services.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Volunteers promote sustainable farming practices and agroforestry to improve food security and income generation. Collaborating with national and international organizations, Volunteers help farmers develop export-quality crops, while also reinforcing traditional farming practices to ensure food security. Volunteers have developed a highly popular training program, called "Agriculture as a Business," for extension officers and agriculture instructors. This program has been adopted by the Department of Agriculture as part of its nationwide professional development program.

### Business Development

Volunteers work with rural and urban institutions facilitating training in business and organizational management, bookkeeping, credit management, cooperative philosophy, and product diversification. They work with organizations and individual entrepreneurs to conduct business feasibility studies, start small businesses, identify local and regional markets, and undertake small-scale processing of local resources. Volunteers have helped producer organizations to develop their institutional capabilities and understanding of market mechanisms, resulting in dramatic increases in the production of high value crops such as coffee and cocoa.

### Education

Volunteers serve in schools and community-based rural training centers. Volunteers work with disadvantaged students in secondary schools, teaching math, science, information technology, and English. They also enhance the quality of education through teacher trainings, curriculum and resource development, and school-based strategic planning.

In an effort to improve the capacity of primary school teachers to reverse declining rates of literacy, several Volunteers worked together to develop and implement the Ministry of Education's first in-service training program for teachers. The training focused on strengthening teaching skills and introduced new methodologies that teachers could use in their classrooms.

### Environment

Communities have a strong interest in improving the management of their natural resources, including coral reefs, forests, wildlife, and agricultural lands. Volunteers help communities promote sustainable land-use practices, develop natural resource management plans, establish conservation areas, promote ecotourism, and create conservation enterprises. Most activities promote conservation and sustainable use while generating income for community members.

More than a dozen Volunteers introduced a 'reef check' program in their communities to promote awareness and protection of nearby coral reefs. This program was so successful in drawing attention to the negative effects of pollution on the coral reefs that the Department of Fisheries decided to establish a national 'reef check' program to protect marine resources through out the island nation.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers help the government of Vanuatu reverse declining health indicators by strengthening village health committees and the capacity of government ministries to measure the incidence of poor health. Volunteers also help strengthen the ability of local health centers to promote good health practices and improve access to clean water and nutrition.

A group of Volunteers organized a census that was completed by traveling from house to house to collect population and demographic data. The data was then used by the Ministry of Health to predict future health care needs for the islands.

*"I would like to thank the Peace Corps for the increasing contributions of Peace Corps Volunteers, who have helped in a big way to improve the lives of the people in rural areas."*

Prime Minister Ham Lini
Republic of Vanuatu

# Zambia

| | |
|---|---|
| PROGRAM DATES | 1993–present |
| PROGRAM SECTORS | Agriculture<br>Education<br>Environment<br>Health and HIV/AIDS |

| | |
|---|---|
| Capital | Lusaka |
| Population | 12 million |
| Annual per capita income | $500 |
| GDP growth | 5.2% |
| Foreign direct investment | $259 million |
| Adult illiteracy rate: | Male: 24%<br>Female: 40% |
| Infant mortality rate | 102 per 1,000 live births |
| Immunization rate | DPT: 80%<br>Measles: 84% |
| Access to an improved water source | 58% |
| HIV/AIDS prevalence | 15.6% |
| Religions | Christianity<br>Indigenous beliefs<br>Islam<br>Hinduism |
| Official language | English |

ANTICIPATED NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS

*Calculated September 30 each year*

| | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Volunteers | 127 | 126 |
| Program funds ($000) | 4,190 | 4,196 |

## COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Republic of Zambia, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, gained its independence from Britain in 1964. Kenneth Kaunda, leader of the United National Independence Party, was named the first president and remained in power for three decades. In November 1991, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy won Zambia's first free presidential elections since 1968. Frederick Chiluba became the nation's second president and was reelected in 1996. He was succeeded by Levy Mwanawasa in January 2002. President Mwanawasa was reelected for a second term in September 2006.

Zambia is one of sub-Saharan Africa's most highly urbanized countries. Approximately half of the country's 12 million people are concentrated in a few urban zones strung along major transportation corridors. Unemployment is a serious problem, and Zambia has a low per capita income.

Zambia's economy has been improving steadily. Maize is the principal cash crop. Zambia contains one of the world's largest copper deposits and remains a leading world producer of refined copper and cobalt, which together comprise 95 percent of all exports. Copper prices have been increasing and are currently at a record high.

## PROGRAM FOCUS

Zambia received its first group of Peace Corps Volunteers in 1994. Volunteers currently serve in agriculture, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## VOLUNTEER FOCUS

### Agriculture

Volunteers help the Department of Fisheries develop fish-farming projects to improve livelihoods in rural communities. Volunteers provide technical assistance in establishing dams, furrows, fish ponds, and integrated agriculture. In addition to providing an excellent source of nutrition for rural families, surplus fish and agricultural products are sold to provide substantial supplementary income.

Volunteers in Northern Province worked together to organize biennial regional meetings for fish-farmer organizations. What began as mostly a Volunteer-led activity involving four communities has evolved to include seven communities encompassing three districts. Regional farmer association meetings are now planned and executed by the farmers themselves with Volunteers playing only the supporting role. The meeting provides a chance for farmers to

share experiences, problem-solve and create their own agendas and teach their own workshops. When attendees return to their home village to teach what they have learned, over 150 fish farmers benefit directly.

### Education

Volunteers work closely with Ministry of Education counterparts at the district and zonal levels. They collaborate with counterparts to increase the quality of education delivered at government and community schools, and to expand access to education in rural areas. Their work includes increasing the use of the Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) program in schools; developing radio schools where no government schools exist; building the capacity of communities to support their own schools; assisting in implementing IRI training for community school mentors; developing zonal resource centers; training teachers, monitoring schools, teaching English classes and starting school clubs.

In conjunction with the USAID-funded Education Development Center and their rural communities, three Volunteers are piloting the use of new technology to increase access and quality of education in rural areas. They have been involved in the IRI iPod Project which allows access to Ministry of Education radio lessons in rural areas that have poor radio reception. It also provides teachers the opportunity to receive visual training via iPod video.

### Environment

In 2005, the environmental program formed an alliance with the Department of Forestry. With their counterparts, Volunteers promote sustainable forest utilization to more than 60 Joint Forestry Management committees comprising more than 208 men and 173 women. They work with teachers in more than 120 schools to develop environmental education lessons. Communities are taught alternative means of enhancing food security through promotion of conservation farming, agroforestry, and seed multiplication.

