

The Peace Corps  
Performance and Accountability Report  
**FISCAL YEAR 2006**



45<sup>th</sup>  
**Peace**  
**Corps**  
*Anniversary*



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Corps  
*Anniversary*



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Performance and Accountability Report  
FISCAL YEAR 2006

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The FY 2006 *Performance and Accountability Report* is available on the agency's website ([www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)) by following the link to Agency Jobs and Info/Policies/Documents. Feedback can be sent to the Peace Corps at its mailing address or via the agency's website by following the link to Agency Jobs and Info/Contact Us/Questions and Comments.



*The Peace Corps' mission is to promote world peace and friendship. While much has changed in the world since the Peace Corps' founding in 1961, its mission has not. The Peace Corps' goals are as relevant today as they were 45 years ago.*

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THE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

On behalf of the Americans serving as Peace Corps Volunteers around the world, I am pleased to present the Peace Corps' Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) for fiscal year (FY) 2006. The PAR is a key report to the President, Congress, and the American people on the agency's achievements, performance against pre-established objectives, and financial information regarding its operations during the past year.

The Peace Corps has been celebrating its 45th anniversary since March 1, 2006. The agency traces its roots and mission to the early 1960s, when then-Senator John F. Kennedy inspired Americans to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. Over the past 45 years, Volunteers have continued their efforts to help those who want to build a better life for themselves, their children, and their communities. Since 1961, the Peace Corps has partnered with 139 countries, and more than 187,000 Americans have served around the world carrying out the agency's mission of promoting world peace and friendship.

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 carrying out the agency's three goals:

- 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; and
- 3) to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

As of the end of FY 2006, 7,749 Americans were serving as Peace Corps Volunteers at 67 posts in 73 countries, encouraging sustainable development and cross-cultural understanding at the grassroots level.<sup>1</sup> While fielding over 7,700 Volunteers is a significant achievement, the Peace Corps did not meet its target number of Volunteers in the field due to events in Bangladesh, Chad, and East Timor during FY 2006, which necessitated suspending operations in those countries. However, the agency broadened its international reach with the historic announcement of a new country entry into the Kingdom of Cambodia in FY 2006 that will bring Volunteers to that country for the first time.

The Peace Corps' Crisis Corps program—which sends returned Peace Corps Volunteers on short-term assignments to assist with critical needs—experienced several historic firsts during FY 2006, including sending its 1,000th Volunteer into service. Throughout FY 2006, Crisis Corps deployed more than 130 Volunteers to the Gulf Coast region to assist with relief efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This deployment was funded by, coordinated with, and under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and marked the first time Volunteers had been deployed domestically. Additionally, working through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development, Crisis Corps sent 21 Americans to provide relief to those affected by the devastation caused by the tsunami in Southeast Asia.

<sup>1</sup> This 7,749 is an "on board" count of all Peace Corps Volunteers and trainees, Crisis Corps Volunteers, and United Nations Volunteers from all funding sources serving under the Peace Corps as of September 30, 2006. It includes 111 Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, as well as 10 Volunteers funded through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development on tsunami relief efforts in Thailand. The "on board" count for posts includes posts in which the Peace Corps is active or suspended, but not closed.

Recognizing the Peace Corps' unique ability to play a positive role in the global fight against HIV/AIDS, in November 2005, the agency created the Office of AIDS Relief within the Office of the Director. The Office of AIDS Relief provides agency-level policy guidance; overall leadership; and general supervision, direction, and coordination of Peace Corps' HIV/AIDS activities, including the agency's participation in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The Peace Corps continues to be a valuable participant in the PEPFAR program with 111 PEPFAR-funded Volunteers serving in nine of the 15 focus countries.<sup>2</sup> Peace Corps Volunteers, by living and working at the grassroots level in communities and speaking the local language, are uniquely suited to share culturally appropriate messages in HIV/AIDS education and prevention. The agency has seen positive results from the increased efforts to incorporate HIV/AIDS messages into all Peace Corps projects and its participation in PEPFAR. In the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer survey, 55 percent of Volunteers reported being engaged in HIV/AIDS activities as part of their Peace Corps work, which is a pronounced increase over the 2004 survey results, which reported 25 percent participation.

Volunteer safety and security remains the agency's highest priority. The Peace Corps' approach to safety and security acknowledges that Volunteer service has inherent risks, but emphasizes that the agency will do its part to ensure that safety and security systems and support are in place. Volunteers do their part by taking personal responsibility for their behavior at all times and by integrating successfully into their host communities. The Peace Corps ensures that safety and security issues are fully integrated in all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service. Though the Peace Corps has been tracking crimes against Volunteers for more than 15 years, FY 2006 marked the introduction of a new crime reporting process. An electronic Crime Incident Reporting Form (CIRF) was created to ensure that violent crimes and medical issues are reported immediately, confidentially, and to the appropriate support staff. The CIRF also clarifies crime definitions so future trends analyses can be as accurate as possible. Since under-reporting of crimes is a concern for the agency, the CIRF will help simplify the reporting process and is one step in encouraging more reporting of crimes. The data are collected, analyzed, and used to enhance existing policies and practices or to develop new policies as needed. The agency has committed considerable staff to the area of safety and security and will review its efforts to ensure that it is providing the best possible programmatic support to its overseas posts.

In FY 2006, the Peace Corps made significant strides in improving the process of performance reporting for the agency. In fall 2005, the agency began revising its 2003–2008 strategic plan to provide an interim adjustment for fiscal years 2006–2008. Improvements were made to better align the plan to the Peace Corps' three goals and internal processes, including new and modified strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators. The Peace Corps completed, and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved, the revised version of the agency's strategic plan, which was included in the fiscal year 2007 Congressional Budget Justification.

Thus, FY 2006 marks the first year for the agency to report out on its current set of ambitious but achievable performance goals and indicators as outlined in the strategic plan. This fiscal year, the agency was on or above target for five of the eight performance goals and 26 of the 33 performance indicators. The Peace Corps' FY 2006 performance results are based on reliable, actual data that are complete as of the production of the results at the close of the fiscal year. However, the data are limited by instances of unforeseen challenges with technology and data that flow in beyond the reporting dates. Overall, the Peace Corps has made great progress in documenting and streamlining its performance reporting process at the agency and can provide solid results on performance measures.

<sup>2</sup> PEPFAR has identified 15 focus countries. The Peace Corps has posts in nine of these focus countries—Botswana, Guyana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The other focus countries are Ethiopia, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Vietnam.

The accompanying statements summarize the agency's financial position; disclose the net cost of operations and changes in net position; and provide information on budgetary resources and financing for fiscal years ended September 30, 2006, and 2005. These statements reflect activity of appropriated funds, with footnote recognition for those trust fund and special fund receipt accounts over which the agency has fiduciary stewardship. These statements were prepared to comply with the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002 and OMB guidelines and were prepared using generally accepted accounting principles for federal entities.<sup>3</sup>

The Peace Corps' financial statements were prepared from its financial systems and processes using the most reliable and complete data available. The Peace Corps has made tremendous strides in the past year in improving financial management to include capitalizing on a fully integrated financial management system and reengineering key processes. There are, however, always portions of financial processes that warrant improvement or refinement. In this report the letter from the chief financial officer provides details of actions to be taken to enhance the Peace Corps' future financial management.

The agency had total assets of \$173 million as of September 30, 2006, and \$176 million as of September 30, 2005. Budgetary sources available for use by the agency totaled \$344 million in FY 2006 and \$338 million in FY 2005, of which appropriated funds (net of rescission) totaled \$319 million and \$317 million, respectively. The agency has implemented an internal management controls program that, once the testing phase is completed, will fully comply with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act and its implementing directive, OMB Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*. This program has resulted in the qualified statement of assurance provided later in this document.

I am pleased to report out on the agency's financial and performance results. I am proud of the Americans serving as Peace Corps Volunteers around the world. By living, working, and integrating into their local communities, Volunteers have a unique role in empowering people in countries across the globe to take charge of their own futures and to strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding between Americans and the people of other cultures. The agency 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.



Ronald A. Tschetter, Director

November 15, 2006

<sup>3</sup> The statements should be read with the realization that they are a component of the overall statements of the U.S. government.



MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS



## Overview | Core Issues

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 a record of service that is admired and recognized around the world.

As of the end of fiscal year (FY) 2006, 7,749 Americans were serving as Volunteers at 67 posts in 73 countries, encouraging sustainable development and cross-cultural understanding at the grassroots level.<sup>4</sup> Volunteers work in the areas of agriculture, business, education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development and on cross-cutting themes such as information and communications technology. Currently, about 20 percent of Volunteers are serving in nations with predominantly Muslim populations. Since the agency's inception 45 years ago, the Peace Corps has partnered with 139 countries, and more than 187,000 Volunteers have served around the world.

In addition to transferring skills to host country nationals and promoting cross-cultural understanding between Americans and other peoples, Peace Corps service also provides America's workforce with overseas experience. In fact, in September 2006, the Peace Corps was recognized by *Business Week* as one of the top 50 best places to launch a career. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers also contribute to America's legacy of service by offering their time and skills to community volunteer programs around the country as well as through Peace Corps programs such as Crisis Corps, Fellows/USA, and Peace Corps Week.

The Peace Corps is providing valuable assistance in the global fight against the HIV/AIDS

pandemic. Since Volunteers live and work at the grassroots level in communities and speak the local language, they are powerful builders of human capacity and conveyors of HIV/AIDS education and prevention messages. The agency established the Office of AIDS Relief within the Office of the Director to lead the Peace Corps' HIV/AIDS efforts and to coordinate the agency's participation in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). With Volunteers working exclusively on HIV/AIDS in PEPFAR focus countries and Volunteers weaving HIV/AIDS prevention messages into their work throughout the world, the agency is an important partner in carrying out efforts to stem the tide of this pandemic.

The agency celebrated its 45th anniversary by looking back at its historic milestones, but also by looking forward. The year marked a fitting time for the Peace Corps to formalize its partnership with two prominent international voluntary service organizations. The Peace Corps signed memoranda of understanding with both the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the German Development Service (DED). Previous collaborations with these two organizations had been localized to individual posts and no formal system existed for participants to best tap into the potential benefits of a structured collaboration. One key area that these and other international voluntary service organizations are focusing on is capturing the impact of the Volunteer's service on the host country.

Similarly, in FY 2006, the Peace Corps embarked on a broader effort to develop increasingly sophisticated research methods for measuring outcomes. The strategic research and information team, composed of leaders within the organization with backgrounds in data use and

<sup>4</sup> This 7,749 is an "on board" count of all Peace Corps Volunteers and trainees, Crisis Corps Volunteers, and United Nations Volunteers from all funding sources serving under the Peace Corps as of September 30, 2006. It includes 111 Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, as well as 10 Volunteers funded through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development on tsunami relief efforts in Thailand. The "on board" count for posts includes posts in which the Peace Corps is active or suspended, but not closed.

management, is actively developing a plan for greater outcome measurement as well as a new structure to increase the agency's research, evaluation, and strategic planning functions. This challenge will continue to be a focus of the agency in the years ahead.

One of the agency's greatest challenges is balancing the need to keep Volunteers as safe as possible while maintaining the integrity of the Volunteer experience. Safety and security messages and training are integrated 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 those risks. While Volunteer service is inherently risky and Volunteers must take much responsibility for their own safety, the Peace Corps has an extensive, well-established support system geared toward Volunteer safety and security. The agency has committed considerable staff and resources to the area of safety and security and will review its efforts to ensure that it is providing the best possible programmatic support to overseas posts.

In an effort focused on the efficiency and effectiveness of Peace Corps operations, the agency launched a program of internal management assessments of posts in FY 2006. The goal of the internal management assessment program is to partner with regional and posts' senior leadership to strengthen and improve post management. Assessment teams have pursued meaningful solutions to improve posts' operations and to enhance Volunteer service and programmatic impact. Seven post assessments were conducted this year leading to specific recommendations, some of which have agency-wide implications. The assessment teams will strategically choose more posts to visit in future fiscal years.

Overall, the Peace Corps' mission and efforts around the globe are as important as ever. The agency will continue to strive to operate at an optimum level to ensure more Americans are given the opportunity to serve as Peace Corps Volunteers to carry out the agency's mission of world peace and friendship.



**Education Volunteer, South Africa:** All Peace Corps Volunteers are encouraged to integrate some form of HIV/AIDS education or awareness into their primary assignments.



## Overview | Mission

The Peace Corps' mission is to promote world peace and friendship. While much has changed in the world since the Peace Corps' founding in 1961, its mission has not. The Peace Corps' three core goals are as relevant today as they were 45 years ago:

- 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; and
- 3) To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

The Peace Corps aims to carry out its mission and goals by assisting interested countries with their development needs while providing an effective and satisfying Volunteer experience for a diverse group of Americans in a safe and secure environment, and by building an operational infrastructure that efficiently and effectively supports the Peace Corps Volunteer in the 21st century.

Since the program's inception, more than 187,000 Americans have served as Volunteers, and the agency has partnered with 139 countries throughout the world. These Volunteers foster positive relationships with host country nationals, dispel myths about Americans, and promote sustainable development. They also bring messages back to the American people about life overseas, the people the Volunteers have served, and the cultures they have experienced.

The women and men who serve as Volunteers reflect the rich diversity of the United States and represent some of the finest characteristics of the American people: a strong work ethic, a

generosity of spirit, a commitment to service, and an approach to problems that is both optimistic and pragmatic. They are afforded no special privileges and often live in remote, isolated communities. They speak local languages and learn the cultures and customs of the people they serve. In this process, Volunteers share and represent the culture and values of the American people, and in doing so earn respect and admiration for the U.S. among people who may have never met an American.

The Peace Corps publishes its current strategic plan in the Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ), which is submitted to Congress each year. The CBJ is available to the public on the agency's website, [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov).<sup>5</sup> The key strategic goals outlined in the agency's strategic plan focus on:

- Delivering a trained and diverse group of Volunteers to interested countries to transfer tangible skills and promote cross-cultural understanding;
- Ensuring Volunteers have a quality experience by providing relevant health, safety, and programmatic support;
- Increasing the exposure of Americans to other cultures by sharing Volunteer experiences through a variety of avenues; and
- Meeting the needs of applicants and Volunteers with efficient and effective support.

The Peace Corps organizational structure supports the agency's efforts to carry out its mission. Peace Corps Volunteers serve in posts throughout the world. Thus, the Peace Corps' organizational structure at headquarters divides these posts into three regions that provide operational support to the overseas posts:

<sup>5</sup> The FY 2007 Congressional Budget Justification can be accessed at the following URL:  
[http://www.peacecorps.gov/policies/pdf/peacecorps\\_cbj\\_2007.pdf](http://www.peacecorps.gov/policies/pdf/peacecorps_cbj_2007.pdf)

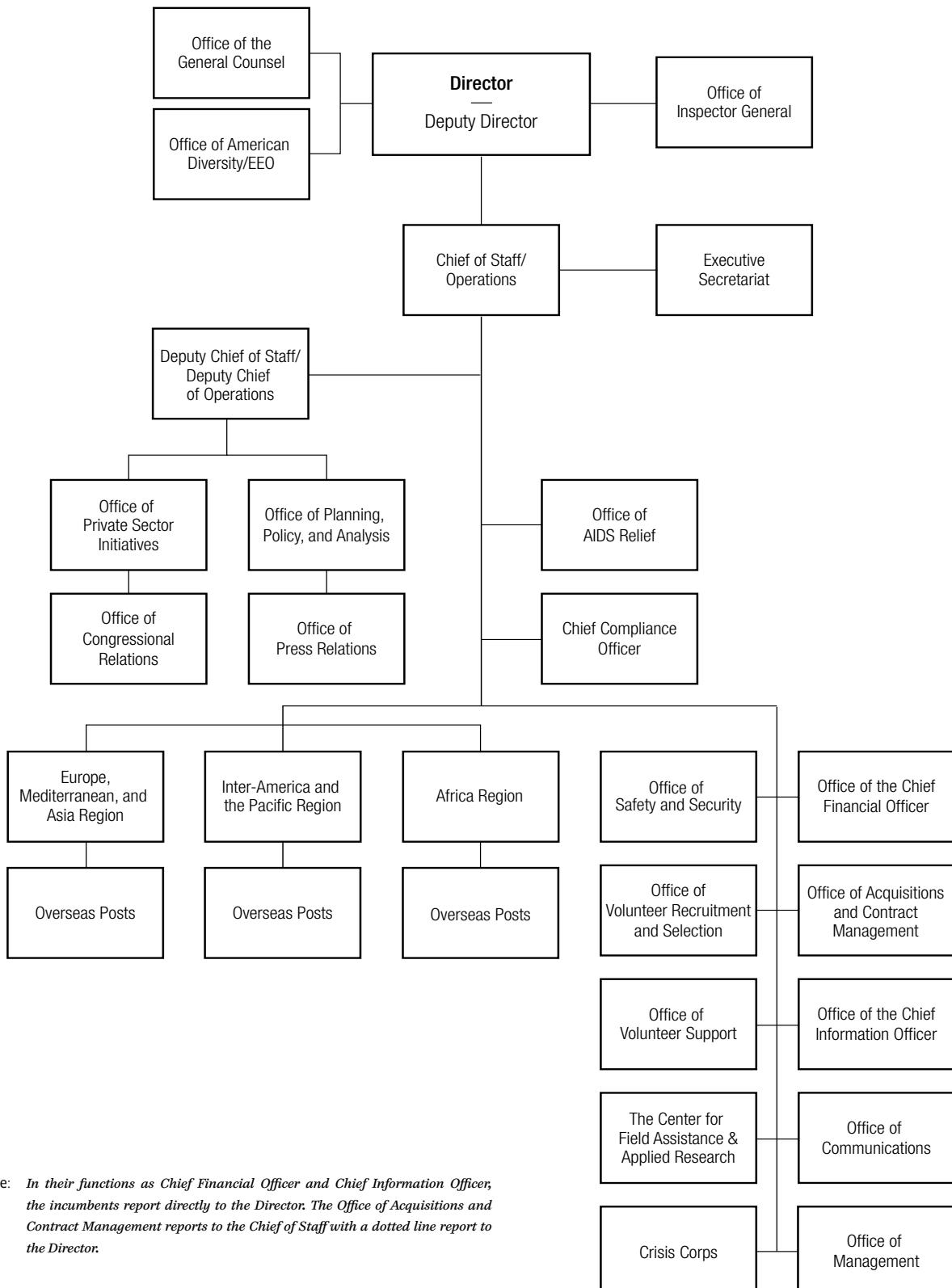
the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region; the Inter-America and the Pacific region; and the Africa region. Offices such as Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, the Office of Safety and Security, Volunteer Support, and the Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research serve as functional and management structures to ensure Volunteers are recruited, screened, and supplied to posts and effectively supported with safety, programming, training, and other resources. The Office of Domestic Programs provides assistance to returned Peace Corps Volunteers and helps reach the American public in support of the agency's third goal of promoting a better understanding of other cultures by sponsoring activities that reach into classrooms and communities throughout the United States. Offices such as the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, and Management provide financial, information technology, and administrative support agency functions. The agency's full organization chart is represented in the graphic on the following page.

Global development indicators suggest that nations face significant challenges in the areas of agriculture, education, business, information technology, health and HIV/AIDS, the environment, and youth development. The Peace Corps, in partnership with interested countries, provides skilled Americans who work to transfer their knowledge about these areas and to build greater understanding between cultures. Thus, the Peace Corps provides practical assistance to developing countries by sharing America's most precious resource—its people. The Peace Corps combines development with people-to-people relationships that Volunteers forge with host country colleagues and communities. This serves as a crucial foundation for peace and friendship for years to come. Indeed, the core values of the Peace Corps since its establishment on March 1, 1961, remain relevant, vital, and strong.



**Agriculture Volunteer, Tonga:** Peace Corps Volunteers continue to carry out the 45 year old mission of the agency by transferring their skills and building cross-cultural understanding with the peoples served.

Graphic | Peace Corps Organization



**Note:** 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.



## Key Performance Goals and Results

### Performance Goals and Results Summary

In fall 2005, the agency embarked on an effort to revise the 2003–2008 strategic plan to provide an interim adjustment for fiscal years (FY) 2006–2008. Improvements were made to better align the plan to the Peace Corps' three goals and internal processes, including new and modified strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators. This effort was undertaken following the FY 2005 review of the agency via the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART). While the Peace Corps received an “effective” rating, the PART review process also included recommendations for improvement, which led to the modifications. The Peace Corps completed, and OMB approved, a revised strategic plan, which was included in the FY 2007 Congressional Budget Justification.

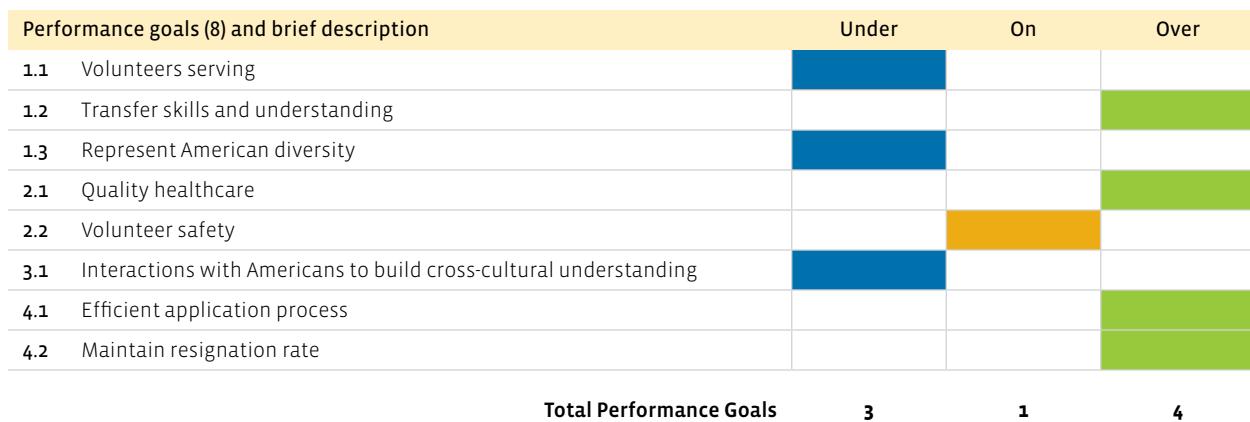
Thus, FY 2006 is the first year for the agency to report out on its current set of ambitious but achievable performance goals and indicator targets outlined in the strategic plan. The Peace Corps utilizes performance goals and measures that focus on providing skilled Volunteers to meet host country needs, supporting the health and safety of the Volunteer, and ensuring that Volunteers reflect the face of America to host countries. The measures also look at the efficiency and effectiveness of programs to recruit, train, and support Volunteers as they carry out their work, as well as the exposure of Americans to other cultures through Peace Corps programs. In FY 2006, the agency was on or above target for five of the eight performance goals and 26 of the 33 performance indicators. These measures are addressed at length in the Performance section of the PAR.

As of the end of FY 2006, 7,749 Americans were serving in 73 countries through 67 posts as Peace Corps Volunteers encouraging sustainable development and cross-cultural understanding at the grassroots level. While fielding more than

7,700 Volunteers is a significant achievement, the Peace Corps did not meet its target number of Volunteers in the field due to the suspension of operations in Bangladesh, Chad, and East Timor during FY 2006. However, the agency broadened its international reach by entering into the Kingdom of Cambodia in FY 2006 for the first time in the agency's history. The agency also announced plans to reenter Ethiopia in FY 2007 with Volunteers who will focus on health and HIV/AIDS. Additionally, the agency may enter one other new country during FY 2007. With requested funding levels and the infusion of Volunteers into existing and new countries, the agency is well-placed to meet its FY 2007 targets.

The agency was slightly below target on the number of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people over 50. While the agency has set ambitious goals in these categories, more efforts are planned to help meet the targets. This includes pilot recruitment efforts by regional recruitment offices around the country. These offices will also target specified associations and gatherings to help boost applications from Americans over 50 and from Americans of diverse ethnicities. Additionally, a long-time informal partnership between the Peace Corps and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities was formalized in FY 2006 with an agreement that strengthens the cooperative relationship.

Media outreach efforts are strong, and the agency exceeded its goals in FY 2006 for press coverage of diverse Volunteers or in outlets covering diverse audiences, as well as public service announcement (PSA) placements in minority- and diversity-gated media. To reach more diverse audiences, the agency released a new radio PSA that appeals to radio stations with an urban format (reaching a wider African-American audience) and Spanish language versions of the PSA for both television and radio.



The Peace Corps has various survey instruments to capture Volunteer feedback on key indicators of the agency's efficiency and effectiveness in delivering different services. The agency received high percentages of positive responses from Volunteers, which allowed the agency to meet or surpass various performance goals. Messages on health, safety, and cultural awareness are woven throughout the agency's recruitment and training materials. The Peace Corps has management, programming, training, safety, administrative, and medical staff strategically positioned to care for the needs of Peace Corps Volunteers. Staff continually trains, supports, and interacts with Volunteers to build their technical, language, and cross-cultural skills and to ensure they can carry out their mission in a safe and healthy manner.

The Peace Corps surveys Volunteers at different stages of their service enabling the agency to receive continual feedback. As the agency strives for constant improvement, the survey results can benefit currently serving and future Volunteers. The biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey provides an important snapshot of Volunteer satisfaction during the same period of time worldwide. The close-of-service survey, implemented throughout FY 2006, allows Volunteers to provide feedback as they complete their time in the field. In FY 2005, the Peace Corps also put a revised feedback mechanism in place for Volunteers who choose to terminate their service early, which has yielded important data for analysis. By gathering feedback from

both Volunteers and staff via a resignation reasons form, the agency receives valuable insight about why some Volunteers choose to conclude their service early.

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. This application process was divided into the various stages for which the Peace Corps has processing responsibilities to best analyze its efficiencies. The agency is pleased to have exceeded the FY 2006 goal of response time to applicants. Through its enterprise architecture (EA) team and other committees, the agency remains committed to streamlining the processes that enable Americans to obtain information, apply, join, and complete service as Peace Corps Volunteers.

Despite activities and events associated with the agency's 45th anniversary and Peace Corps Week, the agency narrowly missed its targeted number of interactions of returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) with the American public, in part due to the challenge of formally capturing the breadth of participation. RPCV activities help carry the message of understanding of other cultures as they share their stories and experiences with schools, community groups and elsewhere across the country. While 45th anniversary events took place throughout the world, the events across the United States, in

particular, have produced significant positive exposure for the agency. During this anniversary year, the agency released a special video and *A Life Inspired: Tales of Peace Corps Service*, a compilation of short stories from Volunteers all over the world. In addition to a special recognition ceremony on Capitol Hill and the numerous dignitaries who visited Peace Corps headquarters throughout the year, the first-ever John F. Kennedy Service Awards were presented to six recipients who demonstrated exemplary service and leadership in fulfilling the agency's mission.

### Performance Reporting Procedures

In FY 2006, the Peace Corps made significant strides to improve its performance reporting process. Throughout FY 2006, the agency worked to enhance its internal controls and documentation of processes surrounding strategic performance reporting to address the auditor's finding in the FY 2005 Performance and Accountability Report of insufficient controls. Enhanced documentation now allows for greater continuity and reliability in reporting and helps mitigate the effect staff changes have on consistent performance reporting. The new reporting process was tested utilizing the offices' documented reporting processes during the mid-year budget review process.

Addressing mid-year performance results during this time allowed the agency to take another positive step forward in aligning performance and budgeting. This formal process includes a presentation to the Director in which offices account for their budget and performance results. An integrated mid-year review allows for funding and human resources to be reallocated to correct a course if there are challenges in meeting performance goals or to validate positive actions taken to meet performance targets.

The Peace Corps' FY 2006 performance results are based on reliable, actual data that are complete as of the production of the results at the close of the fiscal year. However, the data are limited by instances of unforeseen challenges with technology and data that flow in beyond the reporting dates. Overall, the Peace Corps has made great progress in documenting and streamlining its performance reporting process at the agency and can provide solid results on performance measures.

#### Environment Volunteer, Morocco

*Peace Corps staff continually train, support, and interact with Volunteers to build their technical, language, and cross-cultural skills and to ensure they can carry out their mission in a safe and healthy manner.*





## Actions to Address Current Challenges and Future Challenges

### Actions to Address Current Challenges

#### *Programming and Training*

A key component of placing Volunteers overseas is to ensure that they have a well-designed job and sufficient training to carry out their duties. Thus, agency efforts to enhance programming and training, through solid project plans and well-trained Volunteers and staff, help produce a positive Volunteer experience.

The agency increased the number of field and headquarters staff overseeing programming and training in fiscal year (FY) 2006. The agency funded eight new programming and training officers worldwide and increased funding for staff exchanges, which allowed programming and training staff in the field to share best practices. Additionally, the Peace Corps sent experts as part of internal management assessment teams to seven posts to review operations to enhance Volunteer service and programmatic impact.

In FY 2006, the Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research (the Center) provided programming support to posts to build their capacity to design and manage successful projects to make Volunteer service more effective and satisfying. The Center provided in-depth constructive feedback on 37 project plans and reviewed and provided feedback on each of the 224 annual project status reports.

In FY 2006, the Center implemented training systems to support overseas staff and Volunteers. These trainings included two overseas staff training sessions—extended professional development courses—attended by 96 overseas staff. Attendees participated in programming and training-related sessions designed to build capacity at posts to better meet host country development needs. The trainings included special sessions for all training managers in which

the Center rolled out a systematic approach to training design and evaluation. The Center also conducted field-based workshops for training managers in the field who were unable to attend these events. These workshops reached all training managers in the Africa and Inter-America and Pacific regions, and included follow-up support to the training managers at 10 of 18 posts in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region. Furthermore, the three Peace Corps regions held various sub-regional staff development workshops for programming and training staff, which helped staff share best practices and review topics such as effective monitoring and reporting systems for projects.

The Peace Corps' newly established Office of AIDS Relief provided direct field support for HIV/AIDS projects to five posts. Posts received additional feedback and support for their HIV/AIDS programming through the planning and budgeting process. Sixteen posts received assistance with their HIV/AIDS programming strategies and plans for their involvement with President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

When Peace Corps staff are well-trained and have highly honed skills, they provide better programming support and deliver better training to Volunteers. Volunteers receive training throughout their Peace Corps service, beginning with a two-day staging in the U.S. before they leave for post. This is followed by a two-to three-month intense pre-service training, in-service or mid-service trainings and other training events throughout their service. Volunteers learn important competencies related to health, safety, cross-cultural, language, and technical skills. Through annual training status reviews and information gleaned from the Volunteer survey, the Peace Corps continues to review its training, enabling it to deliver top-quality skills training to Volunteers in the field.

*Leadership development*

To provide a source of well-prepared managers and leaders, the agency created the Peace Corps Leadership Development Academy (LDA). Launched in fall 2005, this 12-month program provides employees with the opportunity to develop the leadership skills necessary to manage other employees, think critically, and develop strategic performance metrics. LDA creates an environment of self-discovery and learning and provides opportunities for participants to apply these learned skills to improve the future of the Peace Corps. The program created opportunities for participants to learn critical leadership competencies including teamwork, problem solving, decisiveness, resource management, innovation, and creativity.

An action research project allows these developing leaders to critically assess key issues and recommend important changes that may shape the future of the agency. Using shadowing assignments with senior staff along with ongoing professional development opportunities, the participants were exposed to critical issues facing the Peace Corps.

LDA also features an outside mentoring program that promotes retaining potential leaders through personal developmental guidance and training. Mentoring helped participants build learning partnerships with staff at other federal agencies and increase their knowledge of the background and importance of federal careers. This tie-in with other agencies addresses the President's Management Agenda directive to actively identify and develop potential leaders for the federal government to be competitive in the 21st century. Not only does LDA expand the skills of the participants so they are poised to assume positions of greater leadership for the Peace Corps at headquarters and in the field, but it prepares them for leadership positions at other federal agencies later in their careers.

*Succession Planning*

In FY 2006, the agency initiated a program of internal management assessments of Peace Corps posts. The goal of the internal management assessment program is to partner with regional and post senior leadership to strengthen and improve post management. Assessment teams have pursued meaningful solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of post operations and to enhance Volunteer service and programmatic impact. These assessments are collaborative, timely for posts and the regions, relevant to senior staff at selected posts and in the region, build consensus, and are responsive to post and regional needs.

Seven post assessments were conducted this year. Assessment teams visited Albania, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, Jordan, Mozambique, and Tanzania.

The assessments addressed issues such as:

- Taking full advantage of technology advances to streamline core business processes;
- Developing strategies to strengthen management and leadership;
- Planning strategically for country director transitions;
- Evaluating regional offices in geographically challenging posts; and
- Recruiting strategically.

Additionally, the Peace Corps began the practice of bringing outgoing country directors back to headquarters for an exit interview to ensure that the agency is apprised of post-specific issues that will need to be addressed by the incoming country director. As the key leader and

manager at post, good succession planning for country directors can have a lasting impact on a post. The assessment team has made further recommendations regarding handover reports for various staff to enable a smooth and information-filled transition for country director successors.

Furthermore, the Peace Corps finalized a continuity of operations (COOP) plan in case the agency has to operate in an extreme emergency situation. Its Office of Safety and Security also completed a COOP annex for pandemic influenza and developed a fully functional alternate relocation site using existing Peace Corps facilities. Both the COOP plan and the relocation site were successfully tested in 2006 during the Peace Corps' participation in the biennial government-wide Forward Challenge COOP exercise. The Peace Corps' COOP plan not only meets federal requirements, but has prepared the agency to continue to safeguard the safety and security of the Peace Corps Volunteers in the event of a COOP emergency.

### **Development and Retention of Institutional Knowledge**

The agency developed and began institutionalizing a system to ensure accurate and consistent performance reporting. Throughout FY 2006, the Peace Corps enhanced its internal controls and processes documentation surrounding strategic performance reporting in response to the auditor's finding in the FY 2005 PAR of insufficient controls. The enhanced documentation allows for greater continuity and reliability in reporting and helps mitigate the effects of staff changes on consistent performance reporting. The documentation process was a positive way to develop and retain institutional knowledge.

Furthermore, enhancements to the agency's information technology (IT) infrastructure are

creating systems and information to help develop and retain institutional knowledge. For instance, in the current fiscal year, the Peace Corps has released a new version of the Volunteer information database application (VIDA), which allows posts to manage their Volunteers using a standard system, process, and reports. This version of VIDA includes a new "whereabouts" report for traveling Volunteers and enhancements to improve emergency action plan (EAP) support and system usability for posts. The new VIDA version allows for the development and tracking of programmatic data at post in a supportable and manageable manner. This type of information was previously maintained in files and the memories of individuals at post. Once the individual departed post, so did his or her knowledge as well as the familiarity with the paper files. The paper format was not useful as there was no consistent format or process for capturing the data. Now all posts use the same tool, which provides consistency across posts and allows critical data to be available to future generations of staff.

### **Future Challenges**

While the Peace Corps is on strong footing, there are always challenges to carrying out the agency's mission in the most efficient and effective manner worldwide. In looking ahead, the agency must address the following areas of challenge:

- Volunteer delivery system,
- Strategic research, evaluation, and planning functions, and
- Financial processes to ensure the agency meets the goal of receiving an unqualified opinion on its financial statements by FY 2009.

The Peace Corps' mission is as vital now as ever, and the agency will continue to undertake efforts to meet future challenges that will ensure the agency operates at an optimum level to support its Volunteers as they carry out their work around the world.



**Education Volunteer, Mongolia:** Peace Corps Volunteers represent the diverse face of America, promoting a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.



## Financial Summary

### Overview

Fiscal year (FY) 2006 was a time of substantial improvement and maturation for the Peace Corps' financial systems, organization, and processes. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) completed its reorganization and continues to document its processes and strengthen the internal controls for each process. A reengineered Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) facilitated timely financial management decisions. Most financial statements are now produced directly from the financial system, Odyssey, whereas an offline process had been used in prior years. Accounting for capital assets significantly improved and resulted in identifying (and recording) existing assets and adjusting the value of numerous previously recorded assets.

### Analysis of the Peace Corps' Financial Statements

The Peace Corps' financial statements were prepared from its financial systems and processes using the most reliable, and complete data available. The Peace Corps' financial systems were designed to conform to government-wide standards. The Peace Corps has made tremendous strides in the past year in improving financial management to include capitalizing on a fully integrated financial management system and reengineering key processes. However, there are always portions of financial processes that warrant improvement or refinement. The letter from the chief financial officer provides details of enhancing Peace Corps' future financial management.

The agency had total assets of \$173 million as of September 30, 2006, and \$176 million as of September 30, 2005. The agency made significant

improvements in its accounting for capital assets during this past year. These improvements include refining the methodology for costing internally developed software, identifying and capitalizing previously unrecorded assets, giving recognition to estimated salvage values for the agency's vehicle fleet, and increasing the capitalization threshold for general property.

Budgetary resources available for use by the agency totaled \$344 million in FY 2006 and \$338 million in FY 2005, of which appropriated funds (net of rescission) totaled \$319 million and \$317 million, respectively.

The agency has developed and implemented an agency-wide internal control program. It is spearheaded by a senior assessment team that meets at least quarterly, ensures self-assessments, advises corrective action plans when warranted, and monitors the progress of the corrective actions.

### Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA)

The Peace Corps was not identified under Section 57, "Programs for which Erroneous Payment Information is Requested," in OMB Circular A-11. No specific improper payments were identified internally during this fiscal year or by the independent auditors that would reach the defined IPIA threshold of 2.5 percent and \$10 million. The Peace Corps does recognize the inherent risk associated with improper payments and performed a risk assessment during this fiscal year in the global accounts payable area. All payments are reviewed by a minimum of three levels—the approver, the verifier, and the certifying officer—prior to payment/processing. In FY 2007, the agency expects to perform statistical sampling to further validate the improper payment rate.

## Limitations of the Principal Financial Statements

The principal financial statements have been prepared to report the agency's financial position; disclose the net cost of operations and changes in net position; and provide information on budgetary resources and financing for fiscal years ended September 30, 2006, and 2005 pursuant to the requirements of 31 U.S.C. 3515(b). While these statements have been pre-

pared from the agency's records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for federal entities and the formats prescribed by OMB, the statements are in addition to the financial reports used to monitor and control budgetary resources which are prepared from the same records.

The statements should be read with the realization that they are for a component of the U.S. government, a sovereign entity.



**Business Volunteer, Tonga:** While Peace Corps Volunteers assist host countries in meeting their own needs for information technology (IT) training, the agency is investing in appropriate IT infrastructure to ensure better management, reporting, security, and efficiency of operations.



## Management Assurances

### Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act Statement of Qualified Assurance

The Peace Corps assessed the effectiveness of the organization's internal controls to support effective and efficient programmatic operations, reliable financial reporting and compliance with applicable law and regulations in accordance with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA), Section 2. Based on this assessment, the Peace Corps is able to provide a qualified statement of assurance for FY 2006 that the internal controls are adequate and effective and meet the objectives with the exception of one material weakness. The material weakness is the lack of adequate controls over capital assets (Property, Plant, and Equipment (PP&E)). During the fiscal year 2006 financial statement audit, prior year material weaknesses were reassessed and modified to reflect the current control environment. These modified prior year material weaknesses are described in the *Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control*.

The Peace Corps conducted its assessment of whether the financial management systems conform to government-wide financial systems requirements in accordance with FMFIA, Section 4. Based on this assessment, the Peace Corps is able to provide a qualified statement of assurance for FY 2006 that the agency's financial management systems conform to government-wide financial systems requirements in accordance with FMFIA, with the exception of two non-conformances. Specifically, the Peace Corps' financial management system lacks a contingency plan and has not yet obtained accreditation and certification.

### Internal Control

In FY 2006, the agency implemented an internal control program that involves all senior managers guided by a senior assessment team (SAT).

The SAT is led by the chief financial officer and includes other members of top agency management. Each office throughout the agency conducted risk assessments for all business areas and prepared and monitored corrective action plans for those areas designated as high risk, whether from self assessment or findings from the inspector general or external auditors. The final aspect of the agency's program, development and utilization of testing plans, will be fully operational next year for all high-risk areas. Peace Corps managers signed individual assurance statements for FY 2006 attesting either to the adequacy of the internal controls or that material weaknesses existed in their area. Assurances were based on the managers' personal knowledge of day-to-day operations, existing controls, and other related reviews and evaluations. Identified weaknesses were considered to be manageable within the control of the agency except as indicated otherwise.

The Peace Corps has an enterprise architecture (EA) program within the Office of the CIO to modernize the systems and infrastructure to support the agency's mission in the 21st century. The EA program establishes the analysis and governance framework support to implement the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996; OMB Circular A-11, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*; OMB Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*; the Federal Information Security Act; and various other legislative and regulatory requirements. In FY 2006, the EA program delivered numerous accomplishments including completing a consolidated enterprise systems inventory and creating an end-to-end view of the Volunteer delivery system (VDS), the main business line of the agency. Through its EA program, the Peace Corps is pursuing cross-program and enterprise-wide initiatives strategically and methodically to better meet its mission and goals.

The Peace Corps continued to monitor its compliance with congressional mandates, regulations, and law, as well as its own policies. For both programmatic review and compliance with laws and regulations, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducts program evaluations, audits, and investigations. They also recommend program improvements, improved levels of economy and efficiency, and means to comply with Peace Corps' policies. During FY 2006, the OIG conducted 14 program evaluations and 15 audits at headquarters and in 21 countries. The agency continues to utilize a system of compliance with OIG report recommendations that includes follow-up to verify corrective actions have been taken. The agency also constantly updates its policy manual, and its policy review board assists with policy review, revision, and formulation.

#### **Summary of Material Weaknesses and Non-Conformances**

One material weakness and two non-conformances were identified within the Peace Corps for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006. The material weakness relates to internal control and financial reporting, adequate controls over capital assets (PP&E), and is further described in Appendix 1. Tremendous strides were made

in gaining control over PP&E in accordance with the corrective action plan during FY 2006. The agency anticipates completing the remaining PP&E efforts by March 2007. The other two non-conformances—completeness of a disaster recovery strategy and enterprise-wide financial system accreditation and certification—did not conform to the objectives of FMFIA for financial management systems and are described further in Appendix 1. Although much agency effort was expended toward these two areas of non-conformance, complete financial system certification and accreditation and the contingency plan are not anticipated until March 2007. During the fiscal year 2006 financial statement audit, prior year material weaknesses were reassessed and modified to reflect the current control environment. These modified prior year material weaknesses are described in the *Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control*.

#### **Summary**

The Peace Corps has made great progress in fiscal year 2006 and is pleased to provide a qualified statement of assurance, with the exception of one material weakness and two non-conformances, that the internal controls and financial management systems meet the objectives of FMFIA.



Ronald A. Tschetter  
Director  
November 15, 2006



George A. Schutter III, CPA, CPCM  
Chief Financial Officer  
November 15, 2006



## President's Management Agenda Summary

The Peace Corps has considered its strategic and performance goals, indicators, and targets within the context of the President's Management Agenda (PMA) and its management initiatives. The Peace Corps can be held accountable for significantly, quantifiably, and annually improving the way the agency works. Systems are in place to permit candid discussions regarding where the agency is successful, where it falls short, and what is being done to improve performance. The Peace Corps is providing higher levels of service—levels now more comparable to the private sector—and properly accounting for where and how it spends taxpayers' money.

### Strategic Management of Human Capital

Work at the Peace Corps is carried out by staff working under a term-limited hiring authority, which has been in place since 1965. Most staff is limited to five years of regular employment, with certain exceptions that allow staff to exceed the five year limit and return to the agency for another term after a hiatus. The Peace Corps has continued to improve its human resource management (HRM) working within federal procedures and its unique term-limited appointments. The launch of the Peace Corps' Leadership Development Academy, a 12-month program to ensure that potential future leaders will have the necessary skills to lead Peace Corps, should help build the skills of individuals for positions of greater leadership during their term appointment or upon return to the agency later in their careers.

The most sweeping HRM enhancement has been implementing, as a pilot program, an automated human capital management system based on enterprise architecture. The human capital management system has reduced hiring time frames in many cases, changed the span of control among offices, and increased staff who provide service to citizens, both on a full-time equivalent (FTE) level and on a volunteer level.

The Human Resources Office is automating significant portions of the HRM system. The Office of Overseas Executive Selection and Support (OESS) was the first Peace Corps office to pilot the automated system. OESS currently takes applications for the agency's key country director positions through both the automated system and an alternative electronic application. More than half of the applications in fiscal year (FY) 2005-2006 came via the automated system.

Planned possible actions for the next fiscal year include the Personnel Action Request/National Finance Center front-end system interface integration, automated SF-52 processing of Personnel Action Requests processing, the development of a management escalation plan regarding shared management information that simultaneously informs the vendor of outstanding issues, more training, focused marketing, and surveys.

### Competitive Sourcing

The agency has a full-time staff of approximately 1,000 employees located at Peace Corps headquarters, regional recruiting offices, and in the over 70 countries in which Volunteers serve. The Peace Corps uses approximately 2,000 contractor staff, both domestically and overseas; more than 90 percent of its overseas staff serves under personal service contracts. Over the years, the Peace Corps has also outsourced many of its functions to private firms and other government agencies. Through various outsourcing initiatives, the Peace Corps has achieved a 2:1 ratio of outsourced positions to every Peace Corps employee. These outsourcing initiatives have been driven by business case decisions and include information technology (IT)-managed services, mail services, medical services, medical records support, finance and accounting support, and Volunteer training and support.

In July 2006, the Peace Corps established a strategic sourcing council as the governing body for improvements in the acquisition process and competitive sourcing efforts. The council reviews, evaluates, and approves acquisition-related improvements and competitive sourcing initiatives that improve operational efficiency, improve services, or reduce cost. There were no competitive sourcing efforts implemented in FY 2006, nor are there any planned for FY 2007. As the council gains momentum, however, competitive sourcing ideas and initiatives are expected to surface.

### Improved Financial Performance

This past year was one of substantial maturation for financial systems, for the organization of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and for key agency-wide financial processes, including the internal control program and the Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS). This year, the OCFO made extensive progress by executing strategically minded plans built with tactical detail in financial management organizational structure, technology, documentation, and tools needed to achieve stated goals. The finalization of the reorganization of the OCFO established seven directorates, each with a clearly defined function, based on the results of business process analyses. CFO Bulletin e-mail communication links continued to be sent to Peace Corps staff, including country directors and administrative officers at posts. The Peace Corps' IPBS was reengineered to align with posts' field project designs, the agency's Volunteer recruitment and delivery cycles, and Congressional planning and budget cycles. The information submitted by posts and domestic offices is used by the Peace Corps to make decisions on allocating resources with more focus on rewarding performance and ensuring that results are verifiably measured. Moreover, the agency developed and implemented an agency-wide internal control program that incorporates input from a senior assessment team that meets quarterly, reviews self-assessments and correc-

tive action plans, and monitors the progress of corrective actions.

These efforts have resulted in several improvements, including generating three of the five quarterly financial statements directly from the financial system (previously these statements were dependent on an external report generator) and implementing, or making scheduled progress on, actions to correct all external audit findings from the FY 2003 Gap Analysis and the FY 2004 and FY 2005 financial statement audits.

This coming fiscal year will include further refinements in standardizing and systematizing account reconciliations, analysis to decision-makers, procedures for capital assets, and internal control testing. The agency's goal remains to continuously improve financial processes and data integrity, culminating in an unqualified opinion on its financial statements no later than FY 2009.

### Expanded E-government

Expanded e-government is key to fostering a citizen-centered government with a greater volume of service at lower costs. The Peace Corps' e-government initiatives are geared toward overcoming agency bureaucratic divisions and increasing productivity and the ease of electronic access for citizens, which facilitates program and operation transparency. The Peace Corps has witnessed annual progress in its systems maturation, from a low-tech operating environment to a high-tech enabled agency.

The Volunteer delivery system (VDS) is a continuous cycle of Volunteer recruitment, screening, and placement that allows the Peace Corps to deliver suitable, trained Volunteers to meet host country needs. The Peace Corps has aligned the VDS to speed up the application process and to reach minority groups more effectively. Internal communication was streamlined and overall response times to applicants was reduced. Recent enhancements include an online status check;

automatically generated e-mails to questions posed by applicants; online reference checks, medical history form, and reference submissions; downloadable forms necessary to complete applications; and online training materials. These enhancements have produced cost savings because application packages are no longer printed, compiled, and mailed to applicants. This solution will be further integrated with wireless technology, collaborative efforts, and enhanced Web-based solutions, including the Peace Corps website, the Office of Private Sector Initiatives' website, and the agency's Intranet. Additional plans for FY 2007-2009 include adding country-specific resources to the electronic process for invitees.

In the current fiscal year, the Peace Corps released a new version of the Volunteer information database application (VIDA), which allows posts to manage their Volunteers using a standard system, process, and reports. This version of VIDA included a new "whereabouts" report for traveling Volunteers and enhancements to improve emergency action plan (EAP) support and system usability for posts. The agency implements VSAT technology in countries where the telecommunications infrastructure does not support stable telephone and Internet services. (VSAT stands for "very small aperture terminal," an earthbound station used in satellite communications of data, voice, and video signals.) In FY 2006, this technology was implemented in Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland and Zambia.

The Peace Corps continues to implement IT security policy and disaster recovery plans to secure data stored and processed on agency computers. This enables the agency to be compliant with federally mandated continuity of operations (COOP) plan requirements. The agency continues to move its legacy systems away from older mainframe technologies to Web-enabled distributed environments, providing vast potential for e-government solutions and service delivery. Some recent e-government invest-

ments include developing an improved vehicle fleet plan for posts with established criteria, automated leases, and property agreements; institutionalizing a state-of-the-art electronic, integrated capital property inventory tool; automating space review and usage, including new offices, as needed; updating computerized acquisition and shipping processes; revamping internal and external mail delivery systems; issuing and maintaining data on security badges; and introducing "Prospect Manager," a software application to help recruiters track information on prospective Volunteers.

Planned activities for FY 2007-2009 include:

- Addressing the results of a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) gap analysis and recommending systems and processes for compliance;
- Reengineering processes in the VDS to further enhance and enable an automated online administration and tracking system;
- Identifying areas to develop new and underutilized recruitment markets, reduce application processing time, and increase applicant-to-trainee retention rates via the Intranet and Internet; and
- Streamlining crime reporting processes through the enhancement of an electronic system with real-time incident reporting capabilities.

### Budget and Performance Integration

In FY 2006, the Peace Corps embarked on a major initiative to reengineer the IPBS, its primary program and resource management planning mechanism. The newly reengineered IPBS includes more context for planners about how the Peace Corps system is integrated into the federal process. Posts and domestic offices are encouraged to maintain their strategic plans unless unexpected contingencies emerge. They

now must report back on results from last year's strategic plan goals for the first time with data that can be rolled into the *Performance and Accountability Report* submission. Budget holders and managers have increased flexibility and responsibility to manage their own budgets. More attention is paid to Volunteer-year charts, which are submitted by posts each quarter. Reprogramming has been defined and thresholds for budget adjustments have been revised. Posts and major offices will perform internal monthly reviews of budget execution, and the OCFO will review the budget execution of major offices and posts quarterly.

Another key advance for the agency was the alignment of performance reviews with the mid-year budget review process. This formal process includes a presentation to the Director in which offices are held accountable for their budget and performance results. An integrated mid-year review allows for resources—both funding and human—to be reallocated to undertake a correction in course if there are challenges in meeting performance goals or to validate positive actions taken to meet the performance targets.

In FY 2005, the Peace Corps received its first Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) review and received an “effective” rating. The resulting PART improvement plan outlined the need for the agency to identify new strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators more closely aligned to the Peace Corps’ mission statement. In fall 2005, the agency embarked on an effort to revise its 2003–2008 strategic plan to provide an interim adjustment for fiscal years 2006–2008. Improvements were made to better align the plan to the Peace Corps’ three goals and internal processes, including new and modified strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators. The Peace Corps completed, and OMB approved, the revised version of the agency’s strategic plan, which was included in the FY 2007 Congressional Budget Justification (CBJ). Throughout FY 2006, the agency worked to enhance its internal controls and documentation of processes surrounding strategic performance reporting. The enhanced documentation allows for greater continuity and reliability in reporting and helps mitigate the effects of staff changes on consistent performance reporting.



**Education Volunteer, Mongolia:** Peace Corps Volunteers educate new generations of children in the countries where they serve.



PERFORMANCE SECTION



## Performance Report

The Peace Corps' mission of promoting world peace and friendship is accomplished through the work of Peace Corps Volunteers as they transfer skills and build cross-cultural understanding in partner countries throughout the world. The agency operates in host countries that have invited the Peace Corps to assist in meeting their development needs. Through their work, Peace Corps Volunteers build bridges of understanding between Americans and host country nationals.

The Peace Corps uses performance goals and measures that focus on providing skilled Volunteers to meet host country needs, supporting the health and safety of the Volunteer, and ensuring that Volunteers reflect the face of America to host countries. The measures also look at the efficiency and effectiveness of efforts to recruit, train, and support Volunteers as they carry out their work, as well as the exposure of Americans to other cultures because of the Peace Corps. These goals and measures provide a clear picture of the agency's most important performance results.

In fiscal year (FY) 2006, the Peace Corps made significant strides in improving its performance reporting process. In fall 2005, the agency began to revise its 2003–2008 strategic plan to provide an interim adjustment for fiscal years 2006–2008. Improvements were made to better align the plan to the Peace Corps' three goals and internal processes, including new and modified strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators. The Peace Corps completed, and OMB approved, the revised version of the agency's strategic plan, which was included in the FY 2007 Congressional Budget Justification.

### Program Assessment Rating Tool

The interim adjustment was in response to the Peace Corps' first-ever Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) review, which occurred in FY 2005. The Peace Corps received an "effective"

rating, which indicates that the agency has set ambitious goals, achieved results, is well-managed, and improves efficiency. The PART review process also includes recommendations for improvement, called the PART improvement plan. The Peace Corps' improvement plan outlined the need to identify new strategic objectives with outcome-oriented targets and indicators more closely aligned to the agency's mission statement. In response, the Peace Corps produced the interim adjustment to the strategic plan described above.

The improvement plan also refers to the agency's need to better measure Volunteers' effectiveness in carrying out the Peace Corps' second goal of promoting a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served. The agency continues to work to identify alternate appropriate measures of this goal. Moreover, the Peace Corps conducted a review of field efforts and tasked a research team with exploring an appropriate data collection tool.

In summer 2006, the agency embarked on a broader effort to develop increasingly sophisticated research methods for measuring outcomes. The strategic research and information team, composed of leaders within the organization with backgrounds in data use and management, is actively developing a plan for greater outcome measurement and a new structure to increase the agency's research, evaluation, and strategic planning functions.

### Office of Inspector General Evaluations

The Peace Corps' Office of Inspector General (OIG) regularly conducts program evaluations of the effectiveness of programs that support Peace Corps Volunteers. Evaluators analyze the management and program operations of the Peace Corps at both overseas posts and domestic offices. They identify best practices and recommend program improvements and means to comply with Peace Corps' policies. During FY 2006, the

OIG conducted 14 program evaluations in 13 countries. Challenges cited in program evaluations relate to technical and local language training, Volunteer behavior issues, and support to Volunteers in their sites.

### Performance Reporting Process

Throughout FY 2006, the agency enhanced its internal controls and documentation of processes surrounding strategic performance reporting in response to the auditor's finding in the FY 2005 *Performance and Accountability Report* (PAR) of insufficient controls. The enhanced documentation allows for greater continuity and reliability in reporting and helps mitigate the effects of staff changes on consistent performance reporting. The new reporting process was tested using documented reporting processes during the mid-year budget review.

Addressing mid-year performance results alongside the budget reviews allowed the agency to take another positive step in aligning performance with budgeting. This formal process includes a presentation to the Director in which offices are held accountable for their budget and performance results. An integrated mid-year review allows for funding and human resources to be reallocated to undertake a correction in course if there are challenges in meeting performance goals or to validate positive actions taken to meet performance targets.

Due to the interim adjustment to the agency's strategic plan, the FY 2006 performance results include many new or revised goals and indicators. This makes providing past fiscal year data particularly challenging. Thus, the results include past fiscal year data for a sampling of performance goals. The Peace Corps' FY 2006 performance results are based on reliable, actual data that are complete as of the production of the results at the close of the fiscal year. However, the data are limited by instances of unforeseen challenges with technology as well as the handling of data that flow in beyond the reporting dates. Overall, the Peace Corps has made great progress in documenting and streamlining its performance reporting process at the agency and can provide solid results on performance measures.

### Performance Summary

FY 2006 is the first year for the agency to report out on the current set of ambitious but achievable performance goals and indicator targets outlined in the strategic plan. In FY 2006, the agency was on or above target for five of the eight performance goals and 26 of the 33 performance indicators. In some cases results were more healthy than anticipated; in other areas results fell short of the goal. Overall, the agency will continue to work to achieve its strategic goals and to serve the Volunteer, host country nationals, and the American people.

## Performance Section

Performance Goal and Brief Description	Performance Goal Against Target	Performance Indicators Against Target		
		Under	On	Over
1.1 Volunteers serving	Under	0	3	1
1.2 Transfer skills and understanding	Over	0	2	2
1.3 Represent American diversity	Under	2	0	3
2.1 Quality healthcare	Over	1	1	1
2.2 Volunteer safety	On	0	1	2
3.1 Interactions with Americans to build cross-cultural understanding	Under	2	1	2
4.1 Efficient application process	Over	0	0	5
4.2 Maintain resignation rate	Over	2	2	0
<b>Total Performance Goals=8</b>	3 Under 1 On 4 Over	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>

**Note:** The three categories of performance measurement are under, on, or over target. A number that is under target is any number below the target; a number that is on target is any number that is exactly on target or a maximum of 2 percent higher; and a number that is over target is any number that is more than 2 percent higher than the target.

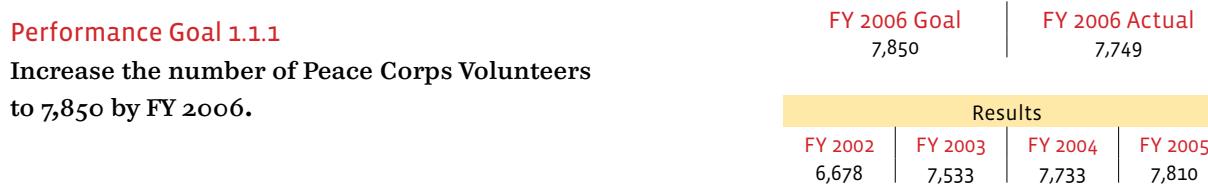
## FY 2006 Performance Results

### 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.



#### Results and Analysis:

As of September 30, 2006, the Peace Corps fielded 7,749 Volunteers working around the globe to carry out the mission of the agency.<sup>6</sup> While fielding more than 7,700 Volunteers is a significant achievement, the Peace Corps did not meet its target number of Volunteers in the field due to events in Bangladesh, Chad, and East Timor during FY 2006, which necessitated suspending operations in those countries. The Peace Corps plans to reach targeted Volunteer levels in FY 2007, including the infusion of Volunteers into a newly established Peace Corps program in Cambodia and in a reopened program in Ethiopia.

Performance Indicators 1.1	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Results
i. Number of new country entries	1	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	223
iv. Overall visits to website	8.3 million	8.3 million

\* This is a measure of whether the Peace Corps is partnering with PEPFAR in all of the nine PEPFAR focus countries in which the agency currently has a presence.

<sup>6</sup> This 7,749 is an "on board" count of all Peace Corps Volunteers and trainees, Crisis Corps Volunteers, and United Nations Volunteers from all funding sources serving under the Peace Corps as of September 30, 2006. It includes 111 Volunteers funded by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, as well as 10 Volunteers funded through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development on tsunami relief efforts in Thailand.

### *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 FY 2006, the Peace Corps opened a program in the Kingdom of Cambodia. This historic new country entry enables Volunteers to work for the first time in Cambodia focusing on issues of education and health.

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 nine of the 15 PEPFAR focus countries.<sup>7</sup> All nine of these posts actively participated in PEPFAR during FY 2006, expanding and enhancing their ongoing efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS. In addition, seven other posts participated in the PEPFAR program, and Volunteers throughout the world integrated HIV/AIDS awareness messages into their work. Peace Corps Volunteers, by living and working at the grassroots level in communities and speaking the local language, are uniquely suited to share culturally appropriate messages in HIV/AIDS education and prevention. In the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer survey, 55 percent of Volunteers reported being engaged in HIV/AIDS activities as part of their Peace Corps work, which represents a major increase over the 2004 survey in which 25 percent reported involvement.

In FY 2006, the Peace Corps' Crisis Corps program sent its 1,000th Volunteer into service since the program's inception in 1996. Returned Peace Corps Volunteers continue to put their specialized skills to work on short-term assignments ranging from disaster relief to HIV/AIDS prevention. It was a very active year for the Crisis Corps program, and the number of natural disasters and infusion of funds from various sources accounts for the agency being significantly over its targeted goal. Crisis Corps deployed 138 Volunteers to the Gulf Coast region for recovery assistance to those impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which was funded by, coordinated with, and under the authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Crisis Corps also sent 21 Americans to Southeast Asia through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development to provide relief to those affected by the devastation wrought by the tsunami. Throughout FY 2006, Crisis Corps fielded an additional 51 Volunteers, plus 13 PEPFAR-funded Crisis Corps Volunteers for a total of 223 Volunteers from all funding sources.

The overall visits to the agency's website, [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov), increased from 7.9 million in FY 2005 to 8.3 million in FY 2006. The agency was on target with its aggressive FY 2006 goal and expects solid growth next fiscal year through enhancements of website content, such as reaching out to diverse audiences, revising its "kids" site, creating a "teens" site, and incorporating new technology such as really simple syndication (RSS) feeds. The number of Web applications and online donations, two key outcomes of Peace Corps' Web presence, continued to make solid gains in FY 2006.

#### **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 80 percent by FY 2006.\*

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual
80%	83%

\* This is a new performance goal as of FY 2006.  
No data from past fiscal years is available.

<sup>7</sup> PEPFAR has identified 15 focus countries. The Peace Corps has posts in nine of these focus countries—Botswana, Guyana, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. The other focus countries are Ethiopia, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Vietnam.

*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 teach solutions that will be sustainable within the community. According to the Volunteers surveyed upon completion of their service, via the new close-of-service (COS) survey implemented in FY 2006, more than 83 percent of Volunteers stated that they have effectively transferred knowledge and skills to members of their host community.

Performance Indicators 1.2	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 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	2,165,000	2,187,000
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	113,800	126,300
iii. Number of community-initiated, Volunteer-led, Partnership Program projects	430	435
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	90%	95%

*Results and Analysis:*

The agency was slightly over 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 working to build the capacity of men, women, girls, and boys so they can manage their own development in a sustainable manner. Volunteers help build capacity by increasing the knowledge, improving the 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.

The number of Partnership Program projects was on target with the FY 2006 goal. Partnership projects are Volunteer-led, community-initiated projects that can only be funded if they meet the Peace Corps' defined standards of sustainability, community involvement, and community need. Through Volunteers, Partnership Program projects help communities realize goals ranging from acquiring equipment for sports teams to building latrines in schools.

One of the key goals 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, and the Peace Corps reached its performance indicator in this regard. Volunteers, by sharing about themselves, their families, and their life in the United States, help 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.

**Performance Goal 1.3.1.**

Incrementally increase the number of Peace Corps applicants representing diverse ethnicities and people 50 and over by 2 percent from an FY 2005 level of 24 percent to 26 percent by FY 2006.

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual		
26%	24%		
Results			
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
25.0%	25.9%	26.1%	24.5%

*Results and Analysis:*

The Peace Corps, while working to gradually expand the number of Volunteers, is also attempting to increase the number of underrepresented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps. This effort ensures that the Peace Corps continues to do its best to reflect the diverse face of the United States. While the agency matched its FY 2005 level of 24 percent, it is slightly below the FY 2006 target of 26 percent. There continues to be a strong emphasis on recruiting applicants of diverse ethnicities and those over 50, including employing pilot recruitment programs.

Performance Indicators 1.3	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Results
i. Percentage of applicants over the age of 50	7.8%	7.2%
ii. Percentage of applicants of diverse ethnicities	19%	17.5%
iii. Total visitors to website who access minority recruitment pages and/or scarce skills, family pages	430,000	442,624
iv. Number of articles placed in newspapers and other media that focus on diverse Volunteers and/or target diverse audiences	175	240
v. Total number of public service announcements (PSA) placements in minority- and diversity/geared media	3,500	5,300

*Results and Analysis:*

In FY 2006, the agency experienced a slight decrease in the percentage of applicants over 50 as well as applicants of diverse ethnicities. Several approaches will be used to increase the diversity of the Peace Corps' applicant pool, including presentations at conventions targeting older and diverse populations, increased press attention, increasing the number of older recruiters hired, and pilot projects for diversity recruitment.

One way to enhance recruitment efforts targeting diverse audiences is to raise awareness about diverse Volunteers serving in the Peace Corps through media exposure. The agency exceeded the target number of articles that focused on diverse Volunteers and/or appeared in publications written for diverse audiences, which often show images and tell stories about Peace Corps Volunteer service.

Visitors to the website who accessed minority recruitment pages and/or scarce-skills and family pages were just above the performance goal. The growth in this area is the result of more outreach into minority communities with specific content for those populations.

The Peace Corps accomplished 5,300 placements for its PSAs in minority- and diversity/geared media for FY 2006, which is substantially above the goal. Significant factors contributing to this success were the development of a new radio PSA that appeals to radio stations with an urban format (reaching a wider African-American audience) and including Spanish language versions of the PSA for both television and radio.

## 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 80 percent by FY 2006.

FY 2006 Goal		FY 2006 Actual	
Results			
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
90%	N/A*	87%	N/A*

\* There are no results reported for these years because the Peace Corps Volunteer survey is conducted every other year.

### 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 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer survey demonstrates 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 2006 Target	FY 2006 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%	81%
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%	91%
iii. Incidence of <i>falciparum</i> malaria in Africa region (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years)	Less than 6.0	2.1

### 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, a Volunteer may need to be medically evacuated to Washington, D.C., and the satisfaction of these Volunteers with the care they receive continues to be a focus of the agency. During FY 2006, the data from the medevac survey given those Volunteers reported that the agency fell short of its goal and the FY 2005 results of 93 percent satisfaction. This decline may be attributable to a shift in the agency's approach to handling Volunteers requiring medical evacuations by utilizing closer regional hubs for their care. In FY 2005, 240 Volunteers were medically evacuated to Washington, D.C., and 176 received care at regional centers overseas. In FY 2006, the percentage shifted appreciably; 192 were served in medical evacuation centers overseas and 187 received care in Washington, D.C. Moreover, those brought to Washington, D.C., were often the most serious cases, which can lead to the termination of a Volunteer's service for medical reasons. While the lower numbers may reflect displeasure with the circumstances, the agency will

nonetheless undertake efforts to address the concerns of medical evacuees, including closely scrutinizing the feedback received in the surveys.

The Peace Corps focuses on equipping Volunteers so that they have the tools they need to deal with the changes they will face in their communities. This training on physical and emotional health is a focus of pre-service training and is reinforced throughout a Volunteer's term of service. The close-of-service survey results from FY 2006 reported 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 the proper protocols and the importance of taking their malaria prophylaxis, which accounts for an incidence rate that is well below the target level.

#### **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 1 percent from FY 2002 level of 86 percent to 87 percent by FY 2006.

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual		
87%	88%		
Results			
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
86%	N/A*	88%	N/A*

\* There are no results reported for these years because the Peace Corps Volunteer survey is conducted every other year.

#### *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. The Peace Corps Volunteer survey results indicate that an overwhelming majority of Volunteers feel safe where they live.

Performance Indicators 2.2	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Results
i. Percentage of posts receiving safety and security report recommendations annually	85%	85%
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%	94%
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%	92%

#### *Results and Analysis:*

As a measure of 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 make recommendations for improvements to their Volunteer safety support systems. By the end of FY 2006, the office had achieved this goal. Additional visits were made to assist in staff training, crisis management, and collaboration with embassies on physical security recommendations or office relocations; follow-up on previous recommendations; and other safety and security programmatic support.

An important goal related to a Volunteer's perception of safety and security was to increase the percentage of Volunteer respondents to 85 percent who feel that the safety and security information received during pre-service training was adequate to very effective. This was also greatly surpassed with survey data revealing that 94 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. Additionally, the information provides them with an understanding of the agency's approach to safety and security. Receiving this information before leaving home enables invitees to better absorb the messages that are included in staging and pre-service training.

Additionally, 91 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. The Peace Corps will continue to focus on this important issue, remaining vigilant to maximize Volunteer security overseas.



**Youth Development Volunteer, Romania:** Volunteers enhance their safety and security by integrating into the communities in which they live and work.

## 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 27,456 (aggregate of indicators i. through iv.) by FY 2008.

#### Performance Goal 3.1.1.

Increase the number of interactions with Americans to further the Peace Corps' goals through Peace Corps supported activities to 24,382 in FY 2006.\*

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual
24,382	23,377

\* This is a new performance goal as of FY 2006.  
No data from past fiscal years is available.

#### Results and Analysis:

While the number of interactions with Americans to further Peace Corps goals fell just under the targeted goal, education activities such as Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise School and Fellows USA programs had healthy levels of participation. Expanded opportunities for Peace Corps Volunteers and returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) to share their experiences with Americans as well as improved efforts to capture such interactions should allow the agency to meet its goal in FY 2007.

Performance Indicators 3.1	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 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	14,550	14,387
ii. Donors supporting Peace Corps Volunteer projects through private sector contributions	5,500	4,588
iii. U.S. educators connecting with Peace Corps Volunteers through the Peace Corps' Coverdell World Wise Schools correspondence match program	4,000	4,037
iv. Fellows/USA participants serving in communities nationwide	332	365
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	1.26 million	2 million

#### Results and Analysis:

Even with high levels of participation during Peace Corps Week and events associated with the agency's 45th anniversary, the agency missed its targeted number of interactions of RPCVs with the American public by less than two percent. The activities of RPCVs help carry the message of understanding of other cultures as they share their stories in schools, community centers, and elsewhere in the United States. The agency will continue to look at ways to encourage even greater RPCV participation, provide them tools to realize the Peace Corps' third goal, and improve efforts to capture the breadth of RPCV participation through activities supported by the Peace Corps.

The number of donors supporting Peace Corps Partnership projects failed to meet the FY 2006 target. The average donation amount increased, which led to a corresponding decrease in donors required to meet project needs. The Office of Private Sector Initiatives continues to shift its outreach strategy to

reach more schools and civic groups, even though groups of people are counted as one donor. This, and the decrease in the amount of funding required by Volunteer-led projects, will make expanding donor numbers a continued challenge. Regardless, the office will continue to reach out to a wide variety of donors as required to meet Volunteer project funding needs.

The number of educators connecting with Peace Corps Volunteers through the Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) program met the target performance level. After experiencing database difficulties that hampered optimum program matching, the program implemented an aggressive strategy to increase educator enrollment, which helped provide atypical teacher enrollment gains since mid-year. The CWWS program will continue with its marketing strategy, enabling Volunteers to match with teachers, which helps to bring their experiences alive to students nationwide.

The CWWS website, a key avenue for connecting with schoolchildren across America, exceeded its targeted number of visits per year. An aggressive marketing campaign supplemented by a regular e-newsletter and fresh content has driven CWWS website traffic to historic highs.

The Peace Corps' Fellow/USA program not only exceeded the target for participants, but experienced the highest enrollment since the program's inception in 1985. The addition of 10 new university partners and two new programs in FY 2004 and FY 2005 has led to unexpectedly strong enrollments in FY 2006. Fellows/USA participants use the knowledge, skills, and competencies they developed during their Peace Corps service to benefit the American people by simultaneously working in underserved U.S. communities as they pursue graduate degrees.



**The Corcoran School, Syracuse, New York:** Peace Corps Volunteers promote cultural awareness of the countries in which they served to schoolchildren and community groups, giving Americans the opportunity to learn from their experiences.

## 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'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 Goal 4.1.1.

Decrease the Peace Corps' response time to applicants by 2 percent from 156 days in FY 2005 to 154 days in FY 2006.\*

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual
154	138

\* This is a new performance goal as of FY 2006.  
No data from past fiscal years is available.

#### Results and Analysis:

The agency is pleased to have exceeded its FY 2006 goal of response time to applicants by being 16 days faster than the 154-day goal. The application process for becoming a Peace Corps Volunteer has numerous stages, which enables the agency to recruit and thoroughly screen applicants for skills, medical, and suitability issues prior to approving and inviting them for Peace Corps service. The Peace Corps' application process was broken down into its various stages to better analyze efficiencies. Cumulatively, these processing days allow the agency to identify its overall responsiveness to applicants.