### Health and HIV/AIDS

In conjunction with the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, Volunteers are fully engaged in the fight against HIV/AIDS. They live in rural communities throughout Zambia and work closely with their Ministry of Health partners in HIV/AIDS education, home-based care, prevention, and enhanced food stability and nutrition.

Volunteers work with counterparts from rural health centers to build the capacity of neighborhood health committees to address health problems at the village or community level. Volunteers facilitate training in community-based prevention of malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and water- and sanitation-related diseases. They also educate their communities about child health and nutrition,

One Volunteer coordinated 2,000 insecticide-treated nets for distribution to rural households. The distribution effort included working with a local district organization to help distribute nets to the often overlooked population of orphaned and vulnerable children. The Volunteer also provided training on the proper utilization of the nets to ensure effective prevention of malaria.

Peace Corps Response Volunteers continue to be placed in local nongovernmental organizations to focus on capacity building for those involved with HIV/AIDS projects, such as training caregivers and establishing databases for monitoring purposes. One Peace Corps Response Volunteer trained 30 primary caregivers in her community, who in turn trained 306 people through outreach activities.

*"These new Peace Corps Volunteers, as they work with communities throughout Zambia, will see and feel the impact that HIV/AIDS has on our lives, our families, and our workforce. The work of Volunteers in all three projects will help address: Quality of life for HIV/AIDS patients; stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS; behavior changes that leave people vulnerable to the virus; and improved food security, health and nutrition for those with HIV/AIDS in our rural communities. With all the hard work, collaboration, and partnership, I am sure we can continue to save lives of men, women, and children who are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS in Zambia."*

Albert Mulonga
Deputy Minister of Agriculture
Zambia

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Photo courtesy of the Washington, D.C.
Convention and Tourism Corporation

# GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT

# THE PEACE CORPS' PERFORMANCE PLANS AS REQUIRED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT

## FY 2008 and FY 2009 Plans

*The agency is currently developing a FY 2009-2014 Strategic Plan. While this plan is being developed, the following FY 2009 Performance Plan provides interim guidance and targets.*

### STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas; broadening the impact on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills; and helping to promote an understanding of Americans, including representing American diversity, at a rate consistent with annual funding.

### Outcome Goals:

1.1 Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas from 8,000 in FY 2008, to 8,100 in FY 2009 at a rate consistent with annual funding.

1.2 Broaden the impact of Volunteers on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills, as measured by increasing Volunteers reporting in the Peace Corps' close-of-service (COS) survey that they were "adequately" to "exceptionally" effective in transferring knowledge and skills to members of their host community, from 82 percent in FY 2008 to 85 percent in FY 2009.

1.3 Represent American diversity in Peace Corps host communities by increasing numbers of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people 50 and over from the FY 2008 level of 28 percent to a level of 29 percent in FY 2009.

**Performance Goals 1.1.1 – 1.1.3**

Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers from 8,000 in FY 2008 to 8,100 in FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- continue to refine recruitment business processes to make it easier for potential applicants to enter Peace Corps service;
- continue to coordinate the increased use of returned Peace Corps Volunteers in awareness, recruitment, and retention activities for new applicants and Peace Corps Response (formerly Crisis Corps) Volunteers;
- maintain the number of Peace Corps Response projects in disaster preparedness, humanitarian relief and responses to natural disasters;
- conduct strategic recruitment and media campaigns designed to cast a wide net for prospective Volunteer candidates in communities and at campuses throughout the United States;
- increase the number of Volunteers working on HIV/AIDS activities, including the agency's involvement in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR);
- continue to improve the functionality of Web-based application materials and expand the use of the Internet in marketing and retention activities; and
- identify new target markets and produce regionally appropriate marketing tools and other resources.

Verification and Validation:
Trainee input, which directly affects the number of Peace Corps Volunteers in the field, will be tracked by the Program Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG reports to senior management and is composed of staff from each of the three overseas Regions, the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, Volunteer Support, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, the Office of Strategic Information, Research & Planning and Peace Corps Response. The group will meet regularly to manage issues related to meeting the agency's annual goals for trainees and Volunteers-on-Board, as well as to develop strategies for balancing supply, demand, and scarce skill issues.

| Performance Indicators 1.1 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of new country entries | 2 | 3 |
| ii. Percentage of Peace Corps focus countries participating in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) | 100% | 100% |
| iii. Number of Peace Corps Response* Volunteers (all funding sources) | 100 | 100 |
| iv. Overall visits to website | 8.8 million | 9.0 million |

** The Crisis Corps has been renamed "Peace Corps Response." For more information see Volunteer section, page 32.*

**Performance Goals 1.2.1 - 1.2.3**

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the Peace Corps close-of-service survey reporting the effectiveness of transferring knowledge and skills to members of their host community as "adequately" to "exceptionally" from 82 percent in FY 2008 to 85 percent in FY 2009.

Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- Train Volunteers in effective ways to build capacity by increasing knowledge, improving skills, and promoting behavior change of individuals and families in the countries they serve;
- Enable Volunteers to effectively work with communities so they can manage their own development in a sustainable manner; and
- Promote Volunteer participation in the Peace Corps Partnership Program, which requires direct community initiation and involvement.

Verification and Validation:
The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research and the Regions, through their annual Project Status Review (PSR) and Training Status Review (TSR) processes, will compile annual data and review observations related to programming and training as submitted by the field; identify general trends and promising practices; and make information available to Peace Corps field staff to help them improve their programming and training. The capacity-building efforts of Volunteers are a central component of the project goals, and the projects will be reviewed, analyzed, and provided specific feedback for improvement. The Office of Private Sector Initiatives will track and report the number of Volunteer projects undertaken through the Peace Corps Partnership Program, including trend information by region and project type. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will provide oversight of data and information quality, will analyze Volunteer survey data and will provide information to Peace Corps management to enable the improvement of programming and training.

| Performance Indicators 1.2 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of individuals assisted by Volunteers (e.g., students, farmers, community members) as reported via the prior year's project status report annual review | 2,196,000 | 2,300,000 |
| ii. Number of service providers trained by Volunteers (e.g., teachers, health clinic workers, agriculture extension agents) as reported via the prior year's project status report annual review | 115,400 | 120,000 |
| iii. Number of community-initiated, Volunteer-led, Partnership Program projects | 505 | 550 |
| iv. Increase the extent Volunteers report that they have helped host country nationals gain a better understanding of the United States and its people, as reported by the Peace Corps close-of-service survey | 92% | 93% |

### Performance Goals 1.3.1 – 1.3.3

Incrementally increase the number of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people 50 and over from the FY 2008 level of 28 percent to a level of 29 percent in FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- augment the use of targeted recruitment and communication strategies, which include multi-media campaigns to attract recruits requested by overseas posts, including minorities and others with needed skills;
- pursue marketing and recruiting initiatives that target colleges, universities, and community colleges with diverse populations, off-campus markets nationwide, and organizations serving the senior population, among others;
- increase the use of information technology to strengthen Web-based outreach to all groups and improve quality of contact information for minority recruitment; and
- implement recruitment techniques and materials that are specifically designed to attract greater numbers of minority applicants.