Performance Indicators 4.1	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Results
i. Number of days from receipt of application to nomination	66	62
ii. Number of days from nominee's completed health status review to medical kit sent	9	8
iii. Number of days from receipt of completed medical kit to medical qualification	32	30
iv. Number of days from medical qualification to invitation	47	38
v. Percentage of applicants who submit their Volunteer applications over the Internet	84%	91%

#### Results and Analysis:

The 11 regional recruitment offices (RROs) located throughout the United States increased the efficiency of their application processing methods, which led to fewer days from application to nomination than the FY 2006 target.

The Placement Unit has processed medically qualified applicants and issued invitations to those individuals in a timely manner. This part of the Volunteer delivery system (VDS) includes finalized information from the Office of Medical Services (OMS), posts, and applicants before the official invitation is issued. The ease in using the online application and electronic references have produced better-than-expected results. In fact, the agency surpassed its goal of applicants submitting their applications over the Internet—91 percent applied online, which was 7 percent over the FY 2006 target and 8 percent over the FY 2005 level.

Additionally, OMS staff, including those sending the medical kits and the screening nurses responsible for determining medical qualification, exceeded their targeted turnaround times, allowing the agency to meet its FY 2006 goals.

#### Performance Goals 4.2.1.

Maintain the overall 12-month Volunteer's resignation rate at 10 percent or less in FY 2006.

FY 2006 Goal	FY 2006 Actual		
<10%	8.8%		
Results			
FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005
9.0%	8.0%	9.0%	8.6%

#### Results and Analysis:

Retaining Volunteers is an area the Peace Corps has examined and analyzed carefully. The agency's target to keep resignations for FY 2006 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). A revised qualitative data instrument was implemented beginning in FY 2005 to collect more meaningful data on reasons Volunteers choose to resign. The agency continues to monitor early terminations (particularly resignations), and to use both quantitative and qualitative data to assist in improving recruiting, training, programming, and all other aspects of the Volunteer experience.

Performance Indicators 4.2	FY 2006 Target	FY 2006 Results
i. Percentage of sites described "very well," "well," or "adequately" prepared in the biennial Volunteer survey	80%	78%
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%	91%
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	95%	94%
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%	85%

#### Results and Analysis:

The Peace Corps strives to retain Volunteers throughout their term of Peace Corps 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 learn 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 communicate with their host country community members.

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) with the regions through the annual project status report (PSR) review process. These evaluations provide feedback to posts on overall possible project improvements. Cohesive projects enable Volunteers to have well-defined work at their sites, which fits into a larger project goal addressing the identified needs of the host country. The agency reviewed and provided feedback on all Peace Corps posts that submitted annual reports; however, it was unable to review all plans during the PSR review process due to unexpected closures of Peace Corps posts during the year. Additionally, the agency was slightly under its goal for the adequacy of site preparation. Site development is a key function of post staff to effectively place Volunteers in communities. The agency will undertake efforts to review and improve programming and training and ensure that best practices on site development are shared and emphasized throughout the overseas posts.

The agency met its goal on preparing Volunteers to meet their mental/emotional health needs during their service. In FY 2006, the agency undertook efforts to equip Peace Corps medical officers in areas of mental health and Volunteer resiliency, including presenting information on mental and behavioral health at continuing medical education programs in all three of the Peace Corps regions overseas.



**Information Technology Volunteer, Philippines:** The Peace Corps provides support to Volunteers to meet their physical, emotional, language, and programmatic needs to help ensure Volunteers have a positive experience.

## FINANCIAL SECTION AND NOTES





## Letter from the Chief Financial Officer

The fiscal year 2005 letter from the chief financial officer included a comment that the past three fiscal years (FY 2003–2005) were a time of transition for financial systems and for personnel. In that vein, this past year was a year of substantial maturation for financial systems, for the organization of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), and for key agency-wide financial processes—the internal control program and the Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS). The financial management process is not complete, but significant progress will facilitate future refinements. Our goal remains to continuously improve financial processes and data, culminating in an unqualified opinion on our financial statements no later than FY 2009.

This effort to improve data integrity and regularly produce reliable, relevant, and timely financial reports will encompass:

- Intensifying an internal control/quality assurance program, to include internal (self) and independent testing and metric monitorship;
- Increasing the use of financial management systems' functionality and automated tools to facilitate reconciliations and analysis;
- Publishing current policy, procedural, and technical documentation;
- Developing, monitoring, and testing action plans to correct deficiencies identified by self assessments, the inspector general, and independent auditors; and
- Increasing agency-wide functional and technical training that, at a minimum, addresses requisite core competencies.

This past year, the OCFO made extensive progress by executing strategically minded plans built with tactical detail in the areas of organizational structure, technology, documentation, and tools needed to achieve the above goals. These included:

- Finalizing the reorganization of the OCFO. The reorganization, based on results of business process analyses, established seven directorates, each with clearly defined functions.
- Continuing the numbered CFO Bulletin e-mail communication link to Peace Corps staff, including country directors and administrative officers at posts. Sixteen bulletins covering a wide range of subjects were disseminated through the end of FY 2006, educating field activities on sound financial management procedures. This information is also accessible to all staff via the CFO webpage.
- Reengineering the IPBS so it aligns the post's field project design and Volunteer recruitment and delivery cycles with Congressional planning and budget cycles. The information submitted by posts and domestic offices is used by the Peace Corps to decide how and where to allocate resources, and it focuses on rewarding performance and ensuring that results are verifiably measured. Budget holders and managers have increased flexibility to manage their own budgets and are held more accountable through increased oversight.

- Strengthening the management process to capture all capital assets.
- Developing and implementing an agency-wide internal control program that incorporates a senior assessment team that meets at least quarterly, ensures self-assessments, advises corrective action plans when warranted, and monitors the progress of corrective actions.
- Publishing five OCFO position papers covering accounting and reporting policies.

These efforts have produced several tangible improvements, including:

- Generating three of the five quarterly financial statements directly from the financial system (previously these statements were dependent on an external report generator).
- Implementing, or making scheduled progress on, actions to correct all external audit findings from the FY 2003 Gap Analysis and the FY 2004 and FY 2005 financial statement audits.
- Refining the value of fixed assets on the financial statement, including a downward adjustment of \$9.7 million to the net book value of internal use software and identifying (and recording) assets not capitalized at acquisition.
- Expanding reconciliations of the fund balance with Treasury with the corresponding Treasury's Governmentwide Accounting (GWA) account statement application; and accelerating the identification and resolution of statement-of-differences items.
- Intensifying validation of open obligations, which resulted in the return of millions of dollars in budgetary resources to the agency for current operations.
- Correcting general ledger anomalies, incompatibilities, and imbalances with corresponding subsidiary ledger data on a regular basis and, where applicable, modifying the system logic that caused the condition.
- Intensifying the review of outstanding travel advances, which resulted in more timely settlements and collections of residual balances.
- Strengthening the audit trail for the payment of international personal service contractors by incorporating that function into the accounts payable module.
- Strengthening the agency's cash management by increased monitoring of post-level cashiering functions. Ongoing monitoring and feedback resulted in all but three posts being certified as fully compliant with the agency's reporting and reconciliation requirements for cashiers and their supervisors.

Equally important are efforts to provide timely, quality service to our customers—the Volunteers, budget holders, other staff members, and vendors. These efforts include searching for the optimum payment methods by category of payee, accelerating the payment of travel claims, and increasing the inventory of readily available data query reports.

This coming fiscal year will bring further refinements in standardizing and systematizing account reconciliations, procedures for capital assets, and internal control testing, as well as providing analysis to decision makers.

The FY 2004 and FY 2005 financial statement audits identified several weaknesses that are summarized in Appendix 2 along with the status of completion for each identified audit weakness.

The OCFO is committed to excellence in financial management. We honor that commitment by preparing annual financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for federal government entities and by subjecting the statements to an independent audit. The Peace Corps' financial statements were prepared from its financial systems and processes using the most reliable and complete data available.



George A. Schutter III, CPA, CPCM  
Chief Financial Officer  
November 15, 2006



*George Schutter, the agency's Chief Financial Officer, addresses staff at Peace Corps headquarters.*

**Peace Corps**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As of September 30, 2006 and 2005**  
(In Thousands)

**2006**  
**2005**  
Unaudited

**Assets****Intragovernmental**

Fund Balance with Treasury (Note 3)	\$ 134,516	\$ 127,662
Accounts Receivable (Note 5)	980	1,712
<b>Total Intragovernmental</b>	<b>\$ 135,496</b>	<b>\$ 129,374</b>

**With the Public**

Cash and Other Monetary Assets (Note 4)	\$ 65	\$ 139
Accounts Receivable, Net (Note 5)	183	39
General Property, Plant and Equipment, Net (Note 6)	32,980	41,697
Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances (Note 7)	3,813	3,668
Other Assets (Note 8)	430	660
<b>Total Assets With the Public</b>	<b>\$ 37,471</b>	<b>\$ 46,203</b>

**Total Assets**

<b>\$ 172,967</b>	<b>\$ 175,577</b>
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**Liabilities****Intragovernmental**

Accounts Payable	\$ 442	\$ 2,035
Other (Note 10)	2	1,229
<b>Unfunded FECA Liability (Note 9 &amp; 10)</b>	<b>24,157</b>	<b>24,606</b>
<b>Total Intragovernmental</b>	<b>\$ 24,601</b>	<b>\$ 27,870</b>

**With the Public**

Accounts Payable	\$ 9,595	\$ 14,266
Federal Employee and Veteran Benefits (Note 9)	116,451	126,651
Contingent Liability (Note 10 & 12)	500	125
Non-Entity Funds	27,379	25,720
Unfunded Employment Related Liability (Note 9 & 10)	9,840	6,796
Accrued Funded Payroll and Leave (Note 10)	3,241	3,144
Unfunded Annual Leave (Note 9)	6,673	6,534
<b>Total Liabilities With the Public</b>	<b>\$ 173,679</b>	<b>\$ 183,236</b>

**Total Liabilities**

<b>\$ 198,280</b>	<b>\$ 211,106</b>
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**Net Position**

Unexpended Appropriations - Earmarked Funds	\$ -	\$ -
Unexpended Appropriations - Other Funds	95,035	84,896
Cumulative Results of Operations - Earmarked Funds	-	-
Cumulative Results of Operations - Other Funds	(120,348)	(120,425)
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b>\$ (25,313)</b>	<b>\$ (35,529)</b>

**Total Liabilities and Net Position**

<b>\$ 172,967</b>	<b>\$ 175,577</b>
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*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.*

**Peace Corps**  
**Statement of Net Cost**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2006 and 2005**  
(In Thousands)  
-unaudited-

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>Program Costs:</b>		
Gross Costs	\$ 312,563	\$ 320,727
Less: Earned Revenues	5,532	3,325
<b>Net Program Costs</b>	<hr/> \$ 307,031	<hr/> \$ 317,402
<b>Net Cost of Operations</b>	<hr/> <hr/> \$ 307,031	<hr/> <hr/> \$ 317,402

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.*

**Peace Corps**  
**Statement of Changes in Net Position**  
**As of September 30, 2006 and 2005**  
 (In Thousands)  
 -unaudited-

	<u>2006</u>				<u>2005</u>	
	Earmarked Funds	All Other Funds	Eliminations	Consolidated Total	Consolidated Total	
<b>Cumulative Results of Operations</b>						
Beginning Balances	\$ -	\$ (120,425)	\$ -	\$ (120,425)	\$ (169,898)	
Adjustments						
Corrections of Errors	-	(6,492)	-	(6,492)	47,386	
Beginning Balances, As Adjusted	\$ -	\$ (126,917)	\$ -	\$ (126,917)	\$ (122,512)	
<b>Budgetary Financing Sources:</b>						
Appropriations Used	\$ -	\$ 308,206	\$ -	\$ 308,206	\$ 316,580	
Transfers-In/Out Without Reimbursement	-	-	-	-	(3,593)	
<b>Other Financing Sources (Non-Exchange):</b>						
Transfers-In/Out Without Reimbursement	-	702	-	702	1,805	
Imputed Financing	-	4,692	-	4,692	4,697	
Total Financing Sources	\$ -	\$ 313,600	\$ -	\$ 313,600	\$ 319,489	
<b>Net Cost of Operations</b>						
Net Change	\$ -	\$ (307,031)	\$ -	\$ (307,031)	\$ (317,402)	
<b>Cumulative Results of Operations</b>						
Unexpended Appropriations:						
Beginning Balances	\$ -	\$ 84,896	\$ -	\$ 84,896	\$ 94,453	
Adjustments						
Corrections of Errors	-	(2)	-	(2)	(2,475)	
Beginning Balances, As Adjusted	\$ -	\$ 84,894	\$ -	\$ 84,894	\$ 91,978	
<b>Budgetary Financing Sources:</b>						
Appropriations Received	\$ -	\$ 322,000	\$ -	\$ 322,000	\$ 320,000	
Appropriations Transferred In/Out		1,100		1,100	-	
Other Adjustments		(4,753)		(4,753)	(10,503)	
Appropriations Used		(308,206)		(308,206)	(316,580)	
Total Budgetary Financing Sources	\$ -	\$ 10,141	\$ -	\$ 10,141	\$ (7,083)	
Total Unexpended Appropriations	\$ -	\$ 95,035	\$ -	\$ 95,035	\$ 84,895	
<b>Net Position</b>						
	\$ -	\$ (25,313)	\$ -	\$ (25,313)	\$ (35,530)	

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.*

**Peace Corps**  
**Statement of Budgetary Resources**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2006 and 2005**  
 (In Thousands)  
 -unaudited-

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>BUDGETARY RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Unobligated Balance, Brought Forward, October 1:</b>	\$ 20,356	\$ 23,081
<b>Budgetary Authority</b>		
<b>Appropriation</b>	322,000	320,000
<b>Spending Authority From Offsetting Collections (Gross)</b>	6,802	4,926
<b>Earned</b>	376	(525)
<b>Collected</b>	-	(27)
<b>Change in Receivables from Federal Sources</b>	(2,064)	905
<b>Change in Unfilled Customer Orders</b>	\$ 327,114	\$ 325,279
<b>Advance Received</b>	1,100	-
<b>Without Advance from Federal Sources</b>	\$ 343,817	\$ 337,855
<b>Subtotal</b>		
<b>None expenditure Transfers, Net, Anticipated and Actual</b>	1,533	7,945
<b>Permanently Not Available</b>	3,220	2,560
<b>Cancellations of Expired and No-Year Accounts</b>	-	-
<b>Enacted Reductions</b>	-	-
<b>Total Budgetary Resources</b>	<u>\$ 343,817</u>	<u>\$ 337,855</u>
<b>STATUS OF BUDGETARY RESOURCES</b>		
<b>Obligations Incurred</b>		
<b>Direct</b>	\$ 319,258	\$ 314,001
<b>Reimbursable</b>	3,522	3,498
<b>Subtotal</b>	\$ 322,780	\$ 317,499
<b>Unobligated Balance</b>		
<b>Apportioned</b>	\$ 7,716	\$ 14,252
<b>Unobligated Balance Not Available</b>	13,321	6,104
<b>Total Status of Budgetary Resources</b>	<u>\$ 343,817</u>	<u>\$ 337,855</u>
<b>CHANGE IN OBLIGATED BALANCES</b>		
<b>Obligated Balance, Net</b>		
<b>Unpaid Obligations, Brought Forward, October 1</b>	\$ 82,624	\$ 72,542
<b>Less: Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources, Brought Forward, October 1</b>	2,126	1,718
<b>Total Unpaid Obligated Balance, Net</b>	80,498	70,824
<b>Obligations Incurred, Net</b>	322,780	317,499
<b>Less: Gross Outlays</b>	317,433	309,162
<b>Change in Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources</b>	(1,688)	380
<b>Obligated Balance, Net, End of Period:</b>	-	-
<b>Unpaid Obligations</b>	87,971	63,405
<b>Less: Uncollected Customer Payments from Federal Sources</b>	438	602
<b>Total Unpaid Obligated Balance, Net, End of Period</b>	<u>\$ 87,533</u>	<u>\$ 62,803</u>
<b>NET OUTLAYS</b>		
<b>Net Outlays</b>		
<b>Gross Outlays</b>	\$ 317,433	\$ 309,162
<b>Less: Offsetting Collections</b>	6,802	4,899
<b>Less: Distributed Offsetting Receipts</b>	-	-
<b>Net Outlays</b>	<u>\$ 310,631</u>	<u>\$ 304,263</u>

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.*

**Peace Corps**  
**Statement of Financing**  
**For the Years Ended September 30, 2006 and 2005**  
 (In Thousands)  
 -unaudited-

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>
<b>Resources Used to Finance Activities</b>		
Budgetary Resources Obligated:		
Obligations Incurred	\$ 322,780	\$ 317,499
Less: Spending Authority from Offsetting Collections and Recoveries	5,114	5,279
Obligations Net of Offsetting Collections and Recoveries	\$ 317,666	\$ 312,220
Less: Offsetting Receipts	-	-
Net Obligations	\$ 317,666	\$ 312,220
Other Resources		
Transfers In/Out Without Reimbursement	702	1,805
Imputed Financing from Costs Absorbed by Others	4,692	4,697
Net Other Resources Used to Finance Activities	\$ 5,394	\$ 6,502
Total Resources Used to Finance Activities	\$ 323,060	\$ 318,722
<b>Resources Used to Finance Items Not Part of Cost of Operations</b>		
Change in Budgetary Resources Obligated for Goods, Services and Benefits but Not Yet Provided	11,448	1,864
Resources that Fund Expenses Recognized in Prior Periods	10,650	7,177
Resources that Finance the Acquisition of Assets	4,801	5,017
Total Resources Used to Finance Items Not part of the Net Cost of Operations	\$ 26,899	\$ 14,058
Total Resources Used to Finance the Net Cost of Operations	\$ 296,161	\$ 304,664
<b>Components of the Net Cost of Operations that Will Not Require or Generate Resources in the Current Period</b>		
<b>Components Requiring or Generating Resources in Future Periods:</b>		
Increase in Annual Leave Liability	139	3,318
Other (+/-)	3,419	1,245
Total Components of Net Cost of Operations That Will Require or Generate Resources in Future Periods	\$ 3,558	\$ 4,563
<b>Components Not Requiring or Generating Resources</b>		
Depreciation and Amortization	\$ 6,658	\$ 8,190
Revaluation of Assets or Liabilities (+/-)	527	-
Other (+/-)	127	(15)
Total Components Not Requiring or Generating Resources	\$ 7,312	\$ 8,175
<b>Total Components of the Net Cost of Operations that Will Not Require or Generate Resources in the Current Period</b>		
Net Cost of Operations	\$ 307,031	\$ 317,402

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.*

**-Unaudited-****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 and financing 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 the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-136, "Financial Reporting Requirements," issued July 2006. 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 (FASAB) principles and other generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for the United States federal government.

The 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 nongovernmental customers, including Volunteers, contributors, employees, contractors, and vendors.

**Federal Financial Statements**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Federal Objective</b>
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.
Statement of Financing	Demonstrates the relationship between budgetary amounts reported on the Statement of Budgetary Resources to the proprietary amounts reported on the Statement of Net Cost. The focus of this presentation is to reconcile net obligations to the net cost of operations.

**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 ap-

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propriation authority has been applied against received goods and services.

**d) Fund Accounting Structure**

The agency's financial activities are accounted for by federal account 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 multiyear appropriations that provide the agency with authority to obligate funds over a two-year period for necessary expenses to carry out operations. After expiring to create new obligations, this two-year budget authority is available 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 closed and funds 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 U.S. Treasury**

The fund balance with 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 U.S. 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 the DOS, the Peace Corps is responsible to pay 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, 2006, cashier imprest funds represented by cash on hand, checks on hand, interim advances, and cashier checking account balances totaled approximately \$3.7 million in U. S. dollar equivalents (USD).

At any point in time, the posts have USD and local currency checks in their possession that are awaiting delivery to

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the payees. 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, 2006, these checks totaled approximately \$2.5 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 rate of exchange as of the date of the transaction. Foreign currency payments are made by the U.S. disbursing officers located at the U.S. Department of State Financial Service Centers in Charleston, South Carolina; and Bangkok, Thailand.

Foreign currency losses and gains resulting from changes in the rate of exchange are charged (or credited) to the same appropriation or account that financed the basic transaction.

**i) Accounts Receivable**

Accounts receivable include amounts due from other federal entities and from current and former employees and Volunteers. The agency recognizes an allowance for doubtful accounts consistent with the U.S. Department of Treasury's requirement that agencies write-off any account that has been delinquent for more than two years. An exception to this write-off policy will be for accounts with approved payment plans in place and for which the debtor is meeting the terms of the plan.

**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)**

For fiscal year 2005, the agency revised the policies and procedures for capitalized property and equipment and related depreciation to be in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

A capital asset inventory of all Peace Corps PP&E assets recorded in the property management database was taken in fiscal year 2005. To establish existing PP&E where historical cost information necessary to comply with the recognition or measurement provisions had not been maintained, estimates were used based on either 1) cost of similar assets at the time of acquisition; or 2) a value based on the asset's condition and fair market value. Additional sub-categories of PP&E were identified during FY 2006 and their values were capitalized.

The agency capitalizes all property, plant, and equipment with the exception of General property, plant, and equipment that has an acquisition cost of \$10,000 or greater, a useful life of two years or more, are not intended for sale in the ordinary course of business, and are intended to be used or available for use by the entity. For General property, plant, and equipment, purchases are capitalized at \$25,000 or greater for individual items and \$500,000 or greater for bulk purchases. 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. No salvage values were estimated in calculating accumulated depreciation through FY 2005 but it was determined that further analysis was required. This practice was reviewed at the end of FY 2006 and a policy determination was made that an estimated salvage value of 40% was warranted for the agency's vehicles based on their resale value in recent years.

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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. Software purchased for \$10,000 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).

**I) Capital Leases**

Leases are accounted for as a capital lease if they meet one of the following criteria: 1) the lease term is greater than 75 percent of the property's estimated economic life; 2) the lease contains an option to purchase the property for less than the fair market value; 3) ownership of the property is transferred to the lessee at the end of the lease term; or 4) the present value of the lease payments exceeds 90 percent of the fair market value of the property.

**m) 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.

**n) Employee Benefits**

- I. *Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) Accrued Claims*—The agency records the direct dollar costs of compensation and medical benefits paid on its behalf by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) for employees under the agency's jurisdiction.
- II. *Future Workers Compensation Benefits*—FECA provides income and medical costs protection to federal employees injured on the job or who have incurred a work-related occupational disease, and to beneficiaries of employees whose death is attributable to job-related injury or occupational disease. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) administers the FECA program. DOL initially pays valid claims and bills the agency on an annual basis.
- 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 (FEHBP) and the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLIP). The agency matches the employee contributions 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 FEHBP and the FEGLIP 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 (ORBs) at the time of employment with the agency. The ORB expense is financed by OPM and offset by the agency through the recognition of an imputed financing source on the Statement of Financing.
- VI. *Employee Retirement Benefits*—Peace Corps direct hire employees participate in one of three retirement systems: Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS), or the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System (FSRDS). The following table provides data for each of these plans:

Plan	% of PC Participants	Employee Deductions/Agency Contributions			
		Plan	TSP	FICA	Medicare
CSRS	6	7% / 7%	N/A	N/A	1.45% / 1.45%
FERS	92	8% / 10.7%	See Note	6.2% / 6.2%	1.45% / 1.45%
FSRDS	2	7.25% / 7.25%	N/A	N/A	1.45% / 1.45%

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Note: The agency contributes 1 percent of the employee's basic pay; it will also match an employee's contributions up to 4 percent of his or her basic pay.

Foreign service national (FSN) employees at overseas posts who were hired prior to January 1, 1984, are covered under CSRS. 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 Foreign National Personal Service Contractor Severance and Retirement Liability*—The Peace Corps is generally liable for separation or retirement payments to eligible foreign national 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.

**o) 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.

**p) Use of Estimates**

The preparation of financial statements required management to make some estimates and assumptions that affect 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.

**q) 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.

**r) Intragovernmental Net Costs**

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

**s) Adjustments to Maintain Inherent Account Relationship Integrity**

At the fiscal years ending 2004, 2005, and 2006, the trial balance was reviewed and it was determined that there existed out-of-balance conditions. These conditions were attributed to various factors, such as timing differences between the posting of proprietary account entries and budgetary account entries, incorrect use of transaction codes by users, or systemic issues that were identified but still unresolved.

In order to correct the relationships between the proprietary and budgetary accounts, a high-level analysis was performed. Cash balances on the books were aligned to agree with budgetary account balances. Additionally, 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.

**-Unaudited-****Note 2 Non-Entity Assets**

Non-entity assets are composed of trust and deposit funds. These funds are not available for Peace Corps' use and not part of Peace Corps resources. The Peace Corps has a fiduciary responsibility to monitor collections, status, and distribution. Below, as information, are the U.S. Treasury fund balances of non-entity, fiduciary assets. All the non-entity assets are non-governmental.

<b>Non-Entity Fund Assets</b>	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
<b>Trust Funds</b>		
Gifts and Contributions (Cash)	\$ 603	\$ 665
Advances from Foreign Governments	3	55
FSN Separation Liability Trust Fund	8,817	9,091
<b>Deposit Funds</b>		
Volunteer Readjustment Allowance	16,849	15,933
Volunteer Payroll Allotment Account (Payroll Savings Bond Account)	(7)	(24)
Other Fund Types (Special Fund Accounts)	1,114	
Total Nonentity Assets	\$ 27,379	\$ 25,720
Total Entity Assets per Balance Sheet	\$ 145,588	\$ 149,857
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 172,967</b>	<b>\$ 175,577</b>

*Trust Fund Accounts*—Consists of gifts and contributions, advances from foreign governments, and the FSN separation liability trust fund. Gifts and contributions represent funds from public, nongovernmental sources. Advances from foreign governments are U.S. dollar contributions supported by an agreement with the host country. The FSN separation liability trust fund represents the estimated accrued liability for separation pay (based on local labor law) of FSN employees.

*Deposit Fund Accounts*—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.

*Special Fund 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**

<b>Fund Balances</b>	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
Appropriated Funds	\$ 107,137	\$ 101,942
Total Nonentity Assets (Note 2)	27,379	25,720
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 134,516</b>	<b>\$ 127,662</b>
<b>Status of Fund Balance with Treasury</b>	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
(1) Unobligated Balance		
(a) Available	\$ 7,716	\$ 14,252
(b) Unavailable	13,321	6,104
(2) Obligated Balance Not Yet Disbursed	113,479	107,306
<b>Fund Balance with Treasury</b>	<b>\$ 134,516</b>	<b>\$ 127,662</b>

The fund balance with Treasury is equal to the unobligated balance of funds plus the obligated balance not yet dis-

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bursed.

*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, 2006 (in thousands)	September 30, 2005 (in thousands)
Total Cash and Other Monetary Assets	\$ 65	\$ 139

The cash balances represent imprest funds at headquarters and at the East Timor post, both held in U.S. currency.

#### Note 5 Net Accounts Receivable

	September 30, 2006 (in thousands)	September 30, 2005 (in thousands)
Accounts Receivable—Intragovernmental	\$ 980	\$ 1,712
Accounts Receivable with the Public	183	39
Total Accounts Receivable, Net	\$ 1,163	\$ 1,751

Intragovernmental receivables are due from other federal agencies for services provided per reimbursable agreements. Accounts receivable from the public are due from nonfederal entities, consisting primarily of receivables from employees. The allowance will be established in the financial records if the total amount exceeds \$30,000; otherwise, the amount is considered immaterial. An allowance was not established as of September 30, 2006.

#### Note 6 General Property, Plant and Equipment (PP&E)

Components of Fixed Assets as of September 30, 2006: (in thousands)	Useful Life in Years	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
General Property, Plant, and Equipment	5–10	\$ 2,864	\$ 2,103	\$ 761
Vehicles	5	15,519	5,578	9,941
IT Hardware	3–15	8,266	4,336	3,930
Leasehold Improvements	10	180	31	149
Internal-Use Software	3–9	26,881	8,682	18,199
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 53,710</b>	<b>\$ 20,730</b>	<b>\$ 32,980</b>

Components of Fixed Assets as of September 30, 2005: (in thousands)	Useful Life in Years	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Book Value
General Property, Plant, and Equipment	5–10	\$ 2,714	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,394
Vehicles	5	17,284	9,784	7,500
IT Hardware	3–7	4,773	1,824	2,949
Internal-Use Software	5–9	37,464	7,610	29,854
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 62,235</b>	<b>\$ 20,538</b>	<b>\$ 41,697</b>

**-Unaudited-**

For quarter ending September 30, 2006, Peace Corps fixed assets include internally developed software and those assets that are reflected as active in the end of year property management databases. These assets are located at headquarters in Washington, D.C., the eleven 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 developed from the most reliable available data for each system. The net book value of internally developed software initially recorded in the September 30, 2005 financial statements was overstated by \$9.7 million. This is the most material aspect of the corrections (a net decrease of \$6.6 million) to the FY2005 values discussed above. An analysis to determine the true cost has been completed and the net book value was reduced accordingly with adjustments made to the FY2006 accounts. There are no restrictions on the use or convertibility of General Property, Plant and Equipment owned by Peace Corps.

### **Note 7      Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
Prepaid Volunteer Living Allowances	\$ 3,813	\$ 3,668

*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.

### **Note 8      Other Assets**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
<b>Intragovernmental</b>		
Travel Advances to Employees	43	10
<b>Total Intragovernmental</b>	<b>\$ 43</b>	<b>\$ 10</b>
Relocation Advances to Employees	78	66
Prepayments to Foreign National Personal Service Contractors (FNPSCs)	5	5
Travel Advances to Employees	304	579
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<b>\$ 430</b>	<b>\$ 660</b>

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

*Prepayments to Foreign National Personal Service Contractors*—Payments of the foreign national personal service contractors' biweekly payrolls are made prior to the end of the pay period so that the direct deposits or checks are received by the last day of the pay period.

*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.

**-Unaudited-****Note 9 Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
<b>Intragovernmental Liabilities</b>		
Unfunded FECA Liability	\$ 24,157	\$ 24,606
<b>Public Liabilities</b>		
Unfunded Annual Leave	6,673	6,534
Other Unfunded Employment-Related Liability	9,840	6,796
Federal Employee and Veterans Benefits	116,451	126,651
<b>Total Liabilities Not Covered by Budgetary Resources</b>	<b>\$ 157,121</b>	<b>\$ 164,587</b>

*Unfunded FECA Liability*—A liability for the direct dollar costs of compensation and medical benefits paid on the agency's behalf by the U.S. 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 (U.S. Employees)*—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, 2006. Payments are charged to the appropriation current at the time of payment.

*Unfunded Annual Leave (FSNFPSC)*—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 200 foreign service nationals and a range of 1,500 to 2,000 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.

*Other Unfunded Employment Related Liability*—A liability for the FNPSC estimated severance. 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 paid for out of current appropriations.

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

**-Unaudited-****Note 10 Other Liabilities**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
<b>Intragovernmental Liabilities</b>		
Advances from Others	\$ 2	\$ 1,229
Unfunded FECA Liability	24,157	24,606
Total Other Intragovernmental Liabilities	\$ 24,159	\$ 25,835
<b>Public Liabilities</b>		
Accrued Funded Payroll and Leave	\$ 3,241	\$ 3,144
Unfunded Leave	6,673	6,534
Other Unfunded Employment Related Liability (PSC Severance)	9,840	6,796
Contingent Liability	500	125
Total Other Public Liabilities	\$ 20,254	\$ 16,599
<b>Total Other Liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 44,413</b>	<b>\$ 42,434</b>

*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 12.

*Non-current Liabilities* - Unfunded FECA Liability, Unfunded Leave, Other Unfunded Employment Related Liability, and Contingent Liabilities are non-current liabilities. The remainder are current liabilities.

**Note 11 Leases**

The agency does not have any capital or noncancelable leases with terms longer than one year.

**Note 12 Commitments and Contingencies**

In the opinion of the management and legal counsel, the likelihood that the agency is liable for contingent liabilities related to administrative proceedings, legal actions, or claims is probable and measurable as of this statement date in the amount of \$500,000.

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 \$950,000 as of September 30, 2006. The likelihood of potential losses from overseas cashiers is estimated to be \$27,000 as of September 30, 2006.

Obligations related to canceled appropriations for which the agency has contractual commitments for pay-out are estimated to be \$67,004 as of September 30, 2006.

**-Unaudited-****Note 13 Imputed Financing**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
Federal Employees Health Benefit Program (FEHBP)	\$ 3,645	\$ 3,386
Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program (FEGLIP)	12	12
Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)	834	792
Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)	-0-	299
Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System (FSRDS)	201	208
Total Imputed Costs	\$ 4,692	\$ 4,697

Imputed financing recognizes actual costs of future benefits which include the FEHBP, FEGLIP, and pension benefits that are paid by other federal entities. The agency is not required to reimburse other entities for these costs.

**Note 14 Exchange Revenues**

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>	<b>September 30, 2005 (in thousands)</b>
Intragovernmental Earned Revenues	\$ 4,853	\$ 3,325
Earned Revenues from the Public	678	-0-
<b>Total Exchange Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 5,531</b>	<b>\$ 3,325</b>

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

**Other Accompanying Information***Disclosure on Contributions*

1. Media Contributions Received—The agency received \$5.4 million in print, radio, and television media contributions through public service announcements in the first 11 months of fiscal year 2006.
2. Host Country Contributions—The agency received cash and in-kind contributions from host countries.

	<b>September 30, 2006 (in thousands)</b>
Host Country Contributions (HCC) U. S. Treasury Foreign Currency Accounts (USD Equivalents)	\$840

In-kind contributions estimated at \$4.2 million in fair market value were received at posts through the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2006 for services, supplies, equipment, and facilities.

**-Unaudited-*****Required Supplementary Information***

## Disclosure on Trading Partners

**Peace Corps****Intragovernmental Assets by Trading Partner****As of September 30, 2006***(in thousands)*

Trading Partner	Fund Balance with Treasury	Accounts Receivable
U.S. Treasury	\$134,516	
U.S. Agency for International Development		\$ 778
U.S. Department of State		\$ 81
U.S. Department of Homeland Security		\$ 81
Other		\$ 40
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$134,516</b>	<b>\$ 980</b>

**Peace Corps****Intragovernmental Liabilities by Trading Partner****As of September 30, 2006***(in thousands)*

Trading Partner	Accounts Payable	Other	Unfunded FECA
General Services Administration	\$ 163		
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	\$ 150		
Other	\$ 129	\$2	\$24,157
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 442</b>	<b>\$2</b>	<b>\$24,157</b>

*Intragovernmental Earned Revenues*—The Peace Corps' total intragovernmental earned revenues from trade transactions were less than the \$500 million materiality threshold for reporting as determined by OMB.

*Intragovernmental Nonexchange Revenue*—The Peace Corps did not realize intragovernmental nonexchange revenue transferred in nor incur intragovernmental nonexchange revenue transferred out.

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*1961-2006: a legacy of service at home and abroad*

To: Ronald A. Tschetter, Director  
 From: H. David Kotz, Inspector General   
 Date: November 15, 2006  
 Subject: Audit of Peace Corps' Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Financial Statements

This letter transmits the three reports of Urbach Kahn and Werlin LLP (UKW) on the results of its audit of the FY 2006 Peace Corps' financial statements, each titled, as follows: *Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements*; *Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control*; and *Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Laws and Regulations*.

As required by the Accountability of Tax Dollars Act of 2002, 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. The Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990 requires the Inspector General, or an independent external auditor as determined by the Inspector General, to audit the financial statements in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Under a contract monitored by the Office of Inspector General, UKW, an independent certified public accounting firm, performed the audit of Peace Corps' FY 2006 financial statements in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, OMB Bulletin No. 06-03, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, and applicable sections of the U.S. Government Accounting Office (GAO)/President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE) *Financial Audit Manual*.

#### **Opinion on the Financial Statements**

In its report dated November 10, 2006, UKW issued a qualified opinion on the balance sheet as of September 30, 2006 and disclaimed an opinion on the balance sheet as of September 30, 2005 and for the related statements of net cost, changes in net position, financing, and budgetary resources for the years ended September 30, 2005 and 2006.

Except for not maintaining adequate accounting records and sufficient supporting documentation for certain obligations recorded, the balance sheet as of September 30, 2006 presents fairly in all material respects the financial position of Peace Corps in conformity with accounting principles accepted in the United States. Peace Corps had not maintained adequate accounting records and sufficient supporting documentation for material balances presented in the balance sheet as of September 30, 2005; UKW was not able to sufficiently extend auditing procedures to determine the extent to which the statements of net cost, changes in net position, financing and budgetary resources may have been affected by this condition.

### **Matters Pertaining to the Effectiveness of Internal Control**

In planning and performing its audit, UKW considered Peace Corps' internal controls over financial reporting, including testing controls necessary to achieve the objectives in OMB Bulletin No. 06-03. UKW identified matters relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of Peace Corps internal controls that in its judgment, could adversely impact Peace Corps' ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions by management in the financial statements.

Specifically, these matters were categorized as material weaknesses and reportable conditions per definitions of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Material weaknesses are reportable conditions in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements may occur and not be detected within a timely period by the employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions.

Although Peace Corps has made progress in its overall financial management during FY 2006, UKW reported the following four material weaknesses in its Independent Auditors Report on Internal Control:

- Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its financial management structure, monitoring processes, and financial reporting.
- Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its accounting business processes.
- Peace Corps was not able to substantiate material prior period account balances.
- Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its information systems control environment.

### **Results of Tests of Compliance with Laws and Regulations**

Peace Corps management is responsible for complying with laws and regulations applicable to the agency. To obtain reasonable assurance about whether Peace Corps' financial statements are free of material misstatements, UKW performed tests of compliance with certain provisions of laws and regulations, noncompliance of 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 No. 06-03, including requirements of the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) of 1996.

UKW's test of compliance with specific laws and regulations, exclusive of FFMIA disclosed no instances of noncompliance with laws, regulations and provisions of contracts and grants that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 06-03. However, UKW's tests disclosed instances where Peace Corps financial management systems did not substantially comply with Federal financial management system requirements as required in FFMIA.

### **Office of Inspector General's Evaluation of UKW's Audit Performance**

To fulfill our responsibilities under the Chief Financial Officers Act, and related legislation for ensuring the quality of the audit work performed, we monitored UKW's engagement to audit Peace Corps' FY 2006 financial statements by:

- Reviewing UKW's approach and planning of the engagement;
- Evaluating the qualifications and independence of its auditors;
- Monitoring the progress of the engagement throughout the audit process;
- Reviewing UKW's reports to ensure compliance with *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 06-03;
- Coordinating the issuance of the reports; and
- Performing other procedures that we deemed necessary.

UKW is responsible for the attached auditor's reports, dated November 10, 2006, and the opinions and conclusions therein. The OIG is responsible for technical and administrative oversight regarding UKW's performance under the terms of the contract.

Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact me, or Camilla Barror, Technical Audit Manager at 202-692-2921, or Gerald Montoya, Assistant Inspector General for Audits at 202-692-2907. We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended to UKW and to the OIG staff during the conduct of the audit and review.

#### **Attachments**

cc:      Jody Olsen, Deputy Director  
          David Liner, Chief of Staff  
          George Schutter, Chief Financial Officer

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## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Director  
Peace Corps

Inspector General  
Peace Corps

We have audited the accompanying Balance Sheets of Peace Corps, an independent executive branch agency of the United States government, as of September 30, 2006 and 2005, and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the management of Peace Corps. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits.

Except as discussed in the following paragraphs, 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. 06-03, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*. These standards and OMB Bulletin No. 06-03 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 audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

Peace Corps had not maintained adequate accounting records and sufficient supporting documentation for material balances presented in the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2005, and we were unable to sufficiently extend our auditing procedures to determine the extent to which the Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years ended September 30, 2006 and 2005 may have been affected by this condition.

Additionally, Peace Corps had not maintained adequate accounting records and sufficient supporting documentation to determine the proper classification of certain obligations recorded during the year ended September 30, 2006. We were unable to extend our auditing procedures to determine the extent of misclassification of the status of obligations on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006 and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the year then ended.

Because of the matters discussed in the third paragraph, the scope of our work was not sufficient to enable us to express, and we do not express an opinion on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2005 and the Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years ended September 30, 2006 and 2005.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, CONTINUED**

In our opinion, except for not maintaining adequate accounting records and sufficient supporting documentation for certain obligations recorded during the year, the Balance Sheet referred to above presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Peace Corps as of September 30, 2006 in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

The information in the Management's Discussion and Analysis and Required Supplementary Information, is not a required part of the financial statements, but is supplementary information required by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board and OMB Circular A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements*. We have applied certain limited procedures, which consisted principally of inquiries of management regarding the methods of measurement and presentation of the supplementary information. However, we did not audit the information and express no opinion on it.

The Other Accompanying Information is presented for purposes of additional analysis and is not a required part of the financial statements. This information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the financial statements, and, in our opinion, is presented fairly, in all material respects, in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

In accordance with *Government Auditing Standards*, we have also issued reports dated November 10, 2006 on our consideration of Peace Corps' internal control over financial reporting, and on our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of applicable laws, regulations, contracts and grants. Those reports are an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and, in considering the results of the audit, those reports should be read in conjunction with this report.

*Urbach Kahn & Werlin LLP*

Washington, DC  
November 10, 2006

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL**

Director  
Peace Corps

Inspector General  
Peace Corps

We have audited the Balance Sheets of the Peace Corps, an independent executive branch agency of the United States government, as of September 30, 2006 and 2005 and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years then ended. We have issued our report thereon, dated November 10, 2006, in which we issued a qualified opinion on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006, and disclaimed an opinion on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2005 and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years ended September 30, 2006 and 2005 for the reasons noted in that report.

In planning and performing our audit, we considered Peace Corps' internal control over financial reporting by obtaining an understanding of Peace Corps' internal control, determined whether internal controls had been placed in operation, assessed control risk, and performed tests of controls in order to determine our engagement procedures. We limited our internal control testing to those controls necessary to achieve the objectives described in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 06-03, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, and *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. We did not test all internal controls relevant to operating objectives as broadly defined by the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982, such as those controls relevant to ensuring efficient operations. The objective of our audit was not to provide assurance on internal control. Consequently, we do not provide an opinion on internal control.

Our consideration of the internal control over financial reporting would not necessarily disclose all matters in the internal control over financial reporting that might be reportable conditions. Under standards issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, reportable conditions are matters coming to our attention relating to significant deficiencies in the design or operation of the internal control that, in our judgment, could adversely affect Peace Corps' ability to record, process, summarize, and report financial data consistent with the assertions by management in the financial statements. Material weaknesses are reportable conditions in which the design or operation of one or more of the internal control components does not reduce to a relatively low level the risk that misstatements in amounts that would be material in relation to the financial statements being audited may occur and not be detected within a timely period by employees in the normal course of performing their assigned functions. Because of inherent limitations in internal controls, misstatements, losses, or noncompliance may nevertheless occur and not be detected.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

However, we noted certain matters involving the internal control and its operation that we considered to be reportable conditions, all of which are considered material weaknesses.

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

1. Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its financial management structure, monitoring processes and financial reporting.
2. Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its accounting business processes.
3. Peace Corps was not able to substantiate material prior period account balances.
4. Peace Corps did not have adequate controls over its information systems control environment.

In addition, with respect to internal control related to performance measures reported in the Management's Discussion and Analysis, we obtained an understanding of the design of significant internal controls relating to the existence and completeness assertions, as required by OMB Bulletin No. 06-03. Our procedures were not designed to provide assurance on internal control over reported performance measures, and, accordingly, we do not provide an opinion on such controls.

We also noted other less significant matters involving the internal control and its operation, which we have reported to the management of Peace Corps in a separate letter, dated November 10, 2006.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the management of the Peace Corps, the Peace Corps' Office of Inspector General, 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*

Washington, DC  
November 10, 2006

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED

### REPORTABLE CONDITION 1 (Material Weakness)

#### **PEACE CORPS DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE CONTROLS OVER ITS FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE, MONITORING PROCESSES, AND FINANCIAL REPORTING**

During fiscal year (FY) 2006, Peace Corps continued to improve its financial management structure and monitoring processes, control environment and financial reporting process. The restructuring of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer was completed in 2006; however, additional refinements in roles and responsibilities within the accounting and financial reporting division are needed to ensure timely and reliable financial reporting. Peace Corps also still does not have a fully effective monitoring control over the financial reporting process. Specifically, improvements are needed in management review and analysis controls to ensure the propriety of the financial statements, related footnotes and the annual Performance and Accountability Report. The presentation and disclosure of Peace Corps' financial statements were not initially in accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-136, *Federal Reporting Requirements* and applicable government accounting standards. Numerous corrections and changes were made to the draft financial statements after they were submitted to OMB. We also found:

- Ownership roles for specific financial statement lines, general ledger accounts and subsidiary ledgers need further refinement
- Monitoring roles of the Accounting and Financial Reporting division were defined but the specific responsibilities and procedures need to be clarified and documented
- Accountability for ensuring that support for account balances is available and is adequately reviewed for accuracy, completeness and compliance with accounting standards and internal policies needs enhancement. It was not always clear who was primarily responsible for explaining discrepancies in account reconciliations and amounts supporting the financial statements. Furthermore, the deficiencies in the account balances and in the adequacy of documentation identified in the audit were not always researched and resolved prior to our inquiry.

The Government Accountability Office's (GAO) *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, states:

*...Information should be recorded and communicated to management and others within the entity who need it and in a form and within a time frame that enables them to carry out their internal control and other responsibilities.*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 1 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

*For an entity to run and control its operations, it must have relevant, reliable, and timely communications relating to internal as well as external events. Information is needed throughout the agency to achieve all of its objectives.*

GAO's *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, also states:

*Control activities are an integral part of an entity's planning, implementing, reviewing, and accountability for stewardship of government resources and achieving effective results.... They include a wide range of diverse activities such as approvals, authorizations, verifications, reconciliations, performance reviews, maintenance of security, and the creation and maintenance of related records which provide evidence of execution of these activities as well as appropriate documentation.*

OMB Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, states:

#### **A. Objectives of Internal Control over Financial Reporting**

*Internal control over financial reporting is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of financial reporting. Reliability of financial reporting means that management can reasonably make the following assertions:*

- *All assets, liabilities, and transactions that should be reported have been included and no unauthorized transactions or balances are included (completeness)*

Most of these issues were affected by Peace Corps' continuing emphasis on validating historical data supporting key financial statement balances, rather than fully focusing on the effectiveness of routine financial reporting business processes.

### **Recommendations**

We recommend that the Chief Financial Officer of Peace Corps:

1. Refine roles and document specific responsibilities in the Accounting and Financial Reporting division to ensure every financial statement line item and the related footnote is assigned to members of the division, with specific quality control procedures related to internal and external financial reporting. These quality control procedures include monitoring the information supporting the financial statements to ensure it fully matches the reported balances and is readily available.
2. Ensure the key responsibilities of the Accounting and Financial Reporting division are appropriately assigned and clearly communicated with performance goals to ensure all monthly and quarterly procedures necessary to produce financial statements in compliance with applicable accounting and reporting standards.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED

### REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness)

#### **PEACE CORPS DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE CONTROLS OVER ITS ACCOUNTING BUSINESS PROCESSES**

##### **Business Processes Over Fund Balance with Treasury Reconciliations Were Not Sufficient**

Peace Corps did not assign responsibility for compiling and reviewing an overall Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT) reconciliation. While Peace Corps made significant improvements in internal control over FBWT during FY 2006, we found critical portions of the FBWT reconciliation and reporting process were being performed by several people in different departments, and these reconciliations were not linked, compared, nor consolidated.

Additionally, Peace Corps was unable to completely identify and substantiate all unreconciled items between detailed cash activity from their general ledger and the Governmentwide Account (GWA) Systems Report, *Expenditure Activity*, which is an independent confirmation from Treasury that reflects year-to-date and current month cash activity in appropriation, trust, revolving, clearing and deposit fund accounts. Peace Corps manually adjusted its general ledger balance by approximately \$800,000 (net) to agree with Treasury's balance at September 30, 2006. This adjustment included more than \$4.1 million in debit and credit adjustments.

OMB Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, states:

*Management controls are the organization, policies, and procedures used to reasonably ensure that (i) programs achieve their intended results; (ii) resources are used consistent with agency mission; (iii) programs and resources are protected from waste, fraud, and mismanagement; (iv) laws and regulations are followed; and (v) reliable and timely information is obtained, maintained, reported and used for decision making.*

GAO's *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government*, states:

*Control activities are an integral part of an entity's planning, implementing, reviewing, and accountability for stewardship of government resources and achieving effective results.... They include a wide range of diverse activities such as approvals, authorizations, verifications, reconciliations, performance reviews, maintenance of security, and the creation and maintenance of related records which provide evidence of execution of these activities as well as appropriate documentation.*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

#### **Business Processes Over General Property, Plant and Equipment Were Not Sufficient**

In FY 2005, Peace Corps could not adequately support its reported General Property, Plant and Equipment (PP&E) financial statement balance. During FY 2006, Peace Corps completed a full physical inventory and validation of its capitalized property balances. However, there were not effective internal controls and processes in place for compiling, verifying and ensuring the completeness of their listings of capital assets. During the FY 2006 audit, we found:

- Some values recorded in the PP&E listing were based on budgeted cost, not actual cost, causing inaccurate asset values and double counting of some assets
- Some assets on the listing could not be validated by invoices or physical verification
- Management estimates used to support cost values for assets that were not supported by invoices were not consistently calculated and supported

Peace Corps performed additional procedures to validate and support their property balances and we were able to extend our procedures over the adjusted property schedules to ensure the propriety of the PP&E balances reported in the final September 30, 2006 Balance Sheet. We were unable to extend procedures to ensure the propriety of the PP&E balances on the September 30, 2005 Balance Sheet.

We identified the following causes of the conditions described above:

- Peace Corps does not yet have procedures in place to adequately record additions and disposals for all categories of PP&E
- Peace Corps does not have adequate policies and procedures in place relating to retaining documentation supporting asset values
- Peace Corps did not perform sufficient existence, accuracy and completeness checks on its PP&E listing as part of the capital property validation, accounting and financial reporting processes

Statement of Federal Financial Accounting Standards (SFFAS) No. 6, *Accounting for Property, Plant and Equipment*, states:

*In the period of disposal, retirement from service, general PP&E shall be removed from the asset accounts along with associated accumulated depreciation/amortization. Any difference between the book value of the PP&E and amounts realized shall be recognized as a gain or a loss in the period that the general PP&E is disposed of, retired or removed from service.*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

SFFAS No. 6, *Accounting for Property, Plant and Equipment* also states:

#### *Asset Recognition*

*All general PP&E shall be recorded at cost. Cost shall include all costs incurred to bring the PP&E to a form and location suitable for its intended use. For example, the cost of acquiring property, plant, and equipment may include:*

- *Amounts paid to vendors;*
- *Transportation charges to the point of initial use;*
- *Handling and storage costs;*
- *Labor and other direct or indirect production costs (for assets produced or constructed);*

### **Management Processes for Estimating Accrued Liabilities Needs Improvement**

In FY 2006, Peace Corps properly recorded all invoices received by the year-end as Accounts Payable. Additionally, they posted several manual journal entries to record additional liabilities for goods and services received but not billed related to obligations over \$250,000. However, our review found some errors in the amounts accrued and inconsistent processes for documenting the amounts to be accrued.

Additionally, Peace Corps has not established an effective accrual process to identify and record additional liabilities for goods and services that were received before September 30, 2006, which were related to obligations under \$250,000. Peace Corps had not performed sufficient validation of its methodology to ensure that unrecorded liabilities for obligations less than \$250,000 would not be material to the financial statements. We were unable to extend our procedures to determine the adequacy of the Accounts Payable balance as of September 30, 2005. We were able to extend our auditing procedures to ensure that these unrecorded liabilities as of September 30, 2006 were not likely to be material.

OMB Circular A-136, *Financial Reporting Requirements*, states:

#### *3.4 Liabilities*

*General Categories. A liability is a probable future outflow or other sacrifice of resources as a result of past transactions or events. Financial statements shall recognize probable and measurable future outflows or other sacrifices of resources arising from (1) past exchange transactions, (2) government-related events, (3) government-acknowledged events, or (4) nonexchange transactions that, according to current law and applicable policy, are unpaid amounts due as of the reporting date. SFFAS No. 5 describes the general principles governing the recognition of a liability.*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

#### **Business Processes Over Obligations and Disbursements Were Not Sufficient**

##### Obligations

Controls over the obligation process were not operating effectively. Policies and procedures to ensure consistent recording of obligations and retention of adequate supporting documentation need to be refined and implemented. Our tests of internal control over obligations found:

- Several obligations were recorded after the goods/services were received
- Signed personal service contracts were not filed at headquarters (HQ)
- Obligations related to contracts requiring additional HQ delegated authority were recorded by the overseas Posts prior to receiving the additional delegated authority as required.

In connection with our testing of unliquidated obligation balances as of June 30, 2006, we found:

- Documentation for some obligations was incomplete, inadequate or not provided timely
- Some obligations were posted incorrectly and corrections were not recorded timely
- Recorded obligation amounts did not match the supporting documentation provided

##### Disbursements

Controls over the disbursement process were not operating effectively. Policies and procedures for processing disbursements and sufficient retention of supporting documentation need to be refined. Our tests of controls found instances where disbursements were not recorded timely.

In connection with our testing of unliquidated obligation balances as of June 30, 2006, we noted that documentation for some disbursements was incomplete, inadequate or untimely.

These issues were the result of misunderstandings by Post personnel regarding the requirements for documenting, supporting and retaining evidence for the various types of obligation transactions.

As a result of the errors and missing documentation found in our testing of unliquidated obligations as of June 30, 2006, we were unable to rely on internal controls in order to reduce the extent of our year end procedures. Our testing also found the balance may have been materially misstated. We were unable to extend our auditing procedures to determine the extent to which these matters may have had on the classification of the status of obligated balances on the September 30, 2006 Balance Sheet.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

OMB Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control* also states:

*Transactions should be promptly recorded, properly classified and accounted for in order to prepare timely accounts and reliable financial and other reports. The documentation for transactions, management controls, and other significant events must be clear and readily available for examination.*

The Peace Corps Overseas Financial Management Handbook, Section 33.1.1, states:

*Country Directors are delegated contracting authority for country of assignment or other third country not to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or local currency equivalent per procurement...Contact the Director, Office of Contracts if additional delegation is required.*

#### **Recommendations**

We recommend that the Chief Financial Officer of Peace Corps:

##### Fund Balance with Treasury

3. Ensure the responsibility for monitoring and combining the different FBWT component reconciliations and performing an overall FBWT reconciliation is assigned to the Accounting and Financial Reporting division.
4. Reconcile the complete Odyssey general ledger cash balance to Treasury's GWA Report monthly to validate that the Fund Balance with Treasury is properly reported. Management should determine whether differences are Peace Corps or Treasury errors and approves applicable corrections.
5. Perform daily reconciliations of Department of State transactions (SF 1221, *Statement of Transactions*) in order to quickly identify and correct disbursement and collections discrepancies.

##### General Property, Plant and Equipment

6. Establish policies and procedures for headquarters and Post property managers and financial reporting personnel relating to retaining documentation supporting asset values.
7. Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the property accounting and financial reporting personnel for performing accuracy and completeness checks on the capitalized property listings.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 2 (Material Weakness), CONTINUED**

8. Develop and implement detailed procedures for recording capitalized property additions, disposals and depreciation on an on-going basis.

#### Accrued Liabilities

9. Develop and test a cost efficient methodology to estimate accrued liabilities for obligations below the management determined \$250,000 threshold.
10. Develop and implement a standardized accrual calculation worksheet to ensure complete and consistent period-end accruals.

#### Obligations and Disbursements

11. Establish a policy containing documentation requirements for the various types of Peace Corps obligations. This guidance should include procedures for documenting estimates used to obligate funds, documentation retention timeframes and filing instructions to ensure support for transactions is readily available.
12. Review and refine controls over obligation entries to ensure obligations are entered prior to goods and services being performed, where possible, for the correct amount, and that if they are entered incorrectly, the error will be found and corrected timely.
13. Ensure signed copies of all contracts entered into by Posts are kept on file at headquarters, in addition to the original at Post.
14. Ensure additional delegation of authority is received by Posts, consistent with the Overseas Financial Management Handbook, prior to entering into applicable contracts at Posts.
15. Evaluate the disbursement process to identify the cause(s) of disbursements not being processed timely. Revise policy and procedures as necessary to ensure all disbursements are posted timely

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 3 (Material Weakness)**

#### **PEACE CORPS WAS NOT ABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE MATERIAL PRIOR PERIOD ACCOUNT BALANCES**

Our prior year engagement found that Peace Corps was unable to provide adequate accounting records and supporting documentation for the Accounts Payable, General Property, Plant and Equipment and Unliquidated Obligation balances reported in the prior year financial statements. During FY 2006, Peace Corps undertook significant efforts to improve the reliability of the balances reported on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006. However, we were not able to extend our auditing procedures to verify the completeness or reliability of the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2005 or determine the effect these matters may have had on the Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years ended September 30, 2006 and 2005.

OMB Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, states:

*Transactions should be promptly recorded, properly classified and accounted for in order to prepare timely accounts and reliable financial and other reports. The documentation for transactions, management controls, and other significant events must be clear and readily available for examination.*

Based on the results of our testing on the September 30, 2006 Balance Sheet, we are not making a recommendation related to this finding.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 4 (Material Weakness)**

#### **PEACE CORPS DID NOT HAVE ADEQUATE CONTROLS OVER ITS INFORMATION SYSTEMS CONTROL ENVIRONMENT**

Peace Corps made improvements within its information systems control environment during FY 2006. However, we identified the following significant internal control weaknesses related to the Peace Corps Financial Management System (Odyssey) and Peace Corps' Overseas Information Technology (IT) environment:

- The current Peace Corps Information Technology Disaster Recovery (ITDR) test plans had been updated to reflect the current Peace Corps environment. However, these disaster recovery plans had not been tested during FY 2006. Without testing the disaster recovery plan, Peace Corps cannot ensure that it will be able to timely recover its computer systems in the event of an emergency. Untested plans make it difficult to confirm the accuracy of individual recovery procedures and the overall effectiveness of the plans.
- The Peace Corps Financial Management System (Odyssey) and the FOR Post/HQ applications did not have contingency plans in place. Without contingency planning in place, the risk of loss of financial data and operations for an unnecessary, extended period of time is increased.
- The Odyssey system, along with the FOR Post/HQ applications, had not been certified and accredited. The system is currently in production and the Odyssey Interim Authority to Operate (IAO) has expired. Without completing the certification and accreditation (C&A) process, Peace Corps management cannot ensure the security of their information systems as required by OMB. In addition, without a complete C&A package (i.e. security plans, risk assessments, contingency plans), proper security may not be administered over the data within the agency's information systems.
- The Peace Corps' Africa Region Posts had insufficient resources for adequate software and hardware support and security training for IT personnel. We noted the following specific issues during testing conducted at overseas Posts. These issues are not planned to be corrected until the software refresh is completed for the Africa Region Posts:
  - A post anti-virus server was obsolete and was no longer supported by the vendor. However, the vendor will continue to send virus definition updates.
  - Windows NT was no longer supported as of December 31, 2005. As of November 2006, the vendor is only supplying critical security fixes to the platform and most third party vendors no longer support this platform for their products.
  - The Post back-up software is no longer supported.
  - The Post proxy server is no longer supported.

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 4 (Material Weakness), Continued**

The delay in the deployment of the overseas software refresh to the Peace Corps' Africa Posts increases the risk that security vulnerabilities and flaws will not be addressed in a manner for minimizing and preventing security risks.

- The Overseas Post Microsoft® Small Business Server (SBS) and workstations had vulnerabilities that are mainly due to non-current system and security patches. The SBS server is open to exploitable vulnerabilities that could have an adverse affect on overseas Peace Corps data and its operations.
- Peace Corps is sharing and exchanging information maintained within Odyssey with external entities without a memorandum of understanding (MOU) stating the terms and conditions as to how the data may be used by each entity.
- Peace Corps had not developed test plan standards for all levels of testing for proposed Odyssey system configuration changes. Test plans help to ensure all critical scenarios of a new implementation or change have been adequately tested and define the responsibilities for each party, such as users, system analysts, programmers, and quality control.

OMB Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources, Appendix III*, requires systems and applications used by an agency to operate effectively and provide appropriate confidentiality, integrity, and availability, through the use of cost-effective management, personnel, operational, and technical controls. It also requires agencies to implement and maintain contingency planning as a requirement of a security program. OMB requires agencies to establish and periodically test the capability to continue providing service within a system based upon the needs and priorities of the participants of the system.

OMB Circular A-130, *Appendix III*, also states the following regarding accreditation of information systems:

*Security accreditation provides a form of quality control and challenges managers and technical staffs at all levels to implement the most effective security controls possible in an information system, give mission requirements, technical, operational and cost/schedule constraints. By accreditation of an information system, an agency official accepts responsibility for the security of the system and is fully accountable for any adverse impacts to the agency if a breach of security occurs. Thus, responsibility and accountability are core principles that characterize security accreditation.*

## **INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

### **REPORTABLE CONDITION 4 (Material Weakness), Continued**

Additionally, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-34, *Contingency Planning Guide for Information Technology Systems*, states:

*Testing helps to evaluate the viability of plan procedures, determine the ability of recovery staff to implement the plan, and identify deficiencies in the plan. Testing should occur at least annually and when significant changes are made to the IT system, supported business process(s), or the IT contingency plan. Each element of the contingency plan should be tested first individually and then as a whole to confirm the accuracy of recovery procedures and the overall effectiveness.*

The Peace Corps Manual Section (MS) 542, *Peace Corps IT Security Policies and Procedures*, states the following regarding the certification and accreditation of an information system:

*An agency computer or network system that contains sensitive information shall not be put into operation unless it has conditional or unconditional certification and accreditation, or has been granted an Interim Authority to Operate (IAO) or a waiver.*

The Peace Corps MS 542, *Peace Corps IT Security Policies and Procedures*, states the following regarding MOU's:

*No Peace Corps computer or network shall be connected to, or have the capacity to be directly connected to, any non-Peace Corps organization, unless the organization has the following security measures in place: a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that sets out the terms, configurations and dates when the connections and the security safeguards will be in place.*

The Peace Corps MS 542, *Peace Corps IT Security Policies and Procedures*, states the following regarding system developer responsibilities:

*System designers/developers shall provide test procedures for the installations of new software or configurations.*

### **Recommendations**

We recommend the Peace Corps Director ensure that:

16. The IT Recovery Plans/Contingency Plans are tested at least annually, or as soon as possible, after any significant interim change is made to the Peace Corps' operating environment.

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
ON INTERNAL CONTROL, CONTINUED**

**REPORTABLE CONDITION 4 (Material Weakness), Continued**

17. The Contingency Plan for the Odyssey Financial Management System, including the FOR Post/HQ applications, is completed and tested at least annually, or as soon as possible after any significant interim change is made to the operating environment.
18. Full certification and accreditation for the Odyssey Financial Management System, including the FOR Post/HQ applications, is completed in accordance with Peace Corps policy and OMB Circular A-130 guidance.
19. A program is developed by Peace Corps headquarters for distributing patch updates to the Posts in a timely manner and the deployment of the overseas software refresh is completed for all posts.
20. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is in place for each entity/agency system that shares information with Odyssey. The MOU should be signed and authorized by appropriate management officials, state the terms and conditions as to how the data may be used by each entity, and reviewed/updated on a periodic basis.
21. Test plan standards are developed for each level of testing performed for Odyssey system changes.

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON  
COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

Director  
Peace Corps

Inspector General  
Peace Corps

We have audited the accompanying Balance Sheets of Peace Corps, an independent executive branch agency of the United States government, as of September 30, 2006 and 2005, and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years then ended. We have issued our report thereon, dated November 10, 2006, in which we qualified our opinion on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006 and disclaimed an opinion on the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2005, and the related Statements of Net Cost, Changes in Net Position, Budgetary Resources and Financing for the years ended September 30, 2006 and 2005 for the reasons noted in that report.

The management of Peace Corps is responsible for complying with laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants applicable to Peace Corps. As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the Balance Sheet as of September 30, 2006 was free of material misstatement, we performed tests of Peace Corps' compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of financial statement amounts, and certain other laws and regulations specified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Bulletin No. 06-03, *Audit Requirements for Federal Financial Statements*, including the requirements referred to in the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA) of 1996. We limited our tests of compliance to these provisions and we did not test compliance with all laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants applicable to Peace Corps.

The results of our tests of compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants described in the preceding paragraph exclusive of FFMIA disclosed no instances of noncompliance with laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts and grants that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Bulletin No. 06-03.

Under the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA), we are required to report whether Peace Corps financial management systems substantially comply with the Federal financial management system requirements, applicable Federal accounting standards, and the United States Government Standard General Ledger at the transaction level. To meet this requirement, we performed tests of compliance with FFMIA section 803(a) requirements.

The results of our tests disclosed instances, described below where Peace Corps financial management systems (specifically the Odyssey system, which includes the FOR Post/HQ system) did not substantially comply with the first requirement discussed in the preceding paragraph related to Federal financial management system requirements.

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS, CONTINUED

Peace Corps financial management systems did not substantially comply with Federal financial management system requirements, including OMB Circulars A-127, *Financial Management Systems* and A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*, as they relate to information system security requirements. Peace Corps did not satisfy the provisions of OMB Circular A-130, Appendix III, Section (3), which requires agencies to implement and maintain a program to assure that adequate security is provided for all agency information collected, processed, transmitted, stored, or disseminated in general support systems and major applications. Specifically,

- The Peace Corps Financial Management System, Odyssey (including the FOR Post/HQ applications), did not have a contingency plan in place. Without contingency planning in place, the risk of loss of data and operations for an unnecessary, extended period of time within Peace Corps financial systems is increased.
- Odyssey (including the FOR Post/HQ applications) had not been certified and accredited. The system is currently in production and the Odyssey Interim Authority to Operate (IAO) has expired. Without completing the certification and accreditation process, senior level agency officials will not have taken the appropriate steps to ensure the security of their information systems as required by OMB. In addition, without a complete C&A package (i.e. security plans, risk assessments, contingency plans) proper security may not be administered over the data within the agency's information systems.

The Peace Corps Chief Information Officer is responsible for the financial systems within Peace Corps.

Specific conditions and recommended remedial actions attributable to these instances of noncompliance are more fully described in our Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control, dated November 10, 2006.

Providing an opinion on compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grants was not an objective of our engagement and, accordingly, we do not express such an opinion.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the management of Peace Corps, the Peace Corps' Office of Inspector General, 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*

Washington, DC  
November 10, 2006

UK  
&W

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OTHER INFORMATION



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

*As required by the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 and Office of Management and Budget guidance, I am pleased to submit the following statement summarizing what I consider to be the most serious management 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,

H. David Kotz  
Inspector General  
September 29, 2006

### Challenge     **The Safety and Security of Peace Corps Volunteers**

Although statistics provided to us by the agency seem to demonstrate that violent crime against volunteers is down, the sheer number of violent incidents that have been reported to us over the past year demonstrates that the safety and security of Peace Corps volunteers remains a management challenge. We also believe that there are many instances of violent crimes not being reported. There is considerable evidence of the agency's efforts to strengthen the systems supporting volunteer safety and security. In the coming fiscal year, we plan to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the major components of Peace Corps' safety and security strategy and the impact of the agency's recent efforts in the safety and security arena.

### Challenge     **Information Technology Management**

The Peace Corps has been taking actions to improve and strengthen its information technology architecture and security management. However, significant issues remain outstanding, possibly exposing the agency to unacceptable information technology risks. The most notable are as follows:

- Many of the agency's information systems have not received their final certifications and accreditations authorizing that they are acceptable for use.
- A systems development and life cycle process and change management practices have not yet been fully or consistently institutionalized.
- Business continuity contingency planning and testing, while ongoing, has not reached the level where all the agency's critical activities could be recovered following a major disruption.

## Challenge      Financial Management

One of the larger challenges initially identified and continuing since fiscal year 2004 has been financial management and reporting. Much progress has been made in transitioning financial processes from one of a transactional, budget-based process to one with a financial management focus. Over the last year, much progress has been made toward this objective.

Presently, the agency continues to face challenges over its process of preparing and presenting the financial results of the agency on a routine basis that ensures financial reporting and information is consistent, reliable and repeatable over time.

## Challenge      Post Imprest Fund Management

Peace Corps is responsible for controlling and maintaining the imprest funds of approximately 70 of its overseas posts. Roughly \$75 million flow through these imprest funds for various needs. Over the last few years, the OIG has repeatedly found that oversight of the imprest funds has not been consistent with agency policy and procedures, leading to shortages and overages as well as embezzlements. Management of the imprest funds would be enhanced by strengthening existing Peace Corps policies and procedures to include training the administrative staff to understand the cashier role and functions, as well as providing hands-on training of cashiers.

## Challenge      Post Management Responsibilities

In addition to imprest fund management at the overseas posts, some administrative activities have been identified as challenges for the agency. The most significant of these, which would benefit by developing and implementing stronger control processes, are described below:

- *Post Property Control and Management* — Posts track inventories of their equipment and furniture on spreadsheets, permitting anyone to easily make un-authorized changes to those records which potentially could lead to the removal property without detection.
- *Post Purchase Cards* — Purchase cards are issued to each post facilitating convenient, relatively small purchases as needed for post operations. For example, one can easily purchase products available through the internet. However, internal controls over the use of post-issued purchase cards are weak, allowing for the possibility of unauthorized purchases to be made using Peace Corps funds. Without billing details, it is not possible for headquarters to know what had been purchased and if such purchases were in compliance with Peace Corps policy.

## Challenge      Managing Resources from Other Agencies: The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Appropriately managing resources from other agencies, such as those received through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) continues to be a management challenge. PEPFAR funding

is provided to participating U.S. government agencies through a planning process managed by the ambassador in each country. These funds are legislatively limited to support AIDS-related programs.

Although there has been progress in providing appropriate guidance to County Directors on how they may properly use PEPFAR funds, the greater influx of PEPFAR funds planned for fiscal year 2007 presents an ongoing challenge and may need additional guidance at the post level to ensure that these funds are not being misused.

**Challenge      Staff Development**

The level of staff development at the Peace Corps, particularly related to overseas staff is a matter the agency should address. Lack of adequate training for host country staff as well the lack of the necessary task analysis, training and mentoring of the program staff represent a significant challenge for the agency. Over the past year, in order to determine how high performing overseas posts are able to achieve successful results, we assessed and analyzed both the posts identified with areas of concern, as well as those posts identified as exemplary. We found that the quality of the staff at posts is uneven, and identified inconsistencies in staff management as well. Also identified were that high-performing posts are able to improve their programs and training events by giving meticulous attention in the form of time and increased training for such tasks as site selection and preparation, quality volunteer training, and superior volunteer support.

**Challenge      Support for Volunteers Working in Projects Dedicated  
to Assisting HIV/AIDS Victims**

In several posts where OIG has conducted program evaluations, we have become concerned about the lack of emotional and mental health support for volunteers who work with HIV/AIDS victims. Program and emotional support is often not adequate for those Peace Corps volunteers who, as a result of their work, attended funerals daily and were faced with death, many for the first time in their lives, nor was the support commensurate with the demands placed on these volunteers by their assignments and workload. Peace Corps staff are sometimes not prepared to provide this technical and emotional preparation and support. Host country staff bear the additional burden of social and cultural stigma making it difficult to even acknowledge the realities and consequences of HIV/AIDS. The agency's exposure to the potential consequences to the volunteers requires attention.



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

To: H. David Kotz, Inspector General

From: Ronald A. Tschetter, Director

Date: November 1, 2006

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

Thank you for your statement of September 29, addressing the management challenges faced by the Peace Corps, as required by the Reports Consolidation Act of 2000 and OMB guidance.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) carries out its work through audits, evaluations, and investigations in order to prevent and detect fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement and promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency in government. The agency is pleased to work alongside the OIG, and remains committed to resolving outstanding issues and addressing recommendations.

Your statement highlights areas of challenge for the Peace Corps as the agency continues to strive for optimal performance while carrying out its mission in an ever-changing world. I would like to take this opportunity to address the issues raised as management challenges.

- **The Safety and Security of Volunteers**

The Peace Corps works in some of the least developed countries and in some of the most remote areas in the world. Our challenge is to operate in a way that minimizes risks and maximizes security while also providing a meaningful experience for Volunteers and their host communities. Safety and security issues are fully integrated into all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service, with emphasis on Volunteers taking personal responsibility at all times and assimilating into their communities.