### Verification and Validation:

The Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection will track applicants from diverse ethnicities, those over 50, as well as the combined total in quarterly minority recruitment reports. Additionally, the Office of Communications will monitor traffic to the minority recruitment and other key sections of the Peace Corps website. The Office of Communication collects news clips on a daily basis to determine the effectiveness of press outreach efforts, and collates a monthly report that includes statistics on articles focusing on diverse Volunteers. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will review data and information quality.

| Performance Indicators 1.3 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of applicants over the age of 50 | 8.0% | 9.0% |
| ii. Percentage of applicants of diverse ethnicities | 21% | 21% |
| iii. Total visitors to website who access minority recruitment pages and/or scarce skills, family pages | 450,000 | 460,000 |
| iv. Number of articles placed in newspapers and other media that focus on diverse Volunteers and/or target diverse audiences | 185 | 200 |
| v. Total number of public service announcements (PSA) placements in minority- and diversity-geared media | 4,000 | 4,000 |

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Ensure a quality Volunteer experience by increasing the quality of healthcare and managing the safety and security risk factors in each of the communities where the Volunteers live.

### Outcome Goals:

2.1 Increase the percentage of Volunteers indicating feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" satisfied with their in-country healthcare from a FY 2008 level of 82 percent to a level of 85 percent by FY 2009.

2.2 Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteer Survey respondents indicating they feel safe most of the time ("usually safe" to "very safe") where they live from a FY 2008 level of 88 percent to a level of 90 percent by FY 2009.

**Performance Goals 2.1.1 – 2.1.2**

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Peace Corps Volunteer surveys indicating feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" satisfied with their in-country healthcare from a FY 2008 level of 82 percent to 85 percent by FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- identify areas within the healthcare system that need improvement; and
- monitor the impact of strategies designed to improve its healthcare system; and
- utilize information from both the biennial survey in 2008 and the close-of-service surveys in years when the biennial survey is not conducted such as in 2009.

### Verification and Validation:

The Office of Medical Services will collect, analyze, and monitor statistics on specific health indicators to gauge the health of Volunteers and monitor the impacts of improvement strategies through the annual *Health of the Volunteer,* Peace Corps Volunteer surveys, medevac survey, and other reports. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will review data and information quality.

| Performance Indicators 2.1 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of Volunteers medically evacuated to Washington, D.C., reporting they are satisfied with their medical evacuation care as measured by the medevac survey | 90% | 90% |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" prepared, both physically and mentally, to meet the challenges of Peace Corps service as measured by the Peace Corps close-of-service survey | 90% | 90% |
| iii. Incidence of *falciparum* malaria in Africa region (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years) | Target <6 | Target <6 |

**Performance Goals 2.2.1 – 2.2.2**

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial and close-of-service Peace Corps Volunteer surveys indicating that Volunteers feel safe most of the time ("usually safe" to "very safe") where they live by 2 percent from a FY 2008 level of 88 percent to 90 percent by FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- select Volunteer sites in communities that are stable and secure;
- through the Peace Corps safety and security officers, provide training and technical assistance so that posts meet compliance requirements;
- review communication and transportation systems to enhance Volunteer safety;
- conduct safety and security workshops for both overseas staff and Volunteers;
- conduct country assessments on safety and security concerns utilizing Peace Corps safety and security officers and State Department regional security officers in the field;
- monitor post compliance with Peace Corps Manual Section 270 (MS 270)—Volunteer Safety and Security; and
- utilize information from both the biennial survey in 2008 and the close-of-service surveys in years when the biennial survey is not conducted such as in 2009.

### Verification and Validation:

The Peace Corps will track its progress in meeting safety and security requirements through mandatory post reports to Regional Directors on MS 270 compliance. Furthermore, Peace Corps Safety and Security Officers will provide assessments and recommendations to posts to enhance post safety and security training and processes. In addition, the agency will monitor results from the Volunteer biennial and close-of-service surveys regarding safety and security issues, as well as information reported in *Safety of the Volunteer*, the Peace Corps' annual report on safety and security incidents involving Volunteers.

| Performance Indicators 2.2 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of posts receiving safety and security report recommendations annually | 85% | 90% |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting the safety and security portion of their pre-service training as "adequate," "effective" or "very effective" as measured by the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Volunteer surveys | 85% | 87% |
| iii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting they were "somewhat," "considerably" or "completely" satisfied with support provided by Peace Corps staff for safety and security, as measured by the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Volunteer surveys | 85% | 87% |

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Increase the exposure of Americans to other cultures by sharing Volunteer experiences and stories in numerous venues, including the classroom, special events, community visits, and through electronic means, as well as engaging those who have completed their service in ongoing Peace Corps-supported volunteer opportunities.

### Outcome Goal:

3.1 Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps supported activities to 22,606 (aggregate of indicators i. through iv.) in FY 2008 and to a level of 23,500 in FY 2009. These targets have been revised to reflect a change in the calculation methodology that reflect verifiable measures.

**Performance Goals 3.1.1 – 3.1.3**

Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps supported activities to 22,606 in FY 2008, and 23,500 in FY 2009.

#### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- strengthen the sponsorship and participation of returned and current Volunteers in Peace Corps Week activities;
- sponsor events and provide services to help first-year returned Volunteers market skills and experience derived from their Peace Corps service to U.S. employers;
- improve communication with and information services to returned Volunteers, especially through the use of technology, to increase their awareness of Peace Corps activities and engagement in third goal initiatives;
- raise awareness of the Peace Corps Partnership Program as a vehicle through which private sector entities (RPCV groups, civic/community organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, businesses, etc.) and individuals can connect with and support Volunteer projects;
- promote awareness of the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise program to U.S. educators; and
- Expand participation in the Fellows/USA program for returned Peace Corps Volunteers.