The Peace Corps has been tracking crimes against Volunteers for the last 15 years in an effort to identify trends and inform policies and practices to improve Volunteer safety. To simplify the reporting process and provide information immediately and confidentially to appropriate staff, the agency overhauled its crime reporting process. The new, upgraded system of reporting crimes via the Crime Incident Reporting Form (CIRF) was implemented in fiscal year (FY) 2006. During the first six months of the implementation of this new system, the Office of Safety and Security — in its quest for accurate crime statistics — noticed what appeared to be underreporting in a segment of the Peace Corps reporting population. Consultations with affected posts led to immediate corrective action.

The underreporting of crimes remains a challenge for law enforcement in the United States and throughout the world. Anecdotal information suggests that a small percentage of Volunteer victims may avoid reporting a crime if they were acting against policy at the time or if they fear the consequences of reporting (e.g., site changes or investigations). One of the safety and security competencies that trainees must learn during their pre-service training is about the importance of reporting crimes, regardless of the circumstances, both to help the victim and to inform how to best protect Volunteers in the future.

The agency is interested in any further information to assist in pinpointing the causes of under-reporting to help decrease underreporting and to capture a more accurate picture of the safety issues Volunteers must manage in the field. The Office of Safety and Security is currently conducting an internal evaluation of the overseas safety and security program and welcomes recommendations from the OIG.

- **Information Technology Management**

The Peace Corps has strengthened its information technology architecture and security management; however, the agency still has steps to take to address the identified challenges.

*Certifications and Accreditations*

In FY 2006, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) conducted a formal evaluation of the agency's information systems to baseline an inventory of systems requiring certification and accreditation. This inventory was conducted in accordance with the standards of OMB, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). The inspector general reviewed the up-to-date inventory and agrees with the methodology and outcome.

Based on this inventory, the OCIO's Office of Information Technology (IT) Security developed a plan to conduct at least three certification and accreditation efforts each year beginning in FY 2007. To accomplish this, the OCIO acquired industry-standard software that will facilitate standardized, repeatable system certification and accreditation. Additionally, the OCIO developed initial system certification and accreditation scoring and acceptance criteria. The Office of IT Security also ensured all new applicable agency IT acquisitions included certification and accreditation requirements.

*Systems Development and Life Cycle Process and Change Management Practices*

The OCIO is in the review stages of version 4.1 of the systems development life cycle (SDLC). The latest version includes updates from the Office of IT Security to ensure compliance with the latest FISMA and NIST guidelines. Additionally, the OCIO project management office (PMO) is in the final stages of establishing a project review board. This board will ensure compliance with appropriate project management principles and institutionalize adherence to SDLC.

The OCIO change management process has been refined and put into operation under the director of IT architecture, standards and practices. This standard process is now clearly documented and followed during weekly meetings that review all IT changes planned for the Peace Corps' production environment. Agency-wide training is provided by the OCIO PMO quarterly as part of IT governance awareness. Additionally, OCIO account representatives provide training on an individual basis.

### *Business Continuity Contingency Planning and Testing*

The OCIO is in the final review stages of a revised disaster/recovery plan that addresses the findings of a 2005 business impact analysis. This effort has included interviews with key user staff to better understand the requirements of the user community, to internally assess OCIO capabilities as well as those of our disaster/recovery contractor, and to review of industry progress in this area.

Our plan was modified to include the critical systems identified by the user community as well as the added capability of Peace Corps OCIO as a result of the domestic deployment of a global Active Directory. This added several critical systems to our infrastructure, including Active Directory, RSA and ISA servers, and Exchange 2003 in a clustered environment.

We have addressed these new requirements during negotiations with our disaster/recovery contractor and now have a substantially updated contract. This contract includes our first test of the new critical systems environment in December 2006. A comprehensive after-action report from this test will be a major input to our strategic decisions regarding disaster/recovery going forward.

- **Financial Management**

FY 2005 and FY 2006 were a period of maturation for the organization of the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO). Staff became increasingly familiar and confident with financial and other systems and the processes to improve the quality of input data and resulting reports. From the OCFO's standpoint, the financial statements are accurate and complete in all material aspects. This past year, the agency made tremendous strides in its recording, reconciling, and reporting. Most financial statements are now produced directly from the accounting system, whereas an off-line process was previously required.

Fiscal years 2007 and 2008 will be a period of further refinement as the agency ensures that each key financial management process is effectively supported by compliant policies, comprehensive procedures, and reconciliation and analysis tools. The results of each process will be monitored through a combination of metric management, peer group presentations, internal assessments, and independent testing.

- **Post Imprest Fund Management**

Oversight of posts' imprest funds was extremely active during FY 2006, and careful oversight will continue in future years. All cashiering support functions and cash management are now under the director of accounts receivable and cash management within the OCFO. Cash management internal controls, reporting, and monitoring have all been reviewed and improved. One specific initiative, the Post imprest fund certification program, automated the cash management reconciliation and reporting process. This program certifies posts as fully compliant with the agency's reporting and reconciliation requirements for cashiers and their supervisors, and includes periodic surprise cash counts. Through this initiative, the OCFO, in collaboration with the three regions and posts, validated all of the transaction data an overseas post uses to record cashiering activity. All but three posts' imprest funds—Mauritania, Uganda, and Zambia—have now been certified under this initiative.

- **Post Management Responsibilities**

*Post Property Control and Management*

The Office of Management is in the process of revising the *Peace Corps Manual*, Section 511, which governs property management, to include access control requirements. This revision assigns responsibilities and mandates periodic process reviews to ensure adherence and effectiveness. The Peace Corps is currently identifying business requirements that would enable the agency to procure an automated worldwide inventory management system. Access control capability is identified as a mandatory design feature requirement.

*Post Purchase Cards*

The primary objective of the purchase card program is to reduce the procurement process/administrative cost for small dollar purchases. To that end, the agency identified a documentation and transaction review approach that provides oversight, which is practical, cost effective, and in line with the intent of the government-wide program. To mitigate risk to the Peace Corps, each purchase cardholder reports to an approving official. The approving official is responsible for reviewing and certifying monthly each of the cardholder's purchase card transactions.

At the agency level, the Office of Acquisitions and Contract Management (OACM) has implemented monthly transactional reviews, which targets (1) purchases exceeding the micro-purchase limit, (2) split purchases, (3) suspected improper or fraudulent transactions, (4) unauthorized purchases, and (5) domestic purchases that were charged sales tax. While these reviews provide an opportunity for training, serious violations or card misuse will be tracked and reported as appropriate.

A new manual section codifying the purchase card program, including updated internal controls and a "don't buy list," is expected to be published during the first quarter of FY 2007. Upon publication of the new policy, OACM will develop computer-based training for the new processes and procedures. This training should be extremely beneficial for cardholders and approving officials serving at our overseas posts.

- **Managing Resources from Other Agencies: The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief**

Effective control and management of funds from outside sources is important to the Peace Corps, and will remain a focus of the agency when working with funding through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). In an effort to provide clear expectations and guidance to the field, the Office of AIDS Relief worked with the OCFO and the regions to update and reissue Peace Corps guidance for PEPFAR proposals (June 2006). As part of this process, the OCFO devised a budget template for PEPFAR planning purposes, which is also used for allotment requests after funding is approved. The guidance and the template not only enable the agency to isolate PEPFAR funds from its own appropriated funds, but they allow each post to track PEPFAR funding according to program service (e.g., prevention, orphans and vulnerable children, etc.), which is an important step in establishing accountability. This document included guidelines for programming as well as for budget and acquisition, which the AIDS Relief Coordinator discussed directly

with 12 posts during a four-day PEPFAR conference in South Africa. Additionally, in FY 2006, the Office of AIDS Relief conducted a three-day training workshop for key staff on PEPFAR program and budget guidance.

The agency anticipates increased funding in FY 2007 and will work to ensure that staff has the training and guidance they need to effectively work with PEPFAR funds. To provide greater support to the posts receiving PEPFAR funds, the Office of AIDS Relief has begun the process to recruit and hire a staff member who will focus on administrative and budget issues.

- **Staff Development**

The agency recognizes staff development as both an opportunity and a challenge. This is especially true for overseas staff. Presently, the Peace Corps provides in-depth training to select overseas staff through its overseas staff training (OST). OST participants include country directors, administrative officers, and programming and training staff. The agency also conducts numerous continuing education workshops for various staff on a regional and sub-regional basis. Our committed staff overseas includes many who are new to the agency and others who have served the agency for long periods of time but may need increased training to navigate the ever-changing operating environment.

While the unevenness of staff abilities is a challenge, the agency aims to develop a continuum of training that is based on core and functional competencies that is delivered with appropriate learning and testing methods. The agency also looks to utilize technology to enhance online learning and collaboration. Timely and focused training can help the agency build the capabilities of its overseas staff and retain high-quality staff.

- **Support for Volunteers Working in Projects Dedicated to Assisting HIV/AIDS Victims**

The Peace Corps is aware of the challenges facing Volunteers when they take up an assignment in a country with a high HIV prevalence rate. This awareness was developed through direct communication from and interviews with Volunteers, country directors, Peace Corps medical officers, the Office of Special Services, and from OIG country reports. Effectively supporting Volunteers requires the work of offices across the agency to ensure that the ramifications of living and working in high HIV-prevalence areas are addressed in all aspects of recruitment, training, and support. In collaboration with other offices within the agency, the Office of AIDS Relief has been involved in the following efforts to address ways in which the Peace Corps can better support these Volunteers:

- Revising and publishing the HIV/AIDS brochure for recruitment purposes to include a new message on how “the road will not be easy”;
- Producing an HIV/AIDS video that includes content about the challenges (from the Peace Corps Director and from the Volunteers) of living in a high-prevalence country;
- Establishing a pilot program for certain applicants to receive HIV/AIDS technical training and hospice training;

- Conducting a review of the HIV/AIDS program in Tanzania, which offers a model of integrated support;
- Initiating development of a “resiliency skills” training module for Volunteers, which was tested in Ukraine.

Peace Corps/Tanzania’s model of supporting Volunteers is a promising one as the agency looks at best practices in this area. The post’s program includes training on coping skills, a peer support network, a proactive medical officer with counselors on hand for referrals, and sub-regional technical workshops. Additionally, an HIV/AIDS training toolkit has been in production over the past year (including a module on Volunteer support) and is expected to be ready for distribution in 2007. The agency will continue to carry out these and other efforts to ensure that Volunteers working with HIV/AIDS issues get the support that they need.



## APPENDICES



## Appendix 1: Material Weaknesses and Non-Conformances

The one material weakness relates to internal control and financial reporting for the business process Property, Plant & Equipment (PP&E), adequate controls over capital assets. Progress toward resolution of this weakness over the last fiscal year includes:

- Issuing CFO Bulletin 06-09 in March 2006 requiring supporting documentation and certification of FY 2005 overseas property.
- Issuing two CFO Policy Statements, 06-04 and 06-05, in August 2006 on accounting for PP&E and accounting for software.
- Reviewing and comparing payments and collections potentially involving capital assets to the corresponding property records to ensure compatibility.
- Assembling all existing documentation on the vehicle fleet at the headquarters and preparing a 2006 vehicle fleet management guide.
- Refining recorded capitalized estimates for Odyssey/FOR Post and adjusting the net book value downward by \$9.7 million.
- Determining that an estimated 40 percent vehicle salvage value was warranted and adjusting depreciation by \$3.8 million.
- Identifying and capitalizing an additional \$8.4 million of assets acquired in previous years involving information technology (IT) hardware and software, telecommunications equipment, aggregate purchases of furniture, and leasehold improvements.

The remaining efforts on the corrective action plan to mitigate this weakness should be completed by March 2007 and consist of the following:

- Refining and implementing a policy that correctly capitalizes and depreciates IT hardware and software and general PP&E.
- Improving and documenting completeness tests in all areas of PP&E.
- Ensuring that book values for PP&E are accurate and periodically reviewed and that the subsidiary ledgers are being updated regularly.
- Documenting methodology for capitalizing leases at post and headquarters.

The two non-conformances—completeness of a disaster recovery strategy and enterprise-wide financial system accreditation and certification—did not conform to the objectives of FMFIA that address government-wide financial management systems requirements. Achieving complete financial system certification and accreditation and implementation of the contingency plan are not anticipated until March 2007. Progress toward achieving conformance within these two areas over this last fiscal year includes drafting and reviewing the Peace Corps IT security documentation standards. The remaining efforts on the corrective action plan to eliminate these non-conformances include:

- Finalizing Peace Corps IT security documentation standards.
- Testing the disaster recovery plan.
- Finalizing the financial system certification documentation, including the system security plan, the disaster recovery plan, and the business continuity plan.
- Completing financial system certification and accreditation.



## Appendix 2: Current Status of Prior Audit Recommendations

### Current Status of Prior Audit Recommendations Directly Involving Financial Processes Summary :: Financial Notice of Findings—Fiscal Year (FY) 2006

#### *Financial Management and Reporting*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Financial Management Control Structure	NoF-01-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Undelivered Orders	NoF-01-FIN-2005	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Subsidiary Ledgers	NoF-03-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Financial Statements	NoF-03-FIN-2005	Medium	<i>Completed</i>
Check Donations	NoF-05-FIN-2005	Low	<i>Completed</i>
Advances/Receivables	NoF-07-FIN-2004	Medium	<i>In Progress</i>
FMFIA Compliance	NoF-07-FIN-2005	Medium	<i>In Progress</i>
Financial Management Structure and Monitoring Processes	NoF-10-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Host Country Contributions	NoF-14-FIN-2004	Medium	<i>Completed</i>

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

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Property, Plant, and Equipment	NoF-04-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>

#### *Intra-governmental Reconciliation*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Distinction Between Federal and Non-Federal Transactions	NoF-02-FIN-2004	High	<i>Completed</i>

#### *Accounts Payable and Other Liabilities*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Accounts Payable Manual Journal Entries	NoF-02-FIN-2005	High	<i>Near Completion</i>

#### *Fund Balance with Treasury (FBWT)*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Fund Balance with Treasury	NoF-05-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>

*Personnel Actions*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Failure to Monitor Personnel and Payroll	NoF-04-FIN-2005	Low	<i>In Progress</i>

*Post Operations*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Overseas Post Accounting and Reporting Functions	NoF-08-FIN-2004	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Purchase Cards	NoF-15-FIN-2004	Medium	<i>In Progress</i>
Reconciliation of Foreign Service National (FSN) Pay	NoF-16-FIN-2004	Medium	<i>In Progress</i>
Post Budgets	NoF-18-FIN-2004	Low	<i>Completed</i>
Prompt Payment Procedures	NoF-19-FIN-2004	Low	<i>Completed</i>

**Status Key**

*Completed:* Completed during FY 2006

*Near Completion:* Substantial progress on corrective action plan with completion by second quarter of FY 2007

*In Progress:* Portions of the corrective action plan have been completed while other portions remain to be completed

**Current Status of Prior Audit Recommendations Not Directly Involving Financial Processes****Summary :: Non-Financial Notice of Findings—Fiscal Year (FY) 2006***Operational*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Professional Development Training	NoF-03-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>In Progress</i>
Performance Measures	NoF-06-FIN-2005	Medium	<i>Completed</i>
Medical Services	NoF-11-FIN-2004	Medium	<i>In Progress</i>

*Information Technology*

Description	Number	Severity	Status
Odyssey Security Plan System Owner	NoF-01-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>Near Completion</i>
Information Technology (IT) Recovery Plan	NoF-02-IT-HIGH-2003	High	<i>Near Completion</i>
Security Awareness Training	NoF-02-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>Completed</i>
Data and Resource Classification Rankings	NoF-04-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>Near Completion</i>
Lack of Formal Policies and Procedures for Odyssey Access	NoF-05-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>Near Completion</i>
Lack of Formal Policies and Procedures for Odyssey and Local Area Network Access	NoF-05-IT-MED-2005	Medium	<i>Near Completion</i>
Archiving, Deleting, and Sharing Odyssey Data Files	NoF-06-IT-LOW-2005	Low	<i>Near Completion</i>
FOR Post/FOR Headquarters Access	NoF-07-IT-LOW-2003	Low	<i>In Progress</i>
Memorandum of Understanding	NoF-07-IT-MED-2005	Medium	<i>Near Completion</i>

***Information Technology (cont'd)***

Description	Number	Severity	Status
FOR Post/FOR Headquarters Audit Logs	NoF-08-IT-MED-2003	Medium	Near Completion
Computer Room Diagram	NoF-08-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Completed
Network Diagram	NoF-09-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Near Completion
Inventory of System/Application Documentation	NoF-10-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Near Completion
FOR Post/FOR Headquarters No Contingency Plan	NoF-11-IT-HIGH-2003	High	Near Completion
Testing of Environmental Controls	NoF-11-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Near Completion
FOR Post/FOR Headquarters Segregation of Duties	NoF-12-IT-MED-2003	Medium	Near Completion
Data Center Emergency Procedures	NoF-12-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Near Completion
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan	NoF-13-IT-MED-2005	Medium	Completed
Testing of Odyssey Contingency Plans	NoF-14-IT-LOW-2005	Low	Near Completion
System Programmers	NoF-15-IT-MED-2005	Medium	Near Completion
Odyssey Audit Logs	NoF-16-IT-MED-2003	Medium	Near Completion
Test Plans	NoF-16-IT-MED-2005	Medium	Near Completion
Odyssey No Contingency Plan	NoF-17-IT-HIGH-2003	High	Near Completion
Odyssey System Change Test Results	NoF-17-IT-LOW-2005	Low	In Progress
FOR Post/FOR Headquarters Certification & Accreditation	NoF-20-IT-HIGH-2004	High	Near Completion
Overseas Small Business Server (SBS) Vulnerabilities	NoF-20/22-IT-HIGH-2003	High	In Progress
Overseas Post IT Budget	NoF-22-IT-HIGH-2004	High	In Progress
Odyssey Certification & Accreditation	NoF-23-IT-HIGH-2004	High	Near Completion
Odyssey Account Review	NoF-24-IT-MED-2004	Medium	Near Completion
Odyssey Segregation of Duties	NoF-26-IT-MED-2004	Medium	Near Completion
Overseas Posts: Disaster Recovery, Security, System and Physical Access and Backup Procedures	NoF-29-IT-MED-2004	Medium	In Progress
Overseas Posts: Overseas Architecture Changes	NoF-30-IT-MED-2004	Medium	In Progress

**Status Key**

*Completed:* Completed during FY 2006

*Near Completion:* Substantial progress on corrective action plan with completion by second quarter of FY 2007

*In Progress:* Portions of the corrective action plan have been completed while other portions remain to be completed

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Produced by The Peace Corps  
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A woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue t-shirt, is smiling and looking down at two young children. She is pointing at a large map or book on a table. The children are looking at the same map. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books. A circular Peace Corps logo is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

## A LEGACY OF SERVICE AND COMPASSION



**PEACE CORPS**  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION  
FISCAL YEAR 2006

..... Letter from  
the Director

..... Agency  
Strategic Plan

..... Budget  
Information

..... Safety and  
Security

..... The  
Volunteer

..... Domestic  
Programs

..... Regional  
Summaries

..... Country  
Program  
Profiles

..... GPRA



## **PEACE CORPS**

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# A LEGACY OF SERVICE AND COMPASSION



**PEACE CORPS**  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION  
FISCAL YEAR 2006

**Front cover:**

A Peace Corps Volunteer in Kazakhstan reviews a geography lesson with her Kazakh counterpart and a group of students.

**Photos, overleaf:** Volunteers in Benin, Tonga, and the Kyrgyz Republic

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F I S C A L   Y E A R   2 0 0 6

# BUDGET

O F   T H E   U . S .   G O V E R N M E N T

## **Peace Corps FY 2006 Budget Request**

The Peace Corps budget request for FY 2006 is \$345,000,000, an increase of \$25,000,000 over the FY 2005 Appropriation of \$320,000,000<sup>1</sup>. The FY 2006 request will enable the Peace Corps to maintain the existing number of Americans serving abroad at 7,850 by September 30, 2006; provide for the safety and security of the Volunteers and staff; open two new programs; and broaden and strengthen the activities and strategies initiated in 2005 to include the development of innovative responses to crises around the world.

<sup>1</sup> The FY 2005 Appropriation of \$320,000,000 was reduced by a rescission of \$2,560,000.

THE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS  
WASHINGTON, DC

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Americans currently serving in 72 countries all around the world as Peace Corps Volunteers, I am privileged to submit the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2006 budget request of \$345 million. This funding level continues to reflect President Bush's commitment to the Peace Corps in his second term, the importance of the agency's mission abroad, and our goals for expansion.

While more than 178,000 Volunteers have served in 138 countries since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, thousands more are eager to serve America by promoting the Peace Corps' mission of world peace and friendship. With continued congressional support for our funding, the Peace Corps is positioned to expand our ranks of Volunteers who are carrying out the Peace Corps' three goals of: 1) helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; 2) helping to promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and 3) helping to promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

The sentiments of many host government officials toward American Peace Corps Volunteers are reflected in the comments of Botswana President Festus Mogae at the swearing-in ceremony for new Volunteers: "In this country, Peace Corps Volunteers have translated their lofty ideals into effective, on-the-ground delivery. In the process, they have forged lasting bonds of friendship with many Batswana. Living as we all do in an often cynical world, one can only admire the enduring spirit of Peace Corps." By immersing themselves in the daily life, culture, and challenges of the people they are serving, Peace Corps Volunteers gain the respect of local communities and are better able to transfer their skills in ways that will have long-term, life-changing consequences.

As we assess the changes in the world and what the face of America looks like in large cities and tiny villages around the globe, we can be proud of the more than 7,700 Peace Corps Volunteers who are committed to grass-roots development efforts to empower people in developing countries to take charge of their future. These Americans share their time and talents by serving as teachers, business advisors, information technology consultants, health and HIV/AIDS educators, and agriculture workers. These men and women—young and old, married and single, and from an array of ethnic backgrounds—are informal ambassadors of the United States to the far reaches of the globe.

I remain proud of your constituents who are serving as Peace Corps Volunteers and grateful for the ongoing bipartisan support that the Peace Corps receives from Congress. I look forward to working with you throughout the appropriations process.

Sincerely,



Gaddi H. Vasquez  
Director

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## Congressional Budget Justification Fiscal Year 2006

### 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 44 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 178,000 Americans have served in 138 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 44 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 2006, the Peace Corps will continue to build on its accomplishments. These accomplishments include reaching a 29-year high of 7,733 Volunteers serving in the field at the close of fiscal year 2004; opening a new program in Mexico; having 20 percent of Volunteers working in 18 predominantly Muslim countries; participating in 10 of the 15 focus countries as part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief; expanding recruiting activities at community colleges; and increasing the recruitment of Volunteers from diverse backgrounds.

The proposed budget request of \$345 million will allow the Peace Corps to enter two new countries, gradually expand the number of Volunteers in the field, and seek innovative programming responses to natural disasters and humanitarian crises. The agency will continue to pursue its strategic goals by increasing the number of underrepresented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps, reducing the 12-month Volunteer early termination rate, improving Volunteers' health care satisfaction and perception of personal safety, improving American's understanding of other peoples by increasing the number of returned Peace Corps Volunteer visits to schools and community organizations, and reducing the overall application time for those applying for Volunteer service.

The safety and security of each Volunteer will remain the agency's top priority and the staff of the Office of Safety and Security will continue their commitment to research, planning, training, and compliance. Volunteer programming and training will also undergo additional reviews to find better methods of preparing Volunteers for their service and assist in the development of feasible project plans and local community acceptance.

This budget will allow the Peace Corps to focus on the gradual expansion of Volunteers within each region and develop innovative responses to natural disasters and humanitarian crises via Crisis Corps—such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and the ongoing HIV/AIDS pandemic. An anticipated trainee input in FY 2006 of approximately 4,300 future Volunteers will require the hiring of additional medical screening nurses, placement officers, and other support staff. Furthermore, country assessments and program ramp-up costs will be required for the two new country entries.

Additionally, the FY 2006 budget request will provide the necessary funds to implement congressionally mandated upgrades to the Peace Corps' financial system and ensure agency compliance with new auditing requirements. Expenditures include continued funding for the overseas rollout of the Odyssey Financial System and overall system enhancements. In the area of information technology and centrally managed resources, notable investments will be made to update the antiquated Volunteer Delivery System, revise Volunteer incident reporting templates, and comply with new HIPPA reporting procedures. The budget also reflects the reimbursements required to the Department of State for the Capital Security Cost-Sharing Program and the increase in expenditures to the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services.

Encouraging service and volunteerism among the American people is part of a long tradition in the United States and of this Administration. More than 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 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.

“Make the choice to serve in a cause larger than your wants, larger than yourself — and in your days you will add not just to the wealth of our country, but to its character.”

**President George W. Bush  
Inaugural Address  
January 20, 2005**



# The Peace Corps Strategic Plan: A Legacy of Service and Compassion

## Opportunity in the Twenty-First Century

The Peace Corps is pleased to present the agency's strategic plan for fiscal years 2003 to 2008. Not only does the strategic plan reflect the agency's long-standing commitment to the unique role that its 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 help achieve the vision to meet the growing needs of the world in this century.

The mission of promoting world peace and friendship, as well as the three goals of the Peace Corps, have remained the same since its inception. Development indicators suggest that there will be even greater challenges for nations on all continents in the years ahead as they deal with the demands for improved development, information technology, agriculture, education, sanitation and environment, health management, and business.

Recognizing the strategic relevance of the Peace Corps in the 21st century, President Bush declared in his 2002 State of the Union Address and in numerous speeches over the past three years that "...the United States remains committed to ensuring a future of peace, hope, and promise for all people, and the Peace Corps is playing a critical role in these efforts."

President Bush's frequent references to the Peace Corps and the agency's new drive to reacquaint the American people with the mission of the Peace Corps has resulted in a significant increase in the number of Americans seeking to serve. At the end of 2004, inquiries were up by 18 percent, new applications rose by 6 percent, and the Peace

Corps website had a 33 percent increase in visitor sessions, for a total of 7.6 million visitor sessions. Since January 2002, the Peace Corps has had pending requests for programs in over 30 countries, has conducted 25 country assessments, and has entered or reentered 21 countries.

In September 2004, the Peace Corps achieved a 29-year high of 7,733 Volunteers serving in 72 countries. The Peace Corps is pleased with its growth to date; however, the amounts provided in the appropriations process for the past three years have fallen significantly short of that needed to meet the goal of doubling the number of Volunteers over five years. Thus, the agency will seek to modestly expand into new countries, maintain the existing number of Volunteers in the field, and develop new programming in response to natural disasters and humanitarian crises, while preserving the quality of the Peace Corps Volunteer experience and focusing on safety and security.

### Vision

The Peace Corps' vision 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.

### Mission

The mission and three goals of the Peace Corps are as relevant today as they were 44 years ago when they were first defined in the Peace Corps Act of 1961. The Peace Corps combines development with people-to-people relationships that Volunteers forge with host country colleagues and communities.

## The Peace Corps Mission and Three Goals:

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

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

This serves as a crucial foundation for peace and friendship for generations to come.

## 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 measurable objectives and specific tasks—in essence, a performance plan—with related timelines. IPBS is based on a three-year planning cycle, and 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 the office to meet them. These plans are based on projected levels of funding; however, they are adjusted accordingly if these levels are not realized through actual appropriations. This is possible through the annual update of the three-year plan. IPBS begins with an assessment and evaluation of the previous year's plans and projects. It then identifies lessons learned, potential improvements, and plans for the future.

In concert with IPBS, 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 is reviewed annually in December. Each project's strengths and weaknesses are assessed, and the plan is reaffirmed or altered based on lessons learned in the planning process.

The agency's planning process begins each winter with the issuance of Director Gaddi H. Vasquez's guidance. In addition to reaffirming the agency's mission and goals, the offices are requested

to specifically address the impact of, and plan for the heightened focus on, safety and security of Volunteers and staff. The offices align their individual plans to the agency's overall direction and each strategic plan submission is presented to the director and reviewed. Upon concluding these review activities, 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.

The director has also established the inter-office Quality Statements and Indicators Project (QSIP) to measure strategic outcomes through the Peace Corps Volunteer Survey. QSIP complements the agency's strategic plan under GPRA by helping to determine if performance goals and plans actually result in higher quality operations and service.

For example, each office's individual strategies under GPRA are designed to support, complement, or enhance the agency's strategic goals. These goals drive how the Peace Corps operates and performs. Offices determine that to meet the GPRA goals, they must conduct certain training, provide certain services, etc. QSIP provides a means by which the Peace Corps can measure if these plans actually work by asking for feedback from Volunteers about the quality of their experience. QSIP developed quality statements and performance indicators for recruitment and placement, programming, training, Volunteer support, third goal and domestic activities, and management and administration. The main vehicle for evaluating progress in these areas is the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer Survey because this survey is completed by approximately 70 percent of serving Volunteers. It is, therefore, a useful source of feedback by which Peace Corps can track its progress.



# The Peace Corps Strategic Plan for Responding to the President's Challenge

## **Strategic Goal 1**

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the number of Volunteers in the field to 8,000 by FY 2008, at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support.

## **Strategic Goal 2**

Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer health care satisfaction rate and increasing Volunteers' perception of their personal safety where they live.

## **Strategic Goal 3**

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and community organizations.

## **Strategic Goal 4**

Reduce the overall response time for those applying to Peace Corps.

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

In response to President Bush's challenge to increase the size of the Peace Corps, the agency focused on growth in FY 2003 and FY 2004, achieving the highest number of Volunteers serving abroad in 29 years, while providing a positive experience for Volunteers in a safe and secure environment. However, given the funds provided in the appropriations process, since FY 2003, the Peace Corps is no longer on track to double in size. This has required the Peace Corps to modify Strategic Goal 1. This document continues to present the four strategic goals the Peace Corps seeks to achieve from FY 2003 through FY 2008, with minor modifications. 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 in the performance budget; key factors potentially affecting achievement of goals; and the methods used to assess achievement.

### **Strategic Goal 1**

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the existing number of Volunteers in the field, at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support, up to 8,000 Volunteers by September 30, 2008.

### **Strategic Goal 2**

Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer health care satisfaction rate by 7 percent, from 75 percent in FY 2002 to 82 percent by FY 2008; and increasing Volunteers' perception of their personal safety where they live by 3 percent, from 86 percent in FY 2002 to 89 percent by FY 2008.

### **Strategic Goal 3**

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and community organizations by 29 percent, from 7,000 in FY 2003 to 9,000 by FY 2008.

### **Strategic Goal 4**

Reduce the Peace Corps' overall response time for those applying to the Peace Corps by 5 percent from 223 days in FY 2003 to 212 days by FY 2008.

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## STRATEGIC GOAL 1

**Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the existing number of Volunteers in the field, at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support, up to 8,000 Volunteers by September 30, 2008.**

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### **Strategy**

The Peace Corps is committed to maintaining the approximate number of Volunteers in the field at the FY 2003 level. 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 provide the infrastructure necessary to support the work of the Volunteers and the business of the agency. To meet the challenges of the 21st century, the Peace Corps is focusing action items in the following areas.

#### **Infrastructure Support**

Under the direction of the Offices of the Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer, the Peace Corps is developing the necessary technical infrastructure to streamline current operational processes that will support the Volunteers in the field. In addition, management is reviewing personnel practices to identify and analyze trends and future needs among Volunteers and staff that will be used to inform workforce processes and resource allocations. These analyses will also inform policy decisions and maximize resource efficiency and quality of service.

#### **Recruitment**

While four-year institutions have been the main source for Volunteers over the years, the Peace Corps is now working with the American Association of Community Colleges to expand recruiting activities at community colleges. Assignment areas, such as health and information technology, can often be filled by community college graduates 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 who have previously been under-represented in the Peace Corps. In 2002, the Director established a diversity task force composed

of senior officials and other agency staff to provide guidance and assistance in increasing the diversity of Volunteers. The Peace Corps is currently identifying venues, such as national conferences or publications, and developing partnerships with key agencies and organizations to 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 American diversity and constructive coping and support strategies for use during their time in the field. Efforts to expand the number of older Americans serving in the Peace Corps involve identifying senior Peace Corps officials and returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) who can be spokespersons at national conferences and other speaker forums. The Office of Medical Services (OMS) is developing materials for use in informing older Volunteers about issues of interest to them, such as the impact on retirement benefits, insurance, and medical benefits.

#### **Communications**

The Peace Corps launched the new awareness and recruitment campaign "Life is calling. How far will you go?" in September 2003. This campaign included the placement of a significant number of public service ads in both English and Spanish in strategic venues. To date, this campaign has earned over 9.2 million dollars in free media and has garnered over 1.5 billion audience impressions.

#### **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, the training modules can help them get a head start in learning about culture, languages, and the personal respon-

sibility requirements, which increase their chances for success. The Peace Corps also completed an applicant dropout study and a newly expanded early termination study to help identify reasons that applicants and Volunteers drop out of the system. This helps enhance the agency's systems and addresses issues that negatively impact retention rates.

In addition, the programming and training as well as the recruitment and placement QSIP committees have developed performance goals to

ensure that Volunteers are satisfied and effective. To achieve this, 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 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer Survey and the newly designed close-of-service study. Outcome goals related to the satisfaction levels of Volunteers in this area will be established in 2005.

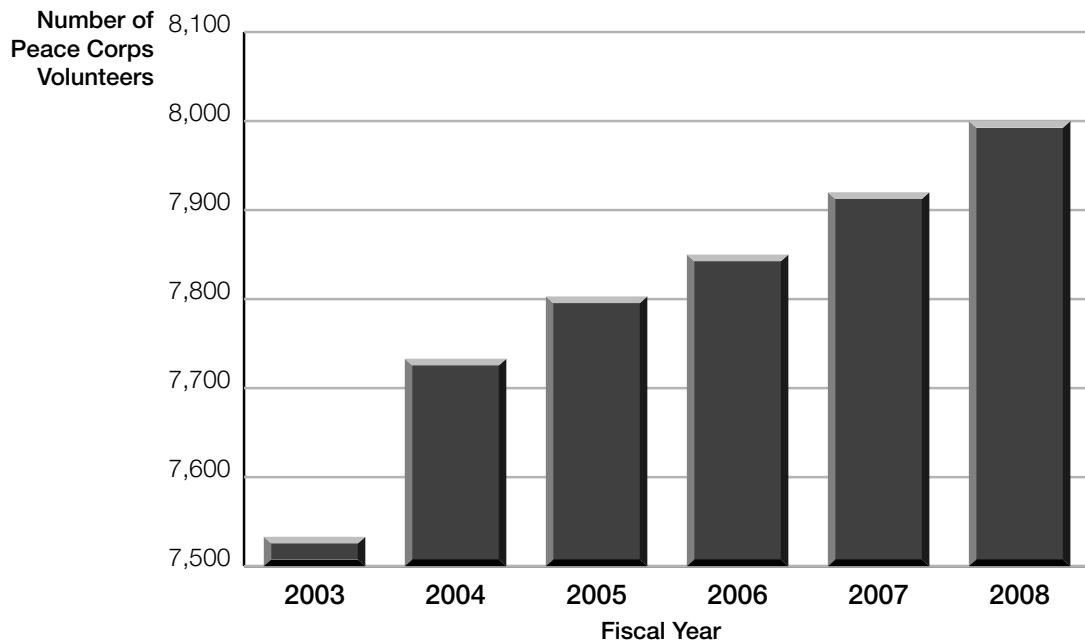
## **Outcome Goal 1.1**

Maintain the approximate number of Volunteers in the field from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 8,000 (6.2%) by FY 2008, assuming full funding for FY 2006 and future requests, and incrementally expand Volunteer programming to include the development of innovative responses to natural disasters and humanitarian crises.

## **Performance Goal**

- 1.1.1 Incrementally increase in subsequent performance years Volunteers/trainees on board from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 8,000 (6.2%) by FY 2008.
- 1.1.1.1 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,733 (2.7%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2004.
  - 1.1.1.2 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,803 (3.6%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2005.
  - 1.1.1.3 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,850 (4.2%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2006.
  - 1.1.1.4 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,920 (5.1%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2007.
  - 1.1.1.5 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 8,000 (6.2%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2008.

**Figure:** Projected increase in the number of Peace Corps Volunteers in the field, FY 2003–2008



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## **Outcome Goal 1.2**

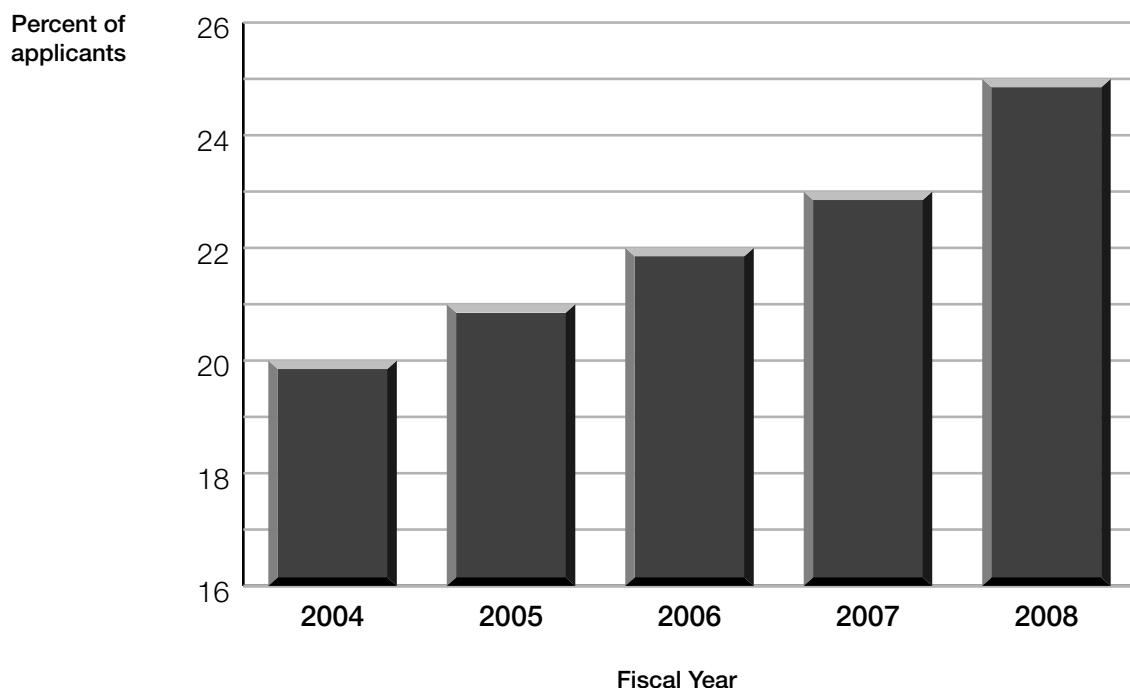
Increase the combined number of applications to the Peace Corps from underrepresented ethnic and age groups from 19% to 25% by FY 2008 in order to provide Volunteers to interested countries that better reflect American diversity.

### **Performance Goal**

- 1.2.1. Increase the combined number of underrepresented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps from 19% to 25% by FY 2008.
  - 1.2.1.1 20% of applicants will be from underrepresented groups by FY 2004.
  - 1.2.1.2 21% of applicants will be from underrepresented groups by FY 2005.
  - 1.2.1.3 22% of applicants will be from underrepresented groups by FY 2006.
  - 1.2.1.4 23% of applicants will be from underrepresented groups by FY 2007.
  - 1.2.1.5 25% of applicants will be from underrepresented groups by FY 2008.

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**Figure:** Increase in the percentage of underrepresented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps, FY 2004–2008



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## **Outcome Goal 1.3**

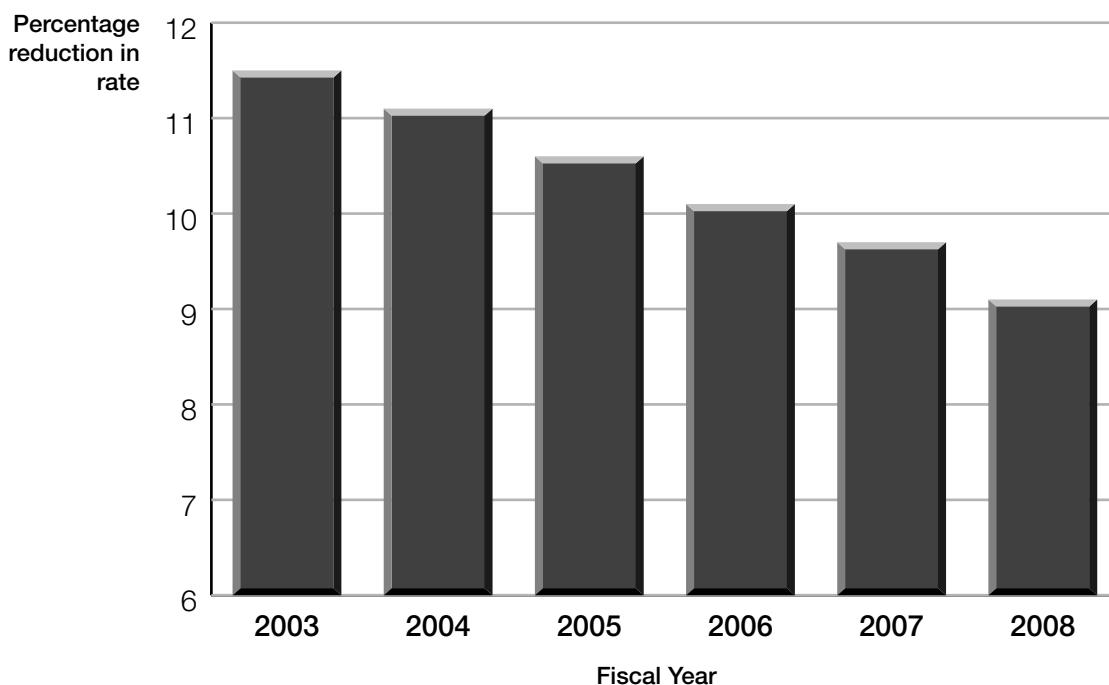
Reduce overall 12-month Volunteer early termination (ET) rate by 2.5% from the FY 2003 level of 11.6% to 9.1% by FY 2008 through improved matching of Volunteers' skills and primary assignment, and improved satisfaction rate of Volunteer health and safety.

### **Performance Goal**

- 1.3.1. Reduce the overall 12-month Volunteer ET rate by 2.5% from FY 2003 level of 11.6% to 9.1% by FY 2008.
  - 1.3.1.1 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 11.1% by FY 2004.
  - 1.3.1.2 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 10.6% by FY 2005.
  - 1.3.1.3 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 10.1% by FY 2006.
  - 1.3.1.4 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 9.6% by FY 2007.
  - 1.3.1.5 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 9.1% by FY 2008.

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**Figure:** Projected reduction in early termination rate of Peace Corps Volunteers, FY 2003–2008



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## **STRATEGIC GOAL 2**

**Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer health care satisfaction rate by 7%, from 75% in FY 2002 to 82% by FY 2008; and increasing Volunteers' perception of their personal safety where they live by 3%, from 86% in FY 2002 to 89% by FY 2008.**

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### **Strategy**

Because the Peace Corps Volunteer Survey in 2002 captured these data, the baselines have been set. The Peace Corps will continue to measure performance against the results of the survey to determine if target outcomes are met. If they are not met, however, the following areas can be used to evaluate and reassess processes and practices and implement changes to ensure that these targets are achieved.

#### **Office of Medical Services Technical Guidelines**

OMS recognizes that technical guidelines are established to provide comprehensive health services and preventive education to Volunteers. These guidelines provide for rigorous training requirements, licensing and certification, and performance standards for medical staff. They also establish critical guidelines for training and medical care for Volunteers. Finally, these policies ensure that screening guidelines are based on current research, best practices, and knowledge of the field, all of which are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

#### **Emergency Care**

OMS provides medical evacuation 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. Medevaced Volunteers also receive timely and quality medevac care, and, if appropriate, may return to their country of service.

### **Special Services for Volunteers**

The Office of Special Services provides comprehensive services and training to Volunteers that advocate for and promote healthy emotional adaptation to their Peace Corps service. This is critical to ensuring that Volunteers have a positive and productive experience in-country and the support necessary to handle crises and challenging situations.

### **Safety and Security Personnel**

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

### **Safety Policies**

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, the culture, working in a well-designed project, and staying close to host families. Safe Volunteers take responsibility for their own behavior and know how to minimize personal risks. The recent Volunteer survey indicates that these policies are being followed, and that most of the time, Volunteers feel safe where they live and work. The Peace Corps will, however, always continue to review and enhance its safety and security policies.

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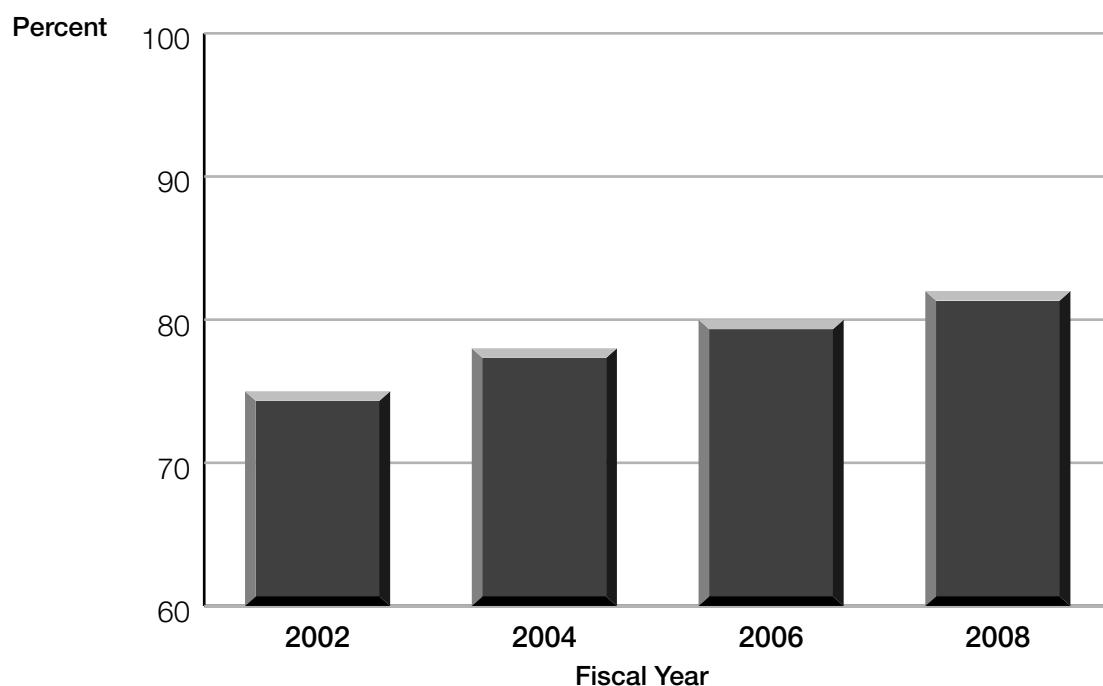
## **Outcome Goal 2.1**

Increase the percentage of Volunteers indicating feeling “well” or “completely” satisfied with their in-country health care from the FY 2002 level of 75% to 82% by FY 2008.

### **Performance Goal**

- 2.1.1 Incrementally increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer Survey indicating feeling “well” or “completely” satisfied with their in-country health care.
- 2.1.1.1 75% Volunteers’ satisfaction rate on their health care by FY 2002.
  - 2.1.1.2 78% Volunteers’ satisfaction rate on their health care by FY 2004.
  - 2.1.1.3 80% Volunteers’ satisfaction rate on their health care by FY 2006.
  - 2.1.1.4 82% Volunteers’ satisfaction rate on their health care by FY 2008.
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**Figure:** Projected increase in the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers indicating feeling “well” or “completely” satisfied with their in-country health care, FY 2002–2008



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## **Outcome Goal 2.2**

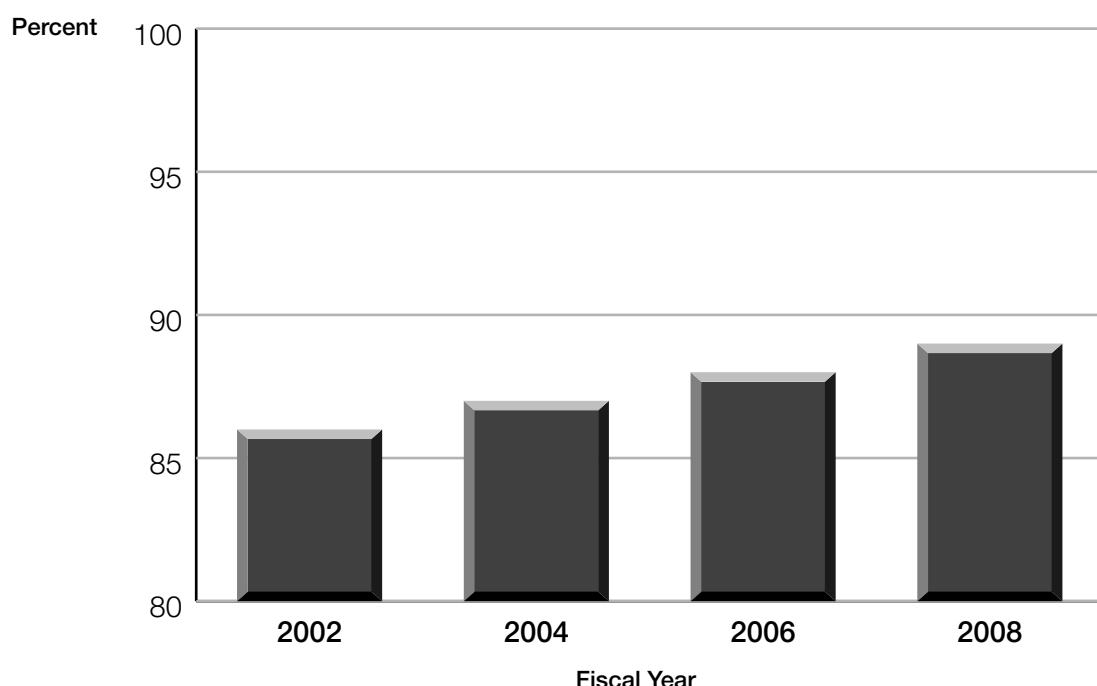
Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteer Survey responses indicating that Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live from the FY 2002 level of 86% to 89% by FY 2008.

## **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 at home.
- 2.2.1.1 86% of the Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live by FY 2002.
  - 2.2.1.2 87% of the Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live by FY 2004.
  - 2.2.1.3 88% of the Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live by FY 2006.
  - 2.2.1.4 89% of the Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live by FY 2008.

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**Figure:** Projected increase in the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers indicating that they feel safe most of the time where they live, FY 2002–2008



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## STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and community organizations by 29%, from 7,000 in FY 2003 to 9,000 by FY 2008.

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### 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 promote a better understanding among Americans about other cultures and other people around the world. The Peace Corps seeks

to increase these opportunities by increasing the number of colleges and universities participating in the Fellows/USA programs. This goal is also achieved by ensuring that RPCVs have the information about and support they need to engage in third goal activities.

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### Outcome Goal 3.1

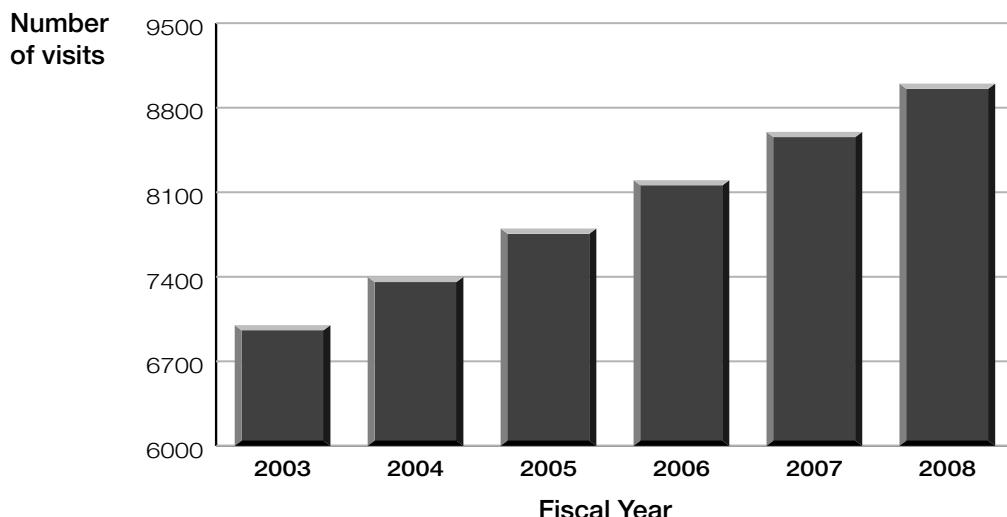
Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 29% from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 9,000 by FY 2008.

#### Performance Goal

- 3.1.1 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 29% from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 9,000 by FY 2008.
  - 3.1.1.1 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 400 from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 7,400 in FY 2004.
  - 3.1.1.2 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 800 from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 7,800 in FY 2005.
  - 3.1.1.3 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 1,200 from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 8,200 in FY 2006.
  - 3.1.1.4 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 1,600 from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 8,600 in FY 2007.
  - 3.1.1.5 Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 2,000 from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 9,000 in FY 2008.

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**Figure:** Projected increase in the number of returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and organizations, FY 2003–2008



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## **STRATEGIC GOAL 4**

**Reduce the Peace Corps' overall response time for those applying to the Peace Corps by 5% from 223 days in FY 2003 to 212 days by FY 2008.**

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### **Strategy**

The application process to become a Volunteer can be lengthy and efforts are being made to reduce the application time. However, because the Peace Corps must determine if a potential Volunteer would be suited for two years of service overseas, it must assess each applicant thoroughly. These assessments include medical and psychological screenings as well as comprehensive skills assessments. In order to streamline this process and reduce the application time, the following areas are being targeted for enhancement.

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

Online applications have increased dramatically and currently comprise over 75 percent of all applications. The agency is continually reviewing opportunities for more efficiencies and greater user compatibility.

#### **Medical Screening**

OMS and Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) have established regionally based medical screening and placement teams to better identify matches between future Volunteers and potential countries. They have reviewed the mental health screening process to reduce screening time; clarified mental health guidelines so screening nurses can make most decisions without mental health care professionals; reduced the number of mental health reviews per applicant; and moved alcohol and drug suitability determinations to VRS. In addition, the redesign of the health status review form and its availability online have significantly reduced the processing time.

#### **Enterprise Architecture**

The CIO has worked closely with VRS to prioritize new software and hardware requirements for the Volunteer delivery system. This review has included: updated activity models; data models; organizational interfaces; and information exchanges that make the application process more efficient and less labor intensive.

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### **Outcome Goal 4.1**

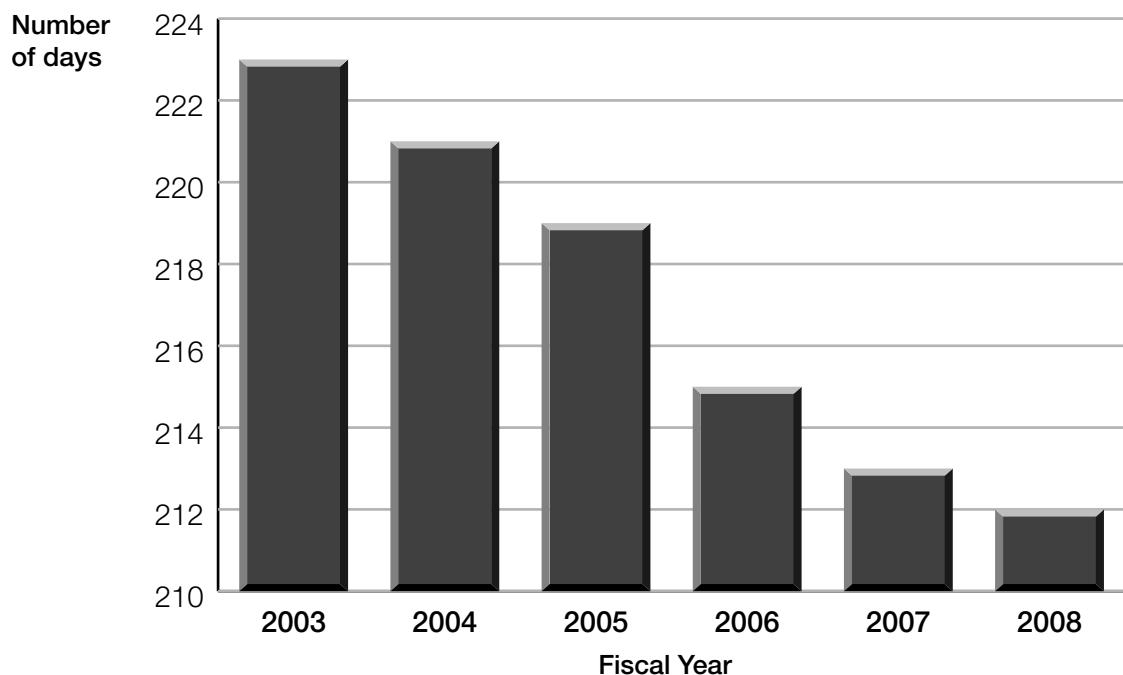
Reduce overall Peace Corps applicant response time by 5% by September 2008 through evaluation and integration of new technology and recruitment and placement of staff structures.

#### **Performance Goal**

- 4.1.1 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 5% from FY 2003 level of 223 days to 212 days by FY 2008.
  - 4.1.1.1 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 1% (to 221 days) by FY 2004.
  - 4.1.1.2 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 2% (to 219 days) by FY 2005.
  - 4.1.1.3 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 3% (to 215 days) by FY 2006.
  - 4.1.1.4 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 4% (to 213 days) by FY 2007.
  - 4.1.1.5 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 5% (to 212 days) by FY 2008.

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**Figure:** Projected reduction in the Peace Corps' response time to applicants, FY 2003–2008



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# Budget Information

## **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, \$345,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2007: 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 \$2,000,000 in funds in excess of the needs of the Peace Corps overseas operations as a result of fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates or changes in overseas wages and prices (Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Act, 2005)

# Peace Corps FY 2006 Budget Request by Program Operations

*(in thousands of dollars)*

## **Direct Volunteer Operations**

	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Estimate	FY 2006 Request
<b>Overseas Operational Management</b>			
Africa	62,450	66,937	68,669
Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia	43,692	46,453	50,055
Inter-America and Pacific	52,289	56,200	57,275
Crisis Corps	638	933	941
United Nations Volunteers	168	111	112
<b>Subtotal, Overseas Operational Management</b>	<b>159,238</b>	<b>170,634</b>	<b>177,053</b>
<b>Overseas Operational Support</b>			
Volunteer Support Operations	6,847	7,390	8,112
Federal Employees' Compensation Act	10,923	10,482	10,701
Medical Services Centrally Shared Resources	14,024	13,706	14,080
The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research	5,684	6,081	6,659
Volunteer Recruitment and Selection	14,275	14,621	15,501
Private Sector Initiatives	607	602	626
Centrally Processed Overseas Equipment and Supplies	2,878	5,208	4,887
International Financial Operations	2,966	2,790	2,981
Volunteer Readjustment Allowance	21,065	20,899	21,110
Reimbursements to Department of State	5,669	6,912	8,148
<b>Subtotal, Overseas Operational Support</b>	<b>84,938</b>	<b>88,690</b>	<b>92,807</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL, DIRECT VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS</b>	<b>244,175</b>	<b>259,324</b>	<b>269,859</b>

## **Volunteer Operations Support Services**

<b>Third Goal Programs</b>			
World Wise Schools	562	654	677
University Programs	340	641	696
Returned Volunteer Services	865	682	696
<b>Subtotal, Third Goal Programs</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>1,977</b>	<b>2,069</b>
<b>Agency Administration</b>			
Director's Office, General Counsel, Congressional & Press	4,195	5,441	5,480
Communications	1,946	2,379	2,440
Safety and Security	1,819	2,018	2,080
Office of Planning, Budget and Finance	9,593	11,257	12,465
OPBF Centrally Managed Resources	1,635	1,712	1,752
Acquisitions & Contracts	1,085	1,567	1,590
Office of the Chief Information Officer	7,178	8,402	8,994
Information Technology Centrally Managed Resources	10,660	11,153	16,196
Office of Management	4,319	4,932	5,489
Office of Management Centrally Managed Resources	13,674	13,337	13,683
Inspector General	2,460	2,862	2,955
<b>Subtotal, Agency Administration</b>	<b>58,565</b>	<b>65,061</b>	<b>73,123</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL, VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS SUPPORT SVCS</b>	<b>60,332</b>	<b>67,037</b>	<b>75,192</b>

	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Estimate	FY 2006 Request
<b>GRAND TOTAL AGENCY</b>	<b>304,507</b>	<b>326,361</b>	<b>345,052</b>
APPROPRIATED RESOURCES	310,000	320,000	345,000
RESCISSION	-1,829	-2,560	
<b>TOTAL ENACTED</b>	<b>308,171</b>	<b>317,440</b>	<b>345,000</b>
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	2,880	8,736	0
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM EMERGENCY FUND	2,132	132	0
<b>TOTAL APPROPRIATED RESOURCES</b>	<b>313,183</b>	<b>326,308</b>	<b>345,000</b>
MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES	853	853	853
RESERVE FOR UNRECORDED OBLIGATIONS	-661	-800	-800
EST UNOBLIGATED BALANCE EMERGENCY FUND	-132	0	0
ESTIMATED UNOBLIGATED BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	-8,736	0	0
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE BUDGETARY RESOURCES</b>	<b>304,507</b>	<b>326,361</b>	<b>345,052</b>

*(Details 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, and in-country medical costs, including the health unit. 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, 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.

#### *Crisis Corps*

The Crisis Corps sends extending and former Volunteers on short-term assignments to assist with disaster relief and humanitarian response 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 contractors.

### *Safety and Security Division*

This division, part of the Office of Safety and Security established in 2002, and formerly part of Volunteer Support Operations, coordinates all efforts to ensure the safety of Volunteers worldwide. Costs include support of regional safety and security officers posted overseas, monitoring compliance with agency policies, and development of programs and materials to train Volunteers in maintaining their safety.

### *FECA*

Under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act, 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 a very small proportion.

### *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, 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.

### *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 Volunteer projects.

### *International Financial Operations*

This division of the Office of Planning, Budget, and Finance provides direct financial management support to overseas posts.

### *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*

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.

#### *Peace Corps Fellows/USA Program*

This program is a public-private partnership that provides graduate fellowships to returned Volunteers who make a commitment to serve in degree-related internships in local, underserved U.S. communities.

### *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, Compliance Officer, 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 Planning, Policy, and Analysis.

### *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.

#### ***Office of Planning, Budget, and Finance***

This office maintains the financial planning, oversight, and internal controls necessary to ensure that the agency operates in a fiscally sound manner.

#### ***Office of Planning, Budget, and Finance 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 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 and security services.

#### ***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, disaster recovery, and enterprise information architecture.

#### ***Inspector General***

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

# Peace Corps Authorizations and Appropriations FY 1962–FY 2006

(thousands of dollars)

Fiscal Year	Authorized	Budget Request <sup>a/</sup>	Appropriated <sup>a/</sup>	Trainee Input	Volunteers and Trainees On Board <sup>b/</sup>
1962	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$30,000	3,699	N/A
1963	63,750	63,750	59,000 <sup>c/</sup>	4,969	N/A
1964	102,000	108,000	95,964 <sup>c/</sup>	7,720	N/A
1965	115,000	115,000	104,100 <sup>c/</sup>	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 <sup>d/</sup>	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 <sup>e/</sup>	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 <sup>f/</sup>	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 <sup>g/</sup>	219,745	219,745 <sup>h/</sup>	3,541	5,644
1995	234,000	226,000	219,745 <sup>i/</sup>	3,954	5,884
1996	—	234,000	205,000 <sup>k/m/</sup>	3,280	6,086
1997	—	220,000 <sup>l/</sup>	208,000 <sup>n/</sup>	3,607	5,858
1998	—	222,000	222,000 <sup>o/</sup>	3,551	5,757
1999	—	270,335	240,000 <sup>p/</sup>	3,835	5,729
2000	270,000 <sup>q/</sup>	270,000	245,000 <sup>r/</sup>	3,919	7,164
2001	298,000	275,000	267,007 <sup>s/t/</sup>	3,191	6,643
2002	327,000	275,000	278,700 <sup>u/w/</sup>	4,047 <sup>w/</sup>	6,636
2003	365,000	317,000	297,000 <sup>x/</sup>	4,411	7,533
2004	—	359,000	310,000 <sup>y/</sup>	3,812	7,733
2005	—	401,000	320,000 <sup>z/</sup>	4,019 <sup>est.</sup>	7,803 <sup>est.</sup>
2006	—	345,000		4,283 <sup>est.</sup>	7,850 <sup>est.</sup>

## 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.



## Safety and Security: The Overarching Priority

*"If there ever was a time that we need to advance the ideal of peace and friendship and promote an understanding of Americans, that time is now. Yet, as we make great strides, we must remain ever vigilant that safety and security be the number one priority of the Peace Corps. I suspect that those volunteers who served some years ago would note a significant difference in the Peace Corps of today. It's substantial. It's momentous. We have implemented many new systems, processes and programs to encourage the volunteers to put into practice conduct, behaviors, and personal habits — where they live and where they work — to ensure that they achieve a safe and secure experience. As we move forward, the Peace Corps will continue to do whatever it takes to make the volunteer experience as productive, meaningful and safe as possible."*

Gaddi H. Vasquez  
Peace Corps Director

### Safety Partnerships

Maximizing the safety and security of Volunteers is the top priority of the Peace Corps. Because Volunteers serve at the grass-roots level worldwide, in urban centers, very remote areas, and everything in-between, health and safety risks are an inherent part of Volunteer service. Peace Corps staff and Volunteers work together to create a framework that safeguards Volunteers' well-being to the greatest extent possible, enabling Volunteers to carry out the Peace Corps' mission. The Peace Corps takes responsibility for ensuring that safety and security information is fully incorporated in all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service and that safety and security policies and training curricula are adjusted as situations change. Volunteers do their part by taking personal responsibility for their behavior at all times and by integrating successfully into their host communities. Volunteers can also reduce risks by following recommendations

for locally appropriate behavior, exercising sound judgment, and abiding by Peace Corps' policies and procedures.

The U.S. embassy is an integral part of each Peace Corps post's network for maintaining safety and security. Each Peace Corps country director is a regular participant in weekly country team meetings and a member of the embassy's emergency action committee, which meets as often as necessary during emergency situations.

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 line of contact with local law enforcement offices. 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.

## **Office of Safety and Security**

While all Peace Corps staff members—domestic and overseas—play a role in promoting the safety and security of Volunteers, coordination of these activities falls primarily to the Peace Corps Office of Safety and Security, which was established in 2002. This office fosters improved communication, coordination, oversight, and accountability for all the Peace Corps safety and security efforts. The Office of Safety and Security is involved with the training and mentoring of safety and security coordinators at each post, collecting and analyzing data related to Volunteer safety, emergency preparedness planning, and training for domestic and overseas operations, and the activities of the regionally based Peace Corps safety and security officers. There are currently nine regional safety security officers with subregional responsibilities.

The Office of Safety and Security tracks and analyzes information related to the safety of Volunteers on an ongoing basis. The office employs a research psychologist to develop protocols for reporting violence and other crimes against Volunteers and to compile and analyze the data that are received. The data analysis is used to enhance existing policies and procedures or to develop new ones as needed. Improvements in safety reporting have allowed the Peace Corps to identify associated risk factors (time of day, location, alcohol use, modes of transportation, etc.) and to develop strategies to help Volunteers address these factors. Throughout this process, pertinent information is provided to recruiters and discussed in Volunteer application materials, in informational booklets and educational videos, in a two-day pre-departure orientation, and as part of in-country training for all Volunteers.

Finally, the Office of Safety and Security publishes an annual Volunteer safety report that 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 twofold objective of the publication is to identify and analyze trends in safety conditions among in-service Volunteers; and to provide useful feedback on the noted trends to

support the safety and security training and education of Volunteers and staff.

### **Volunteer Safety Training**

The safest and most secure Volunteers are those who take personal responsibility for their behavior and who are often at their sites, well-known in their communities, integrated into the culture, able to speak the local language, work on well-designed projects, and reside with or close to host families. The Peace Corps, therefore, 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 also given the tools to adopt a safe and appropriate lifestyle and instruction about Peace Corps' policies and procedures and their responsibility to abide by these. Throughout pre-service and in-service training (which is provided regularly during their entire tour of service), Volunteers develop skills and receive information that help them understand their surroundings, cope with unwanted attention, and develop personal safety strategies.

### **Assessing the Safety of Peace Corps Countries**

A thorough safety and security assessment is conducted for every country that the Peace Corps considers entering. A team from the Peace Corps composed of representatives from several offices previews work and housing sites to assess the ability of the Peace Corps to provide a safe, secure, healthy, and productive environment for Volunteers. Representatives from other government agencies and organizations also help the Peace Corps assess safety and security conditions, potentially including:

- The U.S. Department of State's Office of Diplomatic Security
- The U.S. Department of State's regional security officer in-country
- The ambassador and other embassy officials
- Local and national police

- United Nations agencies in-country
- Other nations' volunteer organizations
- Humanitarian relief agencies

Peace Corps in-country staff is responsible for assessing the availability of safe and secure housing and work sites in the communities where Volunteers will be placed. Site selection is based on established safety and security criteria that reflect consideration of site history; access to medical, banking, postal, and other essential services; access to communication, transportation, and local markets; availability of adequate housing and living arrangements; and the potential for obtaining and maintaining the acceptance and consent of host country authorities and the population at large. Peace Corps program managers and medical staff members visit Volunteers periodically at their sites to monitor the continued suitability of site assignments. If a Volunteer's safety or well-being is at risk or compromised, Peace Corps staff tries to resolve the situation or move the Volunteer to another location.

### **Emergency Communications and Planning**

Volunteers typically live and work in communities at some distance from the Peace Corps office. Volunteers are expected to stay in touch with the Peace Corps office on a regular basis. 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, set forth the strategies developed by each Peace Corps country 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 Peace Corps established a fully equipped "situation room" dedicated to the handling of emergencies as they arise. The room, located at headquarters, includes computer access to emergency contact information and descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of emergency task force members. Staff training for handling emergencies is ongoing, using material drawn from the Peace Corps' extensive experience with emergency situations and the agency's *Evacuation Support Guide*. A "virtual situation room" containing emergency information is available through the agency's Intranet both to those in the situation room and to those at certain outside locations. These redundant communication systems enable the agency to provide uninterrupted support of post operations in an emergency at headquarters. The facility was used on numerous occasions in FY 2004—from the evacuation of Volunteers in Haiti due to civil unrest to the monitoring of the series of hurricanes that hit the Caribbean islands.

“Peace Corps volunteers are examples of the great compassion of our Nation... Your selfless efforts to bridge cultures, to promote education, health, and economic opportunity, and to strengthen ties of goodwill among the poorest of the world contribute to a more hopeful future for all.”

**Holiday Message to Peace Corps Volunteers  
December 2004  
President George W. Bush**



The Volunteer



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

Volunteers are the heart of the Peace Corps program. They learn to appreciate a community's cultural traditions, speak the local language, respond to a community's needs, and are involved in a wide variety of host country projects. Peace Corps' work worldwide falls into six general sectors: agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. Additionally, Volunteers do meaningful work in information and communication technology (ICT), and Women in Development and Gender and Development (WID-GAD) which often occurs as part of the projects in the six program sectors described below. A discussion of each sector's work objectives and examples of Volunteer activities follow.

### Agriculture

Food security and poverty remain enduring challenges in communities where Volunteers work. Natural disasters, regional conflicts, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic increase the urgency of critical rural food and livelihood security issues. Peace Corps Volunteers work with communities to improve the availability and variety of agriculture products, establish and manage related enterprises, and adopt sustainable agricultural practices to protect the fragile resource base. Peace Corps projects in this sector focus on:

- identifying critical issues and solutions through participatory community analysis;
- providing extension services alongside government agents and nongovernmental organization (NGO) staff;

- helping farm families establish demonstration plots;
- training leader-farmers and extension agents to develop, utilize, and disseminate successful farming practices; and
- assisting local government institutions and NGOs with technical issues.

Agriculture Volunteers enhance the sustainability of their efforts by living and working in rural communities and concentrating on building capacity among local groups. They work with service providers in local NGOs and government agencies, cooperative and producer associations, and with schoolchildren and men and women in the farm communities they serve. Currently, Volunteers and their counterparts are:

- 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; and
- helping producers increase the value of agricultural products through improved storage, greater distribution, and more effective management and marketing.

During FY 2004, Almost 500 agriculture Volunteers provided agricultural assistance through 16 projects.

## **Business Development**

Projects in the business development sector seek to alleviate poverty by increasing the capacity of people and microenterprises to access opportunities and resources. Volunteer activities help strengthen business development, microfinance institutions, NGOs, and municipal governments. Peace Corps business development projects contribute to sustainable economic development by:

- expanding activities in ICT;
- conducting market assessments for product and services;
- providing relevant technical training to counterparts and local business personnel; and
- building capacity of organizations and service providers through stronger collaborative practices; and
- strengthening ecotourism.

Peace Corps business Volunteers often work in transitional economies where economic factors such as inflation, currency devaluation and industry instability largely affect the livelihood of individuals. Volunteers provide non-financial technical assistance through business trainings and market linkages. They are sometimes placed with mayors' offices or in municipal offices, providing opportunities to work broadly within the community. Examples of Volunteer work in business projects include:

- 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;
- teaching financial management to NGOs; and
- working with specific ecotourism project planning through community-based resource management.

In FY 2004, more than 1,200 business development Volunteers helped strengthen the local economy through 39 projects.

## **Education**

Education is critical for economic development and human advancement. Still, in much of the developing world, access to basic education is limited. Educational systems suffer from a lack of resources—both human and financial—and many students, particularly girls, are unable to attend school beyond the elementary level.

Education remains the Peace Corps' largest program sector; in truth, Volunteers in all sectors are to some extent "educators." Worldwide, education projects in the Peace Corps focus primarily on:

- building capacity by training teachers and mentoring counterparts;
- developing curricula and teaching materials;
- promoting community resource centers;
- teaching in subject areas such as math, science, English, special education, early childhood education, deaf education, and ICT;
- engaging in nonformal education activities, community development projects, parent-teacher organizations; and
- supporting adult education.

Governments are requesting the assistance of Peace Corps Volunteers with technological skills to help them participate in the 21st-century information age. New technologies are reaching the world's most remote communities and are providing tools for economic development. Schools with Internet access and community information centers that function like public libraries were unimaginable just a few years ago. Recognizing the significant need for technology training and the valuable contribution

Volunteers are making in this area, the Peace Corps has identified ICT in general, and computer skills specifically, as an ongoing high priority.

ICT can broaden access to education, make learning more interactive, provide teachers with access to classroom materials, and enable classrooms around the world to communicate and collaborate. Nearly half of all Peace Corps education projects integrate ICT into teaching and learning. Volunteers incorporated ICT into activities in education projects by:

- conducting computer training in a variety of ways to many different audiences;
- helping to develop websites and to use the Internet to improve lesson plans, classroom activities;
- promoting distance learning;
- working with radio stations to teach English and HIV/AIDS prevention; and
- utilizing television and video to help students and teachers improve English language skills.

Volunteers are making significant contributions in girls' education. They promote activities that help expand girls' educational opportunities in both formal and nonformal settings. Volunteers conduct summer leadership camps for girls, support community awareness of girls' achievements and potential, encourage girls' participation in the classroom, establish safe environments for after-school study, and organize career fairs for women. In FY 2004, more than 2,600 Volunteers in the education sector participated in 61 projects.

## **Environment**

Volunteers working in environment projects help strengthen a community's ability to conserve and use natural resources in a sustainable manner. Peace Corps activities help to build stronger communities and increase local capacity by:

- developing environmental awareness and education activities and programs in communities and schools;

- demonstrating practices and techniques that slow or reverse the degradation of resources such as the soil, water, and forests;
- encouraging sustainable livelihood activities that generate income from renewable natural resources and provide alternatives to dependence on practices that weaken the environment; and
- promoting stronger community planning for the use and management of natural resources.

In many developing countries, people are directly dependent on their local environment, and its degradation can have enormous and unintended consequences on their livelihood. In the context of sustainable development, well-planned natural resource projects can work toward growing the economy while protecting the environment. In work related to environmental activities, Peace Corps Volunteers:

- teach classes in schools, conduct teacher training seminars, and develop curricula related to environmental topics;
- support nonformal environmental education, such as summer camps, eco-clubs, theater dramas, and celebration of international events such as Earth Day;
- help strengthen the management of community-based organizations and NGOs in protected areas;
- promote reforestation and soil and water conservation with individual land owners; and
- endorse specific ecotourism projects in newly defined protected areas.

Volunteers work primarily at the community grass-roots level focusing on human needs and sustainable alternatives. To strengthen understanding about the environment, Volunteers help communities make informed choices to protect precious natural resources. In FY 2004, more than 1,200 environment Volunteers participated in 40 projects worldwide.

## **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Worldwide, 20 percent of all Peace Corps Volunteers are assigned in health and HIV/AIDS projects, and 60 percent of all Peace Corps projects incorporate some HIV/AIDS activities. In addition to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, more than 1 billion people around the world cannot obtain safe drinking water and more than 2 billion lack access to adequate sanitation facilities. To address these worldwide health problems, Volunteers serving in the health and HIV/AIDS sector promote:

- increased HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care;
- expanded peer education to urge youth and other groups to reduce risky behavior;
- expanded maternal and child health;
- enhanced health, nutrition, and hygiene education at the individual, family, and community level; and
- improved infectious disease prevention through improved water and sanitation services.

Volunteers urge the participation of individuals, families, and communities in activities to improve health. Examples of this Peace Corps work include:

- teaching, formally and informally, about HIV/AIDS prevention and care;
- promoting healthy lifestyles, especially for youth;
- supporting youth and orphan activities and care;
- providing nutrition and hygiene education classes in the community;
- assisting in maternal and child health clinics;
- strengthening NGO health delivery systems;
- constructing and managing water systems; and
- supporting community sanitation efforts.

No area of development remains safe from the impact of HIV/AIDS. The spreading pandemic has indelibly impacted individuals, families, communities, countries, and regions. Its long-term effects

can already be seen in many developing countries. Schools have closed because teachers have died or are too sick to continue working. Traditional agriculture methodology cannot be passed from one generation to the next because parents die before their children are old enough to grasp the technical intricacies. Small businesses have failed and whole industries are suffering. Scarce health resources have been exhausted as AIDS patients occupy most of the beds. Peace Corps Volunteers have been responding to HIV- and AIDS-related issues since 1987. None of the Peace Corps sectors has remained untouched by the far-reaching implications of HIV/AIDS.

Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in HIV/AIDS prevention and education because they live and work in local communities and can present information in culturally sensitive ways. In addition, the Peace Corps is collaborating with the Department of State's Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator to support the U.S. government's worldwide HIV/AIDS care, prevention, and treatment commitment.

Each year, an increasing number of Volunteers are joining the fight against HIV/AIDS, and the Peace Corps plans to continue expanding its commitment to HIV/AIDS programs in FY 2005. In FY 2004, more than 1,500 Volunteers worked in 57 health and HIV/AIDS projects worldwide.

## **Youth**

In many countries, young men and women between the ages of 10 and 24 constitute 40 percent or more of the population. Peace Corps youth projects and activities focus primarily on:

- family life and healthy lifestyles, including HIV/AIDS prevention;
- Sports, recreation, drama, and the arts;
- employment skills and the world of work;
- computer proficiency, technical vocational skills, entrepreneurial expertise; and
- literacy, leadership, and citizenship responsibility.

Critical issues affecting youth throughout the world include the enormous need for daily living skills for AIDS orphans and street children, improved employment skills for disenfranchised, out-of-school young men and women, and support to youth to help them avoid drugs and prostitution. Serving as mentors to young people and as counterparts in youth service organizations, Volunteers are uniquely positioned to provide learning opportunities to girls and boys at the grass-roots 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.

The Peace Corps is responding to the growing demand for Volunteer activities that work with youth in positive ways through schools, sports, and clubs to:

- increase employability skill training;
- provide parenting training; and
- promote leadership and citizenship development.

Youth development projects continue to grow. During FY 2004, 231 youth development Volunteers worked in 22 projects worldwide.

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**"We will only send abroad Americans who are wanted by the host country—who have a real job to do—and who are qualified to do that job. Programs will be developed with care, and after full negotiation, in order to make sure that the Peace Corps is wanted and will contribute to the welfare of other people."**

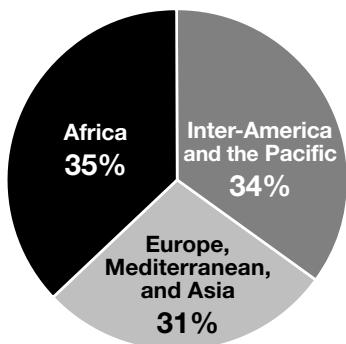
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**President John F. Kennedy  
March 1, 1961**

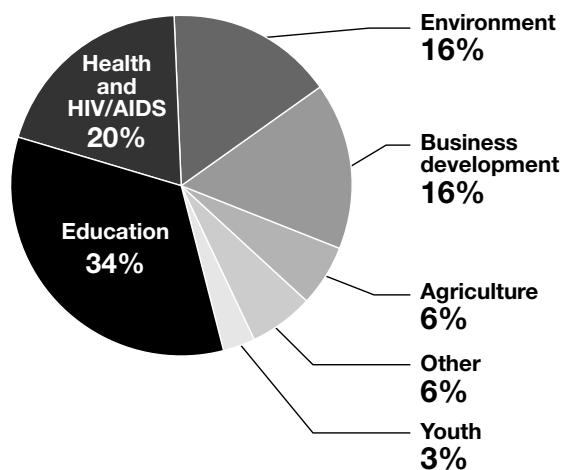
# Volunteer Statistics

# Volunteer Statistics

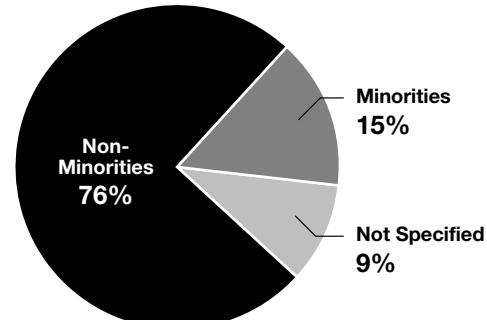
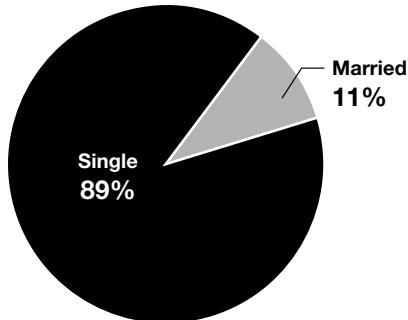
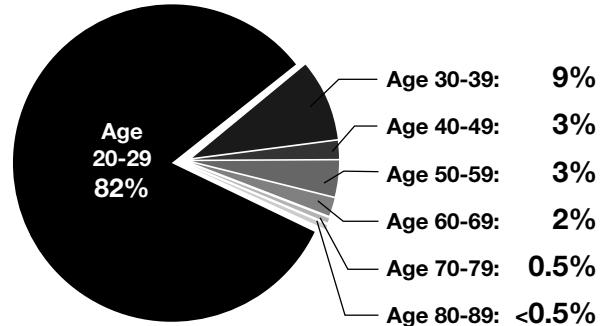
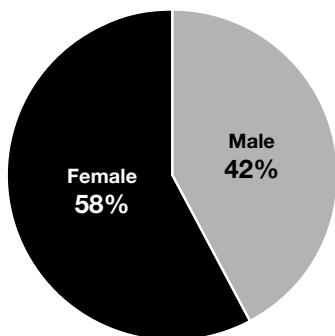
Volunteers by Region



Volunteer Projects



Volunteer Profile\*



\*Totals may not add to 100 percent because of rounding. Data current as of September 30, 2004.

# Number of Peace Corps Volunteers Working in HIV/AIDS Activities FY 2004

AFRICA		INTER-AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC		EUROPE, MEDITERRANEAN, AND ASIA	
Country	Volunteers	Country	Volunteers	Country	Volunteers
Benin	57	Belize	14	Albania	3
Botswana*	45	Bolivia	6	Armenia	26
Burkina Faso	77	Costa Rica	9	Bangladesh	6
Cameroon	130	Dominican Republic	45	Bulgaria	26
Cape Verde	39	East Timor	2	Georgia	1
Chad	14	Eastern Caribbean <sup>1</sup>	41	Kazakhstan	13
Gabon	28	Ecuador	62	Kyrgyz Republic	1
Ghana	80	El Salvador	40	Macedonia	25
Guinea	89	Fiji	13	Moldova	71
Kenya*	167	Guatemala	14	Mongolia	27
Lesotho	94	Guyana*	62	Morocco	55
Madagascar	124	Haiti <sup>*2</sup>	79	Phillipines	2
Malawi	80	Honduras	96	Nepal	22
Mali	63	Jamaica	56	Romania	2
Mauritania	79	Kiribati	18	Thailand	32
Mozambique*	63	Micronesia	4	Turkmenistan	11
Namibia*	87	Nicaragua	38	Ukraine	12
Niger	67	Panama	30	Uzbekistan	28
Senegal	59	Paraguay	14	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>363</b>
South Africa*	85	Peru	2		
Swaziland	56	Samoa	48		
Tanzania*	89	Suriname	6		
The Gambia	51	Tonga	5		
Togo	100	Vanuatu	29		
Uganda*	50	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>733</b>		
Zambia*	137				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,010</b>				

**Grand Total: 3,106**

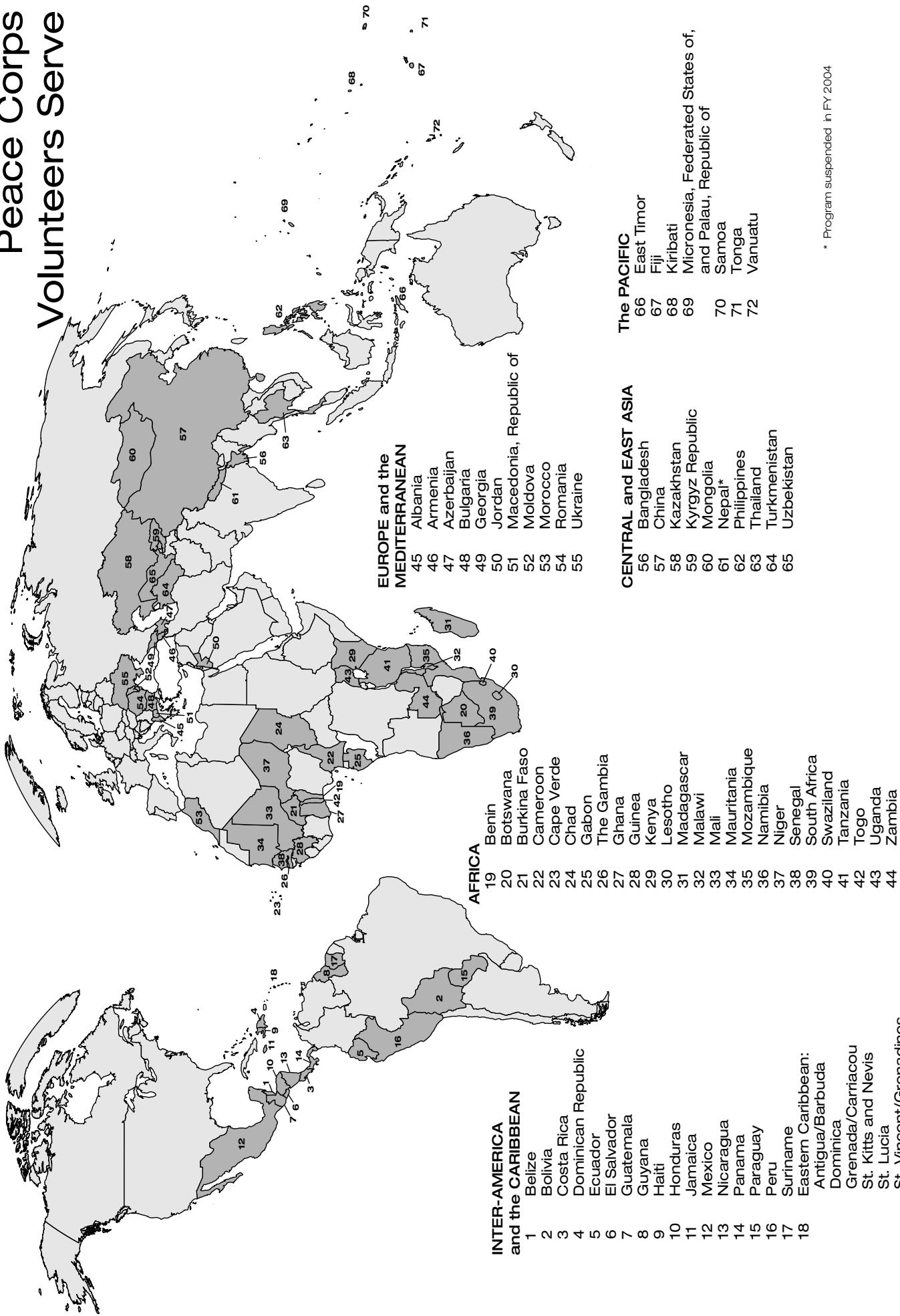
## Notes

\* Countries participating in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

<sup>1</sup> Eastern Caribbean includes Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines

<sup>2</sup> Program was suspended from February through July in 2004

# Countries Where Peace Corps Volunteers Serve



\* Program suspended in FY 2004

# Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

## Africa

<b>Benin</b>	Adja Bariba Dendi Ditemari Fon French Goun Gourmatche Ife Kotafon Mina Naténi Yom Yoruba (Nagot)	Kusaal Mampruli Moar Nankam Nzema Sisaali Taleni Twi Waale Wassa	<b>Niger</b>	French Fulfudé Hausa Kanuri Zarma
<b>Botswana</b>	Setswana	French Guerzé Kissi Malinke Pulaar Soussou Toma	<b>Senegal</b>	French Jaxanke Mandinka Pulaar Seereer Wolof
<b>Burkina Faso</b>	French Fulfudé Gulmancema Jula Lobiri Moré	Kalenjin Kenyan Sign Language Kikuyu Kiswahili Luo Luyha	<b>South Africa</b>	Isi Ndebele Isi Zulu Sepedi Setswana Siswati Northern Sotho Venda
<b>Cameroon</b>	Bamun Bulu Duala pidgin English Fang Fe-Fe French Fulfudé Ghom alà Hausa Kako Tupuri	Sesotho	<b>Swaziland</b>	Siswati Tsonga Zulu
<b>Cape Verde</b>	CV Criolo Portuguese	French Malagasy	<b>Tanzania</b>	Kiswahili
<b>Chad</b>	Chadian Arabic French	Malinke Minianka Senoufou Songhay	<b>Togo</b>	Akposso Bassar Cotocolis Ewe French Gourma Ife (Ana) Kabiye Komkonba Lamba Mina Moba Naodem (Lesso) Tchamba Tchokossi
<b>Gabon</b>	Fang French Mitsogo Nzebi Obamba Punu Teke	Bambara Dogon French Fulfudé Malinke Minianka Senoufou Songhay	<b>Uganda</b>	Ateso Dhopadhola Luganda Lugwere Lumasaaba Lusoga Runyakore Runyole Runyoro-Rutoro Uhopadhola
<b>The Gambia</b>	Jola Mandinka Pulaar Wolof	Arabic French Hassynia Pulaar Soninke Wolof	<b>Zambia</b>	Bemba Kaonde Lunda Nyanja Tonga Tumbuta
<b>Ghana</b>	Buli Guruni Dagare Dagbani Dangme Ewe Fanté Ga Gonja Hausa Kasem	Bitonga Portuguese Ronga Shangan Shona Tonga		
		Afrikaans Damara/Nama Oshikwanyama Oshindonga Otji Herero Rukwangali		

# Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

## Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia

<b>Albania</b>	Albanian
<b>Armenia</b>	Armenian
<b>Azerbaijan</b>	Azerbaijani (Azeri)
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Bangla
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Bulgarian
<b>China</b>	Mandarin
<b>Georgia</b>	Georgian
<b>Jordan</b>	Arabic
<b>Kazakhstan</b>	Kazakh Russian
<b>Kyrgyz Republic</b>	Kyrgyz Russian
<b>Macedonia</b>	Albanian Macedonian
<b>Moldova</b>	Romanian Russian
<b>Mongolia</b>	Mongolian
<b>Morocco</b>	Arabic French Tamazight Tifinagh Tashelheet
<b>Nepal</b>	Nepali
<b>Philippines</b>	Aklanon Asi Bilol Bikol-Albay Bikol-Naga Cebuano Hiligaynon Ilonggo Loocnon Romblomanon Sorsogonan Tagalog Waray-waray
<b>Romania</b>	Hungarian Romanian
<b>Thailand</b>	Thai
<b>Turkmenistan</b>	Russian Turkmen
<b>Ukraine</b>	Russian Ukrainian
<b>Uzbekistan</b>	Russian Uzbek Tajik

## Inter-America and the Pacific

<b>Belize</b>	Creole Spanish
<b>Bolivia</b>	Ayamara Guarani Quechua Spanish
<b>Costa Rica</b>	Spanish
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	Haitian Creole Spanish
<b>Eastern Caribbean</b>	English Creole French Creole (Kwyeol)
<b>East Timor</b>	Tetun
<b>Ecuador</b>	Quechua Spanish
<b>El Salvador</b>	Spanish
<b>Fiji</b>	Fijian Hindustani
<b>Guatemala</b>	Cakchiquel Kek'chi Spanish
<b>Guyana</b>	Creole
<b>Haiti</b>	Haitian Creole
<b>Honduras</b>	Spanish
<b>Jamaica</b>	Creole (Patois)
<b>Kiribati</b>	I-Kiribati
<b>Mexico</b>	Spanish
<b>Micronesia and Palau</b>	Chuukese Halls Island Kapingamarangi Kosraean Namonuito Nukuoro Palauan Pingilapese Pohnpeian Sapwuafik Satawalese Ulithian Woleain Yapese
<b>Nicaragua</b>	Spanish
<b>Panama</b>	Embera Kuna Ngobe Spanish Woun-Meu
<b>Paraguay</b>	Guarani Spanish
<b>Peru</b>	Quechua Spanish
<b>Samoa</b>	Samoan
<b>Suriname</b>	Aucan Dutch Ndjuka Saramaccan Sranan Tongo
<b>Tonga</b>	Tongan
<b>Vanuatu</b>	Bislama

## **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 ensure 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 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 prepare 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.

# **The Phases of the Volunteer**

**How the Peace Corps Supports Volunteers  
From Recruitment Through Their Two-Year  
Service and Beyond**

## **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 ensure 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 State Department to assess and address safety and security risks and ensure Volunteers are properly trained in safety and security procedures.

### **In-Service Training**

Post staff conduct periodic training to improve Volunteers' technical and language skills and to address changing health and safety issues.

### **Links With U.S. Students**

Through the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools correspondence program, Volunteers communicate with schools to expand students' awareness of other countries and cultures. Volunteers can also be linked to classrooms through the Partnership Program in which students raise funds for a specific development project.

### **Links With the Private Sector**

Headquarters staff secure 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 Planning**

Information on careers and higher education is distributed to Volunteers before the end of their service.

### **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 are equipped with computers and other resources to assist returned Peace Corps Volunteers in obtaining career and educational information. The Peace Corps publishes the "Hotline," a bi-weekly jobs bulletin, as well as manuals focusing on careers in teaching, business, the environment, agriculture, and international development. The *Career Information Consultants* directory offers current and former Volunteers access to the expertise of returned Peace Corps Volunteers from various professions.

### **Crisis Corps**

Headquarters staff recruit, train, and place experienced Volunteers in short-term disaster relief and humanitarian response positions.

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Photo:  
Returned Volunteer, New York City

Domestic Programs



## Domestic Programs: “Bringing the World Home”

In 1989, in pursuit of the third goal of the Peace Corps—to help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans—then Peace Corps Director Paul D. Coverdell established the World Wise Schools program, which now carries his name. The program seeks to give American schoolchildren a chance to learn about the world's diverse peoples, cultures, and geography from currently serving Peace Corps Volunteers through a correspondence match program. The program pairs Volunteers serving overseas with U.S. classrooms, facilitating the exchange of letters, photographs, artifacts, and telephone calls, as well as visits from the Volunteers once they have returned to the United States.

The Coverdell World Wise Schools program produces educational materials for U.S. classrooms that promote cross-cultural understanding and the ethic of community service. The World Wise Schools program offers not only an award-winning series of country-specific videos with accompanying teachers' guides but also Volunteer-written literature and culture-based lesson plans based on those writings. These materials are published in book form and are also available on the Web for free download. Some of the titles available: *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*.

Since its inception, the Coverdell World Wise Schools program has helped nearly 3 million U.S.

students communicate directly with Peace Corps Volunteers all over the world. Currently, about 4,000 Volunteers relate their experiences through correspondence exchanges, and approximately 380,000 students—in all 50 states—benefit from some aspect of the program.

### Peace Corps Fellows/USA

Fellows/USA develops and maintains educational partnerships that place former Volunteers in internships in high-need U.S. communities as they pursue graduate degrees. Approximately 300 returned Volunteers pursue graduate studies annually as Peace Corps Fellows at more than 35 partner universities throughout the United States. Fellows study at reduced cost with fellowships provided by the universities and private funders.

During their studies, Fellows work as public school teachers or as interns in community or economic development, nursing, or environmental education with local nonprofits, working on projects of critical importance to local communities. Fellows/USA engages former Volunteers both in university communities and at the grass roots of urban and rural America, where they share the knowledge and use the skills and competencies they developed during their Peace Corps service to benefit their fellow Americans.

Fellows/USA programs are based in communities in 22 states and the District of Columbia. Since the program's inception in 1985, approximately 2,000 Peace Corps Fellows have worked to improve the lives and to raise international awareness of thousands of Americans.

## **Master's International Program**

Through partnerships with 50 colleges and universities across the United States, the Master's International (MI) program currently offers 525 students the opportunity to incorporate Peace Corps service into a master's degree in 82 different programs. Participating graduate schools establish and monitor academic requirements, and the Peace Corps places MI students overseas as Volunteers. Students apply to both the Peace Corps and to a participating graduate school, and they must be accepted by both. Requirements vary by school. MI students complete one or, in a few cases, two years of course work before starting their Peace Corps assignment overseas. Assignments are developed by overseas Peace Corps' staff at the request of host countries.

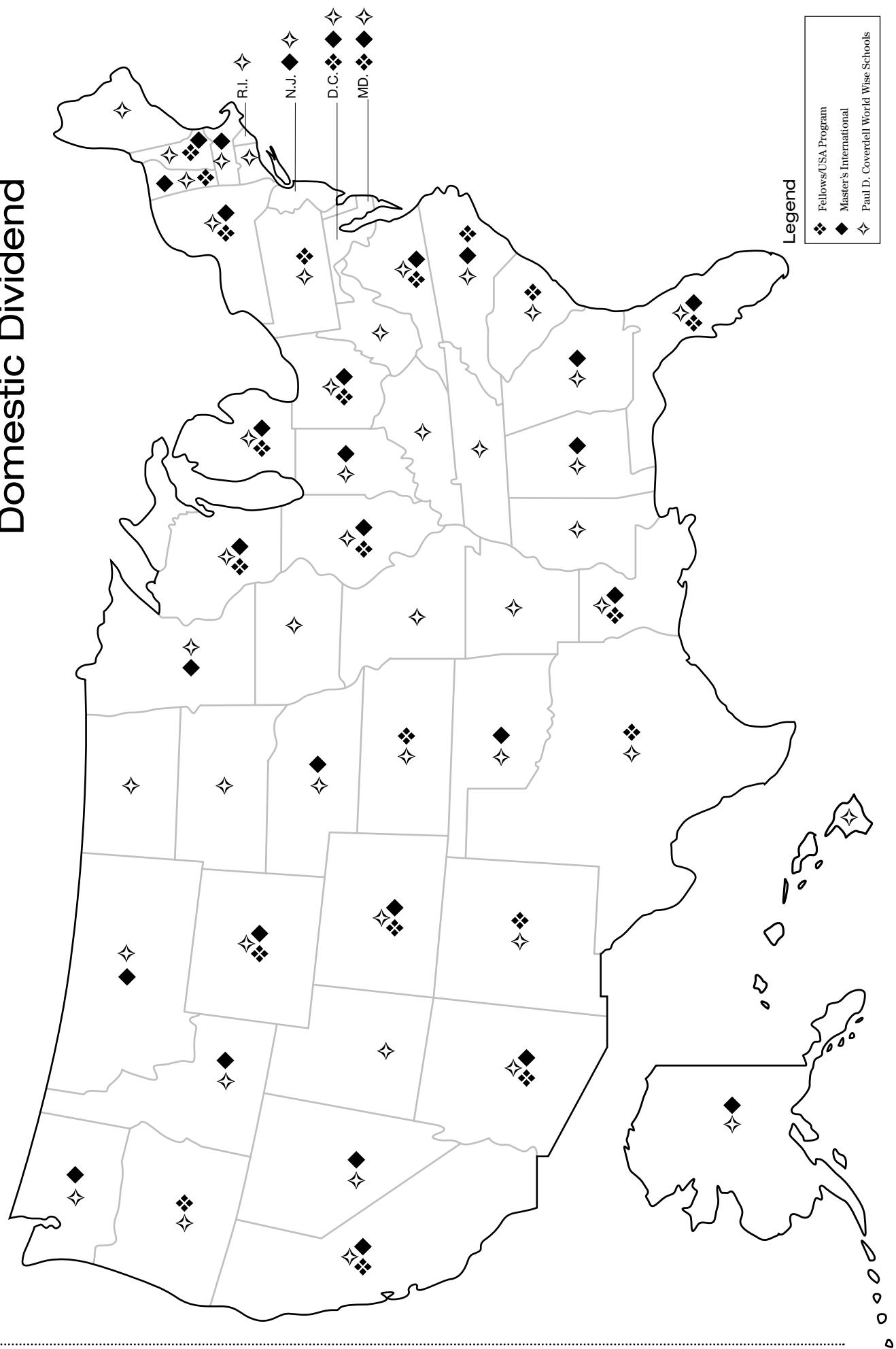
During their Peace Corps service, Volunteers participating in the MI program work on a thesis, professional paper, or other culminating project under the direction of the school's faculty and with the approval of Peace Corps overseas staff. Participating faculty recognize that while serving overseas, an MI student's primary responsibility is his or her Volunteer duties. Rather than determining a research topic in advance, MI students allow their Volunteer assignment to shape the fulfillment of their overseas academic requirement.

The Peace Corps provides MI students with a unique opportunity to apply what they learn on campus to benefit a host country community. Like all Volunteers, MI students seek ways to creatively apply their knowledge and skills to the assignment in which they are placed. Through the MI program, students graduate with a unique combination of an advanced degree and two years of substantive professional experience in an international setting.



*This Master's International student (top row, second from left) at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, CA, is pursuing his MBA while serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines. He is standing with facilitators for a Youth Deaf Camp 2004.*

# The Peace Corps' Domestic Dividend



# 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 East	Northern Arizona University University of Arizona
California	California State University at Sacramento Humboldt State University Loma Linda University Monterey Institute of International Studies University of California–Davis University of the Pacific–Stockton	Loma Linda University ( <i>in development</i> )
Colorado	Colorado State University–Fort Collins University of Colorado–Denver University of Denver	University of Denver
Florida	Florida International University Florida State University–Tallahassee University of South Florida–Tampa	Florida Institute of Technology
Georgia	Emory University Georgia State University–Atlanta University of Georgia–Athens	
Idaho	University of Idaho–Moscow	
Illinois	Illinois State University–Normal	DePaul University Illinois State University Western Illinois University
Indiana	Purdue University	
Kansas		Wichita State University
Louisiana	Tulane University	University of New Orleans Xavier University of New Orleans
Maryland	Johns Hopkins University University of Maryland–Baltimore County	Johns Hopkins University University of Maryland–Baltimore University of Maryland–Baltimore County
Massachusetts	Boston University	
Michigan	Michigan Technological University Western Michigan University	Michigan Technological University
Minnesota	University of Minnesota–Twin Cities	
Montana	University of Montana–Missoula	

# The Peace Corps' Educational Partnerships in the United States

<b>States</b>	<b>Master's International Colleges/Universities</b>	<b>Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities</b>
Nebraska	University of Nebraska–Lincoln	
Nevada	University of Nevada–Las Vegas	
New Hampshire	Southern New Hampshire University	Southern New Hampshire University
New Jersey	Rutgers University	
New Mexico		New Mexico State University–Las Cruces Western New Mexico University
New York	Bard College Cornell University	Columbia University Fordham University New School University
North Carolina	North Carolina State University–Raleigh North Carolina A&T State University–Greensboro	Duke University
Ohio	University of Cincinnati	University of Cincinnati
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State University–Stillwater	
Oregon		University of Oregon
Pennsylvania		Carnegie Mellon University Duquesne University Seton Hall University Temple University
South Carolina		University of South Carolina–Columbia
Texas		University of North Texas
Vermont	School for International Training St. Michael's College	University of Vermont ( <i>in development</i> )
Virginia	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University George Mason University	George Mason University
Washington	University of Washington–Seattle Washington State University–Pullman	
Wisconsin	University of Wisconsin–Madison University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point	Marquette University University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
Wyoming	University of Wyoming	University of Wyoming
District of Columbia	American University George Washington University	George Washington University

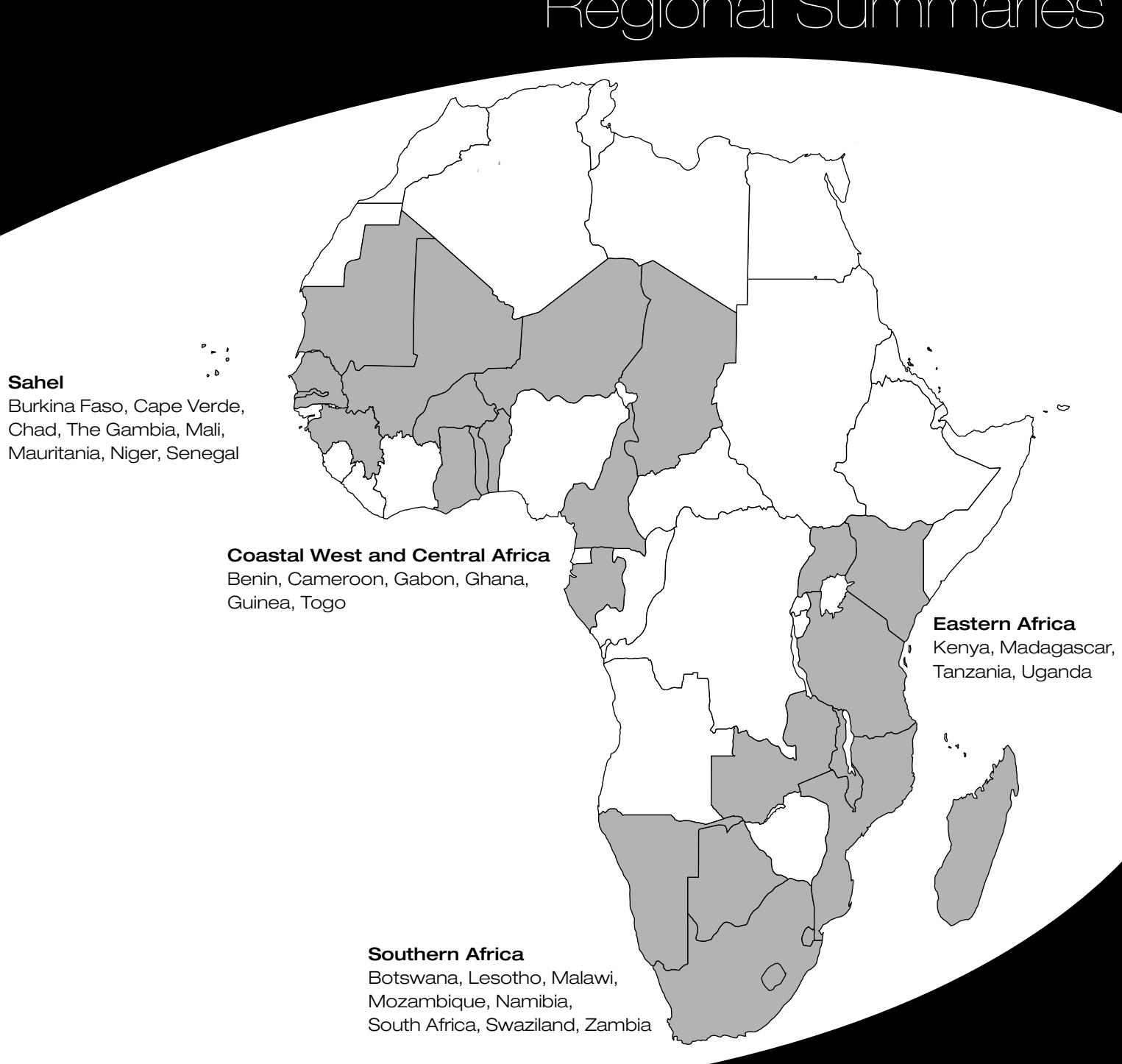
# Home States of Peace Corps Volunteers

as of September 30, 2004

<b>State</b>	<b>Today</b>	<b>Since 1961</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Today</b>	<b>Since 1961</b>
Alabama	54	794	Montana	67	1,086
Alaska	36	911	Nebraska	61	940
Arizona	136	3,046	Nevada	36	742
Arkansas	35	760	New Hampshire	62	1,216
California	873	24,266	New Jersey	166	3,741
Colorado	279	5,755	New Mexico	57	1,996
Connecticut	130	2,461	New York	395	11,097
Delaware	24	341	North Carolina	194	3,174
District of Columbia	47	3,198	North Dakota	25	416
Florida	253	6,110	Ohio	295	4,947
Guam	0	85	Oklahoma	58	922
Georgia	136	2,559	Oregon	222	5,001
Hawaii	21	1,267	Pennsylvania	316	5,807
Idaho	57	1,022	Puerto Rico	9	329
Illinois	352	6,330	Rhode Island	33	779
Indiana	132	2,237	South Carolina	68	1,053
Iowa	98	1,540	South Dakota	22	462
Kansas	90	1,141	Tennessee	80	1,185
Kentucky	59	1,089	Texas	342	5,401
Louisiana	32	969	Utah	52	820
Maine	71	1,427	Vermont	42	1,266
Maryland	233	5,110	Virgin Islands	2	79
Massachusetts	212	7,047	Virginia	341	6,114
Michigan	269	5,101	Washington	357	7,541
Minnesota	261	5,048	West Virginia	27	518
Mississippi	19	375	Wisconsin	289	4,409
Missouri	131	2,390	Wyoming	28	381

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# Regional Summaries



## Africa Region

“ I warmly acknowledge Peace Corps Volunteers who selflessly give of their time and the best of themselves to the education of our children... They strive to dedicate themselves completely, in close collaboration with other teachers, to making our students intelligent and enlightened citizens, equally conscious of their rights and responsibilities.”

Mrs. Rafiatou Karimou  
Minister of Education  
Benin

## Africa Region

The Africa region has the distinction of having received the very first Peace Corps Volunteers at the inception of the program in 1961. Since that time, some 60,000 Americans have served in 46 African countries. The Peace Corps continues to enjoy strong cooperation with the people of this region. At the end of fiscal year 2005, 2,711 Volunteers and trainees will be on board and working in 26 countries in all six of the program sectors—agriculture, environment, business development, education, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. In addition, many Volunteers are engaged in projects involving information and communications technology (ICT). With real potential for expansion in these sectors and projects, the Africa region of the Peace Corps is poised for substantial growth. In 2004, the Peace Corps received multiple requests for new country entries in Africa, and country assessments were conducted in Sierra Leone and Ethiopia.

The Africa region continues to make the safety and security of Volunteers its number-one priority. Thirty employees are dedicated strictly to safety and security, and each of the 26 posts has a designated safety and security coordinator. In addition, the Africa region's safety and security desk officer located at Peace Corps headquarters ensures effective communication and compliance related to issues of safety. There are three additional regional Peace Corps safety and security officers located on the Africa continent. These officers—located in Lesotho, Togo, and Uganda—provide advice and support to country directors in all areas of safety and security. Finally, in early fiscal year 2004, the Africa region held a safety and security workshop for its new safety and security coordinators in eastern and southern Africa, enhancing the skills of the participants and sharing best practices related to Volunteer safety and security.

Africa remains the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic. Working with President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the Peace Corps has a strong commitment to fighting the spread of this terrible disease. The Peace Corps trains new Volunteers in HIV/AIDS awareness, with an emphasis on prevention,

capacity building of local AIDS service providers, care of orphans and children, and support to people living with AIDS. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in the field of HIV/AIDS because they live and work in the communities where they serve. They are trained in the local language and can share information in a culturally sensitive way. In addition to committing new Volunteers to targeted African countries, the Peace Corps trains all Volunteers bound for Africa, regardless of their primary assignment, in HIV/AIDS prevention and education.

While all Volunteers in the Africa region are impacted by the multiple health, social, and economic consequences of HIV/AIDS, some Volunteers work directly to combat the disease. For example, in Botswana, health and HIV/AIDS Volunteers are assigned as counterparts to district AIDS coordinators. These Volunteers provide assistance to the district AIDS committees in developing multi-sector, district-wide responses to HIV/AIDS. Other Volunteers working in village health clinics seek to increase the uptake in services to prevent mother-to-child transmission. In Ghana, two health Volunteers are working directly with local groups of people living with AIDS and engage them in educational outreach programs. In Kenya, one Volunteer helped her community establish a new orphanage for children whose parents have died of AIDS.

Additionally, Volunteers continue to establish peer educator groups, organize vaccination campaigns, and develop seminars for village health workers. In 2004, health Volunteers in Cameroon alone trained nearly 500 peer educators on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted disease (STD) issues and educated more than 13,000 community members on the prevention of HIV and STDs.

Volunteers also work to improve basic health care in the areas of child survival, nutrition, disease prevention, environmental health, orphan care, home-based care, youth and at-risk groups, and women's health. For instance, Volunteers in Ghana helped communities plan, acquire, operate, and manage their own water and sanitation facilities. Additionally, one-third of all health Volunteers there are working to eradicate the debilitating Guinea

worm disease. In Lesotho, Volunteers are working in permaculture in rural communities to promote sustainable practices that increase the diversity of food and improve nutrition. Volunteers in Mauritania were involved in a door-to-door campaign to vaccinate children against polio. Health Volunteers work with community-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and host country local governments to raise awareness of health issues and improve education in healthy living.

Peace Corps Volunteers are involved with business development in 12 countries across Africa. Their efforts are focused on teaching business skills to youth, farmers, artisans, NGOs, credit institutions, and universities. Volunteers in Burkina Faso work with tour guides and hotel and restaurant owners to develop hospitality skills and enhance the tourism industry. In Cameroon, Volunteers work to improve the business, credit, and loan portfolio management skills of bank staff, clients, and the general public.

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, information technology (IT) and life skills. Volunteers use community content-based instruction to incorporate HIV/AIDS, environmental, and gender-specific themes into their lesson plans and presentations. Many Volunteers also work with schools and communities to develop libraries and other resource centers. Volunteers help their fellow teachers use these expanded resources, thus raising the standard of teaching in the community. Volunteers are often involved in other activities, including computer training, income-generating projects, and youth development in outreach to their local community. For example, in Cape Verde, Volunteers are using local radio programs to teach English to children and adults across the country. In Tanzania, Volunteers promote environmental awareness on school farms.

Volunteers in the agriculture and environment sectors continue to improve agricultural practices and promote environmentally friendly approaches. They also help increase access to resources that

can help local communities generate income and improve their diets. This effort to improve agricultural outputs occurs within the context of education in natural resource management and conservation. Volunteers and their counterparts address environmental issues by promoting environmental education in schools and in educating farmers. In Niger, a group of Volunteers worked with NGOs to train village-level animal health workers and provide vaccinations. In Zambia, Volunteers helped the Department of Fisheries develop fish-farming projects to improve livelihoods in rural communities.

Across Africa, youth are a major focus of Volunteers. In Cape Verde, Volunteers work in municipal youth centers where they train youth in information technology, English, music, leadership and life skills. In Lesotho, Volunteers provide at-risk youth with training for income generation and job creation. In Niger, Volunteers provide environmental education and awareness sessions in schools and for rural youth. Youth are also one of the primary recipients of HIV/AIDS awareness training across the continent.

Volunteers in every project sector are using ICT to help improve the training, capacity, and abilities of the African people in all aspects of life. Many education Volunteers offer courses to improve use of ICT by students and faculty. For example, in Benin, the efforts and training of a group of Volunteers has allowed their school to now use the computer system to print report cards, tests, and other important documents. Volunteers helped to establish the first distance learning/virtual class ever offered in The Gambia, bringing together students from China, Sweden, the United States and The Gambia. In Mali, Volunteers are helping to strengthen existing computer centers and establish Internet cafes. A new initiative works with a nationwide network of community learning and information centers to provide training in basic computer and Internet skills to young Malians.

In 2004, Peace Corps joined forces with the Least Developed Countries Initiative, a partnership among Cisco Systems, Inc., the United Nations Development Programme, the U.S. Agency for International

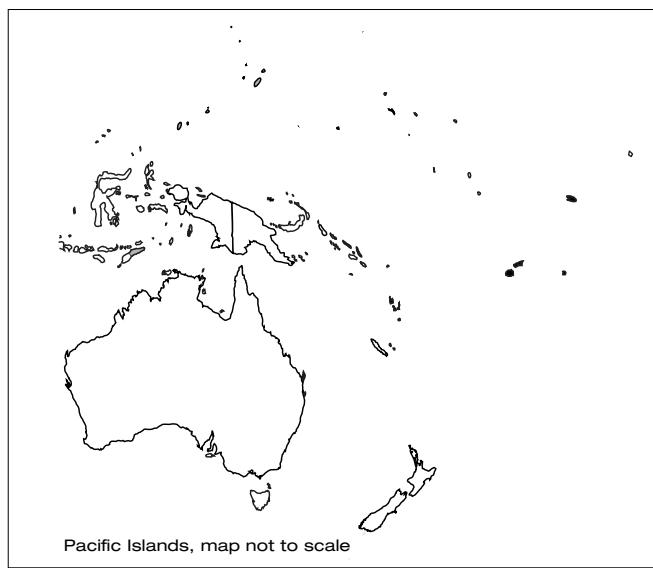
Development, the International Telecommunications Union, and United Nations Volunteers, to increase and enhance IT training and awareness. As a result, Peace Corps/Africa and the Cisco Networking Academy Program have formed working partnerships in seven countries throughout Africa, supporting the enhancement of ICT education, encouraging the regular exchange of technical resources, and encouraging female participation in IT development. Volunteers in Senegal, Mauritania, and Lesotho have already been assigned to work with Cisco Networking Academies. A Volunteer in Senegal is currently working to improve recruitment and marketing strategies to encourage women to enter the ICT

field. Several Volunteers in Lesotho are teaching basic computer skills and also encouraging female participation in the Academy Program. Kenya, Cameroon, Cape Verde, and Uganda are slated to assign Cisco Networking Academy Program Volunteers in the near future.

Since the opening of the first Peace Corps program in Ghana in 1961, Peace Corps Volunteers have worked to transfer skills to Africans and to promote a better understanding of Americans. Returned Volunteers bring their knowledge of life in Africa back to the United States and share their experiences with their fellow Americans. Peace Corps' work in Africa continues to leave a long and positive legacy.



*Health sector Volunteer working in Benin*



### Central America

Belize, Costa Rica,  
El Salvador, Guatemala,  
Honduras, Mexico,  
Nicaragua, Panama

### Caribbean

Dominican Republic,  
Eastern Caribbean  
Islands, Haiti, Jamaica

### South America

Bolivia, Ecuador,  
Guyana, Paraguay,  
Peru, Suriname

### Pacific

East Timor, Federated  
States of Micronesia  
and Republic of Palau,  
Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa,  
Tonga, Vanuatu

## Inter-America and the Pacific Region

"The Peace Corps is a living example of man's humanity to man. No area has been too remote... for the [Volunteers] to venture in and give of their time and skills, inspiring our people to improve not only their living conditions but also realize their hopes and expectations."

Sir Howard Cooke  
Governor General  
Jamaica

## **Inter-America and the Pacific Region**

Since the Peace Corps' inception in 1961, more than 72,000 Volunteers have served in the Inter-America and Pacific (IAP) region. They have served in more than 32 countries in the Inter-Americanas and 14 countries in the Pacific Islands. At the end of fiscal year 2005, 2,530 Volunteers will be working in 25 posts in all six of the agency's sectors: agriculture, business development, education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth.

Under the Partnership for Prosperity initiative of President Bush and Mexican President Vincente Fox, the Peace Corps entered Mexico in 2004. The Mexico/Peace Corps program is a unique partnership that provides the first opportunity for the Peace Corps to recruit highly specialized, technically trained and experienced Volunteers to work side-by-side with Mexican counterparts. The first Volunteers arrived in October 2004 and they are working in the areas of environment/water engineering, business development, and technical research and development.

In 2004, the IAP region also reopened operations in St. Kitts and Nevis, making it the sixth island nation within the Eastern Caribbean post. Volunteers are working in youth development, with a focus on healthy lifestyles, social skills development, and vocational and entrepreneurial training. The IAP region continues to be in dialogue with additional countries, such as the Marshall Islands, that have expressed interest in receiving Peace Corps Volunteers.

The region is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all Volunteers. All IAP posts have safety and security coordinators. In addition, three regional Peace Corps safety and security officers located in El Salvador, Fiji, and Peru help posts assess risks and ensure appropriate training for staff and Volunteers. Each post has an emergency action plan, which is tested at least annually and revised when necessary.

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is a five-year, multi-billion-dollar initiative to combat the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. Under the auspices of PEPFAR, in Haiti, Volunteers are developing and

delivering HIV/AIDS prevention education in clinics, schools, and rural communities. To ensure sustainability of these efforts, Volunteers will develop curriculum and train HIV/AIDS educators. Other Volunteers will work to mobilize communities to attend health education outreach sessions to encourage community members to be tested in HIV/AIDS testing facilities. These testing facilities will help lower mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. In Guyana, Volunteers are also focusing on community mobilization strategies to prevent HIV/AIDS and improve access to existing services. Combating HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases is one of the top priorities for Guyana's Ministry of Health. Volunteers are working with health centers and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to help Guyana address the HIV/AIDS problem and diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and dengue.

Many Volunteers in the IAP region work in traditional sectors, such as water and sanitation. Volunteers in El Salvador are helping their communities to increase access to potable water and improve sanitation conditions. Natural disasters, such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, destroyed latrines and water management systems and damaged roadways in El Salvador. Salvadorans have had limited access to potable water due to contaminated water sources. Volunteers there are providing training to community members on water systems and latrines, including their maintenance, management and monitoring.

In Peru, Volunteers in the small business development project address high levels of poverty and underemployment, particularly in rural areas. Volunteers work with farmers, artisans, ecotourism businesses, and computer centers. Together with their counterparts, Volunteers guide the development of business plans, marketing strategies, quality control, and product diversification. One business Volunteer helped weavers develop new designs and provided training in product pricing, packaging, and general marketing. The weavers have since diversified their market and increased income.

In many IAP countries, the Peace Corps' traditional sectors, such as environmental education and

resource management have a youth component. In Fiji, for example, Volunteers who live and work in communities with environment projects train youth in environmental management practices and help them organize around local social needs. Fiji Volunteers are training youth groups to plan and implement income-generation projects. One Volunteer is developing an environmentally sustainable project that will reduce waste disposal on the Coral Coast by 30 percent.

In Belize, information communication technology is a focus of the education project. In schools and libraries, Volunteers provide outreach support,

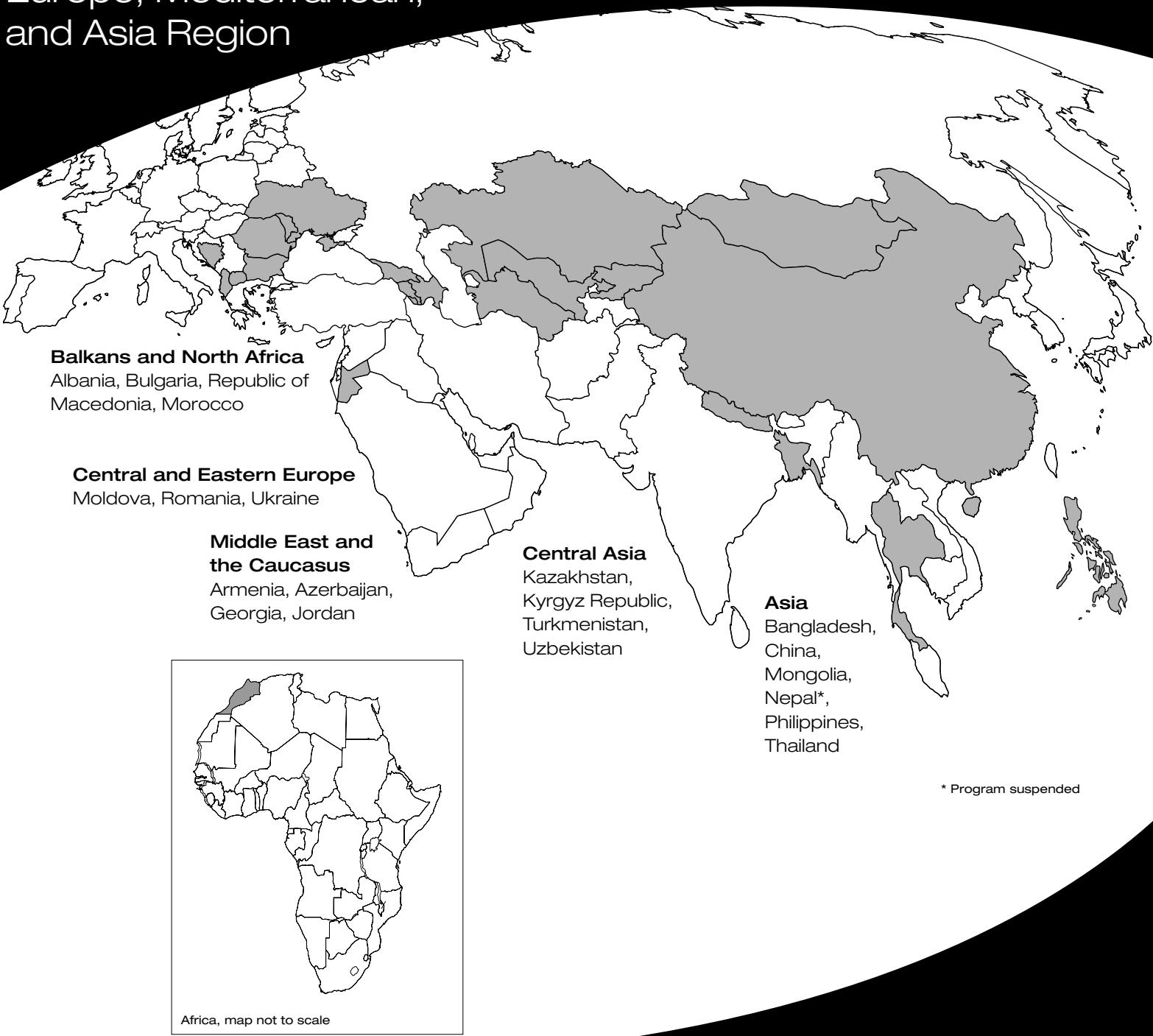
such as hardware/software installation and training, repairs, and Internet setup. A Volunteer assigned to the Belize Council for the Visually Impaired helped them set up their computer system. This Volunteer has also started a project to allow persons who are blind or visually impaired to use computers by utilizing screen-reading software.

Volunteers have a significant legacy of service to countries in the IAP region. The Peace Corps has partnered with some countries for more than 40 years and will continue to work to the benefit of people in the Inter-Americas and the Pacific.



*Agriculture sector Volunteer working in Tonga*

# Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region



“The current Peace Corps Volunteers are terrific. Through teaching at schools and working with community organizations, they are making visible changes in the skill levels of the local people. What’s more, they are working as cultural ambassadors in the communities they serve.”

Government Official  
Ministry of Education  
Bangladesh

## **Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region**

More than 46,400 Volunteers have served in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) region since 1961. At the end of fiscal year 2005, EMA will have 2,541 Volunteers and trainees working in 20 countries, and most of these nations are undergoing rapid economic and social changes. Throughout the region, Volunteers work to provide needed technical expertise and promote cross-cultural understanding—in conjunction with governments, local organizations and communities—to meet changing needs in education, health, business, agriculture, and the environment.

The Peace Corps continues to stress the importance of safety and security among its Volunteers, recognizing that their safety is best ensured when they are integrated into their local communities, valued and protected as extended family members, and viewed as contributors to development. Both Volunteers and staff receive ongoing training, and each country monitors safety and security according to agency guidelines. Based on favorable safety and security assessments during the past year, the Peace Corps re-entered China and Jordan, two extremely important countries with strong Peace Corps programming and support. At the same time, the program in Nepal was suspended in September 2004 due to escalating violence.

Many countries in the EMA region are making considerable strides toward playing a larger part in the global economy. Hampered by antiquated technologies, unstable monetary systems, and difficult transitions to free-market economies, governments are hard pressed to adequately support effective development. Volunteers address these needs by providing practical business skills, revitalizing English language teaching, creating environmental awareness, and improving health-care systems.

Education continues to be the largest sector in the region with teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) identified as the primary activity. Programs also focus on special education, teacher training, and resource and community development. Education Volunteers and their counterparts

collaborate in teaching at the primary, secondary, and university levels; supporting the professional development of host country teachers; and promoting school/community activities to identify and address local needs.

Education Volunteers continue to incorporate cross-sector knowledge and skills into their English classes and out-of-school activities. Through community content-based instruction, Volunteers help students expand their knowledge about HIV/AIDS awareness, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, life skills, civic responsibility, conflict resolution, leadership, and information technology (IT).

In the business sector, Volunteers are active in both practical and academic business education for emerging entrepreneurs, with a special emphasis on women and youth. They help strengthen the management of local business development organizations such as chambers of commerce, local governmental agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other community organizations, all of which are becoming increasingly more important as governments struggle with issues of decentralization.

Volunteers have been particularly successful in incorporating IT and providing guidance on how communities might use IT in business, education, and community development projects. Volunteers across all project sectors continue to find that computers and Internet technology increases the impact of their work, though they are also successfully utilizing other media formats, such as radio, television and film. Capacity-building efforts concentrate primarily on training people to use basic software applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, and databases. While many Volunteers are conducting skill-building exercises, others are expanding their work to a more complex level by focusing on the training of trainers. Additionally, Volunteers have established computer centers, e-commerce training courses, and Internet research and usage curricula. They have led training workshops, designed websites to promote tourism, and expanded Web-based marketing.

A Volunteer in Romania produced a film documentary series funded by the United States embassy.

The documentary series entitled, O Zi Din Viata (A Day in the Life), explores minority life in Romania through the eyes of youth. Four young ethnic Romanians were invited to live with four minority families (Roma, Hungarian, Turkish, and a family with a handicapped member) for a three-day period and had their experiences documented on film. The film will be presented to 5,000 students in schools across Braila county. Accompanying the film series will be a book of 25 lesson plans created by a team of teachers and students supported by the Volunteer and funded by USAID. The new curriculum complements the film and stresses the importance of tolerance and diversity.

In Bulgaria, a Peace Corps business Volunteer and his wife (an education Volunteer) worked with groups in their community to create an Internet crafts shop that sells products of unemployed Bulgarian artisans. They worked with a women's group to set up a weaving and sewing cooperative, providing jobs for 64 women, and helped a local government agency set up an Internet connection to provide a one-stop information service linking seven remote villages. In Kazakhstan, Romania, and Bulgaria, Volunteers helped schools and universities in their communities set up career centers that provide students with career education and skills development opportunities, including consultation and resources for job opportunities, resume building, and interviewing practices. The centers also assist local businesses, organizations, and state offices in filling their vacancies with better qualified candidates.

Youth development activities are increasingly important in the EMA region where half the population is under the age of 25. Projects are flourishing in Bulgaria, Jordan, Morocco, and Bangladesh, and are being developed in Ukraine and Mongolia. The need for young people to have positive channels of economic, social, and political opportunities is more critical than ever. Volunteers have a meaningful effect on how young people and their communities view the youth as an important asset and an agent of change. Volunteers work to engage and prepare youth for their roles within family life, the workforce, and as active citizens. Important areas of activity

include youth employment; entrepreneurship and life-skills training; promoting tolerance and conflict resolution; and advocating for youth participation in community development through 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. Other Volunteers work with marginalized young people to build their capacity to create a positive future in a region where human trafficking, street children, drug and alcohol use, prostitution, and lack of schooling plague youth.

The EMA region has 13 health projects and 23 projects with HIV/AIDS elements in them. Most of the health projects strengthen health education, whether in schools, teaching institutions, or communities, using a preventative health-care approach. Volunteers also work with communities to obtain basic resources for health, such as cleaner water systems. Countries served by health activities include Albania, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Romania, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Throughout the region, Volunteers work with students and community members to strengthen environmental awareness. To increase the durability of their efforts, many focus on reinforcing the capacity of organizations and enterprises working on environmental issues. Volunteers also work with farmers and government counterparts to ensure improved management of natural resources and protected areas. One environmental management and training Volunteer in Bulgaria worked with his municipal government on a variety of projects including eco-tourism development and water-testing education. For one project, the Volunteer won a silver prize in the International Green Apple Awards presented at Britain's House of Commons for his work in outdoor leadership and environmental education.

Volunteers in the region use participatory community development tools to increase community members'—especially women and youth—participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives. In pre-service training, trainees in Turkmeni-

stan learn to analyze gender relations in their families and at their work sites. During in-service training in Bangladesh, Volunteers and community members study gender analysis tools, and how they can best be used to determine gender needs when designing and implementing projects. Programs often give special focus to the empowerment of girls who are often more disadvantaged than boys, especially in the areas of education, leadership skills, and self-esteem. The highest percentage of Peace Corps-supported girls' leadership camps is in the EMA region, stemming from the Soviet tradition that youth camps are an integral part of society.

In addition, Volunteers in EMA have the highest percentage of anti-trafficking activities. Every country in the EMA region is a source, transition point, and/or destination country for human trafficking;

as such, this is a high-priority development issue. In Romania, the Association for Social Alternatives has been working to combat the trafficking of women since 1997. The organization provides social, psychological, and legal counseling to repatriated victims of trafficking. One Volunteer helped the association form a partnership with the International Organization for Migration. One result of this partnership has been the establishment of a safe house that offers specialized counseling, treatment, and re-integration assistance to repatriated victims.

EMA continues to develop and refine Volunteer programs to address the most urgent developmental needs of host countries, to assure that Volunteers gain a broader understanding of other cultures, and that other cultures gain a better understanding of the United States and its diversity.



*Education sector Volunteer participating in a cultural event in Kazakhstan*

# Country Profiles

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The statistical data in the following country profiles come primarily from the World Bank's *World Development Indicators 2004*. 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

Capital .....	Tirana
Population .....	3 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,450
GDP growth .....	4.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate .....	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 98% Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$135 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 99% Rural: 95%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.01%
Religions.....	Islam: 70% Albanian Orthodoxy: 20% Roman Catholicism: 10%
Official language .....	Albanian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	74	64
Program funds (\$000)	1,787	1,914

## Country Overview

Program dates	1992–1997 2003–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Albania has started on a path to a democratic, pluralistic system, but much work remains to be done. There is a general distrust of government and institutions at all levels. The country overwhelmingly approved a new constitution in 1998, which was a step toward strengthening democracy. Local elections in 2000 and 2003 demonstrated additional progress, but parliamentary elections scheduled for June 2005 will be a test of the country's commitment to building democracy. Debates over whether the 2003 elections were free and fair still go on. The international donor community, along with international and domestic nongovernmental organizations, is active in economic and trade development and democracy building.

Albania is very poor by European standards but is beginning to make the transition to a more open-market economy. The government is taking measures to curb crime and revive economic activity and trade, with integration with the West as the central tenet of its foreign policy. The major challenges are low living standards, widespread poverty, and high unemployment. Remittances from Albanians working abroad (more than \$600 million annually) supplement the economy and allow many families to survive. Lack of sufficient fertile land, land disputes, the remoteness of schools and health centers, lack of agricultural equipment, poor transportation systems, and very limited rural credit have led to urban migration, especially among the younger population. The demographics in Albania are changing rapidly as the rural population surges into the urban areas to seek work and educational opportunities. In the poorer mountainous areas, some families live in virtually medieval conditions.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps initiated a program in Albania in 1992, and 73 Volunteers were serving in the country by 1997, assisting in secondary English teaching, small business development, and agroforestry development. In 1997, some fraudulent pyramid

savings schemes collapsed, causing many Albanian investors to lose their life savings. The resulting breakdown in civil order and public safety led the Peace Corps to evacuate its Volunteers and American staff members in March 1997 and to suspend the program that summer. The Peace Corps returned to Albania in 2003, and currently has Volunteers serving in three projects throughout the country, many in the smaller, needier communities. The focus is on helping communities build their capacity to address local issues more effectively. Albania is slowly decentralizing responsibilities and resources from the national government to local governments, and communities are gaining control over their roads, schools, clinics and public services for the first time. Volunteers work with city halls, community organizations, resource centers, universities, schools, and clinics.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The business development Volunteers were the first to come to Albania since the Peace Corps reopened. They are working with local governments and development associations to improve the organizational and management capabilities of local government staff members, and to strengthen collaborative activities with local nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and citizen groups. Tourism is becoming more economically important to Albania and several Volunteers are working with their communities to improve both tourism promotion and services. The Volunteers and their Albanian colleagues have formed a tourism committee to share information and resources across the country. Two Volunteers recently collaborated with several local organizations and school groups to hold a castle clean-up day to kick off a campaign to clean up a city to make it more attractive for tourists. Another Volunteer worked with the tourism and information department of a city hall to prepare attractive promotional materials in preparation for a cross-border festival to begin the tourist season.

Volunteers also work to overcome the skepticism of communities about doing things differently or trying out new ideas. A Volunteer and his university colleagues held a successful job fair for students at the secondary and university levels. Another Volun-

teer helped to organize a project to repair and paint attractive murals on the walls of a school compound. The success of the project led to another project involving the city hall, regional government, and local organizations to repair and paint the buildings and park at the entrance to the city.

### **Education**

Education Volunteers teach English as a foreign language in secondary schools and work with the teachers of English to improve their skills. They are also developing school and community activities to promote the use of conversational English. During the summer after their training, many of the Volunteers helped to staff a camp that brought groups of young Albanians together from a wide region for activities to build their leadership and citizenship skills, as well as to practice English.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The Volunteers working in the health and HIV/AIDS sector work with local clinics, schools, and community groups to provide education on maternal and child health, water and sanitation, drug awareness, HIV/AIDS prevention, and other local health issues. Volunteers also help develop health education programs and materials for use at the local level. One Volunteer who works in a rural health clinic that lacks even basic supplies is helping to organize a donor program that the community can continue. Another Volunteer is helping to organize a women's support group in a traditional, conservative community.

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**“Building friendships and trust with  
the Albanian people is one of  
the most important steps in the  
development process. The fabric  
of infrastructure here is based, first  
and foremost, upon the Albanians’  
incredibly strong relationships with  
their families and friends, and  
we can learn from each other by  
following these shared values.”**

---

**Albania Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



## Armenia

Capital.....	Yerevan
Population.....	3 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$790
GDP growth .....	12.9%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 0% Female: 1%
Infant mortality rate.....	30 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 94% Measles: 91%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$111 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 87% Rural: 45%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.20%
Religion .....	Armenian Apostolic Christianity
Official language .....	Armenian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	85	84
Program funds (\$000)	1,717	1,743

## Country Overview

Program dates	1992–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Armenia was one of the most industrialized republics of the Soviet Union, exporting industrial, military, and high-technology goods to the other republics and, in turn, relying heavily on them for key inputs. The break-up of the Soviet Union combined with the collapse of its trade, payment, and financial systems dealt crippling blows to Armenia's industries, many of which were essentially non-viable in the absence of the Soviet command economy. Economic effects of a 1988 earthquake that killed 25,000 and left 500,000 homeless are still felt. A blockade resulting from the conflict with Azerbaijan has devastated the economy and intensified dependence on external supplies of energy, food, and materials. Armenia's transition to a free market has been characterized by a plunge in living standards with growth benefiting few and income disparities widening. Half of Armenians live in poverty; more than one in six lives in extreme poverty.

## Program Focus

Armenia is in the midst of historic change. Despite a war, blockades, turmoil, an earthquake, and power shortages, the country is slowly transitioning to a market economy and 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 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 starting to recognize the importance of the environment as a priceless and threatened national resource.

The Peace Corps is supporting Armenia's ability to address many developmental challenges by providing programs in business development, English, health, and environmental education.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

A key challenge facing Armenia is how to initiate and sustain new industries, technologies, and services that can grow, attract investments, create new export markets and jobs, raise living standards, and allow the country and its citizens to flourish within a broader regional and international market. Peace Corps Volunteers help develop Armenian organization and community capacity by providing a diverse range of consulting and technical assistance services to business centers and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Volunteers provide training in project design and management, marketing, finance, organizational development, project monitoring and evaluation.

One business Volunteer initiated and developed an information and community resource center proposal for his host organization. The counterpart and Volunteer designed, wrote, and supervised all aspects of the proposal and project, including budgeting, delegation of responsibilities, and evaluation of the project from inception to completion. Together, they successfully oversaw construction of a major capital improvement to their organization's facilities.

### **Education**

The teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) program 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. One-third of education Volunteers work on information and communication technology projects.

One Volunteer initiated a civic education project (CEP) at the state university where her English students planned and organized the first CEP regional conference in that region. With her guidance, students planned and organized the conference, wrote proposals, delivered papers—and ultimately took great pride in offering such an important and successful event at their university.

### **Environment**

Armenia has a rich natural environment. However, environmental degradation, as a legacy of the Soviet era and as a consequence of the economic crisis, is a significant issue. Awareness activities have been initiated on governmental, public, and educational levels, but they lack coordination and resources. As a result of the convergence of interest and an increase in activities by Armenians and by Volunteers, Peace Corps/Armenia initiated a new environmental project in 2003.

One Volunteer helped to establish an environmental club with her counterpart organization. Club members attend weekly meetings where they are creating a survey about perceptions of the environment and drawing a community map of pollution/environmental problems in their town.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers organize health classes, seminars, clubs, community and professional lectures, and discussion groups on topics such as general health and hygiene, women's health, self-esteem and life planning, nutrition, exercise, and physical therapy. Health Volunteers also train health workers in clinics and hospitals enhancing their professional development.

One Volunteer, working with her counterpart health-care foundation, developed health and nutrition pamphlets for the community and booklets for village nurses and doctors. After a few weeks, 80 percent of the nurses improved scores on related tests, and half the pamphlets were distributed to patients. Using a survey, the Volunteer and counterparts identified a need for medical resources for regional health professionals. With the Volunteer's assistance, the NGO applied and received a grant to create a library.



*Married Volunteers serving in Armenia*



## Azerbaijan

Capital .....	Baku
Population .....	8 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$710
GDP growth .....	10.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	3%
Infant mortality rate .....	76 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 97% Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1,392 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 93% Rural: 58%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Islam: 93.4% Russian Orthodoxy: 2.5% Armenian Orthodoxy: 2.3% Other: 1.8%
Official language .....	Azerbaijani

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	85	104
Program funds (\$000)	1,527	1,729

## Country Overview

Program dates	2003–present
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Program sector	Education
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Azerbaijan's government has three branches. The executive branch is composed of a president, a prime minister, and the council of ministers. The legislative branch consists of the 125-member parliament (Milli Majlis), whose members are elected for five-year terms, 100 of them elected from territorial districts and 25 elected from party lists. Finally, the judicial branch, headed by a constitutional court, is nominally independent.

In October 2003, Azerbaijan held presidential elections, selecting Ilham Aliyev, son of former President Heydar Aliyev, to follow in his father's footsteps. The election did not meet international standards, and critics of the new administration still argue that it has much to do to support building, both domestically and internationally.

Reopening negotiations with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjoining territories captured by Armenia remains high on the agenda of the new regime, as does addressing the problems of an economy dependent upon the as-yet-unfulfilled promise of revenues from oil and gas reserves. A U.S.-sponsored development project to develop agribusiness was launched in 2004 to help diversify Azerbaijan's economy. This effort will be reinforced by another USAID rural agribusiness development project. The British Petroleum-led consortium of oil and gas producers is similarly launching efforts to fund development projects along the route of its newly laid oil pipelines.

## Program Focus

The first group of Volunteers in Azerbaijan arrived in September 2003 and completed training in December 2003. They are English language teachers who are teaching at the secondary and university levels. Secondary education in Azerbaijan includes grades 2 through 12, but most schools introduce English (and other foreign languages) in the fifth grade. The initial cohort was 25 strong and the Volunteers were posted at sites outside the capital. A second cohort of English language teachers arrived in July 2004, and they augment both the secondary school and teacher training efforts.