#### Verification and Validation:

The Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, which includes the Office of Domestic Programs, will monitor and assess implementation of events and delivery of services to ensure increased returned Peace Corps Volunteers' involvement and participation in events throughout the country that further the Peace Corps' third goal of improving Americans' understanding of other peoples. Furthermore, the Office of Private Sector Initiatives will monitor and report on private sector entities and individuals who support Peace Corps Volunteer projects through the Peace Corps Partnership Program. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will review data and information quality.

| Performance Indicators 3.1 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. RPCV interactions with the American public in communities and on campuses nationwide during Peace Corps Week and throughout the year through activities supported by the Peace Corps | 11,050* | 11,500* |
| ii. Donors supporting Peace Corps Volunteer projects through private sector contributions | 6,200 | 6,600 |
| iii. U.S. educators connecting with Peace Corps Volunteers through the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise Schools correspondence match program | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| iv. Fellows/USA participants serving in communities nationwide | 356 | 400 |
| v. Visits per year to the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise School website that contains lesson plans, Volunteer stories, and other educational resources for use in the classroom and beyond | 1.45 million | 1.60 million |

* *These targets have been revised to reflect a change in the calculation methodology that result in more accurate reporting.*

*Interactions between American Volunteers and the people in their host communites are the core of Peace Corps service*

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Increase the retention level of Americans interested in the Peace Corps by better facilitating the process of obtaining information, applying, joining and completing their Volunteer service.

### Outcome Goals:

4.1 Improve the responsiveness of the Volunteer application process by streamlining the application process and decreasing the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 4 percent from 146 days (aggregate of below indicators of timeliness) in FY 2008 to 140 days in FY 2009.

4.2 Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer's resignation rate (with resignation officially defined as a decision made by a Volunteer/Trainee that he/she no longer wishes to continue in Peace Corps service) at 10 percent or less.

**Performance Goals 4.1.1. – 4.1.3**

Decrease the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 4 percent from 146 days in FY 2008 to 140 days in FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- institutionalize and enhance Web-based application procedures for prospective recruits;
- pilot at each regional recruitment office a variety of innovative Internet outreach, visibility, recruitment, and applicant retention activities, including those oriented toward minority audiences;
- continue to modify the Peace Corps' external website to provide a more citizen-centered experience, including expanded country and assignment information;
- institutionalize and enhance Web-based medical screening procedures for prospective recruits;
- institutionalize customer service improvements and simplify the process for nominating applicants to Peace Corps programs;
- strengthen outreach for hard-to-fill countries, including those in Central Asia; and
- use the website as a tool in training, educating, and preparing Volunteers for service.

### Verification and Validation:

The Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection will manage and evaluate these strategies using a standardized system that tracks Peace Corps applications from the initiation of the application process to submission and throughout the subsequent necessary phases. Similarly, the Office of Medical Services will utilize tracking mechanisms to monitor the timeliness of the key steps needed for an applicant to be medically cleared for Peace Corps service. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will review data and information quality.

| Performance Indicators 4.1 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of days from receipt of application to nomination | ≤64 | ≤62 |
| ii. Number of days from nominee's completed health status review to medical kit sent | ≤7 | ≤6 |
| iii. Number of days from receipt of completed medical kit to medical qualification | ≤30 | ≤29 |
| iv. Number of days from medical qualification to invitation | ≤45 | ≤43 |
| v. Percentage of applicants who submit their Volunteer applications over the Internet | 86% | 90% |

**Performance Goals 4.2.1 - 4.2.3**

Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer's resignation rate at 10 percent or less in FY 2008 and FY 2009.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- maintain and improve systems to ensure appropriate site development for Volunteers, including the selection and orientation of host country counterparts;
- provide an appropriate level of staff support to Volunteers throughout their two years of service, including site visits from programming and other staff;
- develop and maintain information systems to identify, collect and disseminate promising practices in programming and training from posts and other sources;
- promote and support the exchange of field resources for enhancing programming and training effectiveness;
- develop manuals, tools, and resources, based on promising practices collected from the field and responding to needs expressed by posts; and
- utilize information from both the biennial survey in 2008 and the close-of-service surveys in years when the biennial survey is not conducted such as in 2009.

### Verification and Validation:

The Peace Corps' Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research will monitor the production and quality of programming and training materials (including the quality of materials provided to posts) with the regions through review of annual reports and evaluations. The Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning will collect data on the resignation rate for Volunteers and provide the data for the regions to utilize and will also provide data and information quality reviews.

| Performance Indicators 4.2 | FY 2008 | FY 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of sites described as "very well," "well," or "adequately" prepared as measured by the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Volunteer surveys | 80% | 81% |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting their pre-service training to manage cultural differences as "adequate," "effective" or "very effective" as measured by the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Volunteer surveys | 91% | 92% |
| iii. Percentage of Peace Corps project and training programs reviewed annually to provide feedback for improvement to posts as reported via the prior year's project status report/ training status report review process | 97% | 98% |
| iv. Percentage of Peace Volunteer respondents reporting their pre-service training as "adequate", "effective," or "very effective" in preparing them to maintain their mental/ emotional health, as measured by the biennial (2008) and close-of-service (2009) Volunteer surveys | 85% | 86% |

# THE PEACE CORPS' PERFORMANCE RESULTS AS REQUIRED UNDER THE GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS ACT

## FY 2007 Performance Results

## STRATEGIC GOAL 1

**Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas; broadening the impact on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills; and helping to promote an understanding of Americans, including representing American diversity, at a rate consistent with annual funding.**

### Outcome Goals:

1.1 Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of trained Volunteers serving overseas from 7,733 in FY 2004 to 8,000 in FY 2008, at a rate consistent with annual funding.

1.2 Broaden the impact of Volunteers on the lives of men and women in their host communities by transferring tangible skills, as measured by increasing Volunteers reporting in the Peace Corps' close-of-service survey that they were "adequately" to "exceptionally" effective in transferring knowledge and skills to members of their host community, from 80 percent in FY 2006 to 82 percent by FY 2008.

1.3 Represent American diversity in Peace Corps host communities by increasing numbers of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people 50 and over by 4 percent, from FY 2005 level of 24 percent to 28 percent by FY 2008.