With more than 2,200 schools offering or hoping to offer English courses, there is considerable scope for growth within the education sector. In addition, preliminary discussions are underway to explore additional programs, particularly in the areas of business development and agriculture.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

The popularity of and need for the education program are reflected by the hundreds of schools that submitted applications requesting a Volunteer. Indeed, more than 700 schools have applied for the 50 plus Volunteers in-country. When asked why a Peace Corps Volunteer is needed in a certain village, the head English teacher replied, "Look around you. All of my colleagues were my students in this very school. We are all Soviet trained. We love our children and we love English but we have taken our learning as far as we can go. We need your Volunteers to help us teach spoken English and to introduce new methods to us."

Volunteers began their assignments when the Azerbaijani English language curriculum was undergoing significant change. This change was characterized by a shift from rote memorization of literature and grammatical rules to a communicative and generally interactive process. Most Azerbaijani English language instructors have never had native English speakers as teachers. Team teaching with a native speaker who can assist in the transition to an emphasis on spoken English is an opportunity that scores of Azerbaijani teachers are eager to grasp.

In addition to their teaching duties, Volunteers have been remarkably inventive in augmenting their classroom responsibilities with a wide range of supportive activities. Fifteen Volunteers created after-school English conversation clubs that involve their students, parents, and teachers wishing to learn English. One Volunteer, teaching in a school with a faculty that speaks only Russian, developed an English language program for her colleagues. Three other Volunteers combined their talents and their students to promote innovative secondary school teacher training for university students. They convened some 50 students from two secondary schools and divided them into classes that enabled

future Azerbaijani teachers to hone their English teaching skills.

Summer programs have been equally impressive. Three Volunteers developed a drama camp for 30 children in their community. Introducing the students to English as well as set design, costume preparation, and rehearsals, this summer-long effort culminated in a presentation of *Snow White* that ran to full houses for several days. Moreover, one athletically inclined Volunteer developed a swimming program for young women in her community that has grown into a community-wide weekend sports program; a group of Volunteers developed a successful day camp; and two Volunteers ran a highly successful GLOW (Girls leading Our World) camp, promoting self esteem for young Azerbaijani women.

"For me, a really defining moment occurred this summer during my "civic engagement" project, when my (university student) participants realized that they could actually do something to affect change. That something as 'simple' as teaching English to unemployed job seekers could make a difference gave the recipients a sense of hope and gave the university students a sense of empowerment."

### **Azerbaijan Volunteer Education Sector**

"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."

**Ilham Aliyev  
President**



## Bangladesh

Capital .....	Dhaka
Population .....	136 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$380
GDP growth .....	4.4%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 50% Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate .....	48 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 85% Measles: 77%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$47 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 99% Rural: 97%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Islam: 88.3% Hinduism: 10.5% Christianity: 0.3% Buddhism: 0.6% Others: 0.3%
Official language .....	Bangla

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	130	140
Program funds (\$000)	1,759	1,776

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1998–2001 2002–present
<b>Program sector</b>	Education Youth

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, and the needs of its people are substantial. Efforts to improve the standard of living are hampered by political instability, corruption, cyclones, and floods. Nonetheless, positive indicators of development include self-sufficiency in rice production and a significant decline in infant mortality. The government also continues to support women's participation in the political process and girls' education. Consequently, primary school enrollment has increased considerably, with girls comprising 2.5 times as many students as they did in 1971.

Bangladeshi politics have been characterized by a continual struggle between the current ruling party, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, and the main opposition party, the Awami League, which was voted out of office in the October 2001 parliamentary elections. Both parties have frequently resorted to denunciations, intermittent strikes, and occasional violence to discredit each other. Still, Bangladesh is one of the most democratic states in the Muslim world and a leading voice among the least-developed countries. It also has taken on an increasingly active role in international peacekeeping operations.

Bangladesh has experienced steady economic growth. The agriculture sector continues to support most of the population. While rice and jute are the primary crops, wheat and tea are assuming greater importance. Approximately 80 percent of the country's export earnings come from manufacturing of ready-made garments. This provides employment for more than 1.5 million people, many of whom are women. However, change is imminent. When the current quota is lifted in 2005, U.S. importers will be able to buy their goods from any country, forcing Bangladesh to compete with countries with cheaper labor and better manufacturing skills. Women provide about one-quarter of the earned income, often aided by microcredit loans given by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, small nongovernmental organizations, and other

innovative credit methods. Although the industrial sector is growing, unemployment and underemployment remain serious problems.

## Program Focus

The first group of Volunteers in Bangladesh arrived in November 1998 as English teacher trainers. The program was expanded the following year to include assignments at technical training centers and youth training centers. As a result of election-related violence and the increased concern for the safety of Americans abroad after the events of September 11, 2001, the Peace Corps suspended operations in Bangladesh on October 20, 2001. In August 2002, a group of 11 trainees arrived to resume their service as Volunteers, all of them assigned to youth development centers. Since then, 110 Volunteers have served as English language teachers in both youth development centers and government secondary schools. At the end of 2004, Volunteers will be working in 54 districts.

## Volunteer Focus

### Education

The education program responds to a strong need to enhance English language skills throughout the country. In 1971, East Pakistan fought a war of independence against West Pakistan, which had been triggered, in part, by the central government's planned imposition of Urdu as the official language of all Pakistan. As a matter of national pride, public schools switched from teaching in English to teaching entirely in Bangla. For 30 years, teachers and students had little opportunity to study and work in English. This created an acute need for English instruction, which the government of Bangladesh has come to view as an essential tool for integrating the nation and its people into the global economy and into a rapidly changing technological world. Thus, Volunteers serving as English language teachers in secondary schools will be an important part of equipping Bangladeshi schoolchildren for the future.

One TEFL Volunteer has worked with a teaching counterpart to test community wells for arsenic. For groups using contaminated wells, he and his

counterpart have developed information sessions on using alternative sources of water. In addition, the Volunteer has learned to build and use a pond-water filtration system to make potable water.

### Youth

Thirty percent of the population of Bangladesh is in the 15- to 30-year-old age group. The government recognizes that youth need to play a major role in the country's social and economic development. It is committed to empowering youth and other segments of the society, such as women, who have not previously had a voice in local decision-making. One of the ways the government wants to accomplish this is through youth development centers, which will provide young men and women with training to help them earn a living. This, in turn, will allow them to assume a larger role in meeting local needs.

Peace Corps/Bangladesh currently provides English instruction, as well as some vocational and other training, at youth development centers. Volunteers provide education in areas such as health and hygiene, computer skills, embroidery, fabric dying, and block printing. Because the centers provide a venue for community impact through the education of youth and women, it is a rich opportunity for Peace Corps to introduce this new programming appropriate to community needs.

One Volunteer works with a youth group from a community of indigenous tribal peoples who inhabit one of the last remaining forests of Bangladesh. The Volunteer is working on a natural resources management project supported by the government of Bangladesh and USAID that will train youth to create and maintain tourist trails in the forest.

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**"Peace Corps/Bangladesh has  
opened my eyes to the world,  
instilled confidence, challenged  
my values, given me invaluable  
international experience, and allowed  
me to grow close to devout Muslims,  
which is critical for post 9/11 when  
Islam is so misunderstood."**

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**Bangladesh Volunteer  
Youth Sector**



## Belize

Capital.....	Belmopan
Population.....	253,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,970
GDP growth .....	3.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	24%
Infant mortality rate.....	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 87% Measles: 82%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$ 34 million
Access to safe water .....	90.9%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.5%
Religions .....	Christianity Islam Hinduism Buddhism
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	58	54
Program funds (\$000)	1,718	1,685

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962-present
Program sectors	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Belize, which encompasses approximately the same land area as El Salvador, is the most sparsely populated nation in the Central American peninsula. Though Belize has historically focused its development on export of tropical crops, the country has recently begun to widen its focus to include ecotourism. The pace of development is quickening with an increase in foreign investment. At the same time, however, Belizeans are becoming more aware of the environmental costs associated with development. As the central government moves toward privatization and decentralization of services, towns and rural communities are challenged to prioritize, finance, and manage their own affairs. Building the capacity of rural communities to develop good governance practices and sustainable livelihoods for their constituents is becoming a priority for the development community.

The Pan American Health Organization, recognizing the steady increase in HIV/AIDS cases in Belize, has designated it as the country with the highest number of people affected by HIV/AIDS in Central America. This sparked the government's creation of a National AIDS Commission, which is charged with coordinating Belize's strategic plan for HIV/AIDS eradication.

Belize's Caribbean coastline is annually affected by tropical storms. The government has struggled to address their impact on the growing rural population and the resulting lack of access to basic services. With the national focus moving toward ecotourism, there has been a push to ensure that communities living close to national parks are incorporated into planned income-generating activities.

## Program Focus

In response to the diverse issues facing Belize, Peace Corps programming focuses on a wide variety of projects in two main sectors: education and the environment. Peace Corps/Belize is moving away from placing Volunteers with government agencies and toward placing them with NGOs and in community councils. This has facilitated Volunteers' integration with their communities.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Volunteers provide education in literacy, HIV/AIDS education and prevention strategies, computer skills, small project development and management, and computer training and support for teachers. Information communication technology Volunteers are providing outreach support, including hardware/software installation and training, repairs, and Internet setup for 25 schools and libraries. One Volunteer assigned to the University of Belize is working on a network and computer laboratory using open-source software for the Ministry of Education. Another Volunteer, assigned to the Belize Council for the Visually Impaired (BCVI), has helped the agency set up their computer system. Recently the Volunteer started a project to allow blind or visually impaired people to use computers by utilizing screen-reading software. This is innovative technology for the agency, and the clients are excited about this new development and opportunity.

### **Environment**

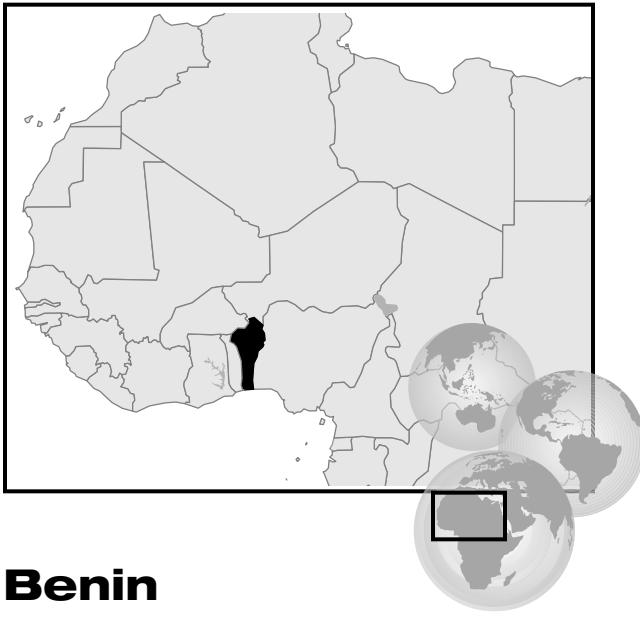
Belize boasts a diverse natural resource base, from tropical forests to the second largest barrier reef in the world. Peace Corps/Belize is committed to helping Belizeans protect that base. To accomplish this, the Peace Corps actively participates in the national environmental education program, which first focused on primary schools, but is now directed to the general population. Peace Corps/Belize is also supporting new conservation NGOs in their environmental education efforts and with their co-management of protected areas. Volunteers also assist a wide spectrum of local conservation NGOs, community-based development organizations, and government agencies responsible for environmental management and protection. Activities include organizing, assessing priority needs, programming and fundraising, and, most recently, viable business planning for eco-tourist initiatives. An environmental Volunteer, assigned to a community-based organization committed to protecting the Sibun River's ecosystems, works as a community development officer in the watershed's 11 villages. In that capacity, the Volunteer has created a mobile watershed classroom, organized a workshop for teachers on the watershed and freshwater ecosystems, trained 23 villagers in community-based water-quality management, and collaborated with the Belize Zoo in conducting a teachers' workshop on wetlands.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Education Volunteers with a focus on HIV/AIDS have provided assistance to the National AIDS Commission, district AIDS committees, the School Health and Physical Education Services of the Ministry of Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health, and local NGOs. HIV/AIDS education Volunteers implemented prevention training for nearly 9,000 students and teachers and trained close to 800 service providers and community members from 25 organizations. Training covered prevention strategies and working with and supporting persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWAs). One HIV/AIDS education Volunteer assigned to the Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) taught HIV/AIDS prevention classes in 13 Stann Creek villages to 800 students; assisted the Dangriga AIDS Society with presentations to banana, citrus, and shrimp farm workers; and trained a group of at-risk, out-of-school youth as HIV/AIDS peer educators.

**"I have worked extensively with four Peace Corps Volunteers on the implementation of the IT program here in the Toledo District. The initial phase of the project saw the intensive contribution of valuable Volunteer IT skills and expertise. The IT thrust will, in time, expand as more schools move from a single PC to network computer labs. This will ensure the development of sustainability, which is one of the main objectives of the program. Any success in IT can be accredited to the valuable contribution of the Volunteers that work at the district education center."**

**Glenford Parham  
IT Coordinator  
Ministry of Education and Sport**



## Benin

Capital .....	Porto-Novo
Population .....	7 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$380
GDP growth .....	6.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 45% Female: 74%
Infant mortality rate .....	93 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 79% Measles: 78%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$41 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 74% Rural: 55%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	3.6%
Religions.....	Indigenous beliefs: 50% Christianity: 30% Islam: 20%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	121	143
Program funds (\$000)	3,266	3,544

## Country Overview

Program dates	1968–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Benin has emerged as a beacon of democracy and one of the most stable countries in Africa. The country has held three consecutive presidential elections, which were generally viewed as free and fair. The government continues to reform the educational system, provide opportunities for private economic initiatives, improve health-care delivery, and decentralize its functions. While Benin has experienced economic growth during the past few years, it remains among the world's poorest countries. However, the government has managed to reduce fiscal expenditures and deregulate trade, initiate the privatization of key energy and telecommunications infrastructures, and implement a broad liberalization program in the cotton sector, a primary source of foreign exchange.

## Program Focus

Although the government has demonstrated success in its commitment to improving the well-being of the Beninese people, the country's human and material resources are often insufficient to provide qualified teachers in sufficient numbers, 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. Peace Corps Volunteers are addressing these needs with a broad range of activities in business development, education (teaching English), environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. Regardless of sector, Volunteers receive training in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

Local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and micro-entrepreneurs need assistance with basic management skills. Volunteers work directly with entrepreneurs, village associations, women, and NGOs to teach marketing, accounting, busi-

ness management, and organizational techniques. Credit unions in most towns have no computerized system to track credit. This can delay recovery of debts by two months or more. Volunteers created a database in Microsoft Access that helps track credit and is now used in the Federation of Credit Unions throughout the country.

One Volunteer founded a "Junior Entrepreneurs' Club" to provide local children under 12 with guidance on forming their own small businesses and to teach them business skills, such as accounting and marketing. The club started a business catching birds and making cages to sell at the market and one selling lemonade on the street. The club also developed its own savings system so that it can buy improved traps.

### **Education**

The education project continues to evolve to meet the need for qualified educators for an increasing student population. Volunteers work in secondary schools teaching English and incorporating HIV/AIDS education and prevention into their lessons. Volunteers also transfer innovative and participatory methodologies to their colleagues. The Network of Professional Women, which assumed the gender and development activities from Peace Corps in 2003, is now assisting Peace Corps/Benin's Scholarship Program by giving 100 scholarships to needy girls. Several Volunteers have organized girls' camps during the long vacation period.

One Volunteer trained his colleagues in computer skills on computers donated by his predecessor. The school now uses the computer system to print report cards, tests, and other important documents.

### **Environment**

Seventy percent of the population works in agriculture, and Benin faces serious environmental consequences as a result of deforestation and rapid reduction of soil fertility. In response, the Peace Corps has strengthened its environment project, expanding its scope to include environmental education. In the future, Volunteers will focus on environmental education, tree production techniques, and project design and management.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Rural communities in Benin face many health issues. Volunteers collaborate with social service centers throughout the country to conduct health education, particularly on maternal and child health issues. Peace Corps/Benin's HIV/AIDS peer education program, "Project Panther," allows Volunteers to continue to partner with peer educators from their communities. While the leadership of the project has changed, Volunteers continue this important work that significantly increases youth involvement in HIV/AIDS education. Volunteers work with their communities to select two youth peer educators (one female, one male) and a community advisor to conduct a variety of HIV/AIDS education activities targeting youth who do not attend school. Future emphasis in this sector will be on family nutrition, HIV/AIDS, and health education, particularly regarding malaria and diarrhea.

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**"Coming to Africa is the  
best thing I ever did."**

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**Benin Volunteer  
Education Sector**



*Students in a Benin Volunteer's math class*



## Bolivia

Capital .....	La Paz
Population .....	9 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$900
GDP growth .....	2.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 3% Female: 19%
Infant mortality rate .....	56 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 81% Measles: 79%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$677 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 64%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religion .....	Roman Catholicism: 95%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	145	132
Program funds (\$000)	2,958	2,931

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1971 1990–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Bolivia has faced several years of political change and challenges. With a stagnant economy, rising unemployment rates, escalating civil unrest among indigenous populations, and mounting antipathy between the executive and legislative branches of government, the political situation in Bolivia remains precarious.

Bolivia's main exports are natural gas, tin, zinc, gold, silver and soybeans. Although the nation has experienced macroeconomic stability over the past decade, approximately 80 percent of Bolivia's rural population lives below the poverty line; the Bolivian GDP/person is \$870—only 31 percent of the average GDP/person in Latin America. The United Nations Development Program's human development index ranks Bolivia as the least developed country in South America. Though unemployment remains high, the economy grew by around 2.5 percent in 2003. Inflation is estimated at about 2.6 percent.

## Program Focus

From 1962–1971, approximately 1,550 Volunteers served in Bolivia. In December 1987, the government of Bolivia formally requested that the Peace Corps, after a long absence, return to Bolivia. In 1990, the Peace Corps resumed operations. Today, there are approximately 135 Volunteers in-country, working in health, agriculture, business development, education, and environmental projects. Where appropriate, the Peace Corps integrates information technology into projects to expand technology access to Bolivian youth, farmers, entrepreneurs, and municipalities.

## Volunteer Focus

### Agriculture

Bolivia's farmers face serious challenges in meeting basic needs for both adequate nutrition and income. Agriculture Volunteers help farmers gain

skills in sustainable agriculture and soil conservation techniques. The agriculture project focuses on both traditional agricultural extension and business and marketing. The project helps farmers improve crop production; increase family income through improved farm management; and commercialize agricultural products.

Through a USAID small projects assistance grant, one Volunteer is working with local farmers to build a water-conserving irrigation system. The system will improve production of organic crops, including lettuce, carrots, and strawberries, which are popular in local markets and sell at three times the price of nonorganic produce. This Volunteer is also working to help local women develop nontraditional honey products, such as shampoos and soaps.

### **Business Development**

To address endemic rural poverty, Volunteers help communities develop income-generating activities and business skills. Volunteers help improve microenterprise practices to create greater economic opportunities for poor people in rural and peri-urban areas. This includes training local artisans, teaching basic business skills, and developing local tourism plans.

One business Volunteer trained indigenous women weavers in basic business practices through capacity-building workshops given in Quecha, the region's native language. As a result, the women increased family income through cost analysis, improved handicraft product development, and increased market access.

### **Education**

Volunteers help reduce child mortality rates by training families, students, educators, and communities to improve poor nutrition and hygiene habits. The project combines nutritional habits, healthy lifestyle practices, and nonformal education skills in an integrated strategy aimed at improving family health. Volunteers train school districts and classroom educators in nonformal education techniques and other ways to incorporate health education curricula in the classroom. These activities aim to improve student health practices and strengthen Bolivia's educational reform efforts.

A Volunteer in the Cochabamba Valley is working with teachers and handicapped students. In addition to training teachers on interactive teaching

methodologies that can be adapted to special-needs students, the Volunteer is training students in cooking, hygiene, and sanitation.

### **Environment**

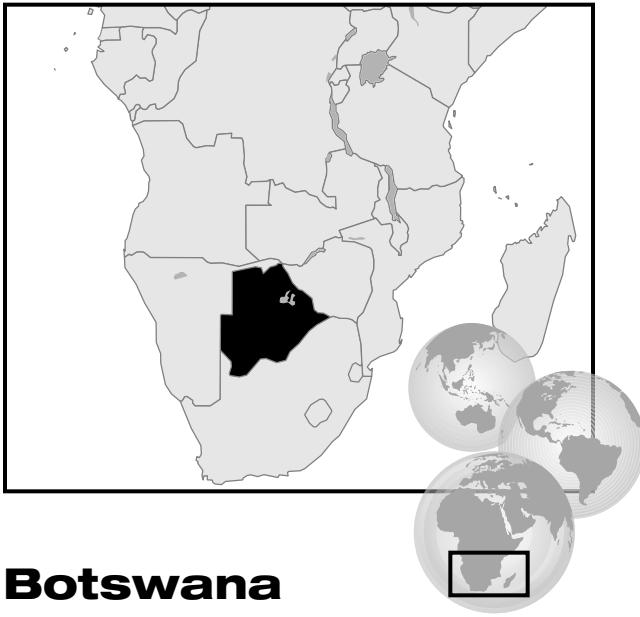
Bolivia faces rapidly deteriorating natural resources resulting from both mineral extraction and agricultural practices that deplete soil and water resources. The natural resources management project aims to protect the environment and create an ethic of environmental stewardship. Volunteers work with local communities on soil conservation, watershed management, and re-vegetation activities. Youth conservation clubs and teacher training focused on environmental sciences and conservation help expand conservation practices and develop a stewardship ethic.

One Volunteer is promoting environmental protection through youth clubs. Working with her counterpart, she helps teachers design an environmental education curriculum component, and has successfully formed three youth ecology clubs in rural communities. Club members have conducted a variety of activities, including Earth Day celebrations, tree plantings, and environmental health fairs.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Access to potable water and latrine systems is a major development challenge in Bolivia. Partnering with a range of local and national organizations, Volunteers are improving sanitary conditions by designing and constructing water systems and providing potable water to poor communities in rural areas. Volunteers organize and train local water boards in administration, maintenance, and environmental protection issues associated with potable water, and they help strengthen the ability of municipalities to meet ongoing local water needs. Volunteers have also spearheaded Peace Corps' efforts to improve solid-waste management, focusing on recycling and composting practices.

In Bolivia's drought-stricken Chaco area, one Volunteer is working with community members to construct nearly 700 family rainwater catchment systems. The Volunteer initiated a training and certification program for local masons and other community members, allowing this technology to be replicated at significantly reduced costs. Families now have reliable access to clean water in their homes.



## Botswana

Capital .....	Gaborone
Population .....	2 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$3,010
GDP growth .....	3.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 24% Female: 18%
Infant mortality rate .....	80 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 97% Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$37 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 100% Rural: 90%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	38.80%
Religions.....	Christianity: 60% Indigenous beliefs: 40%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	61	62
Program funds (\$000)	1,747	2,006

## Country Overview

Program dates	1966–1997 2003–present
Program sector	Health and HIV/AIDS

The Republic of Botswana is a multiparty democracy with a stable and progressive political climate. National politics is dominated by the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which has won every presidential election since independence in 1966. Seretse Khama, Botswana's first president, was elected under the banner of the BDP. Quett Ketumile Masire, who retired in March 1998, succeeded him in an orderly transition. The country's current president is Festus Mogae.

Botswana has maintained one of the world's highest economic growth rates since independence. Through fiscal discipline and sound management, the nation has transformed itself from one of the poorest countries in the world to a middle-income country. Diamond mining has fueled much of this economic expansion. Other important economic activities include tourism and beef production. Despite its high GDP, however, Botswana suffers from high unemployment and income disparity.

The government has managed the country's resources prudently. In addition, revenue from diamonds and profits from the large foreign-exchange reserves of the Bank of Botswana have largely cushioned Botswana from recessions that have hurt most countries in the region. But while Botswana has experienced extremely high rates of growth, it has also experienced the most acute ravages of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. HIV/AIDS is much more than a health problem in Botswana—it is a development problem that will impact all aspects of Batswana life for years to come.

## Program Focus

From 1966 to 1997, Peace Corps projects touched nearly all aspects of Botswana's development, with Volunteers working in education, health, the environment, urban planning, and economics. Volunteers filled significant gaps in human resources and, made important contributions to the steady progress of Botswana. Many leading figures in Botswana today were positively influenced by a Peace Corps teacher or counterpart. Because of Botswana's

economic success, a decision was made in 1997 to close the Peace Corps program.

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. The president leads the national strategic plan by chairing the National AIDS Council. Such public acknowledgment of the development threat posed by HIV/AIDS and the commitment to action by a head of state gave momentum to Botswana's war on AIDS. The government enlisted international agencies, civil society, other governments, and volunteer organizations in this fight. In 2001, President Mogae asked President Bush to reestablish the Peace Corps program to address the HIV/AIDS 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

Under the guidance of the National AIDS Coordinating Agency, the Peace Corps began its activities in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, specifically with the AIDS Coordinating Unit. This unit is helping to mainstream HIV/AIDS education and programming at the national, district, and village levels. (All government-sponsored development programs are to include HIV/AIDS training and education for the workforce and the recipient community.) It has deployed AIDS coordinators in 24 health districts throughout the country. Twenty-three Volunteers are assigned as counterparts to these coordinators. The Volunteers provide assistance to the district AIDS committees in developing multisector, districtwide responses to HIV/AIDS. They also help develop village AIDS committees; monitor, evaluate, and document of HIV/AIDS programming and its impacts; and facilitate district plans to ensure that HIV/AIDS activities are integrated into all development projects.

In 2004, Peace Corps/Botswana, in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, placed Volunteers in two new projects. In the first project, eight Volunteers are working with social worker

counterparts at the village level to build capacity for home-based care clients as well as orphans and vulnerable children. In the other new project, 14 Volunteers work at village health clinics providing services to women to prevent mother-to-child transmission. This project is in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Botswana Ministry of Health.

"I have been impressed with the programs and effort given to the fight against HIV/AIDS. I am proud that the Peace Corps was asked to be a part of the effort and think that we can make a contribution. Even though we only get two years to help individually, in the years to come, I hope to look back and see some positive things in Botswana, and I will be happy to have been a part of it. This opportunity is very special and it has inspired me to try the best I can at living up to the Peace Corps mission to promote world peace and friendship."

**Botswana Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



*Botswana Volunteer teaching technical drawing*



## Bulgaria

Capital.....	Sofia
Population .....	8 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,770
GDP growth .....	4.8%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	14 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 94% Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$600 million
Access to safe water .....	100%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions .....	Bulgarian Orthodoxy: 82.6% Islam: 12.2% Others: 4% Roman Catholicism: 0.6% Protestantism: 0.5%
Official language .....	Bulgarian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	205	202
Program funds (\$000)	3,387	3,496

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1991-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Youth

Bulgaria continues to transform its political, economic, and social systems. Efforts to create stability, prosperity, and opportunity have begun to pay off, particularly in the larger urban areas. In March 2004, Bulgaria became a member state of the NATO alliance. Full membership in the European Union is projected for 2007, although many observers question whether Bulgaria will achieve all of the steps required for new entrants.

Despite this progress, economic development and structural reform have been frustratingly slow for the many Bulgarians who still feel the pain of the economic collapse of 1996. Approximately 35 percent of Bulgaria's population lives below the poverty line. Paradoxically, during the past four years, inflation has been low while growth in gross domestic product has been steady. This has led multilateral observers of the macroeconomic condition to conclude that Bulgaria is moving in the right direction.

## Program Focus

Bulgaria's position in southeastern Europe is critical to regional stability and the evolution of a peaceful and prosperous Balkans. The Peace Corps serves Bulgaria through programs in English language education, business development focusing on community and organizational development, and youth development. In addition to direct skills transfer to adults and children, Volunteers partner with change agents in their communities to identify local needs, create development strategies, and build a civil society through broad-based community cooperation.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

Volunteers in this sector focus on community and organizational development and strive to build greater cooperation at the grass-roots level as Bulgarian communities work towards a democratic civil

society and improved quality of life. Volunteers build synergies among local governments, NGOs, entrepreneurs, civic groups and individuals. The program relies upon the energy and expertise of Volunteers to identify common priorities, set realistic expectations, and develop and implement strategies that meet community objectives.

Volunteers are catalysts for change. Many Volunteers help communities leverage European Union structural funds through improved project design and management. Others promote volunteerism at the community level, organize informational campaigns, transfer management and organizational skills, and build mechanisms for more effective community resource generation.

In 2004, Volunteers worked on municipal infrastructure projects, assisted with tourism development and promotion, organized environmental education activities, consulted and trained entrepreneurs and small- and medium-sized businesses, and taught Junior Achievement classes, among other work.

### **Education**

As Bulgaria continues its economic and social reforms, the need for English language fluency has increased significantly. Volunteers work in primary and secondary schools to improve students' and teachers' English language skills. Beyond their teaching responsibilities, TEFL Volunteers worked in community projects, such as youth camps, adult English courses and diversity training. Many Volunteers are helping to raise awareness of the dangers of human trafficking, which is a growing problem in Bulgaria and the broader region. Volunteers also work with students and counterparts on fundraising

and in teaching basic business skills, peer education, HIV/AIDS awareness, and many other community outreach projects.

In 2004, Volunteers taught 8,700 primary and secondary students in 70 schools. They established eight English language resource centers and computer labs in Bulgarian schools. Volunteers also helped to upgrade existing language resource centers and equip them with books, multimedia resources, and other materials.

### **Youth**

Youth development has become an increasingly important focus of policymakers and communities who view the enthusiasm, flexibility, and potential of young people as a major asset as they implement the changes required for European Union accession. The Peace Corps' youth development program supports two of Bulgaria's most important national initiatives—the Ministry of Youth and Sport's initiative to provide all youth with greater opportunities for personal development; and the State Agency for Child Protection's initiative to improve the conditions of the more than 30,000 children living in orphanages and other state institutions.

In 2004, Volunteers mobilized individuals, parents, institution staff, organizations, and communities to provide Bulgarian youth with opportunities, such as organized sports, volunteer community service, health education, ethnic tolerance building, and career development. These activities gave youth greater fulfillment and increased their sense of civic responsibility, helping to develop leadership and life skills for all involved.

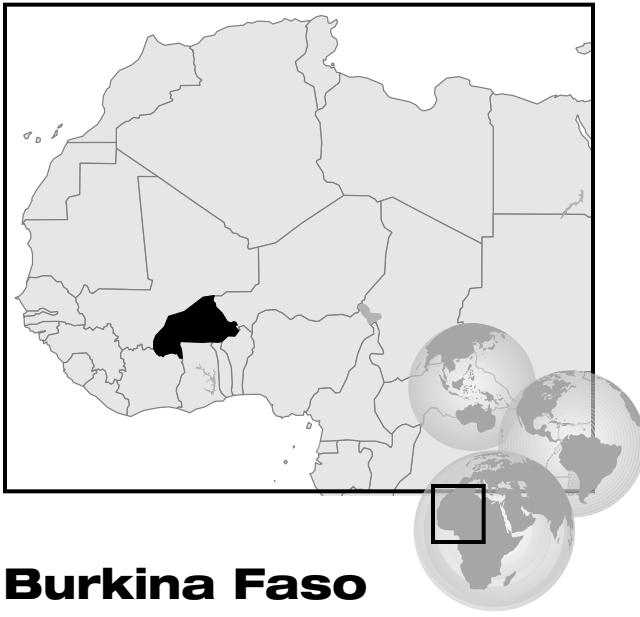
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**"I view of my role in the community as both an observer and representative.**

**I'm an observer of the community, what problems it has, how it functions, and what can realistically be accomplished and then to go about trying to put together the necessary resources to address the issue. I'm a representative by just being myself and by making an active effort daily to get to know people to give them a pragmatic and personal view of what an American is like that typically counters what they have seen from the media...."**

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**Bulgaria Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



## Burkina Faso

Capital .....	Ouagadougou
Population .....	12 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$250
GDP growth .....	4.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 81% Female: 92%
Infant mortality rate .....	107 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 41% Measles: 46%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$8 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 66% Rural: 37%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	6.50%
Religions.....	Islam: 55% Christianity: 25% Indigenous beliefs: 20%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	119	148
Program funds (\$000)	3,055	3,429

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1966–1987 1995–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Burkina Faso, then known as Upper Volta, gained independence from France in August 1960. In 1966, the civilian government was overthrown by a military coup, which characterized the mode of government in Burkina Faso 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 Compaoré, was the sole candidate and won the presidency; he was reelected in 1998 with nearly 90 percent of the vote. Since 1991 the country has experienced a high level of stability. Burkina Faso is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 175 out of 177 on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. The majority of its population is engaged in subsistence agriculture, which is hampered by frequent droughts. Though foreign investment and private sector development are increasing, health care remains inadequate and conditions such as malaria and malnutrition are endemic.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps entered Burkina Faso in 1966. Major projects have included forestry extension, education for young farmers, small enterprise development, secondary education (math and science), well construction, agricultural extension, arts and crafts, and park development. In 1986, the government asked the Peace Corps to cease sending Volunteers because they no longer coincided with Burkina Faso's development goals; the last group completed service in 1987. Volunteers returned in 1995 as part of a newly established health project. One year later, the Peace Corps established a secondary education project in response to the government's urgent request for teachers. In 2003, Peace Corps introduced a small enterprise development project to complement the government's poverty reduction and private sector promotional programs. Currently, nearly 100 Volunteers work throughout the country, primarily in rural areas, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Peace Corps/Burkina Faso works in the small enterprise development sector with a project that promotes business development and tourism. Burkina Faso has many areas that are attractive for tourism and rich in arts and crafts. Volunteers work with entrepreneur associations and cooperatives to market crafts and agribusiness products as well as promote cultural tours and tourism. Volunteers with a marketing background work with tour guides and hotel and restaurant owners to develop hospitality skills. Volunteers with business backgrounds work with savings and credit clubs, handicraft associations, and agribusiness cooperatives to improve business practices and the viability of commercial activities.

One small enterprise development Volunteer helped a women's pottery group to develop pricing and costing skills and enhance their technical pottery skills. The women are expanding their business into nearby community markets and have found funding to construct a workshop and showroom so they can work and sell their products year-round.

### **Education**

Volunteers in the secondary education project are assigned to the Ministry of Education to 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 25 hours per week. These Volunteers teach all classes in French. Volunteers work with their counterparts in secondary schools to build students' capacities for critical thinking, problem-solving, and real life skills. Volunteers have created innovative lesson plans that enrich the Burkinabé traditional way of teaching.

Education Volunteers collaborate with their communities and schools to conduct secondary projects during school vacations. Primary among these

projects is a girls' camp program run in provincial capitals during summer vacation. Girls attend the one-week camp, where they participate in sports, personal health lessons, life skills education, career counseling, and shadowing of professional women. At the camps, Volunteers and their counterparts help increase awareness of basic human rights for women and girls and the importance of their access to education, health care, and mobility.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The health project responds to the government's priority of revitalizing its primary health care system through the Bamako Initiative. This initiative emphasizes achieving full community participation in the management and financing of health services. Volunteers are assigned to village-level health and social promotion centers. They work with communities to strengthen local health management committees and help develop health promotion programs in areas such as childhood communicable diseases, malaria, HIV/AIDS education, and Guinea worm eradication. Volunteers work closely with Ministry of Health officials to coordinate the planning and execution of "Guinea Worm Weeks" in endemic zones of Burkina Faso. Ministry officials and international partners in the Guinea worm eradication campaign consistently cite the efforts of Volunteers as being the backbone of the eradication program.

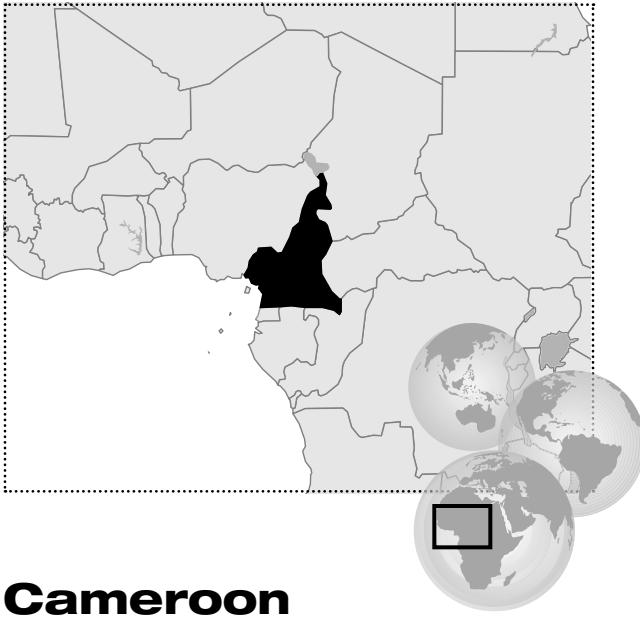
Through training and ongoing day-to-day assistance, Volunteers have built the capacity of local community groups to undertake health promotion activities using primarily their own resources. These community groups include health center management committees and HIV/AIDS groups. The former are groups of villagers elected under the Bamako Initiative to provide local input into health center management; the latter groups were established and trained with the help of Volunteers, and their project, entitled "SIDA Stop" (Stop AIDS), is a grass-roots effort with a strong level of commitment from stakeholders.

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**"I have three friends in Djibasso with whom I can share everything I would share with an American friend—three real, lasting, meaningful, trusting, and deep friendships. We transcended the cultural barrier and found something deeper inside. This is the most meaningful thing I walk away from Burkina Faso with."**

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**Burkina Faso Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Cameroon

Capital .....	Yaounde
Population .....	16 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$550
GDP growth .....	4.4%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 23% Female: 40%
Infant mortality rate .....	95 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 48% Measles: 62%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$86 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 78% Rural: 39%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	11.80%
Religions .....	Christianity: 53% Indigenous beliefs: 25% Islam: 22%
Official languages .....	French English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	124	122
Program funds (\$000)	2,990	2,828

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Cameroon, an independent republic, continues to move toward democracy. Political reforms are having a positive effect and the nation's multi-party system is enabling elections to become more competitive. Cameroon has a national assembly of 12380 members, who serve for five-year terms. The presidential term recently changed from five years to seven years.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Cameroon's economy. It provides a living for 80 percent of the population and accounts for about one-third of gross domestic product 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 Volunteers who came as math and science teachers. Peace Corps/Cameroun's program grew and diversified to include inland fisheries, credit union and cooperatives education, English, community forestry, health, and community development.

Currently, four robust projects are executed throughout the 10 provinces of Cameroon: English, math, computer and science education; health and water/sanitation; agroforestry; and small enterprise development. Additionally, all projects have four common themes running through them: focus, counterpart involvement, Volunteer competence, HIV/AIDS awareness and mitigation, and organizational professionalism.

## Volunteer Focus

### Agriculture

Increasing competition for land in Cameroon has led some farmers to cultivate on steep hillsides and in ecologically important forested areas. Volunteers in the humid highland zone and the Sahel region

are working to establish a network of farmer leaders who understand the benefits of agroforestry and permanent farming systems and can promote these benefits to other farmers. Volunteers helped train farmers in agroforestry techniques by establishing demonstration plots on their farms. They also helped farm families establish 84 nurseries that produced more than 78,000 seedlings and cuttings of agroforestry species. Additionally, 38 seed banks were active during the year.

### **Business Development**

The business development project links Volunteers to microfinance institutions through technical assistance that promotes small enterprise development. Business and credit management are integral components of this project. In 2004, more than 22,000 Cameroonians participated in meetings, workshops, and other training sessions. Volunteers organized to improve business, credit, and loan portfolio management skills. Additionally, campaigns to the banking community and the general public promoted the prudent use of credit and the importance of loan recovery. As a result of the efforts of community-based banks, credit unions, and NGOs managing microfinance initiatives, nearly 2,000 Cameroonians are better able to provide credit management and counseling to entrepreneurs and assist financial institutions in their quest to provide secure loans with a minimal delinquency rate. Currently, 28 small enterprise development Volunteers work in 28 microfinance institutions throughout the 10 provinces of Cameroon.

### **Education**

Providing the ever-expanding school-age population with a quality education remains a challenge for Cameroon. Volunteers improve the quality of education through classroom instruction in English, computer science, math, and science and by developing teaching materials applicable to Cameroonian

society. Students' classroom knowledge is supplemented with health and environmental education curricula integrated into daily lessons. In the TEFL project, Volunteers have helped develop transferable educational materials, including a manual to upgrade teacher skills and a handbook covering HIV/AIDS education. Many Volunteers have started sustainable tree-planting projects, planting medicinal fruit and shade trees to earn income for their schools. Additionally, Volunteers helped establish libraries, science labs, school-based farms, gardens, wells, pit latrines, and health centers. Overall, education Volunteers taught English and didactics, math, and science skills and knowledge to more than 6,000 student teachers in teacher-training colleges and more than 45,000 secondary school children.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

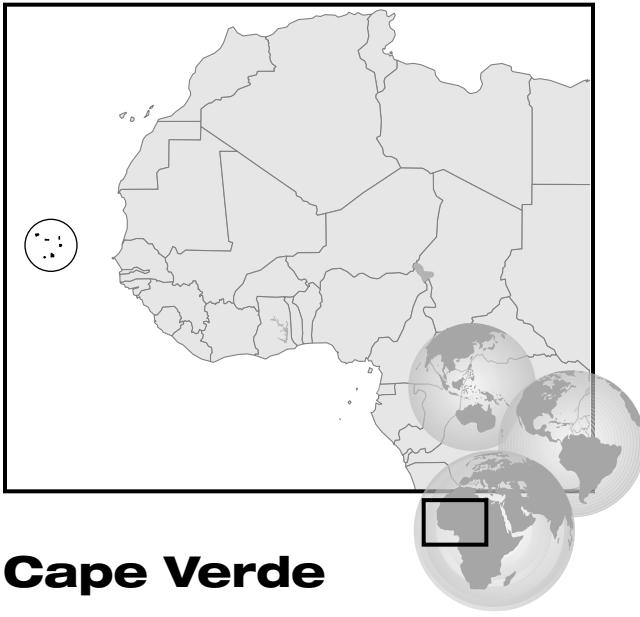
The HIV/AIDS pandemic is one of the most pressing public health concerns, with as much as 17 percent of the population infected in certain urban areas. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in prevention, mitigation, and behavior change with regard to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). This enables them to be important resources in their communities. In addition, Volunteers receive training in the National AIDS Control Plan of Cameroon to facilitate their active participation in local strategies. In 2004, health Volunteers trained nearly 500 peer educators on HIV/AIDS and STD issues and educated more than 13,000 community members on the prevention of HIV and STDs. Health Volunteers also trained more than 1,200 adolescents in life skills, which will enable them to make positive choices and live healthier lifestyles. Health Volunteers actively integrate other technical areas into their activities. Some focus on building local capacity in information technology; others incorporate environmental education issues, including efforts to conserve Cameroon's rainforest, into their work.

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**"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. Peace Corps is like nothing else you will ever experience."**

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**Cameroon Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Cape Verde

Capital .....	Praia
Population .....	458,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,250
GDP growth .....	4.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	25%
Infant mortality rate .....	37 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 94% Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$0.7 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 64% Rural: 89%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.04%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism Protestantism
Official language .....	Portuguese

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	45	44
Program funds (\$000)	1,665	1,743

## Country Overview

Program dates	1988–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Youth

Cape Verde is a stable, transparent democracy. The African Party for Independence governed the country as a one-party state from the time of its 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 African Party for Independence regained control.

Cape Verde has a low per capita gross domestic product (GDP), a result, in large part, of a poor natural resource base, including serious water shortages caused by periods of long-term drought. The economy is service-oriented; commerce, transport, and public services account for almost 70 percent of GDP. Although nearly 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas, agriculture is only a small percentage of GDP. The potential of fishing has not been fully exploited, and about 90 percent of Cape Verde's food supply is imported. Cape Verde runs a high trade deficit annually, which is financed by foreign aid and emigrant remittances. These remittances constitute a supplement to GDP of more than 20 percent. Economic reforms launched in 1991 are aimed at developing the private sector and attracting foreign investment to diversify the economy. In 1998, Cape Verde's constitution was changed to remove state control from all sectors of the economy (except the central bank) and to open the economy to foreign and domestic investment.

## Program Focus

The government of Cape Verde initially invited the Peace Corps to participate in the nation's development efforts in 1987. The first group of Volunteers arrived in 1988, and current Volunteers work on seven of the nine inhabited islands. Cooperating closely with the government's stated development goals, Volunteers work in education (teaching English), capacity building at the municipal level (Cape Verde has 17 municipalities), and youth development (including information technology; vocational training; small business and credit; and leadership training, including life skills). Many Volunteers participate in activities of the women and gender and

development program, including career-planning events for girls, training for women by the National Association of Women Lawyers, and the celebration of International Women's Week. The Peace Corps is considered an important player in the nation's program to combat the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in HIV/AIDS education.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Since the government's shift toward decentralization, municipalities and local communities have had difficulty identifying community needs and developing solutions to community problems. Volunteers continue to promote information technology as a tool to implement sustainable, small-scale community development projects. They also advise small businesses to increase profitability, viability, and access to credit. Vocational education Volunteers teach construction and electrical and mechanical engineering at technical high schools. Because of the high unemployment rate in Cape Verde and the need for vocational skills, vocational education has become an integrated part of the Peace Corps program.

One Volunteer took part in the successful planning, marketing and promotion of "Feira de producto Brazilairos in Cape Verde." This event was promoted by the commerce bureau and more than 1,000 local business people and Brazilian exporters interested in doing business in Cape Verde attended. Another Volunteer helped a local man open up his own businesses by working through the application process of applying for a loan from a local organization. After being approved for the loan and receiving the funds, the applicant opened a shop in his local community. With the success of his business, he has started to pay back the loan.

### **Education**

The education or TEFL project helps the Ministry of Education provide quality learning opportunities to students and teachers, primarily at the high school level. Volunteers teach in the classroom

and train teachers. The education project is shifting from primarily teaching English to greater capacity building in the areas of human resource development, parent and community involvement, and materials development. The project advocates gender relationships and promotes women's participation to increase their status and opportunities. It also educates students and the community in life skills and HIV/AIDS awareness. Working with youth groups in sports, summer camps, and community projects are also important components of the project.

One Volunteer in a small school has started a section in the library composed of American magazines, world maps, and other personal materials for use as resources in lesson plans for teaching English. Another Volunteer is planning to help anchor a local radio program where English will be taught on the air with children and adults calling in from all over Cape Verde. Broadcasting capabilities will include the Cape Verdean community in the United States via the Internet.

### **Youth**

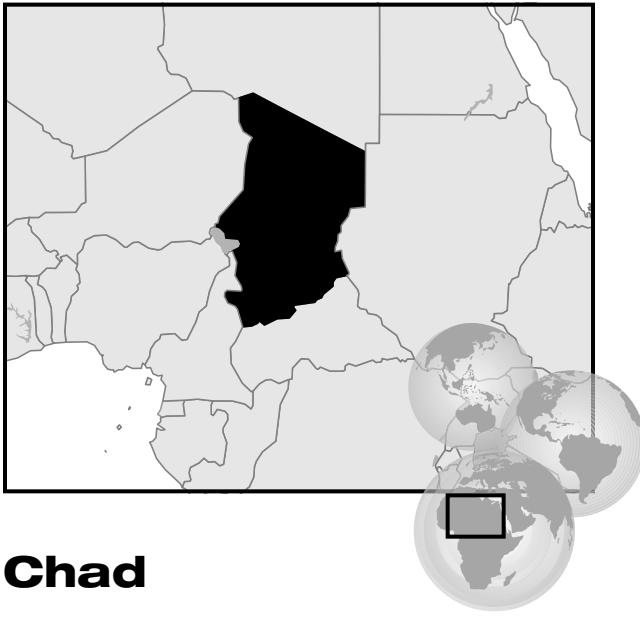
Forty-one percent of the population in Cape Verde is less than 15 years old, so youth are a major focus for Volunteers. The Peace Corps is providing Volunteers in municipal youth centers where they train local staff in organizational development, library development, information technology, and life skills. In addition, Volunteers train youth in information technology, English, music, HIV/AIDS awareness, leadership, and other areas as needed. For example, one Volunteer helped a group develop and implement seven community development projects covering issues such as HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, drugs, and alcoholism.

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**"While working at the youth center, the youth have taken a very active role in the community and have shown that they are a valuable resource open to both, new and developing ideas."**

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**Cape Verde Volunteer  
Youth Sector**



## Chad

Capital .....	N'Djamena
Population .....	8 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$210
GDP growth .....	9.9%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 45% Female: 62%
Infant mortality rate .....	117 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 40% Measles: 55%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$901 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 31% Rural: 26%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	3.60%
Religions.....	Islam: 51% Christianity: 35% Animism: 7% Indigenous beliefs: 7%
Official languages .....	French Arabic

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	46	57
Program funds (\$000)	1,709	1,909

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1966–1979 1987–1990 1990–1998 2003–present
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<b>Program sector</b>	Education
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Chad, a French colony until 1960, endured three decades of ethnic warfare as well as invasions by Libya before a semblance of peace was finally restored in 1990. The government eventually suppressed, or came to terms with, most rebel political and military groups, settled a territorial dispute with Libya on terms favorable to Chad, drafted a democratic constitution, and held multiparty presidential and national assembly elections in 1996 and 1997, respectively. In 1998, a new rebellion broke out in northern Chad, which continued to escalate until the government and the rebels signed a peace agreement in January 2002. The agreement provides for the demobilization of the rebels and their reintegration into the political system. Despite movement toward democratic reform, however, power remains in the hands of a northern ethnic oligarchy.

More than 80 percent of the population relies on subsistence farming and the raising of livestock for its livelihood. Chad's primarily agricultural economy will be boosted by the major oil field and pipeline projects that began in 2000. Cotton, cattle, and gum arabic currently provide the bulk of Chad's export earnings, but the country began exporting oil in October 2003. The economy has long been handicapped by Chad's landlocked position, high energy costs, and history of instability. The government is now proactively maintaining civil order and internal security, especially the high-profile oil pipeline project.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps is well-known for its assistance in Chad. Since the program began in 1966, Volunteers have provided support in education, health, water supplies, and forestry. Peace Corps operations were suspended three times—from 1979 to 1987 and in 1990 and 1998—over concerns for Volunteers' safety. Before the last suspension in 1998, 32 Volunteers were in Chad working in water and sanitation, community health, and agroforestry projects. Despite these suspensions, Volunteers

created a strong bond with the Chadian people. That bond and a more secure environment are the impetus behind the Peace Corps' return.

The government of Chad has expressed a strong need for TEFL teachers, and the Peace Corps has reestablished its program initially with a TEFL project. This project provides a structural framework for Volunteers and their Chadian counterparts to follow, facilitating the development of future initiatives. All Volunteers in Chad, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## Volunteer Focus

### Education

Approximately 30 Volunteers teach English at the secondary school level in the Kanem, Lac, Chari-Baguirmi, Mayo-Kebbi, Tandjile, and Guéra prefectures. These regions are centrally located and contain well over a third of the total population. In addition to teaching English, Volunteers incorporate HIV/AIDS education and prevention into their lessons, and they are sharing innovative and participatory methodologies with their colleagues.

One Volunteer leveraged funds through the Peace Corps Partnership Program to build badly needed classrooms at his school. The Volunteer worked closely with community leaders to identify their most pressing needs and developed a plan to address these needs. The host community is contributing well over 25 percent of the resources required for the classroom project.

**"As a Volunteer in the first group of Volunteers to reopen the Chad program, I have felt warmly welcomed by the Chadian government and people. We are doing work that is highly valued by our communities, and we are clearly achieving Peace Corps' three goals."**

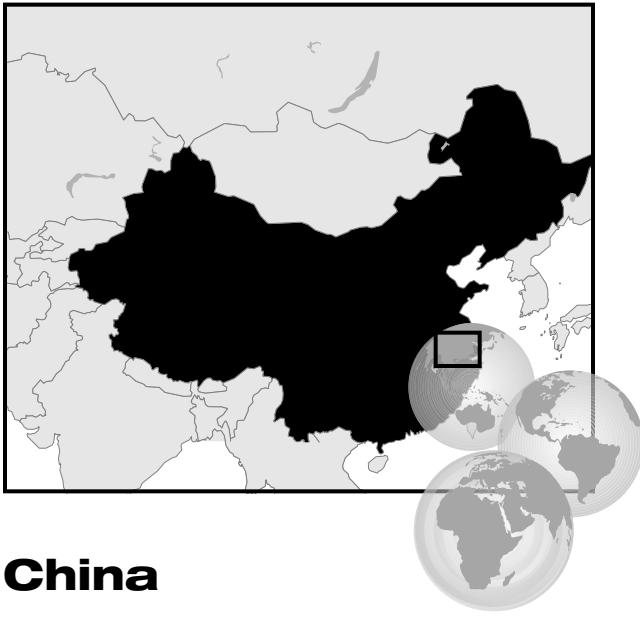
**Chad Volunteer Education Sector**

**"Thanks to their contribution of human resources, the Peace Corps has an impact at the grass-roots level, in both rural and urban areas. They are working not only to improve the quality of education, but the quality of life in their communities. Peace Corps Volunteers are the only foreigners physically present in both urban and rural areas, which is a real contrast to all other international organizations working in Chad."**

**Ministry of Education Official**



Congressman Donald M. Payne and Peace Corps Country Director Nelson Cronyn attended the swearing-in ceremony of new Volunteers in Chad



## China

Capital .....	Beijing
Population .....	1,280 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$960
GDP growth .....	8.0%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 5% Female: 13%
Infant mortality rate.....	30 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 79% Measles: 65%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$49.3 billion
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 94% Rural: 66%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.10%
Religions ( <i>officially atheist</i> ) .....	Buddhism Christianity Islam Taoism
Official language .....	Mandarin

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	103	115
Program funds (\$000)	1,476	1,807

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1993–2003 2004–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Environment

Since 1979, China has been reforming its economy. The Chinese leadership has adopted a pragmatic perspective on many political and socio-economic problems, and has sharply reduced the role of ideology in economic policy. Political and social stability, economic productivity, and public welfare are considered paramount. The government has emphasized raising personal income and consumption and it has introduced new management systems to help increase productivity. It also has focused on foreign trade as a major vehicle for economic growth.

Although these dramatic internal reforms have opened the country to global markets, rapid economic development has left behind many Chinese people who do not have the skills to participate in the new economy, and it has exacerbated China's environmental problems, especially air pollution and soil erosion.

## Program Focus

To help address these challenges, Volunteers are assigned to teach English and environmental education, areas in which the Chinese government has identified a need for increased technical skills. The Chinese government first expressed interest in establishing a Peace Corps program in 1988. The Peace Corps then worked with the Chinese Education Association for International Exchange and the U.S. State Department to finalize an agreement satisfactory to both sides. The first group of 18 Volunteers arrived in 1993 as part of a pilot education project in Sichuan province. At that time, they were referred to as "U.S.-China Friendship Volunteers." In 1998, an official country agreement was signed that formalized the program's expansion into more areas. Volunteers have served in the Sichuan, Guizhou, and Gansu provinces and the Chongqing municipality.

In April 2003, the program in China was temporarily suspended after Peace Corps officials evaluated the safety situation in the country in the wake of the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome)

outbreak and determined that suspension was appropriate. The Peace Corps returned to China in the summer of 2004. Currently, 45 Volunteers are at 29 universities, including two medical colleges and two vocational colleges, teaching English and environmental education. English teaching continues to be the top priority for the universities in Western China and the Chinese government.

## 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 allows greater access to information available internationally and provides expanded opportunities to learn technical skills, conduct business, and fulfill research projects. Peace Corps/China provides this training to both Chinese educators and students.

Volunteers in the English education project have the primary goal of teaching English to students who are training to become middle school English teachers in rural areas, and to train English instructors at the university levels. Volunteers also teach specialized courses in American culture, history, literature, philosophy and critical theory; and they enhance problem-solving skills among their students. 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 their ability to use English in the classroom.

In addition to their regular classroom activities, 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 and offered community lectures on American culture. One popular communication tool is the "English Corner," where Americans gather on street corners, parks, hallways, and anywhere they can find room to accommodate large groups of people, and they simply speak English for an hour. All English teaching Volunteers in China participate or initiate "English Corners" at their universities.

*Volunteer in China exchanging greetings with a host country national*

### Environment

The environmental education project is bringing about improvements to the health and living conditions of Chinese people by increasing their knowledge of environmental protection and sustainable development. Volunteers are posted at universities and colleges, where they work with Chinese teachers of English, biology, chemistry, and other topics relevant to the environment. They teach students and train Chinese teachers.

In addition to their classroom activities, Volunteers plan activities, such as Earth Day and tree-planting days that help raise environmental awareness and promote attitudes and behavior that respect and protect local ecosystems.

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"I teach six hours of American culture to college juniors. There are quite a few misconceptions about America. It's great for me to teach this course and to give an honest picture of America. It's promoting the understanding of America on the part of Chinese people."

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**China Volunteer Education Sector**





## Costa Rica

Capital .....	San Jose
Population .....	4 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$4,070
GDP growth .....	3.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 4% Female: 4%
Infant mortality rate .....	9 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT 94% Measles 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$662 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 99% Rural: 92%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.60%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 69% Evangelical Protestantism: 18% None: 12% Others: 1%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	82	73
Program funds (\$000)	1,732	1,628

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1963-present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Youth
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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 that 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, there are many families and communities in both urban and rural areas that do not benefit from these social gains. President Abel Pacheco has made the fight against poverty, particularly in rural areas, a focal point of his policies.

## Program Focus

Since 1963, more than 2,000 Volunteers have served in Costa Rica in a variety of projects in the health, education, environment, agriculture, small business development, and youth development sectors. The Peace Corps program has changed to respond and adapt to the needs and challenges of Costa Rica and its people. Due to the growing social needs of certain sectors of the population and in light of President Pacheco's priorities, the programming focus is to support the problems of youth and rural community development. Throughout the program's history in Costa Rica, Volunteers have been consistently well-received by Costa Ricans and counterpart agencies.

## Volunteer Focus

### Education

Education is the newest program in Costa Rica. Volunteers in this sector work on project planning and community development to assist communities to combat the growing gap between the rich and poor and the high levels of poverty in rural areas. Volunteers collaborate with Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo de la Comunidad, the national commu-

nity development agency. The poorest rural areas of Guanacaste, Puntarenas, and Limón provinces and the region of Huetar Norte are the areas targeted for development. Volunteers and their Costa Rican counterparts conduct activities to address goals and objectives in three general areas: organizational development of local associations and governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including women's and youth groups; income generation for small businesses and households; and formal and nonformal education.

Most Volunteers in this program teach English as a second language (ESL) to school students and adult groups in their communities. Eighteen Volunteers are working with Junior Achievement in a program to reduce school dropouts. In addition, Volunteers working in this program have assisted more than 31 local community groups organize and prioritize their needs during the past year. One Volunteer worked with the local community to submit a request for funds to construct a park in the center of the community. The park, as a central recreation point, will enhance community integration and provide youth with a healthy outlet in their leisure time.

#### Youth

Volunteers assigned to this program address the needs of youth and families living in marginal communities. The program's overall purpose is to promote a national culture in which all children, youth, and families, including those living in conditions of risk, are respected and granted basic human rights. Volunteers provide skill-building and remediation programs to students and family members through the educational system and existing community organizations. They are strengthening the capacity of Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (Costa Rica's child welfare agency) and marginal communities by developing projects that address the needs of youth and families, and they provide information and training to increase awareness of the rights of children and the needs of youth and families.

Most adults in rural communities have not completed their secondary education; many never completed primary school. Therefore, Volunteers work with children, youth, and adults, promoting and supporting a variety of educational programs, organizing academic support programs for students, and working with schools and their organizations to build their capacity for seeking needed resources.

*Youth sector Volunteers with Costa Rican children*

During the past year, 19 Volunteers organized and facilitated recreational activities with children and youth, including theater, arts and crafts, sports groups, and summer camps. One Volunteer worked with the state-run orphanage to create activities that would complement the boys' and girls' class work.

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**"Since my arrival, I've been working on leadership development with a community youth group, teaching English as a second language in the grade school of 22 students, tutoring in math, and aiding in exam preparations."**

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**Costa Rica Volunteer  
Education Sector**

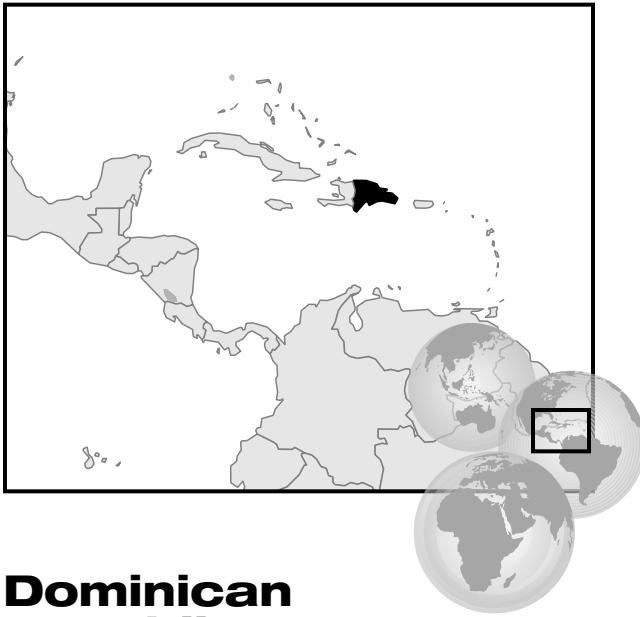
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**"The help that Volunteers have provided in support of new projects has been of enormous value. This collaboration has my full support and projects where Volunteers take part are given top priority."**

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**Annabel Lang, Director  
Direccion Nacional de Desarrollo Comunal**





## Dominican Republic

Capital .....	Santo Domingo
Population .....	9 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,511
GDP growth .....	4.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 16% Female: 16%
Infant mortality rate .....	32 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 72% Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$961 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 90% Rural: 78%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	2.50%
Religion .....	Roman Catholicism: 95%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	165	142
Program funds (\$000)	3,355	3,350

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

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 democratically elected governments. The recent presidential inauguration in August 2004 brought Leonel Fernandez (president from 1996-2000) back to power.

The Dominican Republic's economic success of the 1990s has deteriorated significantly during the past two years. The inflation rate grew by 60 percent in 2003 and more than 50 percent in 2004. Since the change of government, however, the inflation rate has slowed. According to the United Nations Domestic Programme's 2000 Human Development Report for the Dominican Republic, the wealthiest 10 percent of the country receive more than one-third of the income. Poverty incidence in the rural areas is three times higher than in urban areas (exceeding 80 percent), and reaches extreme levels on the Haitian border and in the batey/cane-cutting communities.

## Program Focus

Since 1962, 3,800 Volunteers have provided development assistance to the people of the Dominican Republic. Volunteers work in five sectors in rural and marginalized urban areas.

The Peace Corps enjoys a great deal of support from the government of the Dominican Republic. This is not only because of Volunteers' commitment but because they contribute to those areas identified by the government as priorities: assisting the rural and urban poor and striving to improve health, education, the environment, and community economic development. The youth program is both a stand-alone program aimed at youth and families and a common focus of all other programs. Information and communication technology and HIV/AIDS prevention are also major components of Peace Corps programming in-country. The Peace Corps has a

comprehensive strategy to develop environmental, educational, business, and health projects in the border region with Haiti.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The community economic development project works in urban and rural areas. Volunteers engage in activities that range from business education to strategic planning to technical assistance. In underserved rural communities, Volunteers work with farmers' markets as well as agricultural co-operatives. In urban areas, Volunteers work with micro-entrepreneurs receiving loans from micro-credit organizations. Volunteers also promote business and leadership practices to Dominican youth through leadership/education workshops. All Volunteer activities are carried out so they tap all community stakeholders, including organizational staff, entrepreneurs, and community leaders

### **Education**

In October 2001, an information technology initiative was launched. Volunteers work in computer centers training teachers and students in computer use, forming youth technology clubs, and promoting community access to technology. In 2004, Peace Corps/Dominican Republic expanded its collaboration to include the World Links program with which it will expand the Telecentro model of community information and communications technology development and sustainability.

A special education project was launched four years ago. Volunteers train teachers and school counselors in private and public schools to improve teaching methodologies, classroom management, active learning, and to better serve students with special needs. They also work in the community to strengthen parent groups for children with special needs.

### **Environment**

Environmental efforts include conservation, preservation, environmental education, and ecotourism. Volunteers work in agroforestry and environmental education in schools and in national

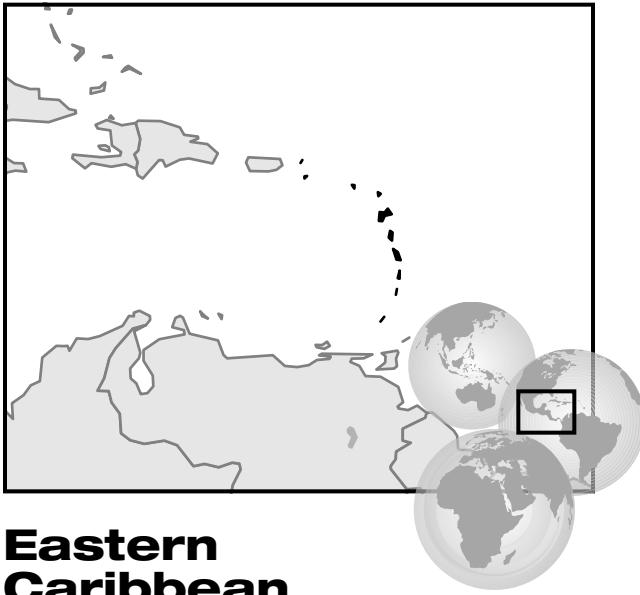
parks. They also promote environmental protection practices with local environmental NGOs and government representatives. During the next year, the post will work more with the sub-secretariat of forestry resources with their new initiative in forest management, especially along the northwestern border with Haiti. The *Brigada Verde* initiative, launched this year, works to create student/youth conservation groups.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers provide assistance in improving sanitation, reducing diarrhea (the leading cause of child mortality), and increasing HIV/AIDS awareness. The World Health Organization ranks the Dominican Republic as ninth in the world in HIV infection. Therefore, all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. The HIV/AIDS strategy focuses on training youth as peer educators, and forms part of three interventions in the Healthy Families project. The other two strategies are nutrition education, including production of nutritious foods; and women's reproductive health. Volunteers are continuing efforts in environmental sanitation through the Healthy Environment project. This project aims to reduce water-borne diseases through the development of water/sanitation systems and a strong health educational component. During the past 12 years, Volunteers and their communities built 90 gravity-flow systems benefiting close to 33,000 people with high-quality potable water.

### **Youth**

Volunteers working in this sector are partnering with organizations as they promote the healthy physical, social, and cultural well-being of marginalized youth in rural and urban Dominican communities. The project seeks to strengthen 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. The program will continue to support the "Don't Call Me a Street Kid" campaign, which started in 2003 as a means to mobilize public support for organizations working with street-based youth.



## Eastern Caribbean

Capitals .....	Antigua and Barbuda: St. John's Dominica: Roseau Grenada/Cariacou: St. George's St. Lucia: Castries St. Kitts and Nevis: Basseterre St. Vincent and the Grenadines: Kingstown
Average population .....	94,000
Average annual per capita income .....	\$4,890
Average GDP growth.....	0.0%
Average adult illiteracy rate .....	6.7%
Average infant mortality rate .....	17 per 1,000 live births
Average immunization rate.....	DPT: 94% Measles: 95.6%
Average foreign direct investment .....	\$45.2 million
Average access to safe water .....	95%
Average HIV/AIDS prevalence.....	Not available
Religions.....	Protestantism Roman Catholicism
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	114	107
Program funds (\$000)	3,058	2,953

## Country Overview

Program dates	1961-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

The Eastern Caribbean enjoys a politically stable environment. Though various attempts to unite the islands politically have failed, the islands were successful 20 years ago in establishing the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, a nine-member group that promotes unity and solidarity. They were also successful 31 years ago in establishing CARICOM, a union that governs trade in the region. All of these governments are committed to providing social services such as free primary and secondary education and health care.

The six nations that make up Peace Corps/Eastern Caribbean 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 500,000, the per capita cost of economic and social infrastructure is high in each island nation. Hurricanes and floods regularly reverse economic gains by destroying fixed investments and disrupting economic activities, particularly in the agriculture and tourism sectors. The recent hurricane that debilitated Grenada not only devastated that country, but, in turn, affected the Eastern Caribbean as a whole. The loss of European preferences on banana exports further threatens economic development of these single-crop economies.

## 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, some 3,310 Volunteers have served on various island nations throughout the region. Most recently, Peace Corps/Eastern Caribbean placed new Volunteers on the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis in February 2004.

Many social and economic problems face Eastern Caribbean youth, who make up about 60 percent of the population. Consequently, Peace Corps programs focus on their educational, health, employment, and life-skills needs. Volunteers work under the umbrella of one youth and community development project in several sub-sectors: special education, health and

HIV/AIDS, information communication technology, and small business development.

## **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 are collaborating with NGOs to establish an umbrella agency that will enable organizations to network and effectively use available resources. Volunteers focus on innovative ways to build capacity and transfer skills, rather than working on ways to fund physical infrastructure. In St. Kitts and Nevis, the Peace Corps collaborated with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Organization of American States to launch a project that fights poverty by exploring and fostering youth's ability to become top business executives through training in the economic and social spheres of life.

### **Education**

Volunteers in the Eastern Caribbean have been instrumental in getting special education placed on the agenda of the ministries of education. Not only are there now classes dedicated to persons with learning disabilities and other special needs, but ministries now recruit staff specifically responsible for special education. Volunteers also transfer teaching techniques and methodologies to their counterparts in schools and provide support to parents.

Volunteers 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. This work focuses on life skills, creative expression through art and music, conflict resolution, and building self-esteem.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers work with ministries of health to develop national HIV/AIDS policies. In primary health-care centers, Volunteers train and disseminate information to health professionals. Three Volunteers produced a health education manual covering primary health care and HIV/AIDS. This manual has been approved by the government for use in schools

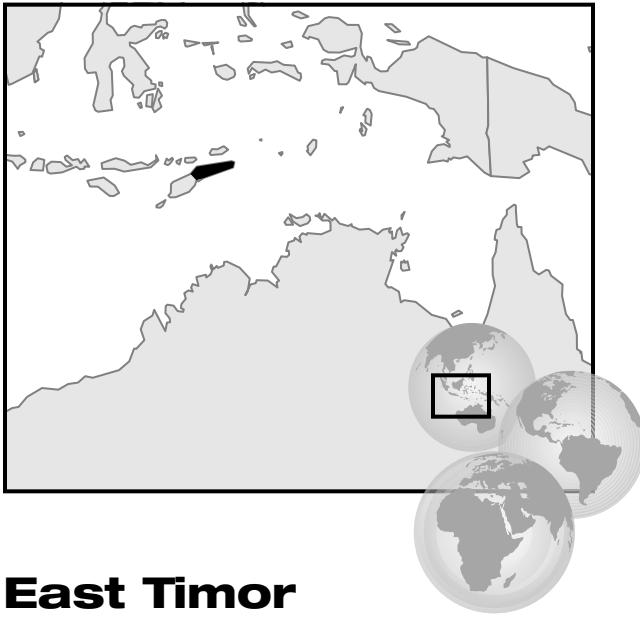
and health centers on one island, and plans are moving forward to circulate it throughout the region. Another Volunteer has developed a life skills manual to help students with issues such as assertiveness, decision-making, behavior modification, and HIV/AIDS. The manual is used by teachers and Volunteers in St. Lucia, and the Ministry of Education is sharing the manual with other island nations.

### **Youth**

Many communities are composed predominantly of out-of-school and out-of-work youth, so Volunteers focus on providing life skills to them, capturing their imagination and energy in after-school programs. On the island of Antigua, for instance, a Volunteer is working in the Big Brother/Big Sister program, promoting mentoring throughout the community. Mentoring raises the youths' self-esteem and self-confidence and improves their interpersonal skills. The mentored youth are less likely to use drugs and skip school. Another Volunteer worked with the Drug Demand Reduction Program in Antigua, which trains youth in drug education and life skills, and provides training for them to serve as peer counselors. In the Caribbean, males are increasingly marginalized, and a Volunteer in Dominica has been working to engage young men in his community in constructive activities through education, sports, and culture.

**"Peace Corps Volunteers have been working together with the youth development division to create a better future for Dominica's youth. They partner with communities and youth at the grass-roots level to build a more optimistic future especially for the marginalized males in the community. This is done through training for employment, self-esteem, and general life skills. Many leave a lasting impression on the youth and community."**

**Ministry of Education, Youth, Sport and Human Resource Development, Dominica**



## East Timor

Capital .....	Dili
Population .....	780,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$520
GDP growth .....	Not Available
Adult illiteracy rate .....	59%
Infant mortality rate .....	124 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	Not Available
Foreign direct investment.....	Not available
Access to safe water .....	46.3%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.64%
Religion .....	Catholicism: 98%
Official languages .....	Portuguese Tetum

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	51	63
Program funds (\$000)	1,402	1,583

## Country Overview

Program dates	2002-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

East Timor achieved independence on May 20, 2002, after a long struggle for independence and three years of governance by a United Nations' transitional administration, whose mandate was to help the Timorese form their own government. While that mission was largely accomplished, the United Nations still has a presence in East Timor.