### Performance Goal 1.1.1

Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,920 by FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 7,920 | 8,079 |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| 7,533 | 7,733 | 7,810 | 7,749 |

### Results and Analysis:

At the end of FY 2007, 8,079 Americans were serving in 74 countries through 68 posts as Peace Corps Volunteers encouraging sustainable development and cross-cultural understanding at the grassroots level. This level of achievement is noteworthy because it represents a high for field-serving Volunteers during the period covered by the present strategic plan and for the agency during the last 37 years. In addition, the agency broadened its international reach with the arrival of Volunteers entering on duty in the Kingdom of Cambodia which opened in FY 2006 and the historic return of the Peace Corps to Ethiopia.

| Performance Indicators 1.1 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of new country entries | 2 | 1 |
| ii. Percentage of Peace Corps focus countries participating in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) | 100% | 100% |
| iii. Number of Crisis Corps Volunteers (all funding sources) | 100 | 64 |
| iv. Overall visits to website | 8.6 million | 10 million |

* *This is a measure of whether the Peace Corps is partnering with PEPFAR in all of he nine PEPFAR focus countries in which the agency currently has a presence.*

### Results and Analysis:

In accomplishing the agency 's goals for modest expansion, the Peace Corps continues to respond to the numerous countries requesting a Peace Corps presence by opening new programs that focus on meeting the unique needs of the host country. In April 2007, the Peace Corps placed Volunteers in the Kingdom of Cambodia for the first time. Volunteers will also again be working in Ethiopia with trainees arriving there in October 2007. The agency has also completed assessments for new country entries in three African countries and one Asian country for consideration in FY 2008.

The Peace Corps continues to be a valuable participant in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The Peace Corps has a presence in 10 of the 15 PEPFAR focus countries. Each of these posts actively participated in PEPFAR funded HIV/AIDS programs during FY 2007, expanding and enhancing their ongoing efforts in the fight against the pandemic. Twelve additional posts also participated in the PEPFAR funded program, and Volunteers throughout the world integrated HIV/AIDS awareness messages into their work. By living and working at the grassroots level in communities and speaking the local language, Peace Corps Volunteers are uniquely suited to share culturally appropriate messages in HIV/AIDS education and prevention.

The Peace Corps' Crisis Corps program sends returned Peace Corps Volunteers on short-term assignments to assist with critical country needs. This fiscal year, programs primarily supported the HIV/AIDS global pandemic and disaster preparedness and mitigation in countries prone to natural disasters. In FY 2007 Crisis Corps served in 10 new countries: Eastern Caribbean (which comprises Antigua/Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, and St. Vincent), Guyana, Madagascar, Panama, and the Philippines. Of the 64 Crisis Corps Volunteers who served, 41 supported HIV/AIDS programs in nine countries. Crisis Corps also sponsored a disaster preparedness workshop for the Central America/Caribbean sub-region, providing strategic response training to facilitate future participation in disaster preparedness and response.

A strategic realignment of priorities in Jamaica along with staff changes in Jamaica and Guatemala, led to a shortfall of anticipated assignments for the Crisis Corps in the Central America/Caribbean sub-region for FY 2007. Establishing a new program in the Philippines, which required hiring a project coordinator and extensive relationship building and site development, also delayed placements and contributed to the program's not meeting its FY 2007 targets. The process to request Crisis Corps Volunteers has been streamlined, and the program expects to receive more-than-sufficient requests to meet its FY 2008 targets.

The American public increasingly uses the internet as its primary source to obtain information. New initiatives for the Peace Corps website have increased traffic to the site by an additional 92,000 visitors. In FY 2007, these initiatives included RRS (really simple syndication) feeds to syndicate news, events, and content of Volunteers' journals; and adding compelling new content to the website, such as an interactive world map, a Kenyan sign language project, the new Coverdell World Wise Schools site, and "Volunteer Voices" podcasts.

### Performance Goal 1.2.1.

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the Peace Corps close-of-service survey reporting the effectiveness of transferring knowledge and skills to members of their host community as "adequately" to "exceptionally" to 81 percent by FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 81% | 86% |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | 83% |

*This is a new performance goal as of FY 2006. No data from past fiscal years is available.*

### Results and Analysis:

One of the Peace Corps' main objectives is for Volunteers to transfer skills to members of the communities in which they live and work in order to make a meaningful and sustainable difference in the lives of those they serve. Volunteers are instructed on methods to build the capacity of the host country nationals with whom they work and to help tech solutions that will be sustainable within the community. According to Volunteers surveyed upon completion of their service, via

the close-of-service survey implemented in FY 2007, 86 percent said they effectively transferred knowledge and skills to members of their host community.

| Performance Indicators 1.2 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of individuals assisted by Volunteers (e.g., students, farmers, community members) as reported via the prior year's project status report annual review | 2,176,000 | 2,403,458 |
| ii. Number of service providers trained by Volunteers (e.g., teachers, health clinic workers, agriculture extension agents) as reported via the prior year's project status report annual review | 114,300 | 155,565 |
| iii. Number of community-initiated, Volunteer-led, Partnership Program projects | 465 | 429 |
| iv. Increase the extent Volunteers report that they have helped host country nationals gain a better understanding of the United States and its people, as reported by the Peace Corps close-of-service survey | 91% | 95% |

Results and Analysis:
The agency exceeded its targets for the numbers of individuals assisted and service providers trained by Volunteers. The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research, through its annual project status review process, compiles annual data and reviews observations related to programming and training as submitted by the field. The Peace Corps accomplishes its goal of transferring skills to people of interested countries by building the capacity of men, women, girls, and boys to manage their own development in a sustainable manner. Volunteers help build capacity by increasing knowledge, improving skills, and promoting behavior change of individuals and families in the countries they serve. Capacity-building efforts are targeted toward individuals, service providers, and organizations, who can, in turn, teach fellow community members.

One key goal of each Volunteer is to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the host country community in which the Volunteer is serving. In FY 2007,the Peace Corps exceeded its target for this performance indicator. Sharing about themselves, their families, and their life in the United States, enables Volunteers to build a bridge of cross-cultural understanding. By living and working in local communities and speaking the local language, Volunteers forge relationships with their host country community members, and they model a spirit of friendship, understanding, and volunteerism on behalf of Americans.

The Peace Corps was slightly below its target for community-initiated, Volunteer-led Peace Corps Partnership Program projects. This was largely due to the use of cumbersome guidance documents and processes during the first part of the year. Steps were taken mid-year to streamline these documents and processes. Subsequently, project approvals increased threefold, but the number still fell short of FY 2007 targets by 36. It is important to note that the average project size increased by approximately 4 percent, while the average fundraising time decreased by approximately 30 percent, further validating the effectiveness of the new streamlined processes.

Performance Goal 1.3.1.