East Timor's domestic economy is growing slowly and is based on the cultivation of coffee (for export) and rice (for both local consumption and export). According to the 2004 U.N. Human Development Index, East Timor ranks 158 of 177 countries, and it is the poorest nation in eastern Asia. More than 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, with an average income of \$1 or less per day. The Timorese are pinning most of their hopes on the considerable gas and oil deposits found offshore, midway to neighboring Australia. At a minimum, the East Timorese government should recover nearly \$180 million in royalties annually from oil sales during the next five years, although treaties with the Australian government are still being negotiated. Though there may be oil and gas deposits on the island itself, no economically exploitable fields have been identified.

## Program Focus

The first group of 19 Volunteers arrived in East Timor in 2002 to work in municipal development and health promotion. Volunteers were the first international group to be trained in the local language, Tetun, and they work at the grass-roots level in rural towns and villages. The language training manual developed by the Peace Corps is now widely used by international agencies and nongovernmental organizations to teach their own staff.

A second group of 18 Volunteers arrived in 2003 to continue this work. With the arrival of 31 Volunteers in 2004, the Peace Corps expanded its health project to include water and sanitation. It also refocused the municipal development project to village community development with a strong emphasis on improving food security through

improved home gardening. Eighty percent of the population relies on subsistence agriculture with high levels of malnutrition throughout the country. Both projects have increasingly focused on capacity building with youth, women, and village-level community leaders.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Major goals in Peace Corps activities are to improve food security and basic nutrition and to increase per capita income through the creation of food surplus. These activities will be focused on youth and women, the primary subsistence agriculture workers in the country. For example, four Volunteers helped plant backyard gardens, teaching composting techniques and crop diversification to their respective communities.

### **Business Development**

Volunteers help small enterprises improve basic business practices, marketing skills, product development, and technical expertise. They also focus on community development by helping emerging local districts, sub-district governments, and organizations establish efficient practices in providing basic services to their communities. Volunteers work with village leaders and organizations to plan community development projects. They also work to identify local and national resources to meet their needs, including the rehabilitation of infrastructure destroyed after the vote for independence in 1999.

One Volunteer worked with a pottery cooperative to develop a new product—a fuel-efficient wood-burning stove—and a marketing strategy to both sell the product and teach other potters how to make the stoves. Another Volunteer, placed in the government development office, helped district staff develop office standards and practices, computer skills, and a district development plan to address all economic and social sectors in the district. Another Volunteer has worked with local village leaders to widen a footpath to accommodate motor vehicles so villagers can transport their produce to local markets.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The target population of health Volunteers are primarily youth and women (and their young children) with the goal of reducing the high child mortality rate (12.5 percent die before age 5). Volunteers teach general health education in community clinics; assist teachers in the design of lesson plans and the creation of materials for health education; and promote activities of health systems in communities.

Three Volunteers have created professional visual teaching materials on health promotion in Tetun to use with both adults and children. When asked to teach English over the local popular district radio station, a Volunteer incorporated lessons on basic health practices and prevention techniques. Another Volunteer has organized a weekly radio health promotion program that incorporates a question-and-answer format with local health providers.

### **Youth**

Volunteers work formally and informally with youth, teaching life skills, leadership, organizational skills, and health practices. They also promote healthy lifestyles, including physical exercise. A Volunteer used the formation of two soccer teams to teach democratic decision-making organization and leadership. Volunteers have also taught basic literacy to youth who are not able to attend school. Many Volunteers teach basic computer and typing skills to both youth and their coworkers. One Volunteer trained local youth in health promotion and they are now teaching primary schoolchildren throughout their district using drama, skits, and participatory activities.

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**“As we in Bili-Bala Olaria see it,  
the Volunteer helps us very much  
and works diligently with us.”**

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**Adriana Fernandes, Manager  
Bili-Bala Olaria Pottery Cooperative**

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**“Peace Corps Volunteers do small  
things, but they have a big impact.”**

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**Estevao De Carvalho  
District Development Officer**



## Ecuador

Capital .....	Quito
Population .....	13 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,490
GDP growth .....	3.4%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 8% Female: 10%
Infant mortality rate .....	25 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 89% Measles: 80%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1,275 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 90% Rural: 75%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.30%
Religion .....	Roman Catholicism: 95%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	129	92
Program funds (\$000)	2,983	2,844

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1962-present

**Program sectors**

Agriculture
Business Development
Environment
Health and HIV/AIDS
Youth

Ecuador's government, democratically elected in 2002, focuses on poverty alleviation, economic reforms, and anticorruption efforts. The government faces an array of challenges, including the need for serious fiscal and governmental reforms and the impact on its northern border of Colombia's civil war.

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 the majority of Ecuadorians, the Peace Corps has redoubled its efforts in the areas of agriculture, animal production, health, youth, and the environment. 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 land-use practices that are more environmentally sound. They also train farm families in small-animal husbandry practices to meet their nutritional and economic needs. To address the eroding incomes of rural families, Volunteers help farmers and cooperatives improve their business and marketing skills. In 2004, Volunteers worked with Ecuadorian communities to perform approximately 30 feasibility and marketing

studies to more than 150 small business leaders. One Volunteer works in a small Afro-Ecuadorian community with individual families integrating their farms. They have applied innovative techniques to growing native and fruit trees and they have started raising small animals. These animals include bees and goats for milk and cheese production and meat; rabbits for meat and lucky-charm key chains; and guinea pigs for human consumption.

The animal production project helps rural farmers find lower-cost production alternatives so they can meet a portion of their families' food needs. Volunteers focus on pigs, chicken, fish, sheep, goats, guinea pigs, and rabbits. Peace Corps/Ecuador is pursuing opportunities for rural families to start small native animal and native fish production businesses at their own homes for food and income. In 2004, Volunteers managed alpacas and llamas for the preservation and recuperation of the Andean paramo.

### **Business Development**

Volunteers with business skills and training complement the five project sectors. These Volunteers manage a business working group that promotes local artisans' products and eco-tourism. In 2004, Volunteers expanded an innovative community savings/banking project that has been successful in more than 150 communities. Micro-banks help people save and manage their finances, and they provide funds to rural families, which has become particularly important in Ecuador's economic crisis.

### **Environment**

To address the high rate of environmental degradation in Ecuador, Volunteers work in three key areas: sustainable community management of trees and natural areas, environmental education, and income generation activities that address economic needs and promote the sustainable use of natural resources. In 2004, Volunteers promoted environmental education in schools, land management by farmers in buffer zones, soil conservation, and income-generating activities that are benefit-

ing thousands of Ecuadorians. Results can be seen in outputs such as the establishment of several community-based eco-tourism projects that now receive paying guests. One Volunteer started a small agroforestry nursery with 100 seedlings collected in the forest or grown from seeds collected by community members. After a year and a half, the nursery had almost 7,000 plants of 20 different native species at any one time, and the community was outplanting almost 1,000 tree seedlings a month.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Malnutrition affects 60 percent of Ecuadorian children under five. To respond to this critical problem, Volunteers provide training in nutrition and family gardening. They also provide HIV/AIDS education in their communities. In 2004, Volunteers trained more than 1,200 persons, including 100 teachers, about HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention. One Volunteer worked with a new women's safe house to establish a community network with 16 communities to support families, especially women, facing domestic violence issues.

### **Youth**

Volunteers work with youth and families in marginalized neighborhoods to address high school dropout rates, illiteracy, drug abuse, gangs, and unemployment. They create and strengthen youth organizations and provide youth with employment and leadership training. In 2004, Volunteers worked with almost 500 Ecuadorians on domestic violence and family relations in workshop settings. One Volunteer worked with the municipality to establish a safe house for street children.

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**"The Peace Corps Volunteers that  
have worked in Nabón and in our  
communities have provided excellent  
help. The school nursery is still  
producing plants even though the  
Volunteers left several years ago."**

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**Mayor of Nabón**



## El Salvador

Capital .....	San Salvador
Population .....	6 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,110
GDP growth .....	2.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 18% Female: 23%
Infant mortality rate .....	33 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 81% Measles: 93%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$208 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 91% Rural: 64%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.60%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 55% Protestantism
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	120	114
Program funds (\$000)	2,576	2,558

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1979 1993–present
Program sectors	Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The government of El Salvador is pursuing a program of decentralization, which places more responsibility on leaders at the municipal level. 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 municipal development projects. In the aftermath of earthquakes, Volunteers have played a key role in providing damage assessments of their sites, which has helped the government and local NGOs more effectively distribute resources to the most affected communities.

As the smallest, most densely populated country in Central America, El Salvador 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 and aftershocks in 2001 resulted in continued loss of fertile topsoil, decreased crop yields, and displaced communities. These natural disasters also have limited access to health care and potable water by damaging major roads, contaminating water sources, and destroying latrines 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, approximately 110 Volunteers are working in municipal development, environmental education and agroforestry, and health.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

In the late 1980s, El Salvador began to decentralize government responsibilities and services from the national level down to local governments. However, municipal governments lack the legal and policy framework, technical skills, trained staff, and financial means to play a broader role in the country's democratic development. In addition, the citizenry is still gaining experience in the implementation of democratic processes that allows them to meaningfully participate in local decision-making. To address these issues, Volunteers work to increase the capacity of municipal institutions and rural community groups by improving their administration and organization skills. Their work allows municipal offices to better serve their constituents while also allowing community groups to solicit, administer, and manage projects at the local level through increased and effective citizen participation.

Five Volunteers created bulletin boards, newsletters, and brochures that inform community members of municipal activities and projects. One Volunteer, working with her local government counterparts, implemented a road project, created and trained five local development committees, and increased youth involvement in community projects. Another Volunteer worked to establish a municipal recycling and waste disposal program in a town where the local trash was normally dumped on the side of the road.

### **Environment**

Deforestation and the resulting soil erosion have affected more than 80 percent of the nation's territory, according to El Salvador's Hydrological Census Service. This erosion has decreased the availability and sustainability of arable land. Volunteers are involved in environmental education and agroforestry activities to educate farmers about sustainable soil conservation and integrated pest management practices that incorporate environmentally friendly applications, diminish the use of chemicals, and improve organic fertilization. One Volunteer, a wildlife veterinarian, helped an agricultural cooperative cordon off and preserve the natural habitat for an endangered spider monkey population.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers work to increase access to potable water and improve sanitation for rural residents by building and maintaining water systems. They work with community groups to educate people about the maintenance, management, and monitoring of water systems and latrines. Volunteers also collaborate with these groups to expedite communication and cooperation with national and international agencies for future sustainable efforts.

El Salvador is a potentially high-risk AIDS nation because of its proximity and accessibility to Honduras, which has a high rate of HIV infection. Youth in rural communities usually have no reliable information about the spread of HIV/AIDS. To address these concerns, HIV/AIDS has been formally added as a component of the water and sanitation project. Working with rural health promoters from the Ministry of Health and local NGOs, Volunteers now develop educational materials, provide organizational support, conduct house visits, and assist with seminars on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

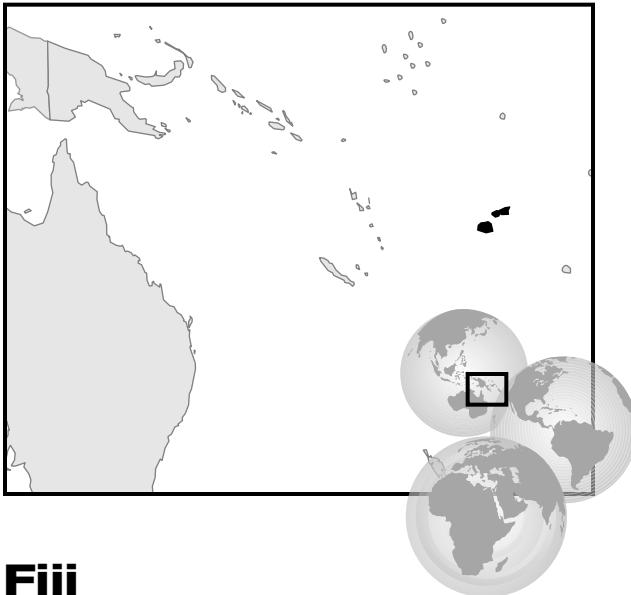
One Volunteer arranged, through a Lion's Club in the Virginia area, to have a young boy flown to the U.S. for an operation to restore vision in one eye that had been severely damaged by a grenade explosion. Peace Corps Director Gaddi Vasquez visited the boy after his operation.

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**"My first thought upon hearing of my assignment was about what I could do to help build a water system. But the main thing is to help the community get organized and to help keep lines of communication open between the community and the outside organization."**

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**El Salvador Volunteer  
Health Sector**



## Fiji

Capital .....	Suva
Population .....	823,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,130
GDP growth .....	4.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	7%
Infant mortality rate .....	16 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 90% Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	-\$2.6 million
Access to safe water .....	47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Not available
Religions.....	Christianity: 52% Hinduism: 33% Islam: 7%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	68	54
Program funds (\$000)	1,758	1,894

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1968–1998 2003–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

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. However, a succession of coups in 1987 and in May 2000 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. The indigenous Fijians control land rights and are guaranteed political authority by the current constitution. Most entrepreneurs and sugarcane farmers are Indo-Fijians; hence, they have great influence on the economy and politics. However, rule of law is still firmly established, and both sides are working to reconcile their political differences and reinvigorate the economy.

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. This has caused shortages in service sectors, such as education and health care. Furthermore, half of the population lives below or close to the poverty line, particularly in rural areas. Overfishing and environmental degradation have reduced food security from traditional sources.

While revenues from tourism, sugar, and garment exports remain the largest contributors to the economy, Fiji also has timber and mineral reserves. Fishing is important both as an export sector and for domestic consumption. Long-term problems include a potential collapse of the sugar and garment industry in 2006, continued low foreign investment rates, and uncertain property rights.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps has a long history of service in Fiji, and more than 2,200 Volunteers served in Fiji from 1968 to 1998. During that time, Volunteers worked in several sectors, including education, rural development, health, small business, agriculture, organizational strengthening, and fisheries. The

people and government of Fiji continue to praise the contributions made by Volunteers and requested that the Peace Corps reopen its program. Peace Corps re-entered Fiji in late 2003 and currently has 45 Volunteers serving throughout the country. Ample programming opportunities exist, but current projects primarily address nonformal education needs in environmental education, agriculture, health, youth, and information technology.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Environment**

Volunteers live and work in communities with existing environmental projects to support and provide technical assistance to participating communities. Predominant concerns are overfishing and the degradation of the marine and terrestrial environment, which are jeopardizing traditional food supplies in many parts of the country. A focus on long-term environmental 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 eco-tourism. One environment Volunteer has implemented a village-wide composting project. Another Volunteer, serving as an environmental advisor for a province, is developing an environmentally sustainable project that will reduce hog-raising waste on the Coral Coast by 30 percent.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers, in partnership with Fijian health educators, provide rural health education and promotion activities related to HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition, and prevention of mosquito-borne illnesses. Volunteers focus on skills transfer and capacity building for newly created health-promotion units at regional and subregional health centers. Additionally, they provide village-based health education that builds local capacity to respond to basic health issues. Health promotion Volunteers have trained more than 600 people on HIV/AIDS education and prevention. Several Volunteers are

working on a project to develop the capacity of rural communities to identify and provide health education and promotion services based on their own priorities and needs. One Volunteer is providing training on counseling skills to health professionals and is assisting in developing Fiji's counseling sector to provide support on emotional health issues.

### **Youth**

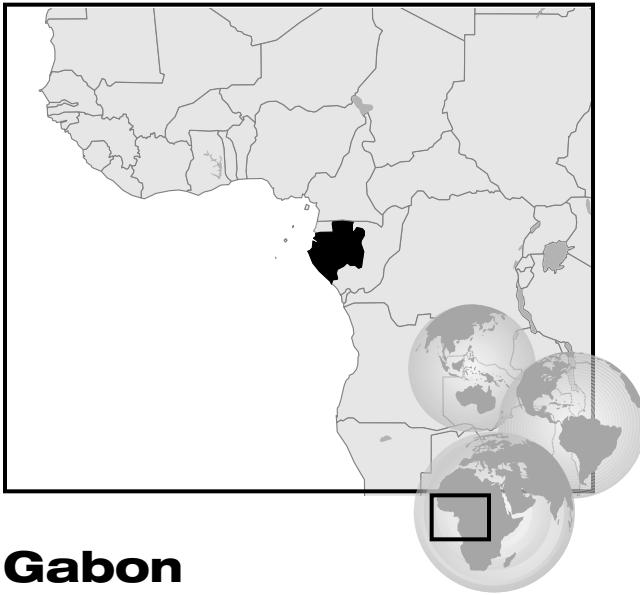
Nonformal education activities focus on life skills, information technology, and income generation. Volunteers partner with local service organizations to engage Fijian youth in activities that enhance life skills for their future roles in their families, communities, and society. Among the topics presented are leadership, decision-making, healthy lifestyles, information technology, career planning, civic responsibility, and income generation. Volunteers also work to build organizational capacities and improve outreach programs conducted by local and international youth-related service providers. Youth Volunteers assist with skills development to prepare youth for employment and social responsibilities. Several Volunteers work with the Fiji Youth Volunteer Corps, which has provided training on HIV/AIDS, first-aid, disaster preparedness and mitigation, and volunteerism to more than 120 young people doing community service. Additionally, Volunteers have taught basic computer skills to several hundred youth in primary, secondary, and vocational schools.

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**"At the beginning I wanted everything to happen quickly, but I have learned that for it to work, I must go slow and be patient about things. It will happen; it will just take time for change. You can't expect for people to change the first time you tell them something — that isn't how Fiji works. Patience is the key!"**

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**Fiji Volunteer  
Health Sector**



## Gabon

Capital .....	Libreville
Population .....	1 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$3,060
GDP growth .....	3.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	37%
Infant mortality rate .....	63 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 38% Measles: 55%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$123 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	4.16%
Religions.....	Christianity Indigenous beliefs Islam
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	29	34
Program funds (\$000)	2,500	2,609

## Country Overview

Program dates	1963–1967 1973–present
Program sectors	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Ruled by autocratic presidents since its independence from France in 1960, Gabon introduced a multiparty system and a new constitution in the early 1990s that produced a more transparent electoral process and subsequent reforms of governmental institutions. Gabon has remained relatively peaceful and stable since its independence. President Omar Bongo Ondimba is Africa's second longest-serving head of state and has been in power since 1967. A constitutional amendment passed in 2003 removed presidential term limits and allows him to run for president as many times as he likes. Political observers expect President Bongo to run again for re-election in December of 2005 when he will be 70.

Abundant natural resources, a small population, and considerable foreign support have helped make Gabon one of the more prosperous African countries. The country enjoys a per capita income more than 12 times that of most sub-Saharan Africa, with a per capita purchasing power parity estimated at \$6,400. While there has been a sharp decline in extreme poverty, a large proportion of the population still remains poor because of income inequality. Gabon was dependent on timber and manganese for revenue until oil was discovered offshore in the early 1970s. The oil sector now accounts for 50 percent of GDP. Gabon continues to face fluctuating prices for its oil, timber, and other exports. Gabon is not self-sufficient in food production and imports large quantities of food from France and neighboring countries.

## Program Focus

The government of Gabon is implementing sustainable development efforts. Efforts focus on human capacity building in conservation of forest and soil resources and tackling health problems related to HIV/AIDS transmission, diarrheal diseases, and malnutrition. Improving education is also a government priority. The educational system continues to experience acute shortages in trained teachers, resources, and curriculum appropriate to the lives

of Gabonese youth. Volunteers are helping Gabon address these issues through education, health, and environmental education projects. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

At the request of the government, the Peace Corps started a new education program in June 2002. Volunteers have been teaching English while using community content-based instruction to incorporate HIV/AIDS, environmental, and gender-specific themes into their lesson plans and presentations. This instruction develops critical thinking, builds self-esteem, develops goal-setting abilities, and encourages responsible behavior. Volunteers are also role models for their counterparts by demonstrating motivation to work and by being involved in after-school activities. These activities include hosting English clubs, offering computer literacy classes to both students and counterparts, organizing awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS, and tutoring students. Several TEFL Volunteers helped international environmental NGOs train newly appointed eco-guides and eco-guards in technical English that will help with eco-tourism efforts in several new national parks.

### **Environment**

Environmental education Volunteers work with schoolteachers and students to incorporate environmental themes into the classroom and organize environment clubs in secondary schools. They also work with communities to address environmental issues and promote HIV/AIDS awareness. In 2004, six Volunteers helped international NGOs to sensitize villagers near newly established national parks to the parks' purpose and the importance of conservation. Peace Corps/Gabon also worked with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Water and Forest to help Gabon join the Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) program. In 2004, more than 20 teachers from 10

schools received training in implementing GLOBE programs in their schools. Volunteers work equally with local and international NGOs on biodiversity conservation and ecotourism initiatives. These partnerships provide a structured environment for Volunteers' work and contribute to the overall objectives of the Congo Basin Initiative.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

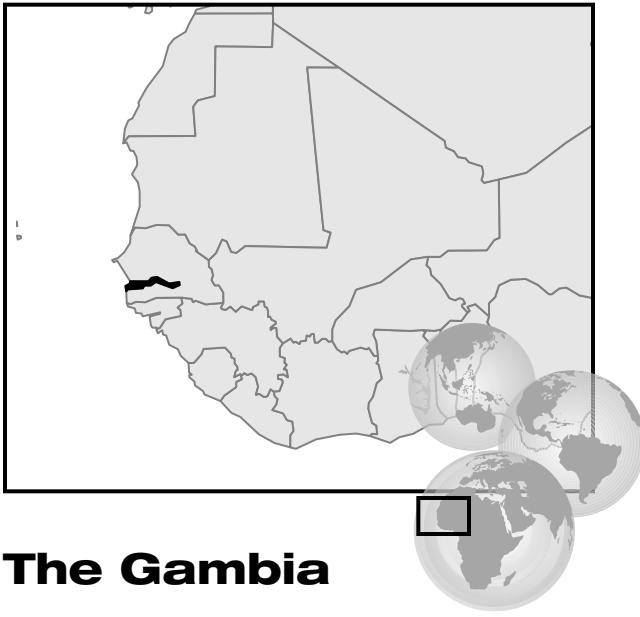
HIV/AIDS education is strategically integrated into all projects. Health Volunteers work in clinics, schools, towns, neighborhoods, and villages to educate people on prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, reproductive health, nutrition, and child health. Volunteers have helped establish peer educator groups, organized vaccination campaigns, and developed seminars for village health workers. In 2004, 25 Volunteers and their counterparts participated in HIV/AIDS life-skills training. The event was facilitated by trainers from local NGOS who were trained by the Peace Corps in 2003, thus building a cadre of trained life-skills experts in Gabon and building capacity throughout the country.

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**“Communication for behavior change regarding HIV/AIDS requires a strong and frank collaboration between the decision-makers and those who are and live closely with the population, for nobody can communicate for behavior change without knowing the target population and those who live in harmony with this population and their involvement and contribution to community actions. Peace Corps/Gabon is a striking example of this harmony!”**

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**Omer Mbouma  
Department of Information,  
Education, and Communication**



## The Gambia

Capital .....	Banjul
Population .....	1 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$270
GDP growth .....	-3.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 56.3% Female: 70.3%
Infant mortality rate .....	91 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 90% Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$43 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 80% Rural: 53%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.60%
Religions.....	Islam: 95% Christianity: 4% Animism: 0.08%
Official languages .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	102	104
Program funds (\$000)	1,886	1,906

## Country Overview

Program dates	1967-present
Program sectors	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Since its independence from Great Britain in 1965, the Gambia has had a series of stable governments. This stability was momentarily 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 and ran and won as a civilian in democratic elections in 1997. He won a subsequent democratic election in 2001. The next election is scheduled for 2006.

The Gambia has no important mineral or other natural resources and a limited agricultural base. Seventy-five percent of the population depends on the agriculture and natural resource sectors for its livelihood, but production of cash and food crops has steadily declined during the past two decades. This decline has been caused by environmental degradation. Small-scale manufacturing features the processing of peanuts, fish, and animal hides. Growth in the tourism industry is being planned and is anticipated.

## 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. Since then, many Gambian institutions and communities have benefited from the services of Volunteers. The Peace Corps' development priorities in the areas of education, the environment, and health match those of the government. An important focus in the education sector is information technology. 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, introduce student-centered teaching techniques and the effective use of learning aids, teach literacy, and launch libraries and resource centers. They promote e-learning, teaching computer literacy, and streamlining business operations using computer technology. For instance, two Volunteers designed, edited, and produced a multimedia CD, "Scientific Mission," which features Gambian teachers and students conducting biology, chemistry, and physics experiments using locally available materials. The CD will be distributed to schools nationwide and its production demonstrates how IT can be used to reinforce concepts in other fields of study. Volunteers worked with the U.S. embassy to revise and update computer use in the Gambian National Assembly. This project focused on automating the record-keeping unit of the national legislature, thereby strengthening the legislative arm of government. Volunteers also participated in the first distance-learning/virtual class in the Gambia. Held at the University of the Gambia, the project was funded by the U.S. State Department. A Volunteer led the technical component of the cultural history class, bringing together students from China, Sweden, the U.S. and the Gambia.

### **Environment**

Volunteers work on a variety of environmental education projects that focus on natural resource management, small enterprise development, and conservation. Some Volunteers work with community groups to establish tree nurseries and fruit orchards and to construct windbreaks and live fences (vegetation used to keep predators out of small gardens). Other Volunteers work extensively with women on community garden projects and skills development. In 2003 and 2004, several Volunteers held beekeeping workshops in different villages that each attracted more than 100 community members. The workshops taught rural Gambians to construct and maintain beehives and to secure a revenue stream from the honey they harvest. Volunteers have also worked in wildlife protection by developing and working with education and eco-tourist centers to protect the Gambia's declining indigenous diversity.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers work in rural areas, where most of the population lives and most are engaged in subsistence farming. Volunteers design and implement activities that raise awareness of common health problems and strategies for preventing them. In 2004, a health Volunteer was concerned about the inability of Cuban doctors and nurses to communicate with their Gambian patients. Cuban doctors represent a large share of the medical staff in-country, and the Volunteer developed a Spanish/Mandinka manual to facilitate communication. A Volunteer with a master's degree in health administration is working with a committee representing a broad range of employees from a regional general hospital. The Volunteer is facilitating the development of the committee's mission and vision statements as well as its values and strategic goals.

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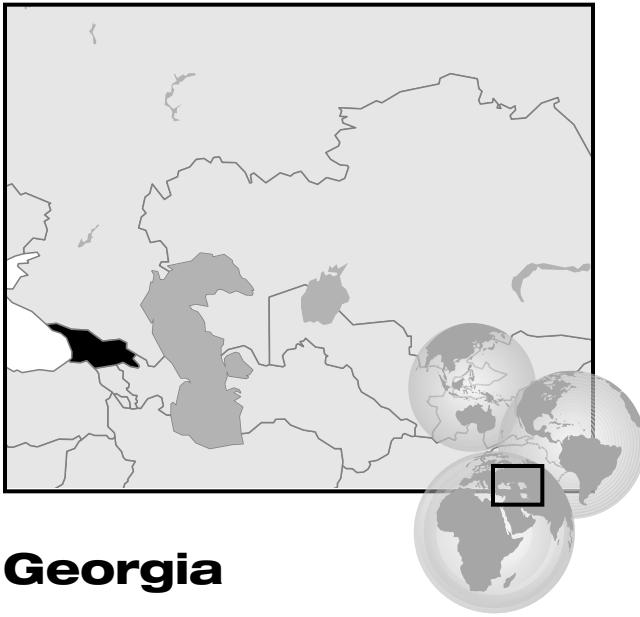
**"The Peace Corps has been active  
in this country for 37 years, during  
which period our partnership has  
steadily broadened to meet  
The Gambia's ever changing  
development needs and challenges."**

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**Gambian Secretary of State  
for Education**



*Math teacher, The Gambia*



## Georgia

Capital .....	Tbilisi
Population .....	5 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$650
GDP growth .....	5.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	1%
Infant mortality rate .....	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 84% Measles: 73%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$165 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 90% Rural: 61%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.1%
Religions.....	Georgian Orthodoxy: 65% Islam: 11% Russian Orthodoxy: 10% Armenian Apostolicism: 8% Other: 6%
Official language .....	Georgian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	67	90
Program funds (\$000)	1,618	1,754

## Country Overview

Program dates	2001-present
Program sector	Business Development Education

The Republic of Georgia is located between the Black Sea and Azerbaijan to its west and east and Russia and Armenia to its north and south. Georgia is a country with a long history and a strong culture. Adjara, an autonomous region, is again incorporated into present-day Georgia, following the sudden departure of its Russian-leaning, self-proclaimed president, Aslan Abashidze, in the spring of 2004. 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 civil war in Abkhazia (1992–1993), Georgia has a large internally displaced population. More than 80 percent of the population fled Abkhazia during and after the civil war.

In January 2004, Mikhail Saakashvili was inaugurated as Georgia's new president. Saakashvili's election followed the Rose Revolution, and heralded a breath of fresh political air 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.

Georgia's main economic activities remain agricultural (nuts, citrus fruits, wine, and spring water), plus manganese and copper mining, small industry, tourism, telecommunications, and transport. The country imports most of its energy, but is in the process of laying gas and oil pipelines (from Azerbaijan to Turkey) that will bring much-needed investment and job opportunities to the region. Economic growth depends upon the present government's ability to address a poor fiscal situation, pervasive corruption, and arbitrary regulation implementation. Interest of foreign direct investment has increased since the Rose Revolution as the Saakashvili government appeals to Turkey, the European Union, and the West. Many have been arrested for corruption, though few have been tried in a court of law.

## **Program Focus**

The Peace Corps began operations in Georgia in 2001 with an education project. The Ministry of Education, individual schools, and communities recognized that English language skills would provide Georgians with many advantages. These include furthering education and advancing careers, accessing information and technology, forging closer relationships with the West, understanding new business practices, and staying abreast of developments in various fields. Thus, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and other community partners, the Peace Corps first established an education program that focuses on English language skills and new teaching methodologies. The program is implemented in secondary English language education, a university program, and teacher training. Volunteers also work with community members on various projects identified by their communities as being high priorities.

In response to the demand for Volunteers' assistance in community outreach programs, a new Peace Corps program in NGO development 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**

There is an increasing awareness and appreciation of Volunteers' assistance in NGO development. This is because of the work Volunteers already do with NGOs in their secondary projects, such as education and rehabilitation of internally displaced children. Consequently, there is an increased demand for more Volunteer assistance in NGO development. Peace Corps/Georgia has begun a new program to meet the needs of local NGOs and community-based organizations in outlying regions of Georgia.

### **Education**

Placed in rural communities throughout the country, Volunteers provide English language instruction to Georgian students and community members, working with English language teachers in provincial and rural public schools. Their primary activities are team teaching with Georgian colleagues, initiating and implementing extracurricular activities for the school community, collaborating with counterparts to develop curricula, and instituting alternative teaching methods. These activities complement the ongoing World Bank-organized education reform program in Georgia.

As a result of the Peace Corps' activities, 65 secondary schools in nine regions of Georgia piloted new English textbooks; interactive teaching methodologies were introduced; and more than 200 Georgian teachers of English were trained in new approaches to teaching, testing, assessment, and evaluation. Additionally, more than 50 schools opened English resource rooms and language labs; nine schools established school and community computer centers; and more than 40 schools started after-school English clubs for students and interested community members. Volunteers arranged summer schools, Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) camps, and ecology camps where more than 250 girls and boys received training in leadership, life skills, critical thinking, environmental awareness, and conflict resolution.

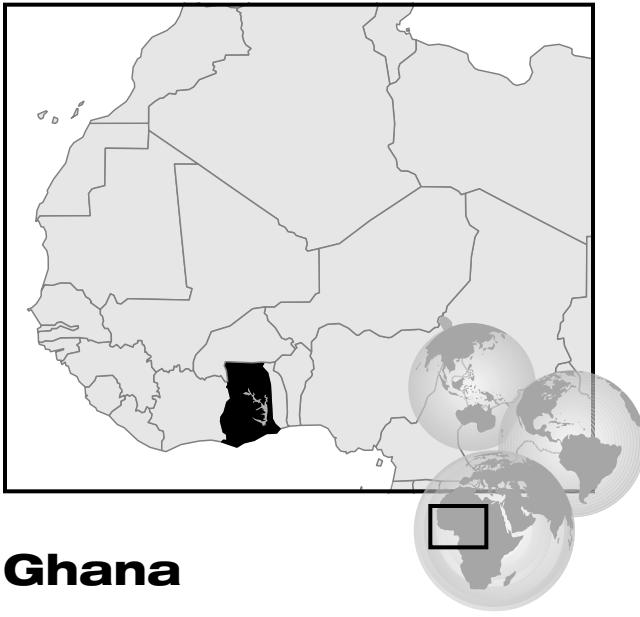
Volunteers assisted secondary schools in rehabilitation projects by training school and community members in project design and management and helping to develop their grant-writing, fundraising, and project monitoring and evaluation skills. Volunteers' efforts have supported the sustainability of numerous school and community projects. These have included gym renovations, school reconstructions, creation of language labs, and garden and farm projects.

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**"My success is the combination  
of successes in lives of different  
people in my community."**

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**Georgia Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Ghana

Capital .....	Accra
Population .....	20 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$270
GDP growth .....	4.5%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 18% Female: 34%
Infant mortality rate.....	60 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 80% Measles: 81%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$50 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 91% Rural: 62%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	3%
Religions .....	Christianity: 69% Islam: 16% Indigenous beliefs: 9% None: 6% Other: <1%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers *Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	151	155
Program funds (\$000)	2,824	2,848

## Country Overview

Program dates	1961-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Ghana's political environment is stable despite instability in some parts of West Africa. The 2000 presidential election was peaceful and has led Ghana in a new direction. The current administration promotes a private sector-led development approach heralded as the "Golden Age of Business."

The presidential and parliamentary elections of December 2004 will be historic because they mark the longest multiparty democratic period in Ghana's post-colonial history. It is expected to be free, fair, transparent, and without any irregularities.

The government remains committed to extending and strengthening democratic institutions. Civil society organizations are emerging as active participants in framing the policy agenda. Parliament's prominence as a dynamic branch of government is growing. The press is free and vibrant.

The overall level of poverty decreased from 52 percent in 1992 to 40 percent in 1999. Modest gains have been made in primary school enrollment. However, the economy grew by less than 4 percent in 2001, the lowest growth rate in a decade, and inflation is estimated at more than 30 percent. Economic growth has not been accompanied by improved health statistics as would normally be expected.

There continues to be a large deficit of teachers in mathematics, science, and computer technology, particularly in rural areas. Deterioration of the environment, from factors such as deforestation and drought, also has had a negative impact on social and economic demographics. Access to clean water remains a problem. Ghana has the highest rate of Guinea worm disease in the world.

## Program Focus

Ghana was the first country to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers. Since 1961, some 4,000 Volunteers have served in Ghana. The government regards Volunteers' work as a significant contribution to community and national development. It has been estimated that one-quarter of current senior-level government officials and industry leaders were taught by Peace Corps Volunteer teachers in the

1960s and 1970s. Officials frequently express the difference it made in their lives.

The Peace Corps' programming strategy is derived from the 1983 government economic recovery program. Current programs are consistent with the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy of 2002. This strategy is the basis for Peace Corps' participation in Ghana's economic recovery, and the protection and promotion of its human and natural resources. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers provide training in ecotourism, small- and micro-business development, financial management, marketing, product quality, client servicing, standards, and credit availability for small entrepreneurs. They work with international and local nongovernmental agencies, local governments, and private sector associations, in both urban and rural areas. Volunteers have won several Ghana government awards in ecotourism. They also organize 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.

### **Education**

Volunteers teach science, mathematics, and visual arts in 15 percent of Ghana's public senior secondary schools, including rural schools and 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 at schools.

One Volunteer teaches 176 students, 60 of whom are girls in a needy rural school for hearing-impaired and mentally handicapped students. The Volunteer has prepared a proposal to construct a vocational center to equip students with employable and life skills for their future lives. Along with the students, the Volunteer has painted a wall-sized world map to learn about the world. Additionally, the Volunteer produces resources for the teaching of visual art and sign language and is leading a drama club to teach vulnerable students about HIV/AIDS and community development.

### **Environment**

Volunteers reduce environmental degradation through partnerships with governmental and non-governmental agencies. Deforestation, diminished soil fertility, erosion, and disappearance of naturally occurring bodies of water are persistent issues in Ghana. As agroforestry managers, Volunteers direct the planting and sale of more than 1 million seedlings each year at community schools, clinics, churches, community forest reserves, and woodlots. They develop sustainable community groups in more than 50 communities each year. They transfer management skills for natural resource-based income-generating projects. Ten Volunteers developed environmental science education projects at 30 junior secondary schools with 1,000 students. A pilot aquaculture project begins this year.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers promote behavior change to reduce water- and sanitation-related diseases and to create HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. In 2004, 22 Volunteers helped 49 communities plan, acquire, operate, and manage their own water and sanitation facilities. Volunteers work with nongovernmental organizations to extend piped water where the ground structure makes sinking of boreholes economically impractical. Volunteers work on a school health education program that extends school-based health knowledge to homes. They also assist local health clinics to expand services to the full community and surrounding clinics. Volunteers assist the clinic staff with educational issues on hygiene, sexual reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, and nutrition. In 2004, health Volunteers created HIV/AIDS awareness trainings for men, women, and children. Two health Volunteers are working directly with groups of people living with AIDS to engage them in educational outreach programs. One-third of health Volunteers are working to eradicate the debilitating Guinea worm disease.

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**"Without good health, there cannot  
be sustainable development."**

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**Ghana Volunteer  
Health Sector**



## Guatemala

Capital .....	Guatemala City
Population .....	12 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,760
GDP growth .....	2.2%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 23% Female: 38%
Infant mortality rate .....	36 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 84% Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$110 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 98% Rural: 88%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1%
Religions.....	Protestantism Roman Catholicism Traditional Mayan
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	173	162
Program funds (\$000)	3,727	3,589

## Country Overview

Program dates	1961-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Guatemala is a democratic republic with separation of powers and a centralized national administration. A new government took office in January 2004 following a highly participatory and peaceful electoral process. This successful election has renewed international organizations' interest in Guatemala, which represents an opportunity for the Peace Corps to become more directly engaged in the dialogue on future development strategies.

Guatemala's complex topography, as well as its cultural and linguistic diversity (22 indigenous languages), complicates efforts to expand education and health services, and contributes to extremely low labor productivity. 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 currently in place.

Throughout the years, the Peace Corps has been a significant resource in grass-roots development in Guatemala. In recognition of 41 years of quality service, President Berger awarded the Peace Corps with the Orden del Quetzal, the highest honor bestowed upon either individuals or organizations.

## Program Focus

The program in Guatemala, which began in 1963, is one of the Peace Corps' oldest. Since the program started, some 4,500 Volunteers have served in Guatemala. More than 175 Volunteers now work in agriculture, business development, the environment, health, and with youth.

## Volunteer Focus

### Agriculture

Fifty-two percent of Guatemala's economically active population works in agriculture. With the current economic crisis resulting from a major drop in coffee prices, plus a severe drought in regions of

eastern Guatemala, improved methods for sustainable agriculture are of even greater importance in addressing rural poverty and food security. Volunteers work to increase small-animal production, diversify agricultural production, better manage harvests, and promote post-harvest marketing and home-based agroprocessing. Volunteers also train Guatemalans in information and communication technology activities.

During the past year, Volunteers working in agriculture projects have helped create close to 250 vegetable gardens, and they have trained 550 local families on sustainable agricultural techniques. One Volunteer formed a marketing committee for the group "Women of Ratzamut" because she saw the need for them to trade products themselves. This Volunteer worked with the women on simple marketing studies, as well as product presentation.

### **Business Development**

The lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector forces nearly 72 percent of the economically active population in Guatemala into the informal economy. Volunteers in business development work with youth and adults to improve the overall profitability of small businesses. Their activities include working with women-owned and women-operated businesses and through the schools to teach practical skills that encourage entrepreneurial activity and teamwork. Training by Volunteers to the board of directors of Mujeres Mayas Comunicadoras has improved the process by which they utilize the concepts learned on a daily basis. In turn, there are 15 women that are associated with the organization that will train future scholarship students with the learned skills and techniques.

Volunteers also help strengthen the capacity of municipal authorities to deliver quality services, to enhance municipal planning, and to increase citizen participation. They do this by directly involving local people in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of local development projects. One Volunteer worked with a municipality to localize the planning process for its development plan. The plan that was developed with local government officials has been used at department and national levels.

### **Environment**

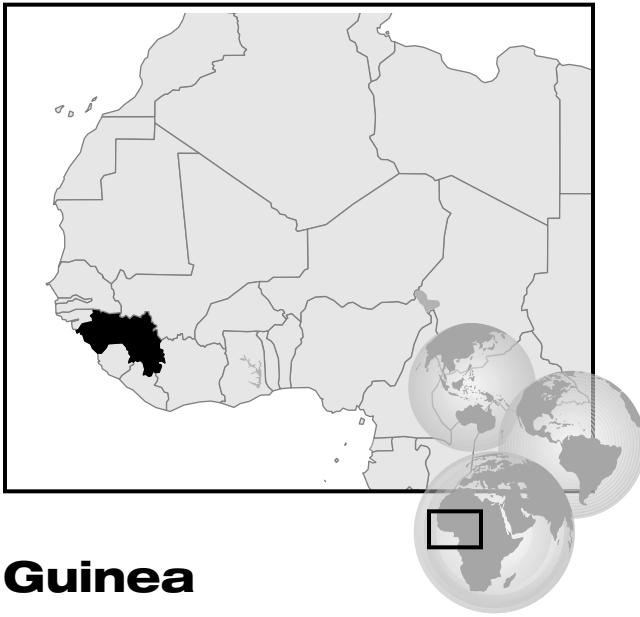
The rapid environmental deterioration and depletion of Guatemala's natural resources are undermining its rich biodiversity and limiting its potential for economic development. Volunteers work in environmental conservation activities to decelerate environmental degradation in protected areas, municipal nature reserves, and other areas where natural resources are particularly threatened. Volunteers are assigned to one of three complementary areas: ecotourism, integrated environmental education, and agroforestry.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The poor health of rural families is related to poor personal hygiene, respiratory problems resulting from indoor cooking fires, and lack of access to safe drinking water. Volunteers work to improve the health of rural elementary school students through education and improved school and community sanitation. They also promote the participation of rural teachers and parents in activities to improve student health and hygiene. In addition, Volunteers have introduced 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. One Volunteer used participatory education techniques to teach children about the environmental problems in their own communities. Following various sessions, the students began working with community members to change environmentally unsound habits.

### **Youth**

The demographics of Guatemalan society, with 50 percent of the population under 24 years of age, underline the importance of involving youth in the development of the country. Volunteers work with youth through activities in environmental education, junior entrepreneurship, and healthy schools. One Volunteer worked with a small group of girls who joined a community youth group to increase their self-confidence.



## Guinea

Capital .....	Conakry
Population .....	8 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$410
GDP growth .....	4.2%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 41.3% Female: 73.6%
Infant mortality rate .....	106 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 47% Measles: 54%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$0 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 72% Rural: 36%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.5%
Religions.....	Islam: 85% Christianity: 8% Indigenous beliefs: 7%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	98	92
Program funds (\$000)	2,483	2,619

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1962–1966 1969–1971 1985–present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS
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Guinea was the first French colony in Africa to gain its independence, which occurred in 1958 under the leadership of Sékou Touré. Soon after President Touré's death in 1984, a military coup, led by Guinean Army colonel Lansana Conté, took charge in the midst of a political dispute among high-ranking officials over succession. Conté subsequently became president and he has held this position ever since. A constitutional committee was established in 1988, and proposals for a new constitution were put to a popular vote at the end of 1990. The proposals received an overwhelming endorsement, ending the first phase of the transition to a democratically elected government. In 1991, a multiparty system was legalized, and a timetable for future elections was 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.

In 2001, a referendum passed that extends the president's term in office from two terms to life.

Despite its mineral wealth, Guinea is one of the poorest countries in the world. The tropical country's economy depends primarily on agriculture. Leading crops are coffee, bananas, palm kernels, and pineapples. Rich deposits of iron ore, gold, and diamonds exist, but Guinea's underdeveloped infrastructure prevents them from being exploited. Guinea's industrial and commercial sectors are in the early stages of development. Mining is the most dynamic and important source of foreign exchange, and it provided more than 90 percent of the export revenues for much of the 1980s. Guinea possesses about 30 percent of the world's known bauxite reserves, ranks second only to Australia in ore production, and is the world's largest exporter of bauxite.

## Program Focus

From the initial group in 1962 to the present, more than 1,000 Americans have served as Volunteers in Guinea. The program today responds to the

government of Guinea's top priorities: education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and small business development. The Peace Corps enjoys strong support from all levels of the government and people of Guinea, and an increasing number of international, national, and local NGOs as well as other private organizations are interested in collaborating with Volunteers. Volunteers are much in demand by schools, health centers, and rural communities, and the demand regularly exceeds the supply. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers work as small enterprise development advisors in medium to large communities. Their work is aimed at empowering youth and small-scale entrepreneurs to play an active role in the economic development of their communities by building their capacity through business management training, the creation and strengthening of market linkages, and establishing sound accounting systems. Volunteers also help individuals develop ideas into structured plans that can help fuel a successful business. The project supports two major cross-sectoral initiatives: empowering women and information and communication technology.

### **Education**

Volunteers have worked in Guinean secondary schools since 1986. In line with the country's priorities, Peace Corps/Guinea's education sector intervenes in four areas: fostering students' access and performance, building teachers' capacity, improving school resources, and enhancing communities' self-reliance. Volunteers teach TEFL, math, and physics. Almost all of the education Volunteers incorporate gender equity values in their daily teaching or give remedial instruction to girls in their schools. Many do secondary projects that help females cope with educational and developmental problems they face. In 2003, Peace Corps/Guinea started the GLOBE

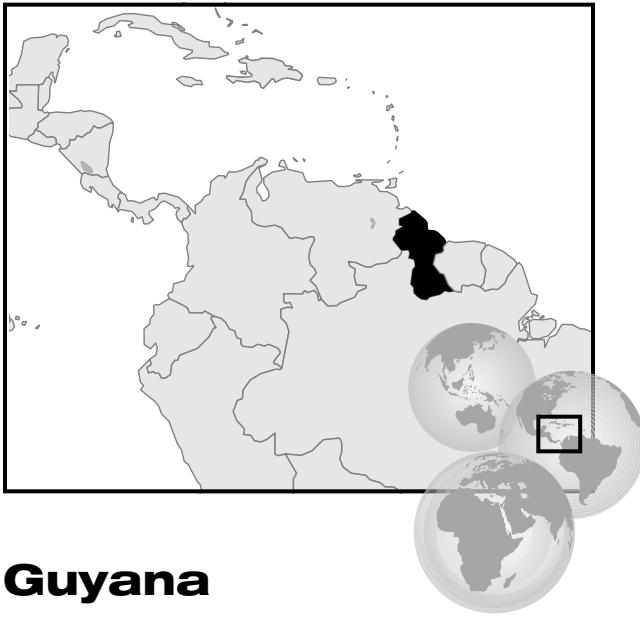
(global learning and observation to benefit the environment) program in 15 new junior high schools. This program focuses on collection of atmospheric data and emphasizes the importance of scientific information in daily life.

### **Environment**

Approximately 80 percent of Guineans derive their living from agricultural activities. Traditional slash-and-burn practices, heavy rains, and the growing number of refugees from neighboring countries have negatively impacted the environment. Volunteers work with counterparts, water and forest technicians, and primary school teachers to raise awareness of environmental issues, promote sound agroforestry practices, and better the lives of rural people. The focus is on community participation at the grass-roots level to address top priorities of the rural population: boosting farm yields, food security, income generation, and environmental protection. For instance, one Volunteer and his community initiated a trash collection and recycling service for the publicly used areas in the town to protect the environment and beautify their town.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers work as public health extension agents in small rural communities. Their overall task is defined broadly as health promotion with specific intervention that directly supports the Ministry of Health's priority activities. These priority activities address diarrhea control, malaria control, reproductive health, and nutrition. Volunteers' work focuses on identifying problems by conducting community needs assessments and then transferring assessment skills as well as health education and project management skills to Guinean counterparts. Volunteers and their counterparts participate in annual HIV/AIDS workshops that provide participants with tools to carry out effective health education work. One Volunteer who coordinates gender and AIDS issues worked with a local NGO to record French and local language testimonies of four individuals living with HIV/AIDS. This cassette is distributed to all Volunteers as a resource for their fieldwork.



## Guyana

Capital .....	Georgetown
Population .....	766,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$860
GDP growth .....	-1.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male 1.1% Female: 1.9%
Infant mortality rate .....	49 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 91.5% Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$ 56.1 million
Access to safe water .....	94%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	2.7%
Religions.....	Christianity: 57% Hinduism: 33% Islam: 9% Other: 1%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	56	49
Program funds (\$000)	1,539	1,515

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1967-1971 1995-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Health and HIV/AIDS

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. In 2003, the two main political parties, which are divided along racial lines, made efforts at dialogue. 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 savanna 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 health-care 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 350 Volunteers have served in Guyana. The reentry was initiated in response to the government's desire to improve its health-care system in rural communities and respond to the needs of a growing youth population with limited employment and educational opportunities. Volunteers address these needs by providing community health education and youth development in collaboration with relevant ministries and NGOs. They help facilitate community involvement, train service providers, and introduce new training and teaching methodologies. The education project

incorporates an information technology component that responds to a request from the Ministry of Education and community-based organizations to enhance their computer training for students, educators, and others.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Guyana has fallen to last place on the Caribbean community's standardized examination. Education needs include raising levels of literacy and numeracy, life skills, special education, environmental education, physical education, and teacher training in curriculum development, methodologies, and instruction. Much work is also needed in 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 enables these youth to meet the challenges of adolescence and contribute positively to their communities. One Volunteer held a workshop with youth on conflict resolution. 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 also help students with career preparation, teaching them to develop resumes, write application letters, create personal job networks, and establish goals and plans.

Two Volunteers prepared a school-based assessment manual for teachers of integrated science. The manual contained illustrations and teaching materials for each science concept being taught in the curriculum. The manual was forwarded to the Ministry of Education's National Center for Educational Research and Development for review and may become a resource document for the teaching of integrated science.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Guyana's general health indicators are the worst in the region with the exception of Haiti. The government has implemented a national health plan, and its first-order priorities are malaria, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), acute respiratory infections, immunizable diseases, and prenatal problems. Second-order priorities are malnutrition and diarrhea disease. Volunteers focus on activities that are in line with these priorities.

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. In 2003, Peace Corps/Guyana 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 part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

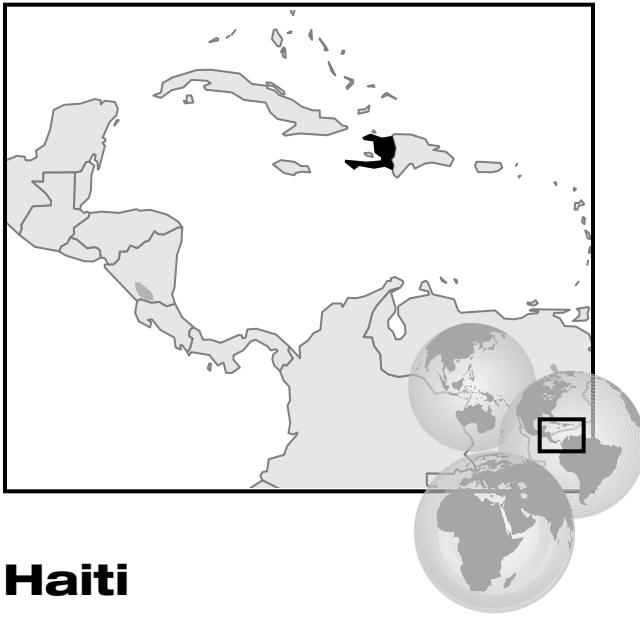
One Volunteer working in a health center works with schools to promote and develop school health clubs. These clubs promote healthy living styles and address the critical health issues facing youth. This work has been recognized by the Ministry of Health, and the Volunteer has been asked to work at the national level to promote health clubs and youth health camps in the summer with a focus on HIV/AIDS information and counseling.

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**"Peace Corps Volunteers bring energy and motivation to their work."**

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**Dr. Leslie Ramsammy  
Minister of Health**



## Haiti

Capital .....	Port-au-Prince
Population .....	8 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$440
GDP growth .....	-0.9%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 46% Female: 50%
Infant mortality rate .....	79 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 43% Measles: 53%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$3 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 49% Rural: 45%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	6.1%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 80% Protestantism: 16% Voodoo
Official languages .....	French Creole

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	17	26
Program funds (\$000)	1,392	1,414

## Country Overview

Program dates	1982–1987 1990–1991 1996–2004 2004–present
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Program sectors	Agriculture Environment Health and HIV/AIDS
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Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, occupies the western one-third of the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean, with a land surface the size of the state of Maryland. Approximately 80 percent of the population lives below the poverty level and unemployment is estimated at 70 percent. Haiti's social and economic indicators are similar to those of many sub-Saharan African countries, making it one of the poorest countries in the world. The country's economic crisis continues with negative annual growth rates, declining per capita income, and double-digit inflation.

Nearly 70 percent of Haitians live in rural communities and depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Most farmers engage in small-scale subsistence farming. Urbanization, expansion of crop cultivation, and the burning of wood for fuel have accelerated deforestation and soil erosion. Consequently, agricultural production has steadily declined, and the country's forest cover has been nearly eliminated.

The Peace Corps has worked in Haiti during three separate periods of time: 1982 to 1987; 1990 to 1991; and 1996 to present. At the end of the first two periods, Volunteers were evacuated for safety and security reasons due to political instability and the program closed. In February 2004, the program was suspended for six months due to political instability; however, eight Volunteers returned in August 2004 to continue the work they were doing when the program was suspended.

## Program Focus

Volunteers' work in HIV/AIDS education, agricultural development, environmental education, and other work has become well known and respected in the country. Recognizing the urgent need to address HIV/AIDS, the Peace Corps/Haiti program has focused on HIV/AIDS education and prevention. In 2004, Haiti was identified as a country in the

President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. In collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and USAID, Peace Corps/Haiti has provided significant input in the design and implementation of the country's efforts. Volunteers work with the CDC to provide education and training to rural community members on the use of the CDC's testing stations. All Volunteers, regardless of their project focus, are trained in HIV/AIDS prevention and education.

In the past nine years, Peace Corps/Haiti has strived to establish a sustainable development program that meets the needs of the Haitian people and, at the same time, enables success for Volunteers by ensuring their safety, security, and health.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers assist local farming organizations and individual farmers in identifying community assets and using them to improve living standards. Volunteers also work to help farmers increase agricultural production. One Volunteer developed an agriculture group of men and women that meets weekly to outline concepts for the prevention of erosion and increased agricultural output on subsistence-level plots. As a result, more than 10 families will increase output from their crops so they can begin selling vegetables and grains for profit. Also, they are protecting the land using new farming practices that prevent soil erosion that they learned from the Volunteer.

### **Environment**

Volunteers work with their communities to rehabilitate the environment through reforestation, soil conservation, and environmental education. As a result of one Volunteer's work, a six-grade class (ages 12–18) now has a foundation of basic environmental awareness through interactive learning. This type of learning encourages critical-thinking concepts so that the students are aware of their actions and their impact on the environment. With the recent flooding in Haiti due to heavy rains and hurricanes, the students see a connection between saving the environment and saving lives.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers promote health and HIV/AIDS education and raise health standards by teaching commu-

nities how to fight chronic malnutrition, stressing the importance of immunizations, sanitation, and child and maternal health. Volunteers work primarily with women and children in collaboration with health agencies. Active community partners worked with one Volunteer to form and train a group of more than 100 females, ages 15–25, which still meets weekly to discuss health topics, self-esteem, and women's issues. They traveled in small groups to five additional communities and conducted seminars on self-esteem and HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted disease prevention. These 100 women are now respected women's health educators. To date, more than 400 other young women in surrounding communities have benefited from their knowledge, hard work, and confidence.

As providing education to youth becomes an important part of community development, Volunteers focus on youth and incorporate more youth activities in their work plans. One Volunteer is working with a youth organization that actively recruits off the street and integrates youth back into the school system and back with their families. The Volunteer provides health seminars for children and parents on AIDS, family planning, nutrition, and other health issues that can improve their lives. As a result of this collaboration, close to 50 youth are getting an education and staying away from drugs, prostitution, and other vices found within street culture.

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**"The importance of a Peace Corps  
Volunteer in the community of a  
developing country should not be  
underestimated. ...Because we are  
a part of our community, we are  
best positioned to identify needs  
and devise simple strategies to solve  
problems. People in my Haitian town  
remember every Volunteer who  
has served in the area with great  
fondness and respect. Their very  
presence gave people hope that  
the future could be better."**

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**Haiti Volunteer  
Health Sector**



## Honduras

Capital .....	Tegucigalpa
Population .....	7 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$930
GDP growth .....	2.5%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 20% Female: 20%
Infant mortality rate .....	32 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 95% Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$143 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 81%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.6%
Religion .....	Roman Catholicism: 97%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers *Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	223	200
Program funds (\$000)	4,035	3,828

## Country Overview

Program dates	1963–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

From the late 1960s to the early 1980s, the armed forces were the principal political force in Honduras, governing directly, influencing general policy, and controlling national security affairs. The Honduran Constitution of 1982 provides the foundation for democracy, which continues to evolve in the post-armed forces era. The private sector, laborers, farmers, teachers, and professionals are all highly organized and actively pursue their own interests through a variety of means, including media, personal contact with officials, rallies, and demonstrations.

In November 2001, Ricardo Maduro of the National Party was elected President, outpolling the Liberal Party candidate by 8 percent. Observers considered the elections free and fair. During his campaign, Maduro promised to reduce crime, reinvigorate the economy, and fight corruption. President Maduro's term in office extends to December 2006.

Honduras is one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America. Poverty and food insecurity are exacerbated by the continuing effects of natural disasters such as Hurricane Mitch and the recent drought in which southern Honduras suffered a total grain loss. Current Honduran initiatives for economic expansion include tourism, focused on the Caribbean coast, the Bay Islands, and the Maya ruins of Copan; and re-export factories known as maquiladoras. Coffee, shrimp, bananas, and forest products continue to be the leading export commodities.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps has enjoyed a long history in Honduras, with more than 5,000 men and women having served as Volunteers since the program's inception in 1963. During the past 40 years, the Peace Corps has helped Honduras achieve many positive results. These include creating and implementing a national park system, expanding the national education curriculum to include environmental education,

reducing infant mortality through education, and constructing water and sanitation systems.

Honduras is currently the largest program in the Peace Corps' Inter-America and Pacific Region, with more than 250 Volunteers working in the areas of child survival and health, business development, agriculture and management of protected areas, water and sanitation, youth development, and municipal development.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Excessive use of slash-and-burn agriculture and poor soil conservation techniques on the hillsides of Honduras is causing a severe loss of quality topsoil, which, in turn, is diminishing crop yields. This situation is compounded by a lack of crop diversification, poor management skills, and few small-scale agribusiness initiatives. Consequently, farmers have difficulty generating and effectively 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. In 2004, Volunteers helped create a laboratory to produce natural enemies for the Broca coffee weevil, a pest responsible for more than 90 percent of the losses in coffee production.

### **Business Development**

Lack of basic business skills has limited economic opportunities for many low-income Hondurans. Volunteers assist people in the poorest communities by identifying local employment opportunities, improving business management practices, and training micro-entrepreneurs in basic business skills. Volunteers are also developing training programs in information technology to help business owners improve efficiency.

As a result of decentralization, Honduran municipalities have a critical need to improve the delivery of public services and strengthen community organizations. Volunteers help increase the capacities of municipal governments by training municipal employees and authorities to better manage the services they provide. For example, in 2004,

one Volunteer created a database for his municipality that links land registries to property taxes and public services. This has allowed the municipality to significantly increase revenues.

### **Environment**

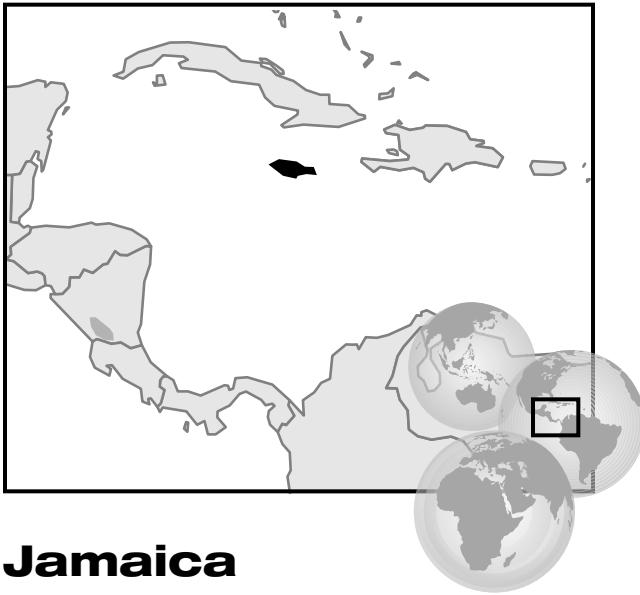
Honduran forest reserves and coastal areas are at risk of overexploitation. Urbanization poses a major threat to watersheds and protected areas throughout the country. Volunteers work with the national forest service and local nongovernmental organizations to promote environmental awareness, sound micro-watershed management practices, and ecotourism among farmers and schools in communities adjacent to protected areas. In 2004, Volunteers helped to organize a national coastal resources management workshop where participants learned to use coastal resources sustainably.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

In rural Honduras, poor knowledge of proper hygiene practices, sanitary waste disposal, and the protection of water sources is causing widespread health problems, disease, and malnutrition. Volunteers train communities on water-source rehabilitation, expansion, and construction, as well as on the construction of fuel-efficient wood-burning stoves. In addition, they are responding to the critical need for health education and accessible health care by providing education on infant care, vaccination programs, and nutrition. Volunteers are increasingly involving women and youth in their projects. In 2004, one Volunteer inaugurated a water system that will benefit 400 people. Other Volunteers collaborated to organize workshops in several towns to train participants in HIV/AIDS education and outreach techniques.

### **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 that can help them develop as humans, citizens, family members, and professionals. In 2004, one Volunteer obtained a donation of 20 computers for youth centers in two communities where young people can now learn basic computer skills.



## Jamaica

Capital .....	Kingston
Population .....	3 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,690
GDP growth .....	1.1%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 16% Female: 9%
Infant mortality rate .....	17 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 87% Measles: 86%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$481 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 98% Rural: 85%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.20%
Religions.....	Anglicanism Judaism Rastafarianism Protestantism Roman Catholicism
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	115	107
Program funds (\$000)	2,927	2,867

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962-present
Program sectors	Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Jamaica is striving to strengthen its economy and escape from a burden of debt. Increased poverty caused by inadequate educational programs, fast urbanization, and a sluggish economy has had a tremendous impact. Close to 70 percent of the budget is set aside to service the national debt, leaving no other choice than to borrow for meeting vital national needs. About 20 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and the government is struggling to provide the services and education that will improve people's standard of living and promote productive enterprise. The country is still recovering from the devastating impact of Hurricane Ivan of 2004, which affected 207 communities.

Providing opportunities to marginalized youth in urban areas is a main concern. With the lack of opportunities in Jamaica, many Jamaicans immigrate to the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, thus causing a "brain drain" and insufficient labor force in the farming industry. The education sector has particularly suffered from this phenomenon as skilled teachers leave for overseas opportunities. Last year's remittances from overseas translated into 25 percent of the GDP, making this inflow of money the largest source of net foreign exchange, before tourism and bauxite mining.

## Program Focus

While Jamaica is famous for its green mountain landscapes, beaches, coral reefs, and unusual biological diversity, the country continues to grapple with many of the problems of underdevelopment, unemployment, environmental degradation, marginalization of young people (especially males), a high rate of HIV/AIDS infection (1.2 percent adult prevalence rate), lack of potable water, and poor sanitary practices. Despite high enrollment rates in primary and lower secondary schools, there is a drastic decline in enrollment rates among 17- to 19-year-olds. High levels of crime, violence, and drug trafficking, especially in inner-city garrison communities, further deteriorate living conditions and negatively impact foreign investments in many sectors on the island.

In response to Jamaica's development priorities, the Peace Corps is addressing these issues through programs in environmental awareness and protection; community environmental health, particularly water and sanitation; HIV/AIDS education and prevention; youth at-risk development, information communication technology (ICT); and, more recently, income generation/small business development for urban and rural youth.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Environment**

The principal focus of the Peace Corps' activities is increasing awareness of environmental issues such as solid waste management, recycling, watershed degradation, over-fishing, removal of coral reef, and damaging hillside-farming practices. Volunteers work with NGOs, community colleges, and schools to promote innovative and environmentally friendly income generation activities including heritage and community tourism events. They also help educate primary school students on environmental awareness and protection. Volunteers assist in creating educational materials and in training teachers in environmental education techniques, coordinating youth environmental camps, and organizing community clean-ups. Volunteers also help increase the capacity of environment NGOs and community-based organizations through technology and income generation projects.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The health project addresses two critical issues: the increasingly inadequate sanitation system, which contributes to poor water quality; and the need for HIV/AIDS education and prevention. Volunteers work in rural and urban squatter settlements to facilitate community development activities and strengthen community-based organizations that support health projects. Water/sanitation Volunteers help design and install waste-water treatment facilities and implement rural water systems that supply safe and reliable water to rural communities. Volunteers take an integrated approach to health promotion and many Volunteers address other issues such as basic hygiene and the maintenance and usage of latrines. Volunteers collaborate with teachers to develop health and hygiene curricula for schools. Additionally, in their secondary projects,

Volunteers engage community groups in income-generating activities.

### **Youth**

Volunteers work with youth in rural and urban areas, focusing on four main activities: HIV/AIDS education and prevention, ICT education, small business development, and youth development. Volunteers collaborate with the government of Jamaica, NGOs, community based organizations, schools, and clinics. Volunteers work with youth to improve their reading skills, life skills development, and computer literacy, and they assist organizations that support persons living with HIV/AIDS. They help build capacity—for youth through peer support and leadership training; for families through parenting education project; and for communities and agencies through developing business plans and youth entrepreneurship training.

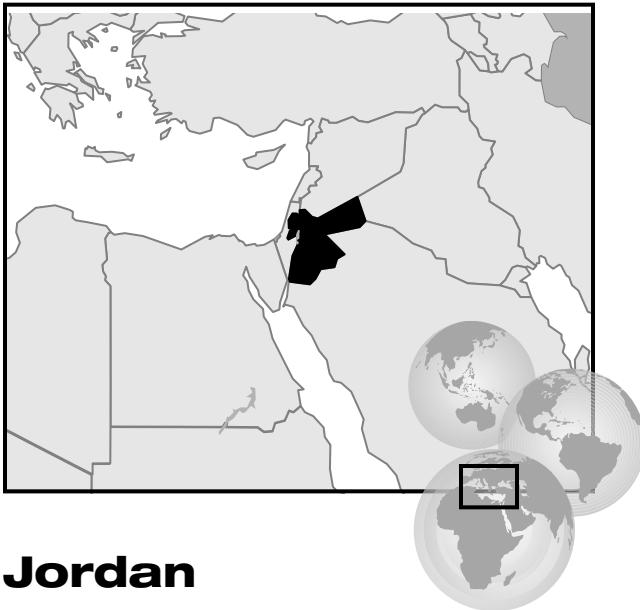
The first ICT Volunteers were assigned to the Ministry of Education, offering services to schools and teacher-training colleges. The Peace Corps, the U.S. embassy, USAID, and the Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture launched the Building Bridges School Link-Up Program in 2004. The program pairs five Jamaican primary schools with five elementary schools in Florida to raise cultural awareness and understanding between teachers and students in Jamaica and their peers in Florida. The program also helps boost students' literacy and technology skills. These Jamaican schools are participants in the New Horizons for Primary Schools Project (NHP), a collaboration of USAID and the Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture to improve literacy and numeric abilities of students in 72 Jamaican primary schools. Peace Corps Volunteers have been assigned to the information technology centers of several NHP schools and also in the project's central office in Kingston.

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**"I will always love this country and  
the people here who have shown me  
a different way of thinking. I will  
always miss this country and the  
natural beauty that makes it unique."**

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**Jamaica Volunteer  
Youth Sector**



## Jordan

Capital .....	Amman
Population .....	5 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,750
GDP growth .....	4.2%
Adult illiteracy rate:.....	Male: 4% Female: 16%
Infant mortality rate .....	27 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 95% Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$56 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 100% Rural: 84%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Sunni Islam: 95% Christianity: 4% Other: 1%
Official language .....	Arabic

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers *Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	60	50
Program funds (\$000)	1,464	1,616

## Country Overview

Program dates	1997–2002 2002–present
Program sectors	Education Youth

Since assuming the throne in 1999, King Abdullah II has demonstrated a sustained commitment to economic and social reform. Numerous development challenges face Jordan, among them high levels of poverty and unemployment and ambitious growth goals in education and primary health-care services. These are areas to which the Peace Corps contributes through programming initiatives and collaborative arrangements with other development and donor agencies.

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 became the fourth nation to enter into a free-trade agreement with the United States, and it has signed trade liberalization agreements with the European Union. As elsewhere, tourism has been affected by a combination of political tension in the region and the events of September 11, 2001. A heavy debt burden and a large public sector continue to be challenges to economic growth in Jordan.

## Program Focus

Since 2000 Jordan has developed a number of 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 future human capacity requirements through improved early childhood, primary, and secondary education, with specific emphasis on English fluency and computer literacy.

Due to security concerns, the Peace Corps suspended its program and withdrew its Volunteers in November 2002. The country director and Jordanian staff used this interim period to evaluate programs, redesign training, and upgrade site development and safety and security systems. In June 2003, a Peace Corps assessment team, working with U.S. embassy and Jordanian officials, deemed the situation in the

country stable and the population receptive to renewing the relationship with the Peace Corps.

Peace Corps/Jordan welcomed two groups of Volunteers in 2004: 25 English teachers arrived in February for placement in rural primary and secondary schools; 10 special education and 15 youth and community development workers arrived in July for assignments at centers in rural and urban communities. This plan was developed in close cooperation with Jordanian partners—the Ministries of Social Development and Education and the Higher Council for Youth. Areas for potential expansion in subsequent years include health education and information technology.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

#### *English Language Teaching and Teacher Training*

Volunteers assigned to rural primary and secondary schools enable Jordanian students, educators, and community members to improve their English language proficiency. This increases access to higher education and employment. Careful screening of underserved communities ensures that Volunteer contributions are focused less on carrying full class loads and more on maximizing Volunteers as resources, as native speakers, and as models of innovative and 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*

The return of special education Volunteers has been particularly welcomed as they serve small- to medium-sized communities, often working with charitable or parent-founded centers. The devotion of parents, families, and communities to their disadvantaged members sets the tone for a remarkable atmosphere of contribution and success.

Queen Rania has taken a strong interest in early childhood development and children with special needs. The University of Jordan now has a degree program in special education, though this remains an underdeveloped specialty. Volunteers are placed with rural and urban special education centers (some residential, some day care) under

the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development. Beneficiaries have multitude physical and mental disabilities and are rarely integrated into the mainstream.

Current special education Volunteers have been warmly welcomed and counterparts have long lists of ideas, priorities, and proposals. This sense of urgency is a tremendous impetus to Volunteer integration and provides an early sense of fulfillment. At a recent counterpart conference, one center director expressed his appreciation for his new "exposure to other centers and their challenges and how we can unite to maximize resources." This has been an unanticipated fringe benefit, he said, putting a multiplier on the value of "just having our own Volunteer."

### **Youth**

Given the population statistics on youth in Jordan and King Abdullah's commitment to investing in them, Volunteers assigned to centers with a range of youth-oriented community have access that bodes well for productive service. Activities are set according to community priorities and Volunteer talents and interests and may include sports and recreation, health and fitness, and computer training. Scouting has shown to be a particularly effective way to channel youth energy and productivity.