Incrementally increase the number of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people 50+ by 3 percent from a FY 2005 level of 24 percent to 27 percent by FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 27% | 24% |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| 25.9% | 26.1% | 24.5% | 24% |

Results and Analysis:
While working to gradually expand its number of Volunteers, the agency is also working to increase the number of individuals from underrepresented ethnic and age groups who apply for Peace Corps service. This effort ensures that the Peace Corps continues to do its best to reflect the diverse face of the United States. While the agency enhanced its performance in FY 2007, it still failed to meet its FY 2007 target of 27 percent. A new strategic emphasis on minority recruiting reflects the agency's continued commitment to recruit applicants of diverse ethnicities and those age 50+.

| Performance Indicators 1.3 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of applicants over the age of 50 | 7.9% | 7.4% |
| ii. Percentage of applicants of diverse ethnicities | 20% | 17.4% |
| iii. Total visitors to website who access minority recruitment pages and/or scarce skills and family pages | 440,000 | 572,363 |
| iv. Number of articles placed in newspapers and other media that focus on diverse Volunteers and/or target diverse audiences | 180 | 260 |
| v. Total number of public service announcements (PSA) placements in minority- and diversity-geared media | 2,500 | 12,337 |

Results and Analysis:

Several initiatives have begun to further increase the diversity of the Peace Corps applicant pool. The following are continuing programs to further improve performance in this area: (1) Presentations at national conventions regarding Volunteer service either mid-career or post retirement; (2) Increased to more than 275 50+ general information meetings with a focus on opportunities for 50+ throughout the 11 regions; (3) Increased press coverage beginning with the Lillian Carter Awards and placement of national advertising in fraternal organization publications; (4) Addition of 50+ recruiters in the regional offices by hiring seasoned or 50+ temporary and full-time staff.

The Peace Corps has also worked diligently to increase the production of diverse applicants. Peace Corps currently enjoys a historic high number of diverse Volunteers in the field. Even though the agency did not meet the FY 2007 target for applicants of diverse ethnicities, Volunteer Recruitment and Selection has implemented the following for further improved performance in the future: (1) Regional diversity milestones; (2) Awareness and extended outreach at Hispanic-serving institutions and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACUs); (3) Workshops and presentations at various minority-serving institutional organizations; (4) Provision of diversity funds to regional recruitment offices for diversity recruitment pilot programs and participation in national diversity events.

New web content and PSA marketing efforts have increased visitors to the Peace Corps' website. Also in FY 2007, the bandwidth of the agency's Internet server was increased and multimedia assets were off-loaded to an external server. This enabled visitors to navigate through the website much more easily. More visitors are coming to the site and each visitor is staying longer to view more pages, sharply increasing the number of minority recruitment, scarce skills, and family pages viewed.

This year the Peace Corps reenergized its campaign to recruit more Volunteers ages 50 and over. The steering committee for the Volunteer Delivery System focused on new recruiting strategies (including those for Americans age 50 and over); communicating better what service really means; expediting the process to medically clear and invite applicants; strengthening language training; and creating good site placements and projects for Volunteers. Pilot posts are evaluating the effectiveness of changes in field operations.

The agency also continued to highlight the diversity of its Volunteers throughout 2007, with concentrated effort during times such as African American History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month. All of these efforts allowed the agency to exceed its number of article placements in diverse and targeted diverse media.

In FY 2007, there were 12,337 placements for Peace Corps PSAs in minority- and diversity-geared media—more than five times the goal. Significant factors contributing to this success were the release of two new Spanish radio PSAs; continued placement of the Spanish television PSA, which launched in 2006; and the strategic placement of Web PSAs. New targeted print PSAs were released in July 2007, which will additionally strengthen the agency's public service campaign.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 2

**Ensure a quality Volunteer experience by increasing the quality of healthcare and managing the safety and security risk factors in each of the communities where the Volunteers live.**

### Outcome Goals:

2.1 Increase the percentage of Volunteers indicating feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" satisfied with their in-country healthcare from FY 2002 level of 75 percent to 82 percent by FY 2008.

2.2 Increase the percentage of Volunteer survey respondents indicating they feel safe most of the time ("usually safe" to "very safe") where they live from FY 2002 level of 86 percent to 88 percent by FY 2008.

#### Performance Goal 2.1.1.

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey indicating feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" satisfied with their in-country healthcare from the FY 2002 level of 75 percent to 82 percent by FY 2008.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 25,844 | 21,748 |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | 21,377 |

Notes: *The target level for this performance goal is interpolated between those previously established for FY 2006 at 80 percent and for FY 2008 at 82 percent. The close-of service survey results for FY 2007 have been used to inform this performance goal since the next biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey is targeted for implementation in FY 2008.*

#### Results and Analysis:

The health, safety, and security of every Volunteer is the Peace Corps' highest priority and is reflected as such in the agency's planning. The results of the FY 2007 close-of-service Volunteer survey demonstrate that the vast majority of Volunteers are satisfied with the healthcare they receive while they live and work in their communities around the world.

| Performance Indicators 2.1 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of Volunteers medically evacuated to Washington, D.C., reporting they are satisfied with their medical evacuation care as measured by the medevac survey | 90% | 92% |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting feeling "adequately" to "exceptionally" prepared, both physically and mentally, to meet the challenges of Peace Corps service as measured by the Peace Corps close-of-service survey | 90% | 92% |
| iii. Incidence of *falciparum* malaria in Africa region (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years) | Less than 6.0 | 1.7 |

#### Results and Analysis:

Peace Corps Volunteers serve in challenging environments throughout the world, and the health of Volunteers is one of the agency's top priorities. In extreme circumstances, Volunteers may need to be medically evacuated to Washington, D.C. Their satisfaction with the care received is important. During FY 2007, data from the survey given to medevaced Volunteers show that the agency exceeded its goal by achieving a 92 percent satisfaction rate. These high marks reflect how well the medical field support unit supports Volunteers on medevac status. Accommodations for these Volunteers during their stay in D.C. include a lounge with Internet access and telephone service for their use; and shuttle bus transportation to and from Peace Corps headquarters each week day, and to grocery stores and pharmacies throughout the week.

The Peace Corps focuses on equipping Volunteers with the tools they need to deal with the changes they will face in their communities. Training on physical and emotional health is a focus of pre-service training and is reinforced throughout a Volunteer's term of service. Close-of-service survey results from FY 2007 indicate that the vast majority of Volunteers are satisfied with the preparation they receive during training to meet the mental and physical challenges of Peace Corps service. Furthermore, Volunteers in malaria-prone areas are thoroughly trained on proper protocols and the importance of malaria prophylaxis, resulting in a marked decrease in the incidence rate for falciparum malaria.