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**"The most important lesson I have learned is that the people of Rfa'yat want me to succeed. If I encounter any problems, I know now that I can go to members of the community who will help me any way they can."**

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**Jordan Volunteer  
Education Sector**

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**"My only concern is whether our Volunteer can extend her stay beyond two years, because both her skills and dedication qualify her to help our future generations."**

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**Besma Al-Qudah, Principal**



## Kazakhstan

Capital .....	Astana
Population .....	15 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,520
GDP growth .....	9.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: <0.5% Female: 1%
Infant mortality rate .....	76 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 95% Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2,583 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 98% Rural: 82%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.10%
Religions.....	Sunni Islam: 47% Russian Orthodoxy: 44% Other: 7% Protestantism: 2%
Official languages .....	Kazakh Russian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	138	149
Program funds (\$000)	2,686	2,874

## Country Overview

Program dates	1993-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education

In 2004, Kazakhstan celebrates its 13th year of independence. Since its independence, Kazakhstan has been a constitutional republic led by Nursultan Nazarbayev, its only president to date. It is proceeding along the difficult path of reforming and building an open democratic society with a market economy. Economically, Kazakhstan has many successes to report. Driven by vast reserves of natural resources, including oil and gas, Kazakhstan has experienced strong growth in GDP. Transitioning to a civil society and securing basic human rights has proven to be a more arduous task. With little history or experience of its citizens participating to promote change in their communities, Kazakhstan's fledgling NGO community is starting to take root.

## Program Focus

In 1993, not long after the country declared its independence, President Nazarbayev invited the Peace Corps to help strengthen the human resource base in Kazakhstan. Since then, the Kazakhstani people and the government have been extremely supportive of the Peace Corps' role in their development. This year, the president announced his latest round of initiatives, including English as the third language of Kazakhstan and the importance of improving education in rural areas of the country. In addition, the president has committed to support the country's developing NGO sector with the creation of a new ministry to oversee NGO activities. The activities of Peace Corps Volunteers are closely aligned with the president's vision in these areas.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

Volunteers promote the development of NGOs and civil society by working with host organizations, counterparts, and community volunteers throughout Kazakhstan to improve communities' capacity to meet their needs, particularly in target sectors such as HIV/AIDS, youth, environment, women, and economic development.

Under the mentorship of a Volunteer, one NGO obtained funding for and recruited 30 local people to participate in a 10-month Web development course. The most successful participants received funding to start Web development businesses. The aim of the program was to develop companies that can meet the needs of local and international companies for Web design services. These new companies bid for Web design business and far exceeded the break-even point in their first month of business. In the longer term, these local companies may be competitive in providing services to Western and regional companies looking for inexpensive outsourcing options for technology development.

### **Education**

One of the main goals of Kazakhstan is integration into the world market economy, and English is the language of international communication. The Ministry of Education has requested assistance from the Peace Corps in English language teaching and educational resource development. The ministry has enthusiastically utilized Peace Corps education Volunteers, particularly in secondary schools in rural areas. Most schools and institutions of higher learning have inadequate teaching staff, outdated and often inappropriate textbooks, very limited teaching resources, and teachers who typically have limited fluency in English and who use a noncommunicative approach to the teaching of English. Volunteers help offset these limitations. In addition, Volunteers organize many community projects including business, technology, and environmental clubs; and HIV/AIDS awareness activities.

One Volunteer was advisor to a business English club and the resulting student-run company "Spirit." Students began an extensive market research project to determine if there was sufficient demand for school spirit products such as T-shirts with the university name. More than 1,000 individuals were surveyed and teachers used the data to illustrate market research capabilities. The IT department at the university created a database and management reports for students and teachers to discuss and evaluate results. The research showed that there was a viable market.

After extensive discussion on products, price points, colors, languages, etc., T-shirt proto-types were made and tested on focus groups and final decisions were made. Spirit, the student-run company, was created to design, produce, and sell T-shirts and

other products. Students became officers of the company; they operate Spirit and make decisions about the future direction of the company and product offerings. Spirit has been approached by other area universities that are interested in having products with their name on them. Profits from the company will be used to fund other student companies.

Spirit offers real-world business experience to students and provides a forum for the practical application of skills learned in classes. In addition, students can include their Spirit business experience on their resumes.

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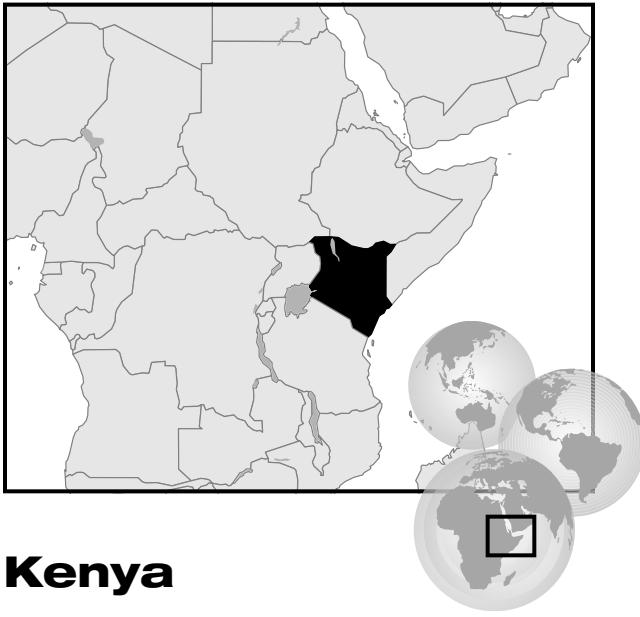
**"Personally, I see a world of possibilities in Kazakhstan, and, although each day has its challenges, they seem of little importance when compared to all the positives. In the end, my Peace Corps experience has been absolutely amazing."**

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**Kazakhstan Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



*These married education Volunteers teach economic development at the Kazakhstan University. They are wearing university tee shirts that their students made as part of a branding and marketing project the couple initiated.*



## Kenya

Capital .....	Nairobi
Population.....	31 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$360
GDP growth .....	1.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 10% Female: 21%
Infant mortality rate.....	78 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 84% Measles: 78%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$50 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 88% Rural: 42%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	15%
Religions .....	Protestantism: 40% Roman Catholicism: 30% Islam: 20% Indigenous beliefs: 10%
Official languages .....	English Swahili

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	150	133
Program funds (\$000)	3,085	2,963

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1964-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Since Kenya's independence from Britain in 1963, the first successful transfer of political power occurred with the December 2002 election of President Mwai Kibaki, leader of the opposition party National Rainbow Coalition. President Kibaki, who ran as the candidate representing Kenya's multiethnic population, will serve a five-year term through 2006. Priorities of the new government include free primary education for all children, good governance, and combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Kenya experienced economic growth after independence until the 1970s, but in the past two decades, Kenya's economy has declined, especially public sector investments. Agriculture is the main source of employment, with approximately 60 percent of the population engaged in farming. Although agriculture is Kenya's most important economic activity, only 20 percent of its land is arable. Kenya's economy is also heavily dependent on tourism.

Kenya ranks 148 out of 177 on the 2004 UN Human Development Index. About half the population lives below the poverty level. Kenya is the world's third largest exporter of tea, which, together with coffee and horticultural products, constituted 53 percent of the country's merchandise exports in 2002.

## Program Focus

Since 1964, more than 4,400 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 NGOs and community members. Peace Corps/Kenya has adapted its projects over the years to fit Kenya's changing needs. Volunteers are currently involved in HIV/AIDS education, girls' education, and information technology education across all current project sectors.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Business Volunteers help Kenyans establish businesses and other income-generating activities by providing training and technical assistance in market expansion. Volunteers also work with Kenyan businesses to monitor product quality and to gain access to credit. Volunteers teach computer skills to community members. One Volunteer works at a dairy cooperative owned by and serving 800 small dairy farmers. The Volunteer has helped the co-op improve its overall business performance, which has produced higher and more stable incomes for the farmers. Additionally, the Volunteer is helping the government develop a software program for dairy co-ops across Kenya.

### **Education**

Volunteers serve as HIV/AIDS educators in secondary and primary schools and work with teachers to implement the government's new AIDS education curricula.

Kenyan teachers learn new teaching techniques from Volunteers, which creates a more stimulating learning environment for students. Volunteers also mobilize teachers along with district education offices to train other educators to teach about HIV/AIDS to their students. One helped start a student health club that organized a local group called People Living Positively with HIV/AIDS. As a result, other students now volunteer their services.

Volunteers teach in primary schools for the deaf and integrate deaf education into other activities. One group of Volunteers is developing a unique Kenyan sign language interactive CD that allows any user to browse through 3,000 English words and 1,100 Kenyan sign language signs. The CD will be distributed to all schools for the deaf, teacher training colleges, the Kenya Sign Language Research project, and several associations of the deaf in Kenya.

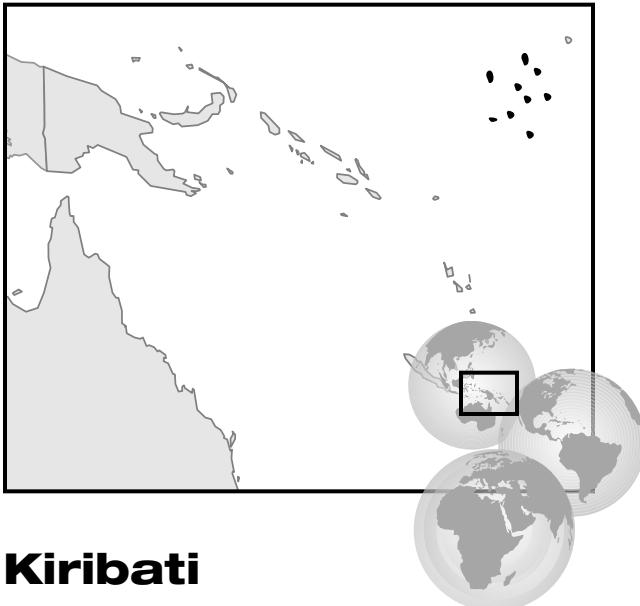
### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, address key public health challenges through attitude and behavior change in communities and among youth to reduce incidences of HIV/AIDS and waterborne diseases and to prevent malaria. Recently Volunteers conducted HIV/AIDS education sessions in schools and community clubs

for 8,648 boys and 7,717 girls to encourage behavior modification. Volunteers helped establish two new community voluntary counseling and testing centers and helped train staff in counseling skills. Volunteers also conducted training on health and sanitation in schools through construction of 12 pit latrines and four water tanks. They dug two boreholes to increase access to safe, potable water. A Volunteer helped her community establish a new orphanage for children whose parents have died of AIDS.

"Often before I go to sleep, I think of all the wonderful sounds, ideas, and people that I meet every day in my small remote mountain village. In America, I don't think that we often take time to think about how many people just struggle from day to day just to survive. This is a humbling experience that puts one's priorities in order. I often fall asleep wondering what new things I will encounter tomorrow, thinking to myself that the Peace Corps motto could not be said better. " This is the toughest job you'll ever love".

**Kenya Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



## Kiribati

Capital .....	Tarawa
Population: .....	95,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$960
GDP growth .....	2.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Not available
Infant mortality rate .....	1 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 99% Measles: 88%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$0.6 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 70% Rural: 80%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Not available
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 53% Kiribati Protestantism: 39%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers *Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	43	43
Program funds (\$000)	1,217	1,313

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1973–present

**Program sectors** Education  
Health and HIV/AIDS

Kiribati (pronounced Kireebus) is a small, isolated group of islands in the central Pacific that straddles the equator and the international date line. The country comprises three island groups: the Gilbert Islands, Phoenix Islands, and Line Islands. It is composed 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 democratic republic with a stable government.

Kiribati has few natural resources and a limited economy. Its main source of revenue is the export of dried coconut (*copra*) and fish and the sale of fishing rights. Agriculture is limited because of poor soil and scarce rainfall. Most citizens live at a subsistence level. 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 for 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 efforts of the government of Kiribati to address the key development areas of education and health. Kiribati does not have a sufficiently trained pool of teachers to meet the demand presented by the country's growing population. The work of Volunteers supports the national plan to improve the quality and accessibility of education at the primary and junior secondary levels. The geography of the country also makes it difficult for the government to provide health services and education to citizens in more rural, isolated villages. Volunteers provide

outreach to villages and develop awareness campaigns to inform youth and adults about important health issues.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Volunteers support the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports in their efforts to provide education to the children and youth of Kiribati that will broaden their opportunities to become productive citizens of the country. Volunteers teach English, math, and science in junior secondary schools throughout Kiribati. They also help teachers in primary and secondary schools enhance their skills by co-teaching with them in the classroom, providing support in curriculum design and planning, conducting professional development workshops, and promoting extracurricular activities. Local teachers appreciate the work and efforts Volunteers have demonstrated in trying to achieve their goals. The Volunteers interaction in an informal setting with teachers and students of the schools where they are assigned to work has helped improve how teachers do their work and children's learning habits. One Volunteer on South Tarawa worked as an assistant coach for the Kiribati Athletic Association (national track team). This year, two athletes from the track team competed in the Athens Olympics. This was the first time Kiribati participated in the competition, and the nation became the 201st country to join the Olympics. Volunteers are also helping revise the national curriculum. Volunteers develop lesson plans, classroom materials, and teaching techniques that enhance the quality of education at all levels by strengthening the skills of co-teachers. In addition, Volunteers instruct new teachers at the Kiribati Teachers College in math, science, and education methodologies. Six Volunteers and four librarians participated in the Sabre Book Project, helping distribute the more than 10,000 books donated from the Sabre Company in the United States.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers in the health project educate communities on the prevention of common diseases and encourage behavior that promotes good health and well-being. Volunteers work directly with families and communities at the village level, managing out-

reach on topics such as leadership and youth development, HIV/AIDS prevention, nutrition, sanitation, first aid, immunizations, and common illnesses. Volunteers also work at the ministry level to carry out health promotion campaigns and activities related to nutrition, anti-smoking, and sports development. One Volunteer and one counterpart translated Can Quit Book (a stop-smoking guide) into I-Kiribati. Another Volunteer worked with the Kiribati Red Cross to strengthen their organizational capacity and ability to provide services to communities. Some Health Volunteers are working on a surveillance study funded by the Global Fund. The study will provide baseline data on HIV prevalence, behavioral risk factors, and sexually transmitted illness (STI) prevalence in two focus groups: the behavioral surveillance study and HIV test will be given to 300 seafarers, and the STI prevalence survey will be given to 200 antenatal mothers.

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**"Peace Corps has a wealth of information, expertise, and human resources for developing nations. Kiribati government will support the Peace Corps to support our people."**

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**His Excellency, Anote Tong  
President of the Republic of Kiribati**



*Kiribati children in costume*



## Kyrgyz Republic

Capital.....	Bishkek
Population.....	5 million
Annual per capita income.....	\$290
GDP growth .....	-0.5%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	1.3%
Infant mortality rate.....	52 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 98% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$5 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 98% Rural: 66%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions .....	Islam Russian Orthodoxy
Official languages .....	Kyrgyz Russian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	174	170
Program funds (\$000)	1,848	1,828

## Country Overview

Program dates	1993–2001 2002–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education

Since declaring its independence from the Soviet Union in August 1991, the government has ruled this small central Asian republic with few serious challenges to its authority. In December 1995, President Askar Akayev was reelected in the first multi-candidate presidential elections in central Asia. Although the Kyrgyz Republic is generally viewed as one of the most democratic former Soviet republics, the government is attempting to curb press freedom and corruption continues. The Kyrgyz Parliament has shown independence from the executive branch, but the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe declared that the parliamentary elections held in early 2000 were neither free nor fair. The next presidential elections are scheduled in 2005.

The collapse of the Soviet Union was a severe blow to the Kyrgyz economy. Between 1991 and 1995, the country's GDP shrank to 50 percent of its 1990 level. Reforms toward creating a market economy that began in 1993 have started to improve the situation; however, GDP growth has averaged only 5 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. However, the country remains one of the poorest in the world.

## Program Focus

The first Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in the Kyrgyz Republic in 1993 to serve in this historically significant nation along the ancient Silk Road. After a temporary suspension of the Peace Corps program following the events of September 11, 2001, the program reopened in March 2002.

Since independence, the Kyrgyz Republic has demonstrated a commitment to achieve full participation in the global market. The government is eager to establish projects that will assist in the difficult transition from a state-controlled to a market-based economy. It wants to promote sustainable development and poverty alleviation by strengthening indigenous nongovernmental organizations and

business education. Although the Kyrgyz Republic continues to reform much of its legal and social structure to accommodate private sector activities, poverty remains a serious problem.

The Kyrgyz Republic has also placed a high priority on English education as a means to link the country to the world. However, the education system faces a severe shortage of trained teachers of English, textbooks, and basic instructional materials. Teacher salaries remain low and are often paid late. The government has requested assistance in increasing the level of English competency among secondary and university students and in improving Kyrgyz teachers' level of English and training. Volunteers address these needs by sharing current techniques in teaching foreign languages.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The business development project places Volunteers directly at the grass-roots level. The project helps community-based organizations become sustainable, participatory, and effective organizations. Volunteers help improve access to information at the local level and work with organizations to develop effective networks and programs consistent with the organizations' missions and community needs. In particular, efforts focus on organizations that work with communities to develop sustainable rural tourism and handicraft projects, increase economic opportunities for women, and assist small farmers in marketing their goods. Additionally, Volunteers help local organizations and communities link with resources from international development efforts.

### **Education**

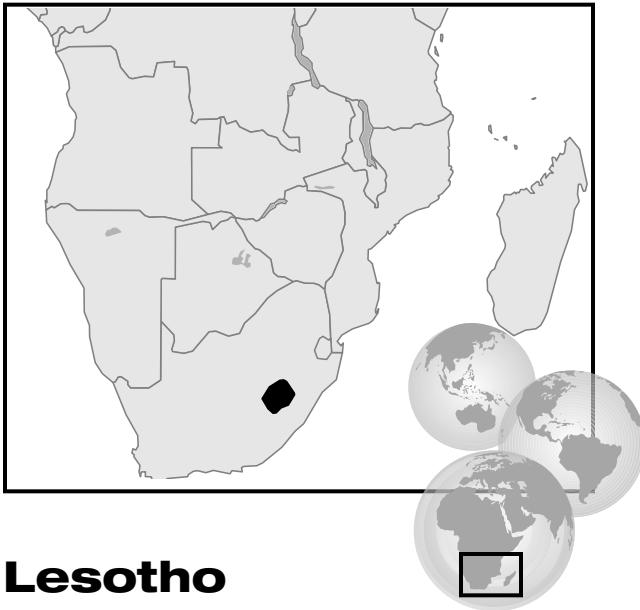
The education project helps Kyrgyz students and English teachers improve their English language competency. Volunteers are assigned as English teachers to secondary schools in rural towns and villages and to institutes of higher education throughout the country. Volunteers in schools introduce communicative teaching methodologies and critical thinking skills. University-based Volunteers help prepare new teachers and teach business English and business-related courses. In addition to their teaching assignments, Volunteers 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 lesson plans. Improved English skills have aided both students and teachers in winning scholarships to study abroad.

Youth development is a major focus of Volunteers in Kyrgyzstan. In addition to their primary assignments, Volunteers are actively involved in secondary projects, such as assisting their counterpart organizations with organizing summer camps. This year, 15 Volunteers helped organize a national summer camp for boys ages 14-17. The approach was to work with the youth to critically examine their roles and responsibilities as men in modern Kyrgyz society, helping them to see new perspectives and identify ways to face future challenges responsibly. About 70 students from all over the country were selected to participate in the Boys' State Camp. Camp objectives were to teach about democracy; promote inter-ethnic and racial tolerance; expose young men to healthy, positive lifestyles; foster youth participation in the community and volunteerism; demonstrate the qualities of a good leader; and improve English communication skills.

"The biggest success is that there is continued interest in the English club and English class. I am teaching younger grades this year and these students are highly motivated. These girls learn quickly that they are already surpassing their older peers. One big success was a trip I took with students to a center that offered us a day-long seminar for beginning Internet and word-processing skills. I also arranged to have two hours of computer time reserved for our school, and students have been signing up for these slots."

**Kyrgyz Republic Volunteer Education Sector**



## Lesotho

Capital .....	Maseru
Population .....	2 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$550
GDP growth .....	3.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 26% Female: 10%
Infant mortality rate .....	91 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 79% Measles: 70%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$81 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 88% Rural: 74%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	31%
Religions.....	Christianity: 80% Hinduism Islam Indigenous beliefs
Official languages .....	English Sesotho

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	85	76
Program funds (\$000)	2,484	2,498

## Country Overview

Program dates	1967–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Lesotho became a British protectorate in 1868 after a series of territorial wars in the mid-19th century that cost Lesotho much of its best agricultural land. It gained its independence in 1966, by which time Lesotho had already been forced into a state of economic dependence on South Africa. King Letsie III remains the head of state. Parliamentary elections were held in May 2002, and 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. Lesotho's high unemployment rate and the return of migrant workers from South African mines have contributed to an increase of crime in the capital city. The government of Lesotho declared a state of famine in April 2002, after another year of poor harvests caused by excessive rainfall. The United Nations estimates that 500,000 people are in need of food assistance. Lesotho also has the world's third highest HIV infection rate in the world, which deepens the impact of the food crisis.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps was invited to work in Lesotho in 1967, and since then nearly 2,000 Volunteers have served in this southern African country. Volunteers respond to Lesotho's needs by strengthening the capacity of individuals to take control of their own lives. Education, business development, and, more recently, health and HIV/AIDS have been the Peace Corps' principal program sectors in Lesotho. The focus in the placement of Volunteers is on rural development, which mirrors the country's 85 percent rural population demography. Volunteers serve in all 10 districts of the country, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers seek to improve the lives of rural communities by strengthening the capacity of nongovernmental organizations, vocational training institutes, community-based organizations, and orphans and youth groups. Volunteers work with cooperatives and registered community groups by organizing and facilitating training for community members in small business management, handicrafts development, marketing, and ecotourism. Three Volunteers taught groups of women weavers to use a computer as a means to market their products. At vocational institutions, Volunteers transfer skills by training staff in business management, and they teach computer skills for in-school youth and other members of the community. Two Volunteers are helping associations organize and improve the operation and management of pony-trekking clubs. One Volunteer is assisting in the development of a cultural village in the home village of King Mosheshoe (the founder of Basotho nation). Two Volunteers are involved in extensive agricultural activities such as potato seeding, and in the storage and marketing of seeds for use by local farmers without crossing to South Africa. Additionally, Volunteers provide at-risk youth with training for income generation and job creation.

### **Education**

In an innovative programming area, education Volunteers are working in five areas: early childhood development, primary teacher training, special education, secondary education, and distance education. Volunteers work with the Ministry of Education to upgrade teacher skills at numerous schools through teacher-training workshops, materials development, and working one-on-one with teachers. After a six-year absence, Volunteers have begun teaching English in classrooms at secondary school level. Volunteers are entering the classroom because of the increasing number of teachers who are dying due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the decline in the standard of English in schools. Twelve Volunteers taught English language and literature to approximately 1,300 boys and girls in secondary and high schools.

In addition to providing support to teachers and students, Volunteers promote girls' education, deliver lessons on HIV/AIDS awareness, train counterparts and parents in special education concepts, and establish community libraries and youth clubs. Education Volunteers also help major educational institutions integrate technology into distance education and teaching programs. They teach computer skills to university students and train teachers who work in early childhood programs. Twenty-three Volunteers provided teacher training for 160 teachers in early childhood care and development centers and primary schools.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The community health program is in its third year, with Volunteers helping the people of Lesotho fight the spread of HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work with district AIDS task forces and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to design and implement HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and support programs for vulnerable groups. Health Volunteers work with communities in all 10 districts to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS on infected and otherwise affected people. Volunteers have helped district AIDS taskforces establish HIV/AIDS support groups, deliver home-based care kits, promote voluntary counseling and testing, and provide HIV/AIDS prevention education to more than 250 villages, reaching more than 13,000 adults and children across Lesotho. All Volunteers in are involved with HIV/AIDS activities as a part of their community outreach. In addition, Volunteers have worked with more than 50 schools, 15 NGOs and government ministries on HIV/AIDS activities. Volunteers also work in permaculture in rural communities to promote sustainable practices that increase the diversity of food and improve nutrition.

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**"My first six months were mostly observation and exchange of ideas. Through observation I was able to see resources that were easily available in the community and the entire income generation project has been started with local resources."**

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**Lesotho Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



## Macedonia, Republic of

Capital .....	Skopje
Population .....	2 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,710
GDP growth .....	0.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	5.4%
Infant mortality rate .....	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 96% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$77 million
Access to safe water .....	Not Available
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Eastern Orthodoxy: 65% Islam: 29% Catholicism: 4% Others: 2%
Official language .....	Macedonian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	78	74
Program funds (\$000)	1,632	1,624

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1996–1999 1999–2001 2002–present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Environment
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The Republic of Macedonia is making significant efforts to develop a society based on democratic principles, to establish a viable market economy, and to equitably represent all ethnic groups within its society. While much progress has been made, inflation and unemployment rates continue to be high and industrial production has been falling.

Macedonia's main objectives for the next few years are developing economic opportunities for its citizens; sharing the benefits of growth more equitably among groups and regions, especially through decentralization efforts; and moving toward European integration. Hopes are that the peace agreement that ended the ethnic conflict of 2001 will put that conflict firmly in the past, while membership in the World Trade Organization, progress toward membership in NATO, increasing regional trade ties, and generally improved links with the rest of the world will move the country closer toward European Union (EU)-level political and economic development.

Decentralization reforms, especially the Law on Territorial Division, which will reduce the number of municipalities from the current 124 municipalities to 84, are currently being debated within the government and society. Municipal elections are planned for March 2005 with decentralization of authority to the local government for such services as education, health care, infrastructure and others to be gradually implemented in 2005. Financing these now local-level responsibilities will be the key element to monitor during the next several years.

Security within Macedonia has steadily improved since the signing of the peace agreement in 2001. In fact, in January 2004, the EU's military force was replaced by an EU police mission, composed of only 200 mostly unarmed EU police. In cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE), this EU mission continues to train and deploy the newly integrated Macedonian police force.

## **Program Focus**

The Peace Corps began operating in Macedonia in 1996 with seven Volunteers. They were assigned to the Ministry of Education and Science and worked in the secondary school English education program. During the next several years, as new Volunteers arrived, the program expanded to include programs in business (municipal and NGO) development, and environmental education and management. Despite early successes in each of these areas, the program did not fully develop because of regional political instability that suspended the Macedonia program on two separate occasions between 1999 and 2001. Since returning in November 2002, the program in Macedonia is again making significant progress in its three key program areas. Additionally, agriculture and forestry extension, community and youth development, and information technology are areas being examined for future focus.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

As government structures devolve from centralized to more localized systems and community jurisdictions have greater autonomy and decision-making authority, government officials must learn how to operate effectively in this new environment. Most municipalities have limited budgets and little experience in addressing these increased public administration responsibilities. Peace Corps Volunteers assist local/municipal governments, local government staff, and nongovernmental organizations through capacity-building training programs and establishment of frameworks for adopting more participatory and responsive management styles. Volunteers conduct organizational and management assistance to host organizations; provide computer skills training; share expertise in donor resource research methods; conduct community outreach in the areas of human/gender rights, health, and environmental awareness; and initiate small project assistance for various community activities.

One Volunteer helped set up a citizens' information center (CIC) in his municipality. The CIC will help inform and involve citizens in the local government process, increasing their participation. It will also assist citizens who need access to information and services and help develop regular, transparent

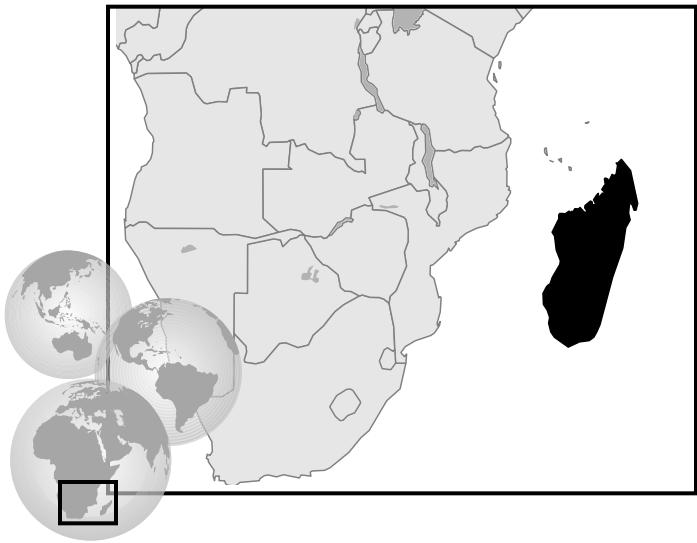
communication between the local government and its citizens. The center will inform citizens about their local government and regional ministries; facilitate solutions to problems citizens have with the delivery of public services; channel citizens' comments to the mayor; and act as a center for citizen complaints and suggestions.

### **Education**

The Ministry of Education and Science is refining its curriculum and making concerted efforts to improve the skills of teachers, particularly in smaller towns and rural villages where the need is greatest. The Peace Corps' involvement in this challenging endeavor is twofold: to improve the effectiveness of instruction through teacher training and resource center development, and to help students improve their English language communication skills, critical thinking skills, and independent lifelong learning skills. Volunteers serve as English language resource teachers and facilitators to help meet the need for continued improvement of English language programs in primary and secondary schools. In addition, Volunteers work on summer projects, including girls' leadership training camps, and they organize English clubs after school, incorporating technology skills into the clubs when possible. The ministry is working to address the barriers that currently prevent foreigners from teaching and grading students.

### **Environment**

The environment program in Macedonia has evolved over the years. Environmental degradation and lack of access to clean water, air and affordable energy services are being addressed at the national and community levels. Macedonia is seeking out and sharing best practices, providing innovative policy advice, and linking partners through pilot projects that help people build sustainable livelihoods. The Peace Corps program focuses on strengthening the capacity of environmental key players at the local level, such as NGOs, public works, schools, and natural parks. Volunteers support public work organizations in wastewater and solid-waste management, capacity strengthening for NGOs, management and sustainable use of natural resources, and development of environmental nonformal educational activities with students and public school teachers. They also assist with community projects with local clubs and NGOs.



## Madagascar

Capital .....	Antananarivo
Population .....	16 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$230
GDP growth .....	-12.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 26.4% Female: 40.3%
Infant mortality rate .....	84 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 62% Measles: 61%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$8 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 85% Rural: 31%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.3%
Religions.....	Indigenous beliefs: 47% Christianity: 45% Islam: 7%
Official language .....	Malagasy

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	126	131
Program funds (\$000)	2,233	2,251

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1993–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The government of President Marc Ravalomanana, backed by its international partners, has embarked on economic recovery and poverty reduction and is committed to fighting environmental degradation, poor health, and the HIV/AIDS scourge. Numerous international development agencies and volunteer organizations have been welcomed to Madagascar, joining the growing number of Malagasy nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), to work with the people of Madagascar on their development efforts. Madagascar is ranked 150 of 177 countries on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index.

The economy of Madagascar is dominated by agriculture, which employs four-fifths of the population. Agriculture, including fishing and forestry, contribute 25 percent of GDP; industry, 12 percent; and services, 63 percent. Major exports, including coffee, vanilla, cloves, shellfish, and sugar, were estimated at \$700 million in 2002. Madagascar's natural resources are severely threatened by deforestation and erosion, aggravated by the use of firewood as the primary source of fuel, which negatively impact the economy and people. A great need continues for teachers, health specialists, and environmental counselors, particularly in rural areas.

### Program Focus

The first education Volunteers arrived in late 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. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Volunteers are posted in rural communities and work with students, teachers, and the larger community to raise the standard of teaching, develop teaching resources, and strengthen the links between schools and communities. Middle and high school students are taught English through both traditional classroom lessons and nontraditional 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.

### **Environment**

Working with the government, NGOs, and local communities, Volunteers provide training for 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 300 communities have learned about environmental conservation through theater projects, videos, and

workshops. Volunteers have helped establish 45 tree nurseries, plant more than 2,500 trees, and build over 300 wood-saving mud stoves in 65 villages.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The community health project helps communities address health issues through behavioral change methodologies and by effectively disseminating health messages. Volunteers concentrate on prevention of the main life-threatening childhood illnesses; help mothers understand basic maternal health issues, such as how to ensure safe pregnancies; and provide the general population with information about preventing HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Through their outreach programs, Volunteers disseminate vital health information to more than 400 communities each year. Volunteers from all sectors collaborate on projects that teach HIV/AIDS awareness. One Volunteer realized that illiterate dock workers and local rickshaw operators were unable to understand the health messages in traditional AIDS awareness campaigns, though this population was clearly at risk. The Volunteer mobilized local resources and organized a person-to-person peer education campaign that has enabled these people to finally understand the risks and solutions.

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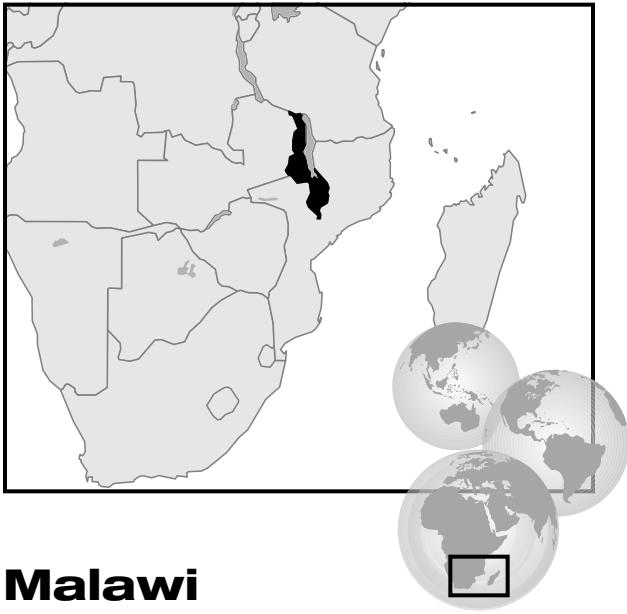
**"Serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Madagascar has been one of the most challenging, illuminating, and irreplaceable experiences of my lifetime.**

**Through the daily struggles to find a way to survive in another culture, seek a greater understanding of that culture, and finally help the people of Madagascar build a healthier and more prosperous future, I have seen remarkable examples of human dedication and exemplary diligence, in spite of minimal resources,**

**that have inspired and humbled me."**

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**Madagascar Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



## Malawi

Capital .....	Lilongwe
Population .....	11 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$160
GDP growth .....	1.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 24% Female: 51%
Infant mortality rate .....	113 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 64% Measles: 69%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$6 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 44%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	15%
Religions.....	Protestantism: 55% Roman Catholicism: 20% Islam: 20% Indigenous beliefs: 3% Other: 2%
Official languages .....	English Chichewa

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	103	99
Program funds (\$000)	2,349	2,312

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1963–1969 1973–1976 1978–present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS
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In 1994, after 30 years of one-party, dictatorial rule dating back to independence from Britain, Malawi quietly and peacefully elected a new government committed to multiparty democracy. In spite of the wave of euphoria that followed their newly won freedom, the Malawian people face the obstacles of drought, floods, environmental degradation, hunger, malnutrition, disease, rising crime, illiteracy, mismanagement, underutilization of local resources for sustainable livelihoods, and the mentality of poverty. Nevertheless, Malawi is on a path of social, political, and economic reform.

Malawi has a parliamentary style of government with a president as the head of state. The president has many powers and sets the agenda for parliamentary debate. Peaceful presidential elections were held in 1999 and in May 2004. Although there has been little local government control, this is gradually changing through a decentralization policy in which resources and responsibilities are moving from the national to the district level.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Malawi's economy, accounting for nearly half of its GDP. Tobacco, tea, and sugar together generate more than 70 percent of export earnings, with tobacco providing the majority (more than 60 percent). The agricultural sector employs nearly half of those formally employed and directly or indirectly supports an estimated 85 percent of the population. Malawi has a narrow economic base with little industry and no known economically viable deposits of gemstones, precious metals, or oil. As a landlocked country, its transport costs make imported goods expensive.

## Program Focus

The change of government in 1994 opened up the possibility of placing Volunteers at the community level for the first time (under the prior regime, foreigners were not allowed to live at the community level). With the increased flexibility in programming, the Peace Corps began working with

counterpart ministries to identify appropriate areas for involvement at the community level. Currently, Volunteers currently work in health, education, the environment, and short-term Crisis Corps assignments related to health. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

The government implemented a free primary education policy in 1994 that has swelled the ranks of schools and seriously strained the country's resources. To support the government's initiative, the Peace Corps has focused its efforts on secondary schools in rural areas, where skills transfer and capacity building can have the greatest impact. Currently, 35 Volunteers help educate secondary school students, promote teacher-to-teacher collaboration, and encourage the exchange of experience and knowledge to improve methods of teaching. Volunteers work with their counterparts by sharing lesson plans and discussing strategies for teaching, evaluating students, and preparing exams. They use local resources to produce teaching and learning materials, such as model lungs and electricity circuit boards. Some Volunteers organized a school library with a textbook section, teacher reference section, and other resources for students and teachers. Other Volunteers have helped schools acquire new labs and equipment so students can perform science experiments.

The education program is introducing a teacher-training component that focuses on secondary schools grouped into clusters. This project will help teachers improve their teaching skills and learn to produce teaching and learning materials with local resources.

### **Environment**

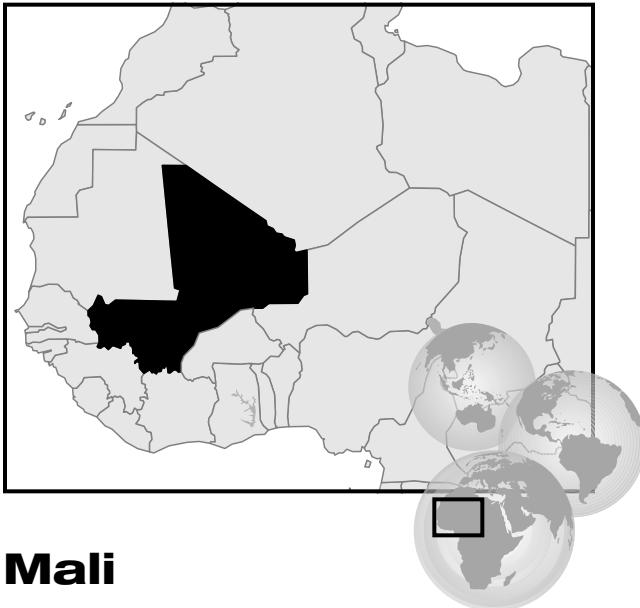
The community-based natural resource management project assists communities surrounding protected areas to create long-term natural resource management plans. Partnering with Malawi's Department of National Parks and Wildlife and Department of Forestry, Volunteers are placed in

communities around parks and forest reserves. They work with government staff and surrounding communities on issues of conservation and resource use, including agroforestry, income generation, appropriate technology, co-management of protected areas, and extension training. Twenty-five parks, wildlife, and forestry Volunteers work with communities that want to use protected-area resources more efficiently and sustainably. They have helped increase the productivity of fish farming and taught conservation farming approaches and how to propagate the trees and other plant species so critical to the rural farming system in Malawi. Volunteers have also helped establish village natural resources management committees and village forest areas, worked with schools and youth organizations, helped identify income-generating activities, and promoted conservation farming approaches.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Malawi is one of the countries most severely affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and it faces many other serious health conditions. The community health project works with the Ministry of Health and Population to address health issues in rural parts of the country. Volunteers work in AIDS education, orphan care, home-based care, youth and at-risk groups, child survival, nutrition, disease prevention, environmental health, and women's health. The project has evolved from primarily HIV/AIDS education to focus on behavior change and now is integrating other health concerns linked with the HIV/AIDS epidemic (for example, other sexually transmitted and infectious diseases). The project has enabled behavioral change through life-skills training offered to a wide range of Malawians, particularly youth. Volunteers have helped create 50 support groups for people living with AIDS.

Peace Corps/Malawi began inviting Crisis Corps Volunteers to work with local organizations that are striving to address the critical issues of HIV/AIDS, food security, and cholera. Since 2000, 42 former Volunteers have joined the Crisis Corps to provide specific technical support requested by organizations, including management, education, nutrition and food security, home-based care, and cholera prevention and treatment.



## Mali

Capital .....	Bamako
Population .....	11 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$240
GDP growth .....	4.4%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 73% Female: 88%
Infant mortality rate .....	122 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 57 % Measles: 33%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$102 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 74% Rural: 61%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.70%
Religions.....	Islam: 90% Indigenous beliefs: 6% Christianity: 4%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	149	149
Program funds (\$000)	4,144	3,811

## Country Overview

Program dates	1971-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

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 and growing democracy and 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 174 of 177 on the 2004 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. A growing tourism industry is centered on Mopti, a major thoroughfare en route to Tombouctou.

### Program Focus

The first Volunteers arrived in Mali in April 1971 to help allay the hardships caused by a severe drought. Mali is not self-sufficient in food production, a problem exacerbated by frequent droughts and a rapidly increasing population that is straining the natural resource base. Volunteers assist the government of Mali in addressing multiple development challenges. A new government initiative promotes decentralization so that local communities assume responsibility for development projects. These communities, however, lack the skilled personnel needed to identify, plan, and implement such projects. Currently, Peace Corps/Mali emphasizes sustainable small business projects in the areas of food production, water availability, environmental conservation, microenterprise development, and preventive health care. An expanded HIV/AIDS

awareness program began in 2001, and all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers are 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 at both regional and national levels. Their goals are to improve agricultural practices and to increase access to resources that can help local communities generate income and improve their diets.

### **Business Development**

Volunteers work closely with small businesses to improve the management capabilities of entrepreneurs and to increase the availability of financial and technical resources. They provide training and counseling to entrepreneurs on feasibility studies, marketing surveys, inventory control, accounting, and product pricing. Some Volunteers help microfinance institutions establish appropriate management systems, loan-tracking systems, business education programs for their clients, and awareness campaigns about the importance of savings and the availability of credit. Other Volunteers work to strengthen existing computer centers and set up Internet cafes. A new initiative works with a nationwide network of community learning and information centers to provide training in basic computer and Internet skills to young Malians.

One Volunteer worked with the microfinance institution to develop a regional marketing plan. The Volunteer conducted a needs analysis with a group of women in a small village. The results indicated that a mobile banking service could improve their returns by training prospective borrowers. The Volunteer then trained many illiterate women in savings and credit concepts, and additional women were able to join the mobile banking service and take their first loans.

### **Environment**

The need for better natural resource management and conservation techniques has grown with the increasing urgency of Mali's environmental problems. Peace Corps/Mali created the natural resource

management project in 1986 in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry to introduce sustainable environmental management systems to communities nationwide. Volunteers also seek to increase sources of safe drinking water and encourage proper disposal of wastewater and solids.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers help restructure the public health sector at the local level through their work with health-care providers, local associations, and individual community members. They raise awareness of health issues and promote preventive care measures such as nutritional practices, breast-feeding, diarrhea, disease control, polio eradication, and vaccinations. They also work with nongovernmental organizations in communities by organizing HIV/AIDS awareness days, working with HIV-positive individuals, educating high-risk groups on HIV transmission, and promoting voluntary testing centers.

### **Youth**

Volunteers help restructure the public health sector at the local level through their work with health-care providers, local associations, and individual community members. They raise awareness of health issues and promote preventive care measures such as nutritional practices, breast-feeding, diarrhea, disease control, polio eradication, and vaccinations. They also work with nongovernmental organizations in communities by organizing HIV/AIDS awareness days, working with HIV-positive individuals, educating high-risk groups on HIV transmission, and promoting voluntary testing centers.

One Volunteer worked with her counterpart at a rural health center to train village lay health workers in 10 villages surrounding her town. These women were busy and could rarely afford transportation to come to training session, so the Volunteer built the training around the market day schedule. This enabled the women to be trained during a weekly class and allowed them to have the time to do market business. In the time between market days, women were able to practice their skills, think of questions, and identify other health needs in their communities. By the end of the six weeks of training, the women had become trained health extension agents, serving comfortably as liaisons between their village and the health center. These new extension agents continue to be engaged in health promotion activities in their villages, improving the capacity of the center to effectively serve the population.



## Mauritania

Capital .....	Nouakchott
Population .....	3 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$280
GDP growth .....	3.3%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 9% Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate .....	120 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 83% Measles: 81%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$12 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 34% Rural: 40%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.52%
Religion .....	Islam
Official language .....	Arabic

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	90	105
Program funds (\$000)	2,290	2,382

## Country Overview

Program dates	1967 1971–1991 1991–present
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Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS
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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. The ruling Democratic and Social Republican Party currently holds the presidency and controls a majority in both houses. 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 number 152 of 177 on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. Besides mining, the only commercially viable industry is fishing.

## Program Focus

Since the 1980s, Volunteers have worked in agriculture, environmental conservation, cooperatives, health education, and Guinea worm eradication. In the 1990s, the agriculture and environmental conservation projects merged to form the agroforestry project. The cooperatives project became small business development, and the Guinea worm eradication project developed into community health and water/sanitation and disease control. In 2000, Peace Corps/Mauritania reinstated the TEFL project and created a new environmental education project. Girls' education and information technology projects were created in 2001. Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers transfer basic business skills to microentrepreneurs in Mauritania's informal economic sector to strengthen skills in planning, financial management, marketing, and profitability. Volunteers help entrepreneurs gain access to credit, allowing them to create new businesses or expand existing ones. Information technology has become an increasingly important part of the business development sector. Volunteers work with the Ministry of New Technology and the Cisco Academy to teach the skills that are needed for the country to develop.

Working with counterparts at the Ministry of Women's Affairs, one Volunteer upgraded the activities, equipment, and outreach of a cyber center at a women's center in a low-income neighborhood. In addition to basic accounting and marketing skills, local women are offered classes in computer maintenance, trouble-shooting, and general management skills.

### **Education**

Volunteers teach English in middle and high schools throughout Mauritania. They have coached Mauritanian teachers in English as they seek to become more qualified, creative, and effective in a work environment with few resources. Volunteers continue to work at the University of Nouakchott doing teacher training and developing classroom materials.

The Peace Corps-sponsored girl's mentoring centers (GMC) have been very successful with outreach efforts. Volunteers and their community

partners have worked diligently to build stability into the nine regional GMCs. The centers are open to secondary school students and are managed by professional women from the community and Peace Corps Volunteers. These centers provide a positive environment where girls are encouraged to continue their studies and share their accomplishments with their peers.

### **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 in selected oases and villages. Volunteers and farmers work together to protect garden sites, villages, and oases against desert encroachment and natural degradation. Environmental education Volunteers work with teachers and students to increase awareness of the importance of environmental protection.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

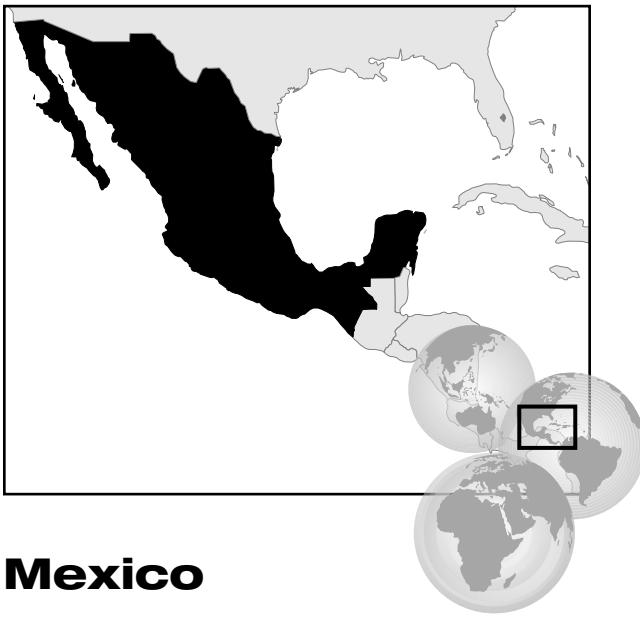
Volunteers strive to improve the health of the rural population by providing communities with the necessary analytical and technical skills to reduce the incidence of waterborne and hygiene-related diseases, such as malaria and diarrhea. They also promote access to potable water through the construction, repair, and maintenance of water sources, such as wells. Volunteers have also designed and implemented HIV/AIDS trainings of trainers and launched major HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns in different regions of the country through sports, cultural events, and formal training sessions. In October 2004, Volunteers were involved in a door-to-door campaign to vaccinate children against polio.

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“In a world of increasing tensions between the United States and the Muslim world, Peace Corps/Mauritania is one of the few meaningful ways in which American and Muslims work together constructively at a grass-roots level, overcoming the power of cliché and groupthink that stokes anti-Americanism and replacing it with the power of personal experience that promotes understanding and cooperation.”

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**Mauritania Volunteer  
Agriculture Sector**



## Mexico

Capital .....	Mexico City
Population .....	101 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$5,920
GDP growth .....	0.9%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 7% Female: 11%
Infant mortality rate .....	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 91% Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$ 14,622 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 69%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.3%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 89% Protestantism: 6% Other: 5%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	29	55
Program funds (\$000)	1,239	1,748

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	2004-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Environment

As a nation of more than 100 million people, Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. About 70 percent of the people live in rural areas. Many Mexicans emigrate from rural areas to the industrialized urban centers and the developing areas along the U.S.-Mexico border.

In late 1994, the devaluation of the Mexican peso sent the country into its worst recession in over half a century. Since then, there has been substantial progress in building a modern, diversified economy, improving infrastructure, and tackling the causes of poverty. Educational levels in Mexico have improved substantially in recent decades, and education continues to remain one of the government's highest priorities.

In July 2000, Vicente Fox of the National Action Party was elected president. This marked the first time since the Mexican Revolution that the opposition defeated the party in power, the Institutional Revolutionary Party. President Fox began his six-year term on December 1, 2000.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps program in Mexico is a unique partnership that provides the first opportunity for the Peace Corps to recruit highly specialized, technically trained and experienced Volunteers to work side-by-side with Mexican counterparts.

The Peace Corps first began exploring the possibility of entering Mexico after President George W. Bush and President Fox announced the Partnership for Prosperity initiative during their summit in September 2001. On June 10, 2003, the Peace Corps and CONACYT (National Council for Science and Technology) signed a memorandum of understanding regarding the Peace Corps' entry into Mexico. The full partnership accord was formalized at a signing ceremony at the Mexican embassy in Washington, D.C., on November 12, 2003.

The first group of Volunteers arrived in Mexico in October 2004. They are currently working with several CONACYT high-level scientific and technological national research centers located throughout central Mexico.

Their work will encompass the following areas of expertise: water and environmental engineering, agro-industrial and manufacturing, knowledge management, information communication technology, and business development. All Peace Corps/Mexico programming focuses on technical cooperation between the neighboring countries.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers in the business development project are assigned to one of several CONACYT centers and they will provide training and consultation in business practices. CONACYT also hopes to offer their clients assistance and training in business management practices. Volunteer collaboration will

be in the following technological areas: business processes improvement, knowledge management, accounting and finance, marketing, and production/operations management.

### **Environment**

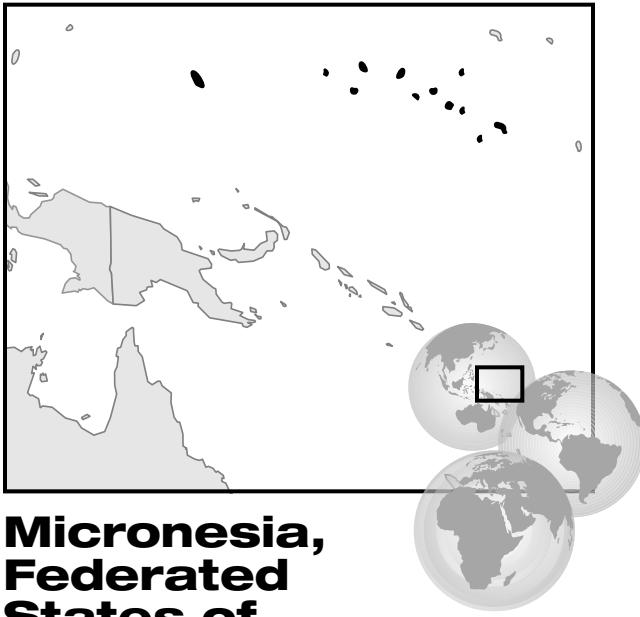
Volunteers in the environmental engineering project work with CONACYT environmental technology departments in projects related to water and wastewater treatment and management. The project will support the appropriate use of water management technologies in rural communities. Specific tasks for Volunteers may include: laboratory research to develop efficient water treatment systems; assisting communities in the organization, planning and implementation of their water and sanitation projects; or promoting watershed protection and management.

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“A tremendous opportunity to forge new relationships with our closest neighbor has arrived. Today, we begin a new level of partnership with the government and the people of Mexico. Mexico has unlimited potential in the field of information technology, and our Volunteers are excited to begin sharing their skills. Just as important, they are ready to learn and to bring back to the U.S. the personal stories and unique customs of the people of Mexico.”

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**Peace Corps Director  
Gaddi Vasquez**



## Micronesia, Federated States of, and Palau

Capitals:	Micronesia: Palikir Palau: Koror
Average population	71,000
Average annual per capita income	\$4,395
Average GDP growth	1.9%
Average adult illiteracy rate	9.5%
Average infant mortality rate	27 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 75% Measles: 84% (Micronesia only)
Foreign direct investment	Not available
Access to safe water	Not available
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Religions	Modekngei Roman Catholicism Protestantism
Official language	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	83	66
Program funds (\$000)	1,909	1,773

## Country Overview

Program dates	1966–present
Program sectors	Environment Youth

Both the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Palau are democratic republics modeled on the U.S. federal system, and each state 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, both scheduled to decline over time. Both countries lack self-sustaining programs to provide for the needs of their population.

Most people of FSM and Palau have subsistence lifestyles, few private sector jobs exist, and basic infrastructure, education, and health services are underdeveloped. Both FSM and Palau have failed to develop a viable private sector. The newly established compact agreements require greater accountability for funds, and focus on helping FSM and Palau become self-reliant.

Developing viable industries and exporting are a challenge 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 Peace Corps/Micronesia is to build the capacity of Micronesians so they can provide for their own needs, appreciate and preserve their environment, and provide opportunities and a healthy environment for youth. The two Peace Corps focus areas for FSM/Palau are environment and youth. Volunteers work in health and nutrition education, libraries, teacher training and curriculum improvement, information technology, small business development and women's income generation, marine resources conservation, environmental education, and terrestrial resources conservation.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Environment**

Volunteers are involved in marine and terrestrial resource conservation projects as well as environmental education activities. Volunteers promote an understanding of marine resources, watersheds, and mangrove ecosystems to build the capacity of government agencies and local conservation organizations to create and implement sound resource management policies. Volunteers also team with government agencies to develop marine resource-based and agricultural economic opportunities while providing training in business planning and operations. Volunteers lead environmental education programs in rural and urban communities and schools, and foster community involvement. Some environment Volunteers also teach gardening techniques in their communities. One Volunteer in FSM has implemented a community-based sea turtle conservation and awareness program. The Volunteer created community awareness through education about sea turtles. The Volunteer developed a program where youth help locate sea turtle nests thereby allowing community members to "adopt" a sea turtle. The turtles are raised in captivity to an age where they have a greater chance of survival in the wild and then are released. The Micronesian Conservation Trust has recently approved funding to hire a community member to be trained by the Volunteer to continue these community efforts.

### **Youth**

There are limited opportunities for youth in FSM and Palau. This has caused increasing problems with substance abuse, alcoholism, violence, suicide, obesity (leading to heart disease and diabetes), and teen pregnancy. The Peace Corps' youth project creates meaningful activities and opportunities for youth to establish healthy lifestyles and increase their participation in social and economic opportunities. They also help youth to take pride in their culture and traditions and promote community membership.

Volunteers work with youth group leaders, teachers, traditional community elders, local NGOs,

government agencies, and families to promote self-esteem and encourage youth to continue their education. Many schools in FSM/Palau have limited resources and under-trained teachers. Volunteers work with teachers to enhance literacy and improve teaching methods by establishing school libraries and developing new curricula.

One Volunteer in Palau worked with her community to establish a community youth center. She helped her community expand a once-a-year softball tournament into a year-round league of more than six men's and four women's teams. Many Volunteers lead summer camps to keep students active during school breaks. Volunteers also coach community members on small business ideas. One Volunteer in FSM helped women in her community obtain funding to purchase a sewing machine so they could export local skirts they design to Guam. In April 2004, the government of Yap State in FSM cut short the school year due to damages from typhoon Sudal. In response, Volunteers organized "Camp SOS," where elementary school students participated in arts and crafts projects, environmental clean-ups, and sports activities.

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**"Only after a few months of incorporating the various sporting activities (i.e., softball league and aerobics) in their daily activities, a number of women have enthusiastically shared their weight loss success with me. This in itself is an accomplishment, as obesity-related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease are a major health crisis in the community."**

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**Palau Volunteer  
Youth Sector**



## Moldova

Capital .....	Chisinau
Population .....	4 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$460
GDP growth .....	7.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: <0.5% Female: 1%
Infant mortality rate .....	27 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 97% Measles: 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$111 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 97% Rural: 88%
HIV/AIDS infection rate: .....	0.20%
Religions.....	Eastern Orthodoxy: 98% Judaism
Official language .....	Romanian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	157	149
Program funds (\$000)	2,518	2,380

## Country Overview

Program dates	1993-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Education Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Moldova is currently the poorest nation in Europe, though it started out its independence as a middle-income country. It has also become one of the region's most heavily indebted countries, especially to Russia. Moldova elected a Communist Party majority to parliament in February 2001, in part as a response to the difficulties people faced in a transitional economy. Though a significant reform agenda remains to be implemented, the government has stabilized the economy, launched some structural reforms, and begun the process of establishing an effective social protection system. Separatist forces in the Transnistrian region, along the Ukraine border, have prevented the government from exercising full control over its territory, exacerbating the difficulties in establishing a secure economy. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the support of the U.S. embassy in Moldova, is seeking a solution to this conflict. In autumn 2003, President Vladimir Voronin publicly expressed the desire to move toward accession into the European Union (EU). However, to make progress toward EU membership, the Transnistrian issue must be resolved. Moldova will hold parliamentary elections in 2005 and this new parliament will select the president for the next five years.

## Program Focus

The Moldovan government is concerned that a lack of English proficiency among its people will inhibit cultural and economic contact with the West. The educational system critically needs qualified English teachers as well as resources and instructional materials. Moldova also recognizes a need to focus on preventive health. However, there are no institutions to train health educators and basic health-care services have deteriorated considerably in recent years. Peace Corps Volunteers are addressing these issues with efforts in agriculture, education, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. Volunteers also work in areas such as creating resource or information technology centers; leading sports

activities, summer camps, and model United Nations programs; and combating human trafficking.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers work with farmer-support organizations and individual farmers to increase incomes by developing information dissemination channels, consulting and training centers, and networking and marketing opportunities. Volunteers assist nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with strategic planning, development, and organizational management. They provide training in basic farm management and financial analysis and work with farmers and service providers to enhance computer literacy and Internet capabilities. One Volunteer worked with his community to renovate and restock fishponds. The fishponds are now providing valuable income to the farmers operating the pond, income to the municipal government through the leasing of the pond, and an inexpensive source of high-quality protein to the community.

### **Education**

Volunteers teach at the primary, secondary, and university levels. Volunteers use English-language classes to improve student abilities in critical thinking, decision-making, teamwork, and problem-solving. Volunteers also work with Moldovan teachers of English through peer-training workshops on topics such as communicative methodologies, American civilization studies, current social and cultural issues, and environmental awareness education. Volunteers actively promote the use of information and communication technologies inside and outside the classroom. One Volunteer established a series of teacher-training seminars that are being conducted

throughout Moldova using the network of partners working with Peace Corps to identify participants. For many of the teachers attending these seminars, it is their only access to technical training and skills enhancement.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Each Volunteer works with two partner agencies, a school and a health-care provider, to promote health education in Moldova. In school, 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 create and develop peer education activities focused on HIV/AIDS prevention and substance abuse. Volunteers have initiated numerous projects with their health-care provider partners, including two nationwide projects addressing breast cancer awareness and education promoting nonviolence. Volunteers developed a life-skills teaching curriculum, in Moldovan, that was adopted by the Moldovan Ministry of Education as a part of the new national curriculum.

### **Youth**

Volunteers in the economic and organizational development project work with NGOs, local governments, and social services agencies. They target community-based organizations that promote sustainable community development, especially in the social welfare field, with activities focused on children and youth. Volunteers assisted more than 6,500 individuals and worked with almost 400 service providers in 60 communities. A Volunteer working with hearing-impaired youth brought a group of her students to the national Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) camp. It was the first time a hearing-impaired group had participated in a national camp with hearing children.

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**"When I was considering whether or not to join Peace Corps, I asked myself,  
'When I am 75 years old and reviewing what I have done with my life, how will  
I feel if I had the opportunity to join Peace Corps but did not?' That thought  
solidified my decision, I had to join."**

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**Moldova Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



## Mongolia

Capital .....	Ulaanbaatar
Population .....	2 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$430
GDP growth .....	4.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 2% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate .....	58 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 98% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$78 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 77% Rural: 30%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Tibetan Buddhist Lamaism: 94% Islam: 6% Shamanism
Official language .....	Halk Mongolian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	86	97
Program funds (\$000)	1,820	1,872

## Country Overview

Program dates	1991-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Beginning in the late 1980s, Mongolia committed itself to democratization and a free-market economy. While this commitment has remained firm and the transition peaceful, economic and societal changes have severely stressed economic, social welfare, and education systems. Although English-language acquisition is of primary importance to citizens and the government, most rural schools do not have enough qualified teachers and resources. Textbooks at universities are outdated, reflecting Soviet-style economics. The health system faces challenges as it moves from a focus on Soviet-style curative treatment to a more modern, preventive approach.

During the transition to a free-market economy, many people have had to rely on natural resources like animals and forests to sustain a small livelihood. The resulting damage to the environment has been severe. Deforestation and encroaching desertification are leaving future generations with dwindling sources of income.

## Program Focus

The people of Mongolia want to direct their own transition and advancement and consider the Peace Corps' approach—which emphasizes capacity building of local people—as fitting with the country's own approach to development. Volunteers provide assistance to organizations whose staff lack needed technical skills or knowledge. The program began with TEFL Volunteers in 1991 and expanded to include Volunteers working in environmental, health, and small business development sectors.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

Volunteers assist the government with Mongolia's economic transition several ways. They build the capacity of nongovernmental organization (NGO) directors, help small business owners plan strate-

gically, develop information technology resources, and teach business management techniques and principles. Volunteers train rural Mongolians in customer service, strategic planning, operational systems, accounting practices, marketing, and proposal writing. They have helped establish computer resource centers and trained students and community members in computer and Internet usage. Volunteers teach business English, and they have organized seminars on networking, international relations, and how to plan for the future. One Volunteer is helping rural people transition from being nomadic livestock herders to semi-settled cooperative members with business plans and partnerships. The Volunteer has also helped with loan facilitation, which has provided the capital for the people to implement their business ideas.

### **Education**

Education is at the forefront of the government's national agenda, and it has chosen English as the primary foreign language of study. Consequently, education Volunteers focus on either teaching English to students or English teacher training. Volunteers teach methodology, lesson planning, grammar, and communication skills as co-teachers in the classroom, as well as in individual sessions and in large workshops for the education community. Several also co-teach computer, economics, and health classes. The education project has a strong community development component. Volunteers engage in additional activities during schools' summer and holiday breaks. They also help co-workers create life-skills, ecology, debate, technology, and drama clubs for students after school. Volunteers have written teacher-training manuals, curricula guidebooks, a resource book to develop visual aids, and a classroom management handbook.

### **Environment**

Environmental education is the primary focus of Volunteers' work in this sector. They promote environmental conservation in community development activities and support the expansion of the ecology curriculum in secondary schools. Eight of the 14 special protected areas offices in Mongolia have benefited from Volunteers' presentations and training on deforestation, wildlife surveying, desertification, alternative income generation and

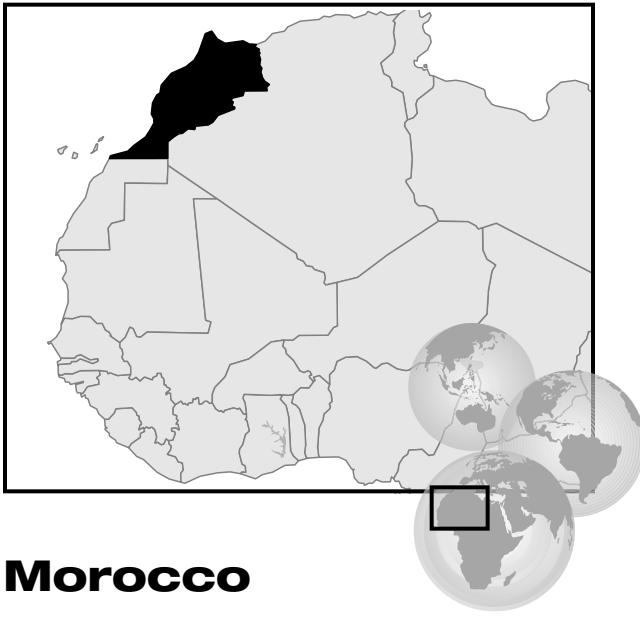
ecotourism development, as well as English language skills and computer and Internet training. Volunteers have written and published ecology curricula for students and teachers, including an "ecology theater" curriculum that was translated into Mongolian. They have also created books that identify endangered bird species in three regions of the country; brochures and media campaigns that promote ecotourism and public awareness of environmental issues; and a chapter in a life skills manual—in English and Mongolian—that covers environmental activities.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The community-based health project focuses on training health professionals and educating students and community members on disease prevention and public health topics. Health Volunteers placed at health departments and NGOs promote public awareness of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, which are on the rise in Mongolia's young and underemployed population. Volunteers have been instrumental in designing and implementing health education outreach activities. Projects have included working with the Red Cross in the training of trainers in First Aid/CPR, assisting with an NGO's teen counseling hotline, and promoting campaigns sponsored by the Public Health Institute-Nutrition Research Center to improve the Mongolian diet. Two Volunteers and their counterparts organized and facilitated a province-wide seminar for health professionals on the control and prevention of chronic diseases. Volunteers have provided life skills training for secondary school students, teachers, and staff; and they are developing a chapter on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health for a life skills manual.

### **Youth**

According to United Nations Development Programme statistics, half of the Mongolian population is under 23; 38 percent under 16. In response to these numbers, Peace Corps/Mongolia is planning a youth development project that will be launched in September 2005. Volunteers will work with school social workers and teachers, staff from children's centers in the provinces, youth-focused NGOs, and the Mongolian Scout Association to provide training in life skills and to form youth clubs and camps.



## Morocco

Capital .....	Rabat
Population .....	30 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,170
GDP growth .....	3.2%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 37% Female: 62%
Infant mortality rate .....	39 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 94% Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$428 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 98% Rural: 56%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.10%
Religions.....	Islam: 99% Christianity, Judaism
Official language .....	Arabic

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	198	186
Program funds (\$000)	3,382	3,559

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1991 1991–2003 2003–present
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Program sectors	Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth
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In 1999 King Mohammed VI assumed the throne after the death of his father, who had ruled for 38 years. Gradual political reforms in the 1990s led to establishment of a bicameral legislature. The king presides over the parliament, the judiciary, the military and the country's religious leaders. Morocco annexed the Western Sahara in the late 1970s. The status of the territory remains unresolved.

By enhancing tourism, Morocco hopes to attract 10 million tourists by 2010, which will, in turn, 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, just as it has lately adopted a new family law. The approved law, which is considered "revolutionary" in the Arab and Muslim world, promotes women's rights and puts wives on a more equal footing with their husbands.

Morocco faces issues typical to developing countries. These include restraining government spending, reducing constraints on private activity and foreign trade, and achieving sustainable economic growth. The country 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.

## Program Focus

Almost one out of four Moroccans in rural areas is poor, compared with one out of 10 in urban areas. Literacy rates are low in rural areas, particularly among girls. Maternal and child health is still a major concern as maternal and infant mortality rates are quite high. While sexually transmitted diseases are widespread, reports of HIV cases remain unrealistically 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, putting them at a disadvantage in a rapidly evolving global economy. To help address these concerns, Peace Corps Volunteers are assigned to projects in business development, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers assist artisan communities by designing sessions on management and computer skills and offering consulting services. One Volunteer trained local artisans in new techniques for stained glass and glass painting that the Ministry of Artisanat will introduce in its curriculum for national artisans' training centers. Another Volunteer organized a traditional weaving workshop to train 20 girls. To enhance crafts exportation, particularly with the newly signed U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement, one Volunteer is creating a CD-ROM catalog of local products with local artisans to promote their work to U.S. importers.

### **Environment**

The environment project seeks to reinforce the Moroccan government's conservation initiatives and help rural populations achieve a higher standard of living. Volunteers have worked with government representatives, youth groups, and environmental interest groups. They have also worked with new local associations to promote income-generating activities such as ecotourism projects. Volunteers have established small community- or school-based tree nurseries and planted tree seedlings, and they have been involved in projects to control erosion and prevent water supply contamination.

Volunteers have co-facilitated workshops to identify topics on environmental awareness and methods to limit desertification in three provinces, and they have helped with the planning and implementation of tree-planting drives for income-generation and

soil stabilization. One project involving seven new local associations resulted in the distribution of 12,000 olive, apple, cherry, and plum trees to 350 local families.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Morocco's high infant mortality rate reflects adverse living conditions associated with poor water quality and inadequate sanitation facilities. A major component of Volunteers' projects is health education focusing on maternal and child health and safe water. Volunteers have collaborated with the government in increasing community access to health services and assisted in educational activities during local vaccination drives conducted by health officials. Volunteers and their Moroccan counterparts developed informal health and hygiene lessons and activities for school-age children outside of school hours. Health Volunteers, in collaboration with youth development Volunteers, organized HIV/AIDS awareness activities in youth centers, high schools, and health clinics.

### **Youth**

One-third of Moroccans are 15 years old and younger. Volunteers encourage youth to attend citizenship and leadership-building activities. Volunteers teach English at local youth centers and help implement extracurricular activities, such as managing sports teams, youth mentoring, and teaching computer skills. The Ministry of Youth has made educating girls a priority, so Volunteers, their supervisors, and other community members are addressing the needs of local girls. Volunteers work with teachers, women's centers, and parent-teacher associations.

In 2004, 18 Volunteers helped develop the curriculum for an English language summer camp for 100 high school students at the request of the Ministry in Charge of Youth. The Volunteers also co-led cultural, educational and leisure activities. The camp created a fun, friendly environment that motivated the young campers to speak English. Additionally, it helped promote leadership skills, encourage environmental awareness, and provide health education. The camp also provided cross-cultural interaction and an ideas exchange between the campers and Volunteers. The camp will serve as a model for language camps in 2005.



## Mozambique

Capital .....	Maputo
Population .....	18 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$200
GDP growth .....	7.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 38% Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate .....	128 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 60% Measles: 58%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$406 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 81% Rural: 41%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	13.00%
Religions.....	Indigenous and other beliefs: 45% Christianity: 30% Islam: 17%
Official language .....	Portuguese

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	87	88
Program funds (\$000)	2,227	2,283

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1998–present

**Program sector** Education  
Health and HIV/AIDS

Since its first democratic elections in 1994, the government of Mozambique has encouraged development and a free-market economy by privatizing former state-owned enterprises, respecting freedom of the press, and promoting the development of an active civil society. In 1999, President Joaquim Chissano was reelected in the country's second general elections, with a slight parliamentary majority for his party, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). In 2003, municipal elections were held in 33 selected districts and cities for the third time. President Chissano did not run in the presidential elections in December 2004, and he was succeeded by FRELIMO candidate Armando Guebuza, who won the popular vote.

Despite impressive political achievements since gaining independence in 1975, Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 171 of 177 on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. However, the country is beginning to exploit the economic potential of its sizable agricultural, hydropower, and transportation resources. Improvements positively impacting the economy include the hook-up of secondary urban centers throughout the country to the powergrid of the hydroelectric dam of Cahora Bassa, the construction of a natural gas pipeline to South Africa, the restoration of three major sugar cane processing factories, and the investment in rare mineral mining.

Due to widespread poverty, poor infrastructure, a dispersed population, low education levels, and the growing threat of HIV/AIDS, the health status of Mozambicans is among the lowest in the world. Treatable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and respiratory infections are the most common causes of premature deaths, particularly of children and infants.

## Program Focus

In 1998, the Peace Corps began a program in Mozambique to assist the government in its plans for English language teaching. Peace Corps/Mozambique collaborates with the Ministry of Education to provide in-service opportunities for TEFL teachers,

produce low-cost materials from local resources, and facilitate projects that link schools and communities. The Peace Corps program expanded in 2004 to include work in the health sector. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Volunteers provide quality English and science instruction to students in secondary and technical schools. They also support Mozambican teachers in expanding their teaching methodologies, improving their English communication skills, developing educational materials, and completing certification responsibilities for the national in-service training program. A group of education Volunteers is preparing Mozambican primary school teachers to introduce English in the sixth grade as a part of a major curriculum overhaul. Volunteers also promote education outside the classroom with activities such as tutoring, coaching, organizing school libraries, and directing theater productions. In addition to their primary assignments, Volunteers are trained to be advocates and educators for HIV/AIDS prevention.