### Performance Goal 2.2.1.

Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey indicating that Volunteers feel safe most of the time ("usually safe" to "very safe") where they live by 2 percent from FY 2002 level of 86 percent to 88 percent by FY 2008.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 87% | 85% |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| N/A | 88% | N/A | 88% |

Notes: *The target level for this performance goal is interpolated between those previously established for FY 2006 at 86 percent and for FY 2008 at 88 percent. The close-of service survey results for FY 2007 have been used to inform this performance goal since the next biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey is targeted for implementation in FY 2008.*

### Results and Analysis:

The safety and security of the Volunteer is the agency's highest priority. Safety and security information is incorporated into all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service. While we are concerned with the slight drop off in this performance indicator, we attribute this to the smaller Volunteer population sampled by the close-of-service surveys. We will continue to emphasize performance in this area and will be able to validate it during the implementation of the biennial Volunteer survey in FY 2008.

| Performance Indicators 2.2 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of posts receiving safety and security report recommendations annually | 85% | 87% |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting the safety and security portion of their pre-service training as "adequate," "effective," or "very effective" as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey* | 85% | 96% |
| iii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting they were "somewhat," "considerably," or "completely" satisfied with support provided by Peace Corps staff for safety and security, as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey* | 85% | 90% |

Notes: * *The target level for performance goals ii. and iii. are maintained at the level previously established for FY 2006 of 85 percent. The FY 2008 target is 85 percent. The close-of service survey results for FY 2007 have been used to inform these performance goal since the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey will be conducted again in FY 2008.*

### Results and Analysis:

To help measure the impact that the safety and security support staff has had on Volunteer safety, the agency's Office of Safety and Security determined that 85 percent of posts would be visited by safety and security officers to assess and recommend improvements to their respective Volunteer safety support systems. By the end of FY 2007, this goal had been exceeded. Safety and security site visits assisted staff in training, crisis management, and collaboration with embassies on physical security recommendations or office relocations; to follow-up on previous recommendations; and to provide other safety and security programmatic support.

An important goal related to a Volunteer's perception of safety and security was increasing the percentage of Volunteer respondents to 85 percent who felt that the safety and security information received during pre-service training was "adequate" to "very effective". This percentage was also greatly surpassed with survey data indicating that 96 percent reported favorably. By including region-and post-specific safety and security information in all *Welcome Books*, invitees become aware of the overall security environment of prospective posts as well as the agency's approach to safety and security. Receiving this information before leaving home enables invitees to better absorb the messages that are reiterated and emphasized in staging and pre-service training.

Additionally, 90 percent of Volunteers reported that they were "somewhat" to "completely" satisfied with the support provided by Peace Corps staff regarding their safety and security, which is well above the 85 percent goal. The presence of regional Peace Corps safety and security officers in the field, safety and security coordinators at each post, and safety and security desk officers at headquarters has improved communication, coordination, and oversight of safety and

security systems. The agency is encouraged by the positive perceptions Volunteer have of their security, training, and support and remains committed to focusing on this important issue, remaining vigilant to maximize Volunteer security overseas.

## STRATEGIC GOAL 3

**Increase the exposure of Americans to other cultures by sharing Volunteer experiences and stories in numerous venues, including the classroom, special events, community visits, and through electronic means, as well as engaging those who have completed their service in ongoing Peace Corps-supported volunteer opportunities.**

### Outcome Goal:

3.1 Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps-supported activities to 25,844 (aggregate of indicators i. through iv.) by FY 2007.

**Performance Goal 3.1.1.**
Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps-supported activities to 25,844 in FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 25,844 | 21,748 |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | 21,377 |

*This is a new performance goal as of FY 2006. No data from past fiscal years is available.*

**Results and Analysis:**
The Peace Corps' failure to achieve this goal is directly related to the methodology to calculate Performance Indicator 3.1 (i). In early FY 2007 the agency established that the previously used methodology was labor intensive and did not provide results that could be verified in an optimal manner. This was because it included an estimate of the number of unregistered returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV) who participated in Peace Corps Week activities. While a number of these individuals definitely contribute to this goal, the Peace Corps has decided to exclude this estimate of unregistered participants in future calculations.

| Performance Indicators 3.1 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. RPCV interactions with the American public in communities and on campuses nationwide during Peace Corps Week and throughout the year through activities supported by the Peace Corps | 15,200 | 10,954 |
| ii. Donors supporting Peace Corps Volunteer projects through private sector contributions | 5,800 | 5,684 |
| iii. U.S. educators connecting with Peace Corps Volunteers through the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise Schools correspondence match program | 4,500 | 4,689 |
| iv. Fellows/USA participants serving in communities nationwide | 344 | 421 |
| v. Visits per year to the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise School website that contains lesson plans, Volunteer stories, and other educational resources for use in the classroom and beyond | 1.32 million | 2.1 million |

**Results and Analysis:**
RPCV participation in Peace Corps Week surpassed the FY 2006 level by 91 participants. However, the agency failed to meet its goal due to a change in calculating methodology. The previously used methodology did not provide results that could be verified in an optimal manner and was labor intensive. This was because it included an estimate of the number of RPCVs who participated in Peace Corps Week activities. While a number of these individuals definitely contribute to this goal, the Peace Corps has decided to exclude this estimate of unregistered participants in future calculations.

Though the number of donors supporting Peace Corps Partnership Program projects did not meet the FY 2007 target, it is still an achievement over levels reported in FY 2006. The 5,684 donors in FY 2007 represented an increase of 24 percent over FY 2006 levels, which is attributable to efforts to develop materials that support internal and external marketing goals. These materials are increasing Volunteer awareness of the Peace Corps Partnership Program and raising the visibility of the program to potential and existing donors.

The Peace Corps is proud to have exceeded the target for the Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match program. The agency will continue to examine the work processes in this area and deploy target strategies to encourage increased participation in FY 2008. These will include revising match procedure to encourage Volunteers to select their own teachers; revamping the marketing brochure to include a detachable, pre-paid mail-in form; adding the form to the applicant kit received prior to staging; regularly reporting status to in-country contacts; and efforts to redesign the Correspondence Match database as an automatic Web sign up application.

The agency successfully achieved its target for the Peace Corps Fellows/USA participant service in communities. This success was due in significant part to effective improvements in reminding RPCVs of this benefit of service. Our performance in increasing the visits to the Coverdell World Wise Schools website is due to several special events like the innovative Global Issues Conference, more Web-based program content, a major website redesign, and cross linking with non-governmental organizations.