Two Volunteer biology teachers successfully organized the second annual regional science fair for students from eight schools in central provinces of Mozambique. Twenty-one students, selected as the best of their own schools, presented scientific experiments in biology, chemistry, and physics. The students' enthusiasm was evident as they presented their theories and it shows how well Volunteer teachers motivate their students to investigate and explore the topics. The students were highly motivated but also concise in their presentation of basic materials that were transformed into tools of a scientific project.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

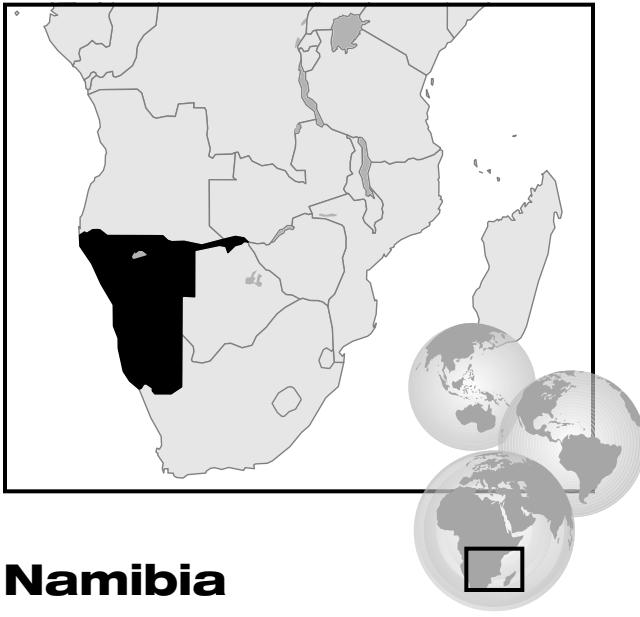
In April 2004, Peace Corps/Mozambique received its first group of health Volunteers. This development was highly welcomed by the National AIDS Council and the numerous nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that are working diligently to improve the health status of Mozambicans. Volunteers are assigned as HIV/AIDS community and institutional development workers to seven different international NGOs recognized by the Ministry of Health for their interventions in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

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**"Students in my biology classes wanted to be a part of something new. I gave them sessions about speaking with their peers about HIV, the facts about who has HIV, what HIV and AIDS are, as well as many more related topics. These students are using their influence to spread the message and create that small change in people ready to receive the message which ends up making a big difference."**

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**Mozambique Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Namibia

Capital .....	Windhoek
Population .....	2 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,790
GDP growth .....	2.7%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 16% Female: 17%
Infant mortality rate .....	55 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 77% Measles: 68%
Foreign direct investment.....	Not available
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 100% Rural: 67%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	22.50%
Religions.....	Christianity Indigenous beliefs
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	78	78
Program funds (\$000)	2,665	2,684

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1990–present

**Program sectors** Education  
Health and HIV/AIDS

Since becoming independent in 1990, Namibia has emerged as a model by establishing political and economic frameworks that give it one of the freest and most open economies in Africa. Namibians are encouraged to participate fully in shaping laws and government policies. Especially noteworthy has been the country's ability to make significant social investments, including making education funding a top government priority. Namibia has set a model for advancing the rule of law and encouraging the growth of civil society.

The country had its first change of top political leadership since independence when Mr. Hisike-punwe Pohamba was elected president in November 2004. This election was a major test of the political institutions that have been built since 1990.

Mining, agriculture, and fishing account for more than 25 percent of GDP. Namibia's mineral resources include diamonds, uranium, copper, lead, zinc, and a variety of semiprecious stones. These industries, however, are very susceptible to external influences, so their contribution to GDP fluctuates. The apartheid system of job allocation and education continues to influence employment in these sectors, with the highest unemployment rates occurring among the least educated and skilled. The overall unemployment rate exceeds 30 percent. People residing in urban areas, including many migrant workers, have adopted Western ways; however, in rural areas, traditional society remains intact.

## Program Focus

Immediately after Namibia's independence in 1990, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture began to reform the educational system. The first group of Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in Namibia less than six months after independence and have made substantial contributions to that reform. Currently, most Peace Corps/Namibia projects still collaborate with the education ministry, and the education sector is likely to continue to be the major platform from which the Peace Corps launches broader contributions to Namibia's development.

A recent collaboration with the U.S. National Science Resources Center (a partnership between the National Academies and the Smithsonian) and the Namibian Ministry of Basic Education will aim to improve the teaching of science. This pilot project to explore curriculum reform in primary and early secondary schools is being planned for future implementation.

Memoranda of understanding with the Ministry of Health and Social Services and with the National Planning Commission will continue to strengthen Peace Corps/Namibia's HIV/AIDS efforts. In collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and USAID in Namibia, the initial project will directly support the ministry by providing community-level training in reproductive health, positive living, and home-based care. The project will provide more focused support to the ministry in the areas of HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, treatment, and care. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Peace Corps/Namibia has significantly contributed to education reform through teacher training; classroom teaching; and subject matter support for teachers, especially in science, mathematics, English, and information and communication technology. As an example, a Volunteer secured a donation

of 100 computers through the Rotary Club to be placed in the northern schools.

Another Volunteer secured donation of 3,000 books that will be categorized and distributed to school libraries throughout the country. Volunteers have also rigorously worked to increase parental and community involvement in education and, in some instances, have helped communities establish local school boards. Volunteers conduct workshops on classroom management and discipline and, at the grass-roots level, conduct home visits to explain student class assignments and solicit parental support for school-based activities. Volunteers also assist with community-based projects, such as planting gardens, promoting small business activities, and assisting women's sewing cooperatives.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers focus on capacity building at regional and school levels. They assist with establishing HIV/AIDS clubs and organizing HIV/AIDS dramas. They conduct HIV/AIDS workshops using both local and Volunteer-developed resources. As a result, regional personnel are more comfortable in accessing and using resources to prevent the further spread of HIV. Volunteers will begin working with the Ministry of Health to promote awareness of a new anti-retroviral treatment program, help build the capacity of the regional staff to use instructional technology, and build capacity of faith-based organizations to assist communities in developing HIV/AIDS action plans and strategies for prevention, care, and treatment.

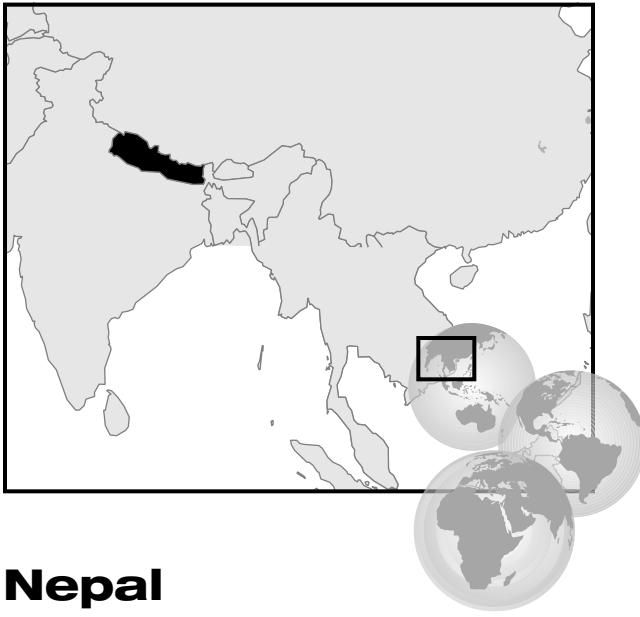
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**"My Peace Corps experience was tough but I enjoyed every moment.**

**I feel like I made a difference in the lives of the learners at my site."**

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**Namibia Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Nepal

Capital .....	Kathmandu
Population .....	24 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$230
GDP growth .....	-0.5%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 38% Female: 74%
Infant Mortality Rate:.....	62 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 72% Measles: 71%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$10 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 94% Rural: 87%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.50%
Religions.....	Hinduism: 80.6% Buddhism: 10.7% Islam: 4.2% Other: 4.2%
Official languages .....	Nepali Gurung

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	0	0
Program funds (\$000)	394	0

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1962–present  
*(Suspended September 2004)*

**Program sectors** Business Development  
Education  
Environment  
Health and HIV/AIDS  
Youth

The Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal is a landlocked, mountainous country that continues to face significant development challenges. The United Nations estimates that 42 percent of the population—about 9 million people—live in poverty, particularly in rural areas. The government's ability to commit significant resources to poverty-reduction activities has been severely compromised by its struggle to quell an ongoing insurgency by Nepali Maoists, who continue to wage their seven-year “people’s war” against the government. All arable land is under cultivation and faces deteriorating soil productivity. Nepal also faces a lack of educational opportunities for its children, poor health facilities, deforestation, and soil erosion.

Ninety percent of the population is dependent on agriculture. Low per capita income; lack of capital, technology, and skills; the fragmented market; and the country’s landlocked status have all impeded industrial development. Urban unemployment and underemployment, particularly in rural areas, remain high. Nepal’s poor economic base and resources have made its economy overly dependent on other countries, particularly India, for the supply of capital, technology, raw materials, and consumer goods. Consequently, external forces exert much influence on the direction of Nepal’s economy.

The Nepali government has experienced many changes of leadership, and the political situation remains unstable. King Gyanendra dissolved the House of Representatives in October 2002 and appointed the current nonparty government after the previous government failed to hold elections as scheduled. Almost all of Nepal’s 75 districts have experienced some sort of violence because of the Maoist insurgency. Approximately 10,000 Nepalis have died in the conflict, including Maoists, members of the police and army, and civilians. Peace talks were held but were not successful.

In September 2004, due to the increased intensity of Maoist activities and a bombing at the American Center, the Peace Corps/Nepal program was suspended. In response to this development, there was an overwhelming outpouring of support and

expressions of appreciation and sadness from Nepali citizens, government agencies, and host agency partners. The Peace Corps has a very positive reputation in Nepal, and has built strong relationships during the 42 years it has been in-country.

## **Program Focus**

In the last 42 years, more than 4,500 Americans have served as Volunteers with the Peace Corps in Nepal. In recent years, Volunteers' work has focused on the following program areas: education and teacher training, forestry, soil conservation, environmental conservation and education, national parks, water and sanitation, youth development, business development and income-generation, health education and nongovernmental organization (NGO) development.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The small business development sector improves local capacities to plan, implement, and monitor business activities to generate income. Volunteers assist the executive staff and members of their NGOs and local women's groups with organizational development, management, marketing, and business-specific skills trainings. They achieve these objectives by creating websites, writing grant proposals for capital funding, and improving the management information systems of their assigned NGOs.

### **Education**

Peace Corps/Nepal's overall commitment in this sector is to support girls' education and promote the quality of education for students from disadvantaged communities. Volunteers work as English language teacher trainers, English resource teachers, and science lab instructors. English language teacher trainers help upgrade the knowledge and skills of Nepali primary-level teachers in English language teaching methods. They promote sustainability and capacity building by working with local partners in designing and implementing curriculum, training, and follow-up support for teachers. Science lab instructors help set up and upgrade science labs. They train science teachers in lab safety, the use of lab equipment, how to integrate lab use into the science curriculum, and how to prepare and use locally available, low-cost or no-cost science teaching materials.

### **Environment**

The natural resources project works in five major areas: soil conservation, community forestry, national parks, Institute of Forestry, and environmental conservation. Volunteers provide support to community groups on everything from soil conservation techniques to watershed, wildlife, and forestry management. They conduct trainings on income-generating activities (prioritizing women and disadvantaged groups), and they assist community groups in networking with each other and with relevant organizations and local bodies. They help staff in national parks develop wildlife databases, which is essential in promoting environmental conservation. Other Volunteers work with NGOs to raise conservation awareness in schools and communities.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The health sector supports government and NGO efforts to increase the access of Nepali communities to quality health education and information. Volunteers help health schools improve their nursing and medical training through classroom instruction and clinical supervision in hospitals and health posts. Other Volunteers assist with capacity building of NGOs by helping them with planning and management, and in establishing networks with other NGOs, government agencies, and international organizations to support health activities. Water and sanitation Volunteers help improve and strengthen communities' capacities to address personal, household, and community hygiene and environmental sanitation problems.

### **Youth**

The youth development program provides programs and activities in life skills and job training, education, health (including drug use and HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness), and community service activities for youth at risk. The project provides programs and activities for youth living under difficult circumstances to enhance their employment opportunities and community involvement. Volunteers concentrate on strengthening local NGOs and community groups to improve the coordination and networking practices among these groups and government agencies. development, and health-related issues, such as drug abuse and HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.



## Nicaragua

Capital .....	Managua
Population .....	5 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$710
GDP growth .....	1.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 33% Female: 33%
Infant mortality rate .....	32 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 84% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$174 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 91% Rural: 59%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.20%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 85%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	160	132
Program funds (\$000)	2,613	2,452

## Country Overview

Program dates	1968–1979 1991–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy with executive, legislative, judicial, and electoral branches of government. 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 reported widely, Nicaragua has become the newest democracy in the Americas. President Enrique Bolaños is only the third democratically elected president since the end of the Sandinista regime in 1990.

Nicaragua has soil, a climate, and an altitude suitable for the cultivation of a wide variety of crops and livestock. Its rivers, volcanoes, coastlines, and timber and mineral resources present impressive economic potential as well as a great challenge to sound environmental management. The country has also suffered from catastrophic natural disasters.

More than half of Nicaragua's population is underemployed or unemployed. Severe environmental degradation and flood damage from Hurricane Mitch have compromised the fragile food security of many rural areas. Limited access to health care and health education has led to a high rate of 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 four sectors: agriculture, business development, environment, and health and HIV/AIDS.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

The sustainable food security project focuses on improving the standard of living of rural farming families through improved agricultural techniques. Volunteers work closely with field technicians from the National Agricultural Technological Institute to help members of rural households develop skills in sustainable crop production, environmental protection, and integrated backyard management.

Volunteers have helped interested community members create 15 rural banks. These locally run banks encourage savings and teamwork and give the participants access to credit. Some have taken out small loans with the banks to initiate income-generating activities related to food processing and the marketing of marmalades, jellies, and fruit honeys.

### **Business Development**

The small business development project focuses on the nation's youth, providing them with business and life skills that will enhance their capacity to gain meaningful employment and increase economic opportunities in their communities. Volunteers teach business enterprise development, primarily in secondary and vocational schools. In a creative business course given by Volunteers, students participate in all phases of business development, from product conception and selling of shares, to running the business, and finally its eventual closeout and paying off shareholders.

In 2004, two Volunteers organized a national competition on the creative business course. Thirteen primarily youth-owned micro-businesses participated in the daylong event. Prizes were awarded for three categories: best presentation of a business, best logo, and best product.

### **Environment**

The environmental education project works directly with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECD). Peace Corps/Nicaragua and MECD created and published an environmental education guide for primary schools. Volunteers assigned to rural school districts work with at least three elementary schools in their district and use interactive, student-centered methods and community efforts to address local environmental concerns.

This year, a Volunteer helped the local youth ecological brigade organize a trash awareness campaign with local bus drivers. (Bus passengers are responsible for a significant amount of trash that accumulates on roadsides.) Bus drivers were responsible for directing passengers on appropriate trash disposal, playing a trash awareness-raising cassette, and to weigh the quantity of trash they collected on their trips. The bus driver who collected the most trash won a cash award.

### **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. The preventive health education project works directly with the Ministry of Health and focuses on four primary areas: hygiene education, nutrition, adolescent health, and maternal and infant health. Volunteers also conduct HIV/AIDS prevention education.

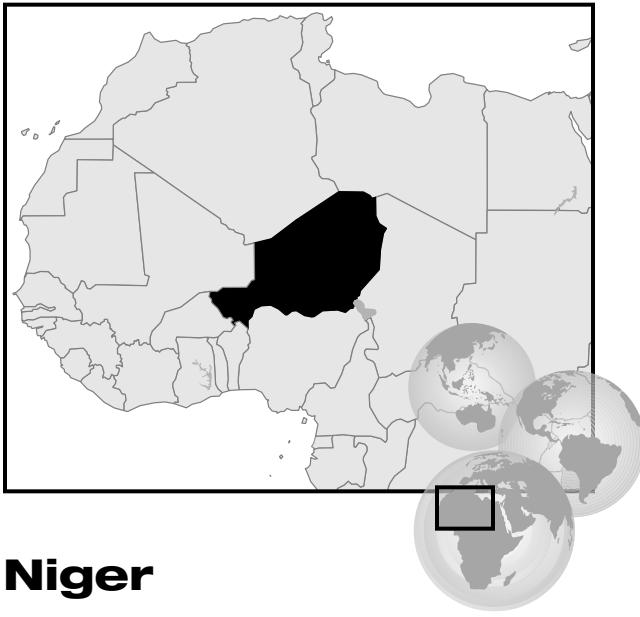
With the assistance of local Ministry of Health specialists, Volunteers have designed and delivered a training series for community health workers. The educational sessions focused on increased knowledge of basic health issues and gender; participants were also taught nonformal education techniques. Follow-up was done with participants to see how they were implementing their new skills.

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**"The work of Volunteers is admirable; their tenacity and determination is contributing to Nicaragua's development via their skills and technology transfer. This will abound in the strengthening of capacities, values, and abilities in our communities and families, particularly for our youth."**

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**Chancellor Norman Caldera Cardenal  
Minister of Foreign Affairs**



## Niger

Capital .....	Niamey
Population .....	11 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$180
GDP growth .....	3.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 75% Female: 91%
Infant mortality rate .....	155 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 23% Measles: 48%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$8 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 70% Rural: 56%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.35%
Religions.....	Islam: 95% Indigenous beliefs Christianity
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	108	131
Program funds (\$000)	2,826	3,092

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

At independence 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, renewing hopes for economic growth. The country has remained politically stable. The last round of elections were held in December 2004, and incumbent President Mamadou Tandja won a second term.

Niger remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 176 out of 177 on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. Natural impediments to growth include its landlocked position, its limited arable land, and the vulnerability to drought of its agriculturally based economy. These obstacles are compounded by a large population with a limited supply of skilled personnel, rapid population growth, intense exploitation of already fragile soils, and insufficient health services. Nearly 90 percent of Niger's population is 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, the environment, community development, youth, education, and health projects to help Nigerien communities attain household food security and to promote sustainable development. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## Volunteer Focus

### Agriculture

Agricultural production is the number-one concern for Niger, a country with variable rainfall and predominantly sandy soils. The agriculture project, in conjunction with the Ministries of Planning,

Agricultural Development, and Animal Resources, helps develop local strategies to improve individual household food production, utilization, and acquisition systems. Volunteers work directly with farmers in their villages on issues such as water harvesting, crop rotation, soil fertility management, and improved animal husbandry.

Several Volunteers have worked with an NGO to train village-level animal health workers and provide vaccinations. Another Volunteer grew demonstration fields of improved varieties of millet and beans, and the results persuaded local farmers to try growing these crops.

### **Education**

Peace Corps/Niger inaugurated new projects in community and youth education in June 2003. An initial group of 15 Volunteers is working to create regional English language centers, aimed primarily at adults who need English for their jobs or to gain employment. Others are conducting awareness campaigns on HIV/AIDS and working with girls education, vocational training, and adult literacy.

### **Environment**

In Niger, where food production is a primary concern, the environment and natural resources it supports are often exploited. Land degradation, the second highest population growth rate in the world, and diminishing natural resources (e.g., fuel wood) are critical problems. Poverty exacerbates these conditions, as most rural people must constantly weigh the choices of short-term resource use versus long-term protection and restoration of the landscape. Volunteers in the environment project implement land reclamation/anti-erosion activities, organize tree plantings/protection, and conduct environmental education and awareness sessions in schools and with rural youth.

One Volunteer organized her village youth to raise trees locally to be sold for profit with the income

going into a savings system for the youth group. Another Volunteer has helped his community build a school, plant trees around it, and promote a native food tree with women in his community.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Niger suffers from one of the world's highest infant mortality rates. Roughly one-quarter of children under age five are malnourished. The primary strategy of the health project is to promote development of nutrition education skills and practices among mothers. Volunteers work to improve the nutrition of children and pregnant women in rural areas by educating mothers on how to improve their feeding and dietary practices. In a successful Guinea worm eradication project, Volunteers educate populations living in endemic zones by distributing fliers that provide important health information and by treating infested ponds. Peace Corps/Niger is also promoting HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention on a region-wide basis through an annual AIDS bike ride that reaches several thousand people every year.

One Volunteer constructed a rural health clinic and selected an educated young man from the village to be trained and to serve as the village health agent. An initial stock of medicines and supplies was purchased with contributions from the villagers and assistance from outside sources, and a cost-recovery payment system was organized to ensure sustainability. The Volunteer also created a fund for maintenance and improvements to the center supported by consultation fees, as well as a "rent-to-own" impregnated mosquito net program.

Another Volunteer developed several effective PowerPoint presentations that trained other Volunteers and language teachers on HIV/AIDS education methods. The Volunteer also helped other Volunteers connect with international and local NGOs involved in HIV/AIDS activities.

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**"Coming to Niger is definitely a sensory overload. Everything is so new, the heat, the food, the smells, and sounds. The people in my village have become like family to me. And the work I have accomplished is so fulfilling. I have gotten to work on a number of issues facing Niger including tree nurseries, gender development, and improved farming techniques. Being here has been an amazing experience!"**

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**Niger Volunteer  
Environment Sector**



## Panama

Capital .....	Panama City
Population .....	3 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$4,020
GDP growth .....	0.8%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 7% Female: 8%
Infant mortality rate .....	19 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 89% Measles: 79%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$57 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 99% Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Male: 1.5%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 84% Protestantism: 15% Other: 1%
Official language .....	Spanish

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	147	119
Program funds (\$000)	2,856	2,571

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1963–1971 1990–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Panama's history has been shaped by globalization and the ambitious dreams of Europeans and Americans. The achievements of the Canal and the construction of the glass and steel towers of Panama City obscure the reality that nearly 40 percent of Panamanians live in poverty. Rural Panamanians, and especially the indigenous groups, suffer from disturbing rates of poverty. Panama also is threatened by the second highest rate of HIV/AIDS incidence in Central America.

Panama's greatest resource—and its foundation for future success—is its environment, which is in peril. Poor management of natural resources has caused 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 Canal, these natural resources are more important than ever.

## Program Focus

Peace Corps works in Panama's poorest rural and indigenous areas to identify, develop, and promote sustainable development projects. Peace Corps/Panama supports five programs: sustainable agriculture systems, environmental conservation, economic development, environmental health, and rural health. The combined effect of these programs 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. Peace Corps/Panama works closely with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Environmental Authority, indigenous councils, and many nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as development partners.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Traditionally, Panamanian agriculture has been based on “slash-and-burn” land-clearing techniques, causing extensive soil erosion and loss of habitat. The sustainable agriculture systems program works to preserve natural resources while increasing viable sources of income for farmers. Volunteers work with subsistence farmers to increase production using new agriculture methods and principles. Additionally, a greater emphasis is being placed on promoting small-scale agribusiness.

Volunteers have helped create integrated farm plans that have resulted in experimental vegetable plots, improved pasture grasses, increased production and sales of cacao, a coffee plant nursery, irrigation systems, and goat projects. One Volunteer helped to plant nearly 4,000 indigenous tree species saplings with a small NGO to promote intercropping of trees with traditional agricultural crops.

### **Business Development**

The economic development project increases household and community incomes by supporting community cooperatives, community-based tourism initiatives, and youth and information technology initiatives. To further support youth development and employability, the program supports Junior Achievement programs in schools. Volunteers are helping to establish computer centers and training in schools and communities interested in increasing computer literacy to prepare youth for work in the information age. One Volunteer helped construct her community’s first computer center, and she helped solicit funds for and donations of computers. She also helped the community build partnerships with a regional college to provide training on teaching methods and maintenance of systems. Another Volunteer has worked closely with an indigenous women’s group to promote cultural and ecological tourism.

### **Environment**

Environmental conservation Volunteers work to protect Panama’s imperiled environment by working in and around priority protected areas, including the Panama Canal watershed. Volunteers promote appropriate technologies like lorena stoves that burn wood fuel more efficiently and reduce women’s and children’s exposure to harmful smoke. In 2004, Peace Corps helped train more than 100 agency and community leaders in the use of appropriate conservation technologies.

Volunteers also promote greater environmental stewardship in communities by supporting environmental youth groups. A group of Volunteers helped organize six weeks of summer camps, which focused on environmental awareness and life skills development and served more than 500 youth. Volunteers assigned to coastal areas and national park buffer zones play an important role in designing and implementing environmental conservation projects with their counterparts from the National Environmental Authority.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The environmental health and rural health programs address health and sanitation issues in the poorest indigenous communities. The environmental health program focuses on access to potable water, availability of proper sanitation services, and improving hygiene. Volunteers work with the Ministry of Health to develop action plans, design infrastructure, and identify needy communities. The rural health program, established in September 2004, works with the Ministry of Health to train indigenous health workers to improve nutrition, reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS awareness. Both programs raise HIV/AIDS awareness through education and national youth conferences. One Volunteer in the environmental health program has helped construct aqueduct systems for three communities in partnership with the Ministry of Health, local water committees and U.S.-based NGOs.

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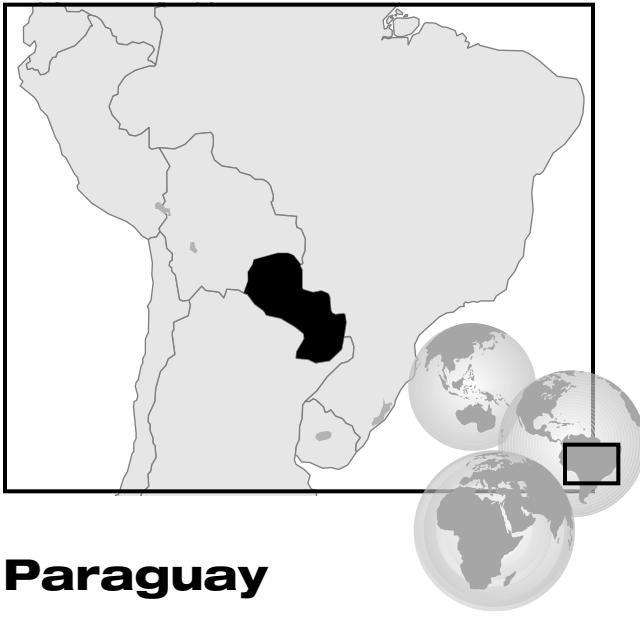
“I’m trying to live a life that I will be proud of when I’m 80. That is why I am here with my husband, living in this small Embera community, working closely with the newly formed water committee to build the village’s first aqueduct.

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Our work will truly make a difference.”

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**Panama Volunteer  
Environment Sector**



## Paraguay

Capital .....	Asunción
Population .....	6 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,170
GDP growth .....	-2.3%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 7% Female: 10%
Infant mortality rate .....	26 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 77% Measles: 82%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$-22 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 93% Rural: 59%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.11%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 90%
Official languages .....	Spanish Guaraní

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	188	172
Program funds (\$000)	3,066	2,915

## Country Overview

Program dates	1967-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

For the past decade, Paraguay has labored under serious economic challenges, aggravated by inadequate government policies. Though a new government administration, elected in August 2003, has begun tackling some of the country's problems, social and economic development will continue to be challenges into the future.

Paraguay has a predominantly agricultural economy and vast hydroelectric resources. Its main exports are soybeans, 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 both re-export of imported goods to neighboring countries as well as thousands of micro-enterprises and street vendors.

Limited access to land resources and economic opportunities have caused significant migration of the predominantly rural population to Paraguay's urban centers or neighboring countries. Extensive urban unemployment/underemployment are a pressing challenge for the government.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps/Paraguay opened in 1967. Since that time, more than 2,700 Volunteers have served in this country. To help address Paraguay's critical needs, Volunteers are assigned to projects in economic development, municipal services development, crop and beekeeping extension, early elementary education, environmental education, agroforestry extension, health and sanitation, and youth development.

## Volunteer Focus

### Agriculture

Farming employs 45 percent of the labor force, but the country is experiencing a decrease in agricultural productivity as a result of soil erosion and

poor pest control practices. Crop and beekeeping extension Volunteers work with small-scale farmers to improve soils, diversify crops, seek new markets, improve people's nutritional status, and identify new income-generating activities. Projects promote horticulture and food crops for domestic consumption, both to reduce dependence on cotton as the single cash crop and to increase nutritional levels in the diet of Paraguayans. Volunteers have assisted farmers in procuring technical information and seeds for farm diversification efforts, provided orientation in planting new crops, and assisted farmers in organizing farmers' markets.

### **Business Development**

Volunteers provide technical training and assistance to small business owners and rural agricultural cooperatives to increase incomes and job opportunities. They work with cooperatives to improve their administrative and organizational operations, management, accounting, and marketing skills. Volunteers help cooperatives diversify their services in credit, technical assistance to farmers, health and life insurance policies, home improvement and construction loans, and consumer clubs. Volunteers provide computer-training courses to cooperative employees, members, and their families.

As part of the municipal services project, Volunteers work with municipal governments to improve the planning and delivery of services to underserved communities. They also help municipalities modernize their data collection techniques and services through information technology. Volunteers work with neighborhood commissions to train them in project design and management and civic education.

### **Education**

Volunteers train kindergarten through third grade teachers in new teaching techniques. They implement summer community education projects, assist families and schools in supporting children with special needs, and help school teachers and administrators promote gender equity in the classroom. Volunteers also work with community organizations, including health posts, municipalities, neighborhood commissions, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), youth, and women's groups. Several Volunteers have been assigned to teacher training colleges to strengthen student teachers' skills.

### **Environment**

Environmental degradation is dramatically increasing in Paraguay. Much of the deforestation, contamination, and inappropriate land use is due to lack of knowledge. Volunteers in the agroforestry project work to increase crop diversity on fragile deforested land while promoting resource sustainability. Volunteers in the environmental education project incorporate environmental education into schools' curricula and participate in village-based projects to support the Ministry of Education's reforms. One agroforestry Volunteer helped her community plant more than 150 trees as windbreaks, live fences, and field divisions. Volunteers helped increase soil production, worked with youth to demonstrate the benefits of trees, and created a community tree nursery.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Rural health and sanitation Volunteers work with Paraguay's National Environmental Sanitation Service. They focus on dental health education, parasite prevention, and nutrition education. They also help construct brick ovens, protect and decontaminate water sources, and construct and improve sanitary latrines. Volunteers work with the Ministry of Public Health to promote preventive health-care practices among nurses, parents, and community members. One Volunteer developed a two-day nutrition-training course for school directors and local leaders. The community requested she give a similar course to the broader community.

### **Youth**

Urban youth development Volunteers live in marginal urban communities and work to form or strengthen youth groups associated with a variety of formal and nonformal institutions. Some Volunteers work with street children. By integrating life-skills education into various organized activities, Volunteers and local youth leaders help youth develop appropriate social and job skills and promote community service. When possible, Volunteers work to improve young people's employment prospects by teaching basic computer skills and a variety of skills that fortify their employability.



## Peru

Capital .....	Lima
Population .....	27 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,020
GDP growth .....	4.9%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 9%; Female: 20%
Infant mortality rate .....	30 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 89% Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2,391 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 87% Rural: 62%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.40%
Religions.....	Roman Catholicism: 90%
Official languages .....	Spanish Quechua

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	139	150
Program funds (\$000)	2,225	2,451

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1975 2002–present
Program sectors	Business Development Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

In Peru, the national economic growth has been approximately 4 percent to 5 percent during the last two years, but the benefits of this economic growth are not felt in rural Peru. With 54 percent of the population living below the national poverty line, and 24 percent living in extreme poverty, the country faces significant development challenges. Peru is also plagued by severe underemployment, which is estimated at 43 percent. Large sectors of the population suffer from nutritional deficiencies, high infant mortality rates, and limited access to basic health services. Under the leadership of President Alejandro Toledo, the push for stronger regionalization is moving ahead with broad-based support.

## Program Focus

Peru was one of the first countries to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers, who began working there in 1962. Volunteers worked in grass-roots development projects targeting health, agriculture, education and business development, until the program was closed in 1975. Returning in 2002 after a 28-year hiatus, Peace Corps/Peru is responding to the national development needs of strengthening civil society, reducing poverty, and building human capital. The program reopened with two projects in the areas of small business development and health. A new youth development program began in March 2004.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

Peru suffers from an alarming rate of poverty and underemployment, particularly in rural areas. To address these critical issues, Volunteers help farmer associations, artisan associations, and small businesses improve incomes by enhancing links to urban markets, improving administrative and organizational operations, and strengthening management and accounting practices. In an enhanced

focus on information and communication technology. Volunteers are linking farmers, artisans, and small business owners to technology.

One business Volunteer worked with her weavers in developing new weaving designs. She assisted in their training in pricing, packaging, and general marketing. The weavers have since diversified their market to increase income.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

In Peru, the gap between rural and urban health indicators is stark. Rural areas have much higher infant mortality rates, and chronic malnutrition approaches 50 percent. Volunteers promote preventive health-care practices and maternal and child care among health workers, families, community members, and local service providers. They focus on family health, nutrition, and hygiene in workshops, health education campaigns, and school lessons. Communication for social change is an area numerous health Volunteers have explored.

Hundreds of people have been reached by simple and effective health messages. For instance, one Volunteer hosts a weekly radio show that focuses on family health topics. A group of five health Volunteers travel to numerous communities to perform a presentation on dental care.

### **Youth**

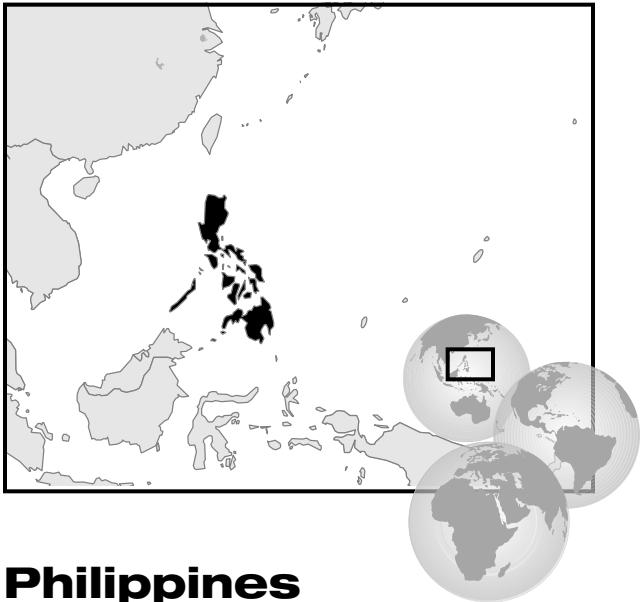
Children are the most vulnerable and unprotected citizens of Peru. Of the 3.8 million people living in extreme poverty, 2.1 million are children. More than 6.5 million of the 10.2 million youth live below the poverty line. Volunteers working in the youth development project address the multiple needs of youth, particularly groups in rural and peri-urban communities. Volunteers will work with youth to increase their capacity to overcome challenging life circumstances and become young adults who contribute to improving the quality of life for themselves, their families, and their communities. One Volunteer at an urban site has already begun to help counterparts deal more effectively with street kids. The Volunteer helps build street kids' self esteem and productivity through classes.

**"As Volunteers, we are constantly being offered the best community members have to offer—whether it be the finest sugar cane juice or a *criollo* chicken egg, these gestures we can accept. But with that acceptance comes the responsibility to do our best and with this responsibility comes commitment. The dedication and passion that make up commitment are evident in the numerous meaningful conversations with staff, other Volunteers and community members alike. Giving the best of our learning, living and loving is the Peace Corps of the future."**

**Peru Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



*Peruvian sisters in local dress*



## Philippines

Capital.....	Manila
Population.....	80 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,030
GDP growth .....	4.4%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 7% Female: 7%
Infant mortality rate.....	28 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 70% Measles: 73%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1,111 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 91% Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions .....	Roman Catholicism: 85% Protestantism: 9% Islam: 5% Buddhist and other: 1%
Official languages .....	Filipino (based on Tagalog) English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	108	141
Program funds (\$000)	2,846	2,973

## Country Overview

Program dates	1961–1990 1992–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment

The Republic of the Philippines is an archipelago of more than 7,000 islands and home to more than 85 million people. Filipinos are descendants of Indonesians and Malays who migrated to the islands hundreds of years ago. The Philippines has a representative democracy modeled on the U.S. system. Its constitution, adopted in 1987 during the administration of Corazon Aquino, reestablished a presidential system of government with a bicameral legislature and an independent judiciary. The president is limited to one six-year term.

The Filipino people face several challenges. Economic growth, while positive in recent years, has not performed at a level needed to provide for the population. While overseas workers continue to inject \$6 billion into the economy annually, the country remains a weak economic performer. Rising crime and concerns about the security situation impact tourism and foreign investment. Although President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is pursuing peace talks with both Muslim separatist groups and Communist insurgents, the country continues to face threats from those groups. Consequently, the Philippines has had to devote increasing resources to quelling rebel group demands and activities, leaving fewer resources for development efforts.

As the Philippines continues to grow and become a center of international business, fluency in English has become an important skill for the workforce. Because of the country's close relationship with the United States, English is prevalent throughout the educational system and in the media, a competitive advantage that attracts foreign companies. A dramatic increase in students and cutbacks in funding for the education sector have led to a decrease in the quality of education over the past few years. In May 2004, newly elected President Arroyo committed her government to a 10-point national development agenda. Volunteers are addressing these areas through Peace Corps projects supporting livelihood development, business training, general education, information and communication technologies, improved management of natural resources, access to water, improved sanitation and solid waste management.

## **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 a threat from Communist rebels; it resumed almost two years later. Over 43 years, the program has diversified into nearly all sectors of development, with projects in agriculture, forestry, small business management, the environment, conservation, health, urban and regional planning, water and sanitation, fisheries, youth, and education.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers assigned to this project focus their work on youth ages 10 to 25. They enhance youth's capacity to develop businesses by organizing classes on project planning, management, and leadership. They organize workshops to promote livelihood development for businesses such as engine repair, dressmaking, and handicrafts production. They provide consultation and advice on business plan development and finding sources of start-up funds. Volunteers working on alternative-livelihood projects have introduced activities such as raising free-range chickens and pigs, mud crab fattening and quilting.

### **Education**

Volunteers in the basic education and technical assistance project work primarily with schools and school districts in activities designed to increase the English fluency, teaching skills, and effectiveness of Filipino teachers. Volunteers work with Filipino counterparts to plan, design, and implement content-based English curriculum in math, science, computer technology, and special education. In the community services component of the project, Volunteers mentor abused children and youth offenders. Volunteers have trained thousands of Filipino educators through workshops, seminars, and consultations.

### **Environment**

A small island development and community-based conservation project promotes environmental education and protection of coastal and upland natural resources. The projects engage Volunteers and communities to reduce environmental degradation, introduce sustainable natural resource use, develop alternative livelihoods, improve water and sanitation, and encourage community participation in natural resource management. Volunteers introduce environmental education activities in schools and communities, encourage livelihood development, and promote natural resource management and environmental protection plans. Volunteers have helped an isolated school provide water to students by building a solar pumping system. One Volunteer assisted the local government unit develop an energy conservation program that will reduce energy costs by 30 percent.

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*"I have been a team leader, college professor, local government consultant, coach, author, translator, older sister, researcher, community worker, godmother, laborer, and cheerleader—and that's just this month! Navigating the various roles and working alongside my community has given me a sense of purpose toward the rehabilitation and protection of the coastal resources and the development of socio-economic progress...I am proud to represent the U.S. Peace Corps in [the] Philippines."*

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**Philippines Volunteer  
Environment Sector**



## Romania

Capital .....	Bucharest
Population .....	22 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,870
GDP growth .....	4.3%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 2% Female: 4%
Infant mortality rate .....	19 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 99% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1,114 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 91% Rural: 16%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions.....	Romanian Orthodoxy: 86.8% Roman Catholicism: 5% Other Protestantism: 5% Greek Catholicism: 1% Judaism: 0.01%
Official language .....	Romanian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	131	134
Program funds (\$000)	2,931	2,940

## Country Overview

**Program dates** 1991-present

**Program sectors** Business Development  
Education  
Environment  
Health and HIV/AIDS

Romania is politically stable and committed to institutionalizing civil liberties, human rights, freedom of the press, and other democratic principles. It has been working to join international institutions such as the European Union (EU) and NATO. NATO formally invited Romania to become a member at the Prague summit in November 2002, and Romania expects to join the EU in 2007. The country has recently taken significant measures to tackle needed reforms and is expected to continue on this path.

Romania has been transforming from a command to a market-based economy. In the years since the overthrow of Nicolae Ceausescu's regime, small-scale privatization has moved forward swiftly, though large-scale privatization remains slow. Although macroeconomic performance has improved recently, Romania's failure to receive "functioning market economy" status implies that further structural adjustments are essential. Foreign investment and development aid are increasing, and Romania enjoyed an impressive GDP growth of 4.9 percent in 2003, continuing the trend from 2002. The country has great potential for future investment, with a well-trained workforce, vast natural resources, and opportunities for tourism. But with nearly 45 percent of the population living below the national poverty line and corruption at many levels of society, many challenges lie ahead.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps is meeting numerous development needs in Romania. All program sectors address the country's educational needs and aim at building local capacity and sustainability. As Romania looks to Europe for assistance, nongovernmental organization (NGO) and institutional development remains an important area of emphasis.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The small business development project was established in 1993 to work with business advisory centers that were created as an initiative of the United Nations Development Programme. Over time, the project focus has shifted to encompass community economic development and local capacity building for sustainable development. All project-related activities are conducted with Romanian partner agencies. The project provides technical assistance in many different fields and works to foster entrepreneurial spirit to help Romanians find ways to increase their standard of living. Volunteers work with a broad range of community economic development organizations, including local and regional development agencies, educational institutions, and NGOs engaged in economic development. In 2004, Volunteers assisted over 3,000 individuals and 300 organizations in more than 100 communities.

### **Education**

The English education project began in 1992 and addresses Romania's expressed need for improved English language instruction. Volunteers work directly with students and teachers to develop their English communication skills. In addition to classroom teaching and training, Volunteers organize and participate in a variety of summer activities, including drama courses and environmental, sports, and leadership camps. In 2004, Volunteers worked with more than 10,000 middle and secondary school students and 79 schools in 58 communities, teaching English, introducing American culture, and exchanging ideas on teaching methodology.

### **Environment**

Romania's environment suffered considerably during the rapid, unregulated industrialization of the communist era. The environmental management and education project helps Romanian organizations address the challenges posed by the years of disregard for the environment. It also aims to develop an enhanced public awareness of responsible and sustainable environmental management that is compatible with economic development. Volunteers work primarily with environmental NGOs; however, collaboration with schools and governmental institutions is expanding to address sustainable development at the community level. In 2004, Volunteers assisted 1,580 individuals and 230 organizations, in 35 communities.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

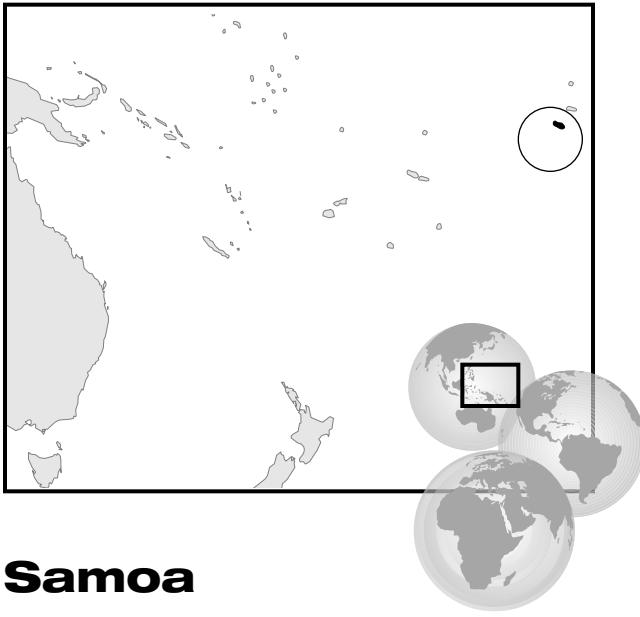
The institutional development project improves the quality and impact of services for youth and marginalized populations by establishing and strengthening local organizational capacity. Volunteers work in the areas of ethnicity and youth development and with organizations helping HIV-positive children, people with physical disabilities, orphaned or abandoned children, and the elderly. Currently, the central and local government cannot address the needs of these populations, so the nongovernmental sector, assisted by Peace Corps Volunteers, has committed its support. In 2004, these Volunteers assisted more than 2,500 people and 120 organizations in over 150 communities.

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**"The work of the Peace Corps has never been more critical than at this juncture in history. While the political tide of goodwill toward America ebbs across the globe, it is imperative that Volunteers be sent out to redeem our image with good works, to serve as role models for democracy, and to live out the faith in freedom that courses through our veins. Every Volunteer has a tremendous impact, from the completion of a much-needed project, to a chance encounter on the train that changes a life."**

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**Romania Volunteer  
Business Development Sector**



## Samoa

Capital.....	Apia
Population.....	176,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,430
GDP growth .....	1.9%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	0.3%
Infant mortality rate.....	30 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 93% Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.2 million
Access to safe water .....	99%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	4%
Religions .....	Christianity: 99.7%
Official languages .....	Samoan English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	48	43
Program funds (\$000)	1,392	1,444

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1967-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

The modern history of Samoa began with the arrival of John William and his team from the London Missionary Society in 1830. To this day, Samoa's parliament is modeled after the British Westminster system. The country has a head of state and his appointment is for life. Members of the House of Representatives are elected by universal suffrage and serve a five-year term. In 1967, five years after independence and after experiencing a devastating cyclone, Samoa invited the Peace Corps to the 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 35-plus year history of the Peace Corps in Samoa, the largest numbers have served in the Department of Education as classroom teachers and advisors.

Samoa's agriculture-based economy focuses primarily on crops such as cocoa, copra (dried coconut meat), and bananas. But new crops, such as kava and nonu, recognized for their medicinal value, have recently gained economic importance. The fishing industry has also become a significant part of the export economy in the past few years. The growing sector of tourism may soon replace all of the above areas in overall economic importance. However, Samoa continues to rely heavily on remittances from its citizens living and working overseas.

## Program Focus

Peace Corps/Samoa works in two project areas that form the core of the Peace Corps' development assistance. The village-based development project addresses the needs of communities, especially in areas relating to project management and strategic planning. The project also encompasses agricultural training and environmental conservation. The capacity-building project recognizes the evolving role of Volunteers from classroom teachers to mentors in technical and professional areas, including information technology, early childhood and special-needs education, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) development.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers work with community members to develop strategic plans and prioritize project areas to improve their lives. Once projects are identified, the Volunteers conduct project design and management workshops that strengthen the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the community-developed projects. These workshops have led to two school renovation projects, several after-school homework centers and libraries, a creative arts class for young people, and income-generating community gardens. Several Volunteers have received donated computers for use in their communities that enable them to transfer business skills to people in rural villages. Peace Corps/Samoa is also working with Future Farmers projects and in the area of integrated coastal management. Volunteers are working with local agencies to strengthen their agricultural training delivery mechanisms for youth in rural communities and are also working with communities to better manage their environmental resources. One Volunteer worked with her counterpart to plan a project design and management training for two villages. As a result of the training, the communities developed a proposal for assistance in rebuilding their primary school.

### **Education**

Today more than 25 percent of Volunteers serve either formally or informally in the area of information communication technology (ICT) by mentoring teachers and government officials and teaching computer skills to community youth and counterparts. These Volunteers enable future ICT specialists to make better decisions through technology

and training. To support these activities, an advisory board with Samoan membership meets regularly to coordinate and leverage new resources. Two publications (Teacher's Resource Book for Introduction to Computer Studies and Text Introduction to Computer Studies) developed by Volunteers and their counterparts continue to be used in schools. One Volunteer is serving as a computer studies lecturer for the Samoa Polytechnic. He is able to offer short courses (four to six weeks) on several software packages, to community members and professionals from local organizations and ministries.

Volunteers with experience in special-needs education, such as autism, speech/language therapy, and art therapy, are working as teacher trainers for the Ministry of Education and the first "second chance" educational institution in Samoa. Volunteers assigned to the Ministry of Education have conducted workshops for special-needs teachers working at the primary and secondary levels. Additionally, Volunteers conduct island-wide surveys to identify special-needs students who could benefit from this program. Two Volunteers work with the Ministry of Education Sports & Culture to develop, coordinate and conduct workshops and trainings for special needs schools and teachers. They have also been instrumental in the development of a national sign language dictionary and curricula.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

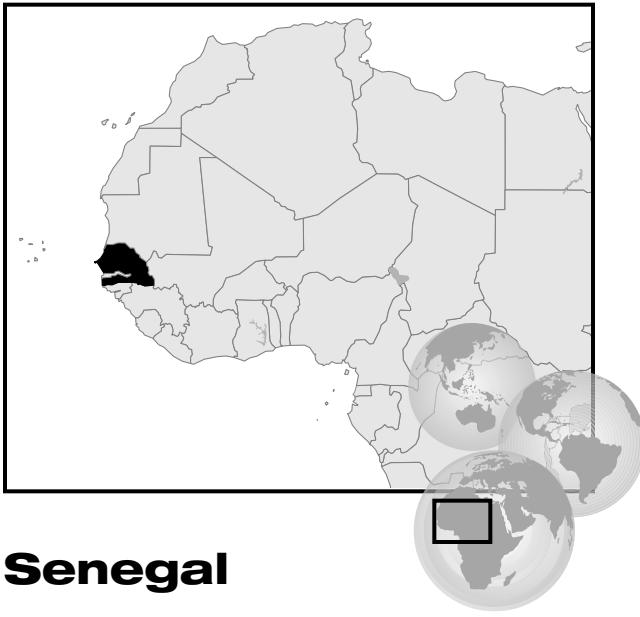
Fortunately, Samoa has very few HIV/AIDS cases. However, Volunteers work in their communities to promote health education by participating in trainings for health professionals on methods to control and prevent the spread of non-communicable diseases.

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"The Peace Corps has made a significant contribution to Samoa over the many years of service and commitment. Volunteers exemplify the global village by becoming members of society—working and living with the people of their adopted countries. There are many Samoan families with Peace Corps sons and daughters of the United States. They remain part of their aiga and part of their village."

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**Dr. Emma Kruse Vaai  
Academic Director, Samoa Polytechnic**



## Senegal

Capital.....	Dakar
Population .....	10 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$470
GDP growth .....	1.1%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 51% Female: 70%
Infant mortality rate.....	79 deaths per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 60% Measles: 54%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$93 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 92% Rural: 65%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	0.50%
Religions .....	Islam: 95% Christianity: 4% Indigenous beliefs: 1%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	140	159
Program funds (\$000)	3,762	3,801

## Country Overview

Program dates	1963-present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Senegal has the distinction of being an African state that never experienced a coup d'état. Senegal 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 socio-political culture free of exacerbated ethnic or religious tensions, and provides a resilient base for democratic politics.

Senegal is one of the world's least developed countries, ranking 157 out of 177 on the 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. Drought has recurred over three decades and agricultural production has declined. Rural out-migration to urban areas has increased rapidly; peanut production, historically the main agricultural export and basis of the economy, has greatly diminished. Desertification adversely impacts agriculture, further threatening the subsistence farm output of 70 percent of the population. In September 2004, locust swarms descended from the Sahara to affect Senegal and its neighbors. Agriculture now represents less than 20 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), reflecting continued decay of this once vital sector. The industrial sector, primarily agro-industrial and mining operations, accounts for about 20 percent of GDP. Fishing generates most foreign exchange earnings, followed by phosphate production and increasing tourism.

## Program Focus

In 1963, the first Senegal Volunteers taught English, and the program evolved, providing a legacy of Volunteer contributions. Some 130 Volunteers currently serve in Senegal. Three quarters work in critically underserved rural areas, providing essential information to the poor on primary health care, environmental education, agriculture and environmental technology. Volunteers help individuals and communities sustainably address their priority development needs. All Volunteers promote HIV/AIDS awareness and girls' education in their assigned communities.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers work in sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, and improved crop production. They help communities and groups to improve soil fertility and production. They help farmers increase production through improved seed varieties and agricultural techniques, and train them in management and conservation techniques. Farmers' groups—and, increasingly, women's groups—have produced bananas and cashews to generate additional revenue.

Volunteers recently started a new urban agriculture initiative. Their efforts are increasing producer incomes; building capacities in horticulture, animal husbandry, ornamental flower propagation, and tree nurseries; contributing to increased food security to combat malnutrition and alleviate poverty; and restoring the environment by recycling organic waste into useful products. Their work is increasing employment opportunities, especially for women, and generating income for poor families. The initiative incorporates knowledge and skills transfer in effective micro- and traditional gardening and waste recycling techniques.

In 2003, Volunteers introduced a fast-maturing bean variety to 148 farmers. Thrilled by the short growing cycle, which permits them to plant twice or more during the rainy season, farmers liked its taste and quality. In 2004, twice as many farmers planted the bean. Volunteers now emphasize crop protection, seed selection, and storage.

### **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.

With strong support from the Tourism Ministry and National Park Service, ecotourism Volunteers began service in December 2003. Placed near national parks and protected areas, these Volunteers advise tourism management committees and representatives from area villages. Volunteers help communities promote products and services and

organize sessions on the risks and advantages of ecotourism, train guides, develop brochures and guidebooks, and provide business consulting to management committees to increase their ability to operate profitably.

Senegal is a Digital Freedom Initiative pilot nation. The Senegalese government, USAID, U.S. Department of Commerce, and private sector firms intend to increase business and grass-roots information technology capacity. Volunteers increasingly incorporate information technology as part of their activities.

### **Environment**

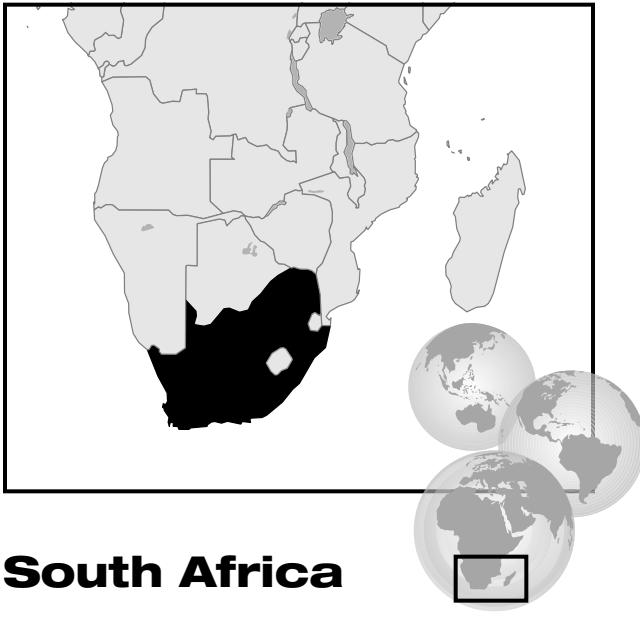
In rural communities with schools, Volunteers work with community leaders to increase awareness of human environmental impact. They help teachers design curricula to teach environmental lessons and work with students and community members to teach practical methods linked to classroom activities. Activities include tree planting for live fencing and community sanitation. Volunteers also promote youth clubs, organizing young community members in activities beneficial to their communities.

After several months working with a rural council to obtain title to two hectares of land, a community group, assisted by a Volunteer, fenced the land and obtained and planted 3,000 seedlings. Hundreds of villagers participated in planting. Soon after, the Minister of Youth visited the project and congratulated the village for their good work.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers educate people in primary health care, enabling them to avoid or treat common illnesses. Volunteers train community partners who train other members of the community, ultimately providing a sustainable base. Volunteers train Senegalese in disease prevention and HIV/AIDS awareness using informal education techniques, including art, music, and theater.

One Volunteer used cultural understanding to develop an original approach to tackle malnutrition. Realizing the important role grandparents occupy in Senegalese society, she trained grandmothers in healthy nutritional practices and breastfeeding and weaning techniques. Grandmothers now enthusiastically care for grandchildren and provide advice to their daughters. They lead sessions on proper nutrition and explain how to eat "well" on a meager budget.



## South Africa

Capital .....	Pretoria
Population .....	45 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,500
GDP growth .....	3.0%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 13% Female: 15%
Infant mortality rate .....	52 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 82% Measles: 78%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$739 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 99% Rural: 73%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	20.10%
Religions.....	Christianity, Indigenous beliefs Islam, Hinduism, Judaism
Official languages .....	Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	124	152
Program funds (\$000)	3,276	3,431

## Country Overview

Program dates	1997–present
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Program sectors	Education Health and HIV/AIDS
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South Africa celebrated its first decade of democracy in 2004. In the 10 years since the end of apartheid, 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 achieved significant progress on issues of nation-building and reconciliation. South Africa's second president, Thabo Mbeki, spent his first term of office building the country's profile and standing internationally. Now, in his second term, President Mbeki is focusing on ensuring that government services have a direct impact on poverty.

South Africa has a productive and industrialized economy that paradoxically exhibits many characteristics associated with developing countries, including a division of labor between formal and informal sectors and uneven distribution of wealth and income. The formal sector, based on mining, manufacturing, electronics commerce, services, and agriculture, is well developed, but limited in reach. Current discourse and policy on economic issues focus on reconciling the country's "two economies" through the development and implementation of initiatives that achieve sustained economic growth while simultaneously redressing the socioeconomic disparities created by apartheid. Despite the nation's abundant wealth, half the population lives below the national poverty line and 30 percent are unemployed.

South Africa's constitution commits to establishing and maintaining a society that protects the human rights of all its citizens. However, the country continues to struggle with the legacy of apartheid and the challenge of achieving its full social and economic development potential. Developing human resources and tackling the specter of HIV/AIDS, which casts a shadow over all aspects of life, are two 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 role of Peace Corps Volunteers. Volunteers

work side by side with district and circuit officials 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 started in 2001, and it focuses on developing the capacity of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to better support community responses to the pandemic. South Africa has more people who are HIV positive than any other country in the world. Volunteers are able to play a significant role in developing the human and organizational capacity of NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to make meaningful contributions to this pressing development issue. Recent policy changes and the advent of the President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) have created new space and new partnerships for Volunteers in this project.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

Volunteers work with teachers and principals in nearly 340 rural primary schools and in more than 80 communities in the Limpopo, North West, and Mpumalanga provinces. Volunteers are reaching more than 100,000 students by working as school and community resources for clusters of three or four schools, each with 40 to 50 teachers. Volunteers are placed at the primary school level, where they facilitate workshops and help educators fully understand the country's revised curriculum. Their primary focus is English, math, science, and life skills. Additionally, Volunteers assist school management

teams in implementing administrative practices that help schools develop into organizations that support learning. Volunteers also seek to creatively involve parents and community members in a mutually reinforcing relationship with schools.

As community resources, Volunteers are involved in a variety of other activities, such as HIV/AIDS education, computer training, income-generating projects, and youth development. Several Volunteers have worked with schools and communities to develop libraries and other resource centers, and they have worked with teachers to help them make use of these expanded resources.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

The South African government called on all organizations—local, national, and international—to join its Partnership Against AIDS at the end of 1998. The Peace Corps used this opportunity to expand its efforts to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and initiated an NGO capacity-building and HIV/AIDS integration project. In this project, Volunteers are placed with NGOs and CBOs to help them be more effective and sustainable while providing appropriate HIV/AIDS-related services to communities.

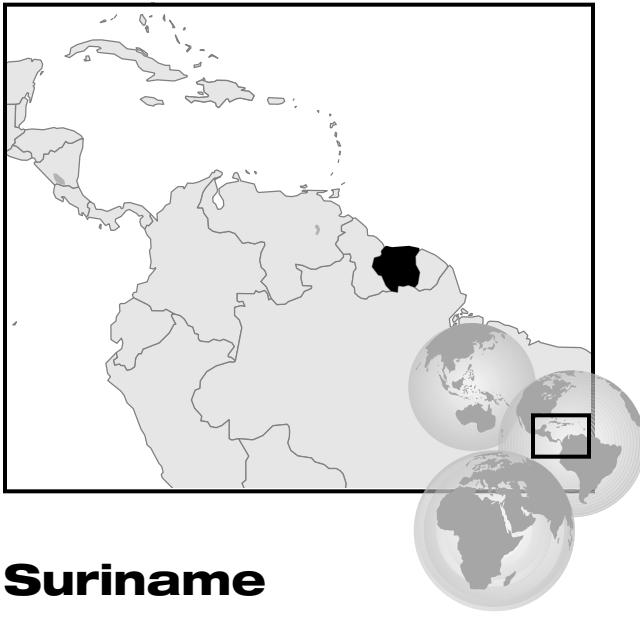
One Volunteer assigned to a home-based care agency spent time working directly with caregivers, providing technical training and supporting their ability to keep patient records. Another Volunteer worked with an NGO that provides counseling services to community members; she developed new training modules for counselors and worked with their supervisors to instill a more developmental approach to staff supervision. Other Volunteers support the development of planning, financial, and administrative systems and skills.

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*"I worked with people who are motivated and willing; they just needed some additional tools and encouragement and I was in the right place at the right time. As a young man, I was able to speak openly and honestly about sensitive issues with other young men—something that had been missing in my community's fight against HIV/AIDS."*

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**South Africa Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



## Suriname

Capital.....	Paramaribo
Population.....	433,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,940
GDP growth .....	3.0%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	10%
Infant mortality rate.....	27 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 85%; Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	-\$66.8 million
Access to safe water .....	85.9%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Not Available
Religions .....	Hinduism Islam Christianity Judaism Baha'i
Official language .....	Dutch

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	40	33
Program funds (\$000)	1,255	1,245

## Country Overview

Program dates	1995–present
Program sector	Education Health and HIV/AIDS

After more than a decade of predominantly military rule, Suriname installed a freely elected Parliament and inaugurated a democratically chosen president in 1991. Most recently, in August 2000, the National Assembly elected Ronald Venetiaan as president for a five-year term. Suriname hopes to increase international investment to generate greater economic opportunities and employment. Its centralized system of government has traditionally focused on the capital of Paramaribo, generating a high sense of dependency among the indigenous and tribal peoples of Suriname's Amazon region.

Suriname is sparsely populated, with most of its inhabitants living in urban and semi-urban areas along the coastal zone. Approximately 33,000 Maroons and 7,000 Amerindians, the principal inhabitants of Suriname's interior, face many problems affecting their socioeconomic development.

Suriname's main exports are gold, bauxite, timber, fish, and bananas. Although it is politically stable, Suriname faces significant impediments to economic growth, including rising inflation and a devaluating currency. More than 85 percent of Surinamese 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 230 Volunteers have served in Suriname. The Peace Corps provides assistance in the Amerindian and Maroon communities and in the coastal area. Working in the interior, Volunteers address issues such as community organizing, resources identification, project planning, income generation, health, and adult education. In the coastal areas, they focus on health-related issues (including HIV/AIDS) and strengthening local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). In collaboration with governmental agencies and NGOs, the Peace Corps began a nonformal rural community education project in 2001, as the rural community development project ended. Working with the Ministry of Education, Volunteers now focus on nonformal education in rural areas.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

The nonformal rural community education project improves the quality of life in rural communities by increasing educational opportunities and enabling communities to take responsibility for their own development. Volunteers assist communities through a variety of nonformal educational outreach activities. They organize preschool educational and basic hygiene activities, after-school programs, and adult education programs. Adult education Volunteers focus on income-generating activities and improving health and hygiene (focusing on water and sanitation as well as HIV/AIDS awareness). Volunteers also help promote community volunteerism.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Peace Corps/Suriname shares an affiliation with the Ministry of Public Health (responsible for overall health planning and services), and the quasi-governmental Medical Mission, which has primary health-care responsibility for serving the interior populations. Volunteers support information technology planning affecting the health sector, and assist the Medical Mission in distributing health information throughout the interior. In turn, Medical Mission shares its radio communication facilities to support Volunteer communication needs regarding safety and security. Additionally, Volunteers support various health-sector providers in carrying out their stated mission of health education, prevention, and treatment.

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"I work with the Stg. Mamio Namen Project, which deals with HIV/AIDS education and conducts visits to AIDS patients in hospitals and at home.

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The quilts that my agency makes from mementos brought in by the families of victims that have passed away are an important part of our work each week. These quilts are carefully stored and are then displayed at all events promoting HIV/AIDS throughout Suriname. I am very pleased to be a part of this organization and I cherish the friendships I have made during my time with them."

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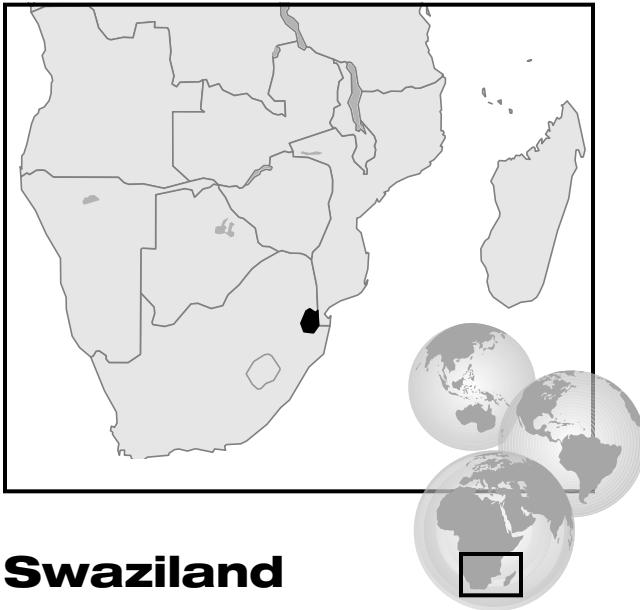
**Suriname Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**

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"Peace Corps does wonderful things in the interior of Suriname and the Peace Corps Volunteers are the best thing to come to Suriname from the United States of America."

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**Jules Adjohia  
Vice President**



## Swaziland

Capital .....	Mbabane
Population .....	1 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,240
GDP growth .....	3.6%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 18% Female: 20%
Infant mortality rate.....	106 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 77% Measles: 72%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$45 million
Access to safe water .....	Not Available
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	33.40%
Religions .....	Protestantism: 35% Zionism: 30% Roman Catholicism: 25% Other: 9% Islam: 1%
Official languages .....	English Siswati

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	74	77
Program funds (\$000)	1,510	1,598

## Country Overview

Program dates	1969–1996 2003–present
Program sector	Health and HIV/AIDS

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 political parties. A new constitution in 1978 continued to concentrate political power in the hands of the monarch, but called for the appointment of a prime minister, a cabinet, and an elected Parliament, the Libandla, in which political parties would remain illegal. The Parliament's functions were restricted to conveying advice to the king and his principal advisory body, the Liqoqo (Supreme Council of State).

The current monarch, King Mswati III, was crowned in April 1986. Shortly afterward, he abolished the Liqoqo, and in 1987, a new Parliament was elected and a new cabinet was appointed. An underground political party, the People's United Democratic Party (PUDEMO), emerged in 1988 and clandestinely criticized the king and the government, calling 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. Although steady pressure has been exerted on the king from both inside and outside the country, he remains immune to threats and continues as one of the world's few absolute monarchs.

In this small, landlocked country, subsistence agriculture occupies more than 60 percent of the population. Manufacturing consists of several agroprocessing factories. Mining has declined in recent years as diamond mines have shut down because of the depletion of easily accessible reserves, high-grade iron ore deposits have been depleted, and health concerns have cut the world demand for asbestos. Exports of soft-drink concentrate, sugar, and wood pulp are the main sources of hard currency. Surrounded by South Africa except for a short border with Mozambique, Swaziland is heavily dependent on South Africa, from which it receives four-fifths of its imports and to which it sends two-thirds of its exports. Remittances from the Southern

African Customs Union and Swazi workers in South African mines supplement domestically earned income substantially.

## **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. Volunteers taught English, agriculture, mathematics, science, and vocational education in secondary schools and promoted agricultural cooperatives in rural areas. The Peace Corps brought its program in Swaziland to a close 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 education and prevention. Swazi youth ages 15 to 29 are the most vulnerable population. In 2002, the rate of HIV/AIDS among pregnant women was 38.6 percent. Approximately 35,000 children have been orphaned as a result of AIDS; it's estimated that these numbers will reach 120,000 by 2010. Despite King Mswati III's declaration of AIDS as a national crisis, infection rates have continued to escalate. The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Swaziland is exacerbating the country's current food crisis. The United Nations estimates that almost a quarter of the population will require food assistance. With outside assistance, Swaziland has embarked on initiatives to strengthen the execution of its national HIV/AIDS strategy.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

In April 2002, a Peace Corps assessment team visited Swaziland to determine how Volunteers could assist the Swazi people. The overwhelming effects of AIDS indicated a need for immediate assistance. The first group of HIV/AIDS Volunteers arrived in Swaziland in mid-September 2003 to reestablish the Peace Corps program. The new program assists the government of Swaziland in HIV/AIDS risk reduction and impact mitigation, with a focus on youth. Volunteers work to encourage in-school and out-of-school youth to develop appropriate behaviors that will reduce the spread of HIV; support mitigation efforts regarding the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and vulnerable children; and build the capacity of nongovernmental organizations and community-based organizations that provide HIV/AIDS services to youth.

Two Volunteers produced a video with public service messages on the orphan crisis. The video is helping to strengthen the national movement on mitigating the impact of AIDS on orphans and vulnerable children. Swaziland's Ministry of Education will play the audio on Swazi radio.

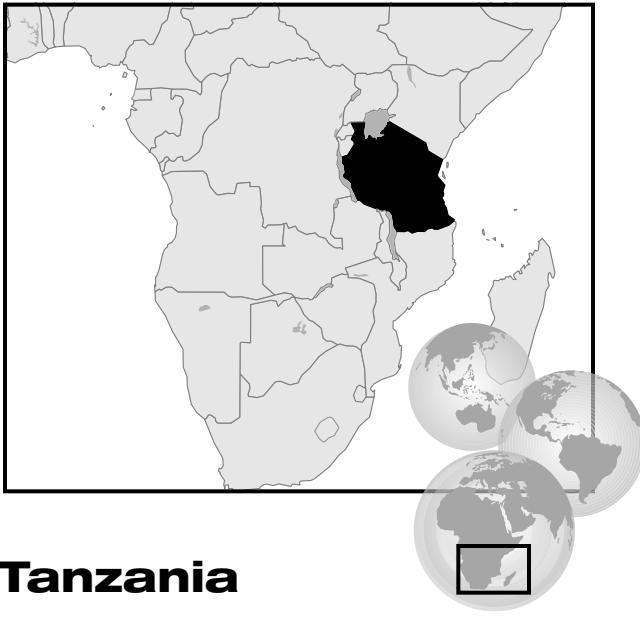
One Volunteer formed a youth association that is providing and promoting constructive activities for youth so that they can gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead healthy, productive, and responsible adult lives. This youth association hosted a "Knock-Out HIV/AIDS Football Tournament," which provided an opportunity to learn about HIV/AIDS prevention.

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**"Armed with the correct information, these youth can play a vital role in the fight against HIV and AIDS, serving as sources of knowledge amongst their peer groups, families and communities."**

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**Swaziland Volunteer  
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



## Tanzania

Capital.....	Dar es Salaam
Population.....	35 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$290
GDP growth .....	6.3%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 15% Female: 31%
Infant mortality rate.....	104 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 89% Measles: 89%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$240 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 90% Rural: 57%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	7.80%
Religions .....	Islam: 45% Christianity: 45% Indigenous beliefs: 10%
Official language .....	Kiswahili

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	177	145
Program funds (\$000)	2,681	2,586

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1962–1969 1979–1991 1991–present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS
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Although Tanzania has made some progress in restoring macroeconomic stability during the past two years, 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 2004 United Nations Human Development Index. While poverty is mainly a rural phenomenon in Tanzania, urban poverty is also increasing. The rising rates of HIV infection and an unpredictable influx of refugees have aggravated the situation, and more than 36 percent of the population lives 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 (including a shortage of mathematics and science teachers) continue to be major challenges.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps arrived in Tanzania in 1962. Since then, Volunteers have served in the areas of education, health, the environment, and agriculture. 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 in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

## Volunteer Focus

### Education

Volunteers work in 70 secondary schools, teaching science, mathematics, and information technology to more than 10,000 students. This work is helping Tanzania address its very critical need for secondary school teachers. Volunteers prepare students for national examinations and promote

the development of critical thinking skills. They also closely collaborate with teachers in developing subject resource materials. Education Volunteers also organize math and science clubs, facilitate HIV/AIDS seminars, and promote environmental awareness on school farms. To encourage experiential learning and outdoor exploration, Volunteers have organized mountain-climbing clubs and field trips to places such as coffee plantations, beaches, forests, and markets. One information technology Volunteer is based in a vocational training center and has developed a variety of electronic