Education Volunteer in Kenya

## STRATEGIC GOAL 4

**Increase the retention level of Americans interested in the Peace Corps by better facilitating the process of obtaining information, applying, joining and completing their Volunteer service.**

### Outcome Goals:

4.1 Improve the responsiveness of the Volunteer application process by streamlining the application process and decreasing the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 7 percent from 156 days (aggregate of below indicators of timeliness) in FY 2005 to 146 days in FY 2008.

4.2 Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer resignation rate (with resignation officially defined as a decision made by a Volunteer/trainee that he/she no longer wishes to continue in Peace Corps service) at 10 percent or less.

**Performance Goal 4.1.1.**
Decrease the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 2 percent from 154 days in FY 2005 to 150 days in FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| 150 days or less | 129.6 days |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| N/A | N/A | N/A | 138 days |

**Results and Analysis:**
There are numerous steps in the application process to become a Peace Corps Volunteer. This enables the agency to recruit and thoroughly screen applicants for skills and medical and suitability issues prior to approving and inviting them to serve as Volunteers. In FY 2007, this application process was broken down into the various stages for which the Peace Corps has processing responsibilities to best analyze its efficiencies. The agency is pleased to have exceeded its FY 2007 goal of response time to applicants by approximately 20 days. The agency remains committed to streamlining the processes that enable Americans to obtain information, apply, join, and complete service as Peace Corps Volunteers.

| Performance Indicators 4.1 | FY 2007 Target | FY 2007 Results |
|---|---|---|
| i. Number of days from receipt of application to nomination | 65 | 58 |
| ii. Number of days from nominee's completed health status review to medical kit sent | 8 | 6.6 |
| iii. Number of days from receipt of completed medical kit to medical qualification | 31 | 31 |
| iv. Number of days from medical qualification to invitation | 46 | 34 |
| v. Percentage of applicants who submit their Volunteer applications over the Internet | 85% | 93% |

**Results and Analysis:**
The agency created a steering committee to optimize the Volunteer Delivery and Support System by leveraging the full force of the agency's organization, management, technology, and fiscal operations to improve and sustain the Volunteer delivery. As a result of the efforts of this steering committee, the agency is pleased to have exceeded the FY 2007 goal of response time to applicants. The agency remains committed to streamlining the processes that enable Americans to obtain information, apply, join, and complete service as Peace Corps Volunteers.

Upon receipt of notification that an applicant has been nominated, and based upon the completed health status review, medical kits containing documents pertinent to each applicant are created and sent. In FY 2007, the agency exceeded its target for the number of days from nomination until the medical kit is sent. Additionally, the Office of Volunteer Support

is creating an online medical kit that will allow Volunteers to receive their medical kits even more quickly and return them to the Peace Corps for evaluation and review.

While the Peace Corps successfully met its FY 2007 target for Performance Indicator 4.1 (iii), the current methodology to calculate the number of days from receipt of completed medical kit to a decision on medical qualification does not adequately address extenuating circumstances that influence the time it takes to make a final decision. In FY 2008, the Office of Volunteer Support will test a new calculation method that will eliminate the days waiting for the return of information or test results from applicants or medical providers. This will more accurately represent the medical workload and timing until a medical decision is made.

The Peace Corps is pleased with its performance on Performance Indicator 4.1 (v), and attributes that success to the ease of applying online and submitting electronic references.

**Performance Goal 4.2.1.**
Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer's resignation rate at 10 percent or less in FY 2007.

| FY 2007 Goal | FY 2007 Actual |
|---|---|
| <10% | 8.8% |

| Results | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| FY 2003 | FY 2004 | FY 2005 | FY 2006 |
| 9.0% | 8.0% | 9.0% | 8.9% |

**Results and Analysis:**
Retaining Volunteers is an area the Peace Corps has carefully examined, and its target to keep resignations for FY 2007 below 10 percent was achieved. Offices throughout the agency benefited from a more thorough analysis of early terminations in general, with a focus on resignations (officially defined as a decision made by a Volunteer/trainee that he/she no longer wishes to continue in Peace Corps service). The agency continues to monitor early terminations and to use both quantitative and qualitative data to improve recruiting, training, programming, and all other aspects of the Volunteer experience.

| Performance Indicators 4.2 | FY 2007 Target* | FY 2007 Results* |
|---|---|---|
| i. Percentage of sites described "very well," "well," or "adequately" prepared as measured by the the biennial Volunteer survey | 80% | N/A |
| ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting their pre-service training to manage cultural differences as "adequate," "effective," or "very effective" as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey | 90% | 93% |
| iii. Percentage of Peace Corps project and training programs reviewed annually to provide feedback for improvement to posts as reported via the prior year's project status report/ training status report review process | 96% | 95% |
| iv. Percentage of Peace Volunteer respondents reporting their pre-service training as "adequate," "effective," or "very effective" in preparing them to maintain their mental/ emotional health, as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey | 84% | 91% |

Notes: N/A *No data available from either the biennial or the close-of-service Volunteer survey.*

* *The target level for performance indicators i, ii, and iv is interpolated between the target previously established for FY 2006 and the target for FY 2008. The close-of service survey results for FY 2007 have been used to inform these performance indicators since the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey is targeted for implementation in FY 2008.*

Results and Analysis:
The Peace Corps strives to retain Volunteers throughout their term of service by managing a quality program. However, life circumstances, such as family emergencies, sometimes cause Volunteers to resign early. These performance indicators were chosen in light of the difficulties Volunteers face that can lead to resignation, including challenges in adapting to the local culture, dealing with emotional or mental health issues, and struggling with the work environment.

The Peace Corps met its goal on training Volunteers to manage cultural differences. The most safe and secure Volunteers are those who are well-integrated into their communities. The Peace Corps provides extensive training on cross-cultural awareness, enabling Volunteers to function well in their new communities. Additionally, the agency provides Volunteers with extensive language training to help them adapt to their new environment and to communicate effectively with their host country community counterparts.

Cohesive projects enable Volunteers to have well-defined work at their sites, which fits into a larger project goal to address the identified needs of the host country. The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research monitors the production and quality of programming and training (including the quality of materials provided to posts) through an annual project status report review. These evaluations provide feedback to posts on overall possible project improvements. The agency is proud to have completed review of 95 percent of the project plans in FY 2007 which is slightly below the target of 96 percent previously established. We expect this performance to improve in FY 2008.

The agency met its goal on preparing Volunteers to meet their mental/emotional health needs during their service. In FY 2007, the agency continued training efforts of staff and Volunteers that are essential to maintaining and enhancing mental health and Volunteer resiliency.

Education Volunteer in Nicaragua

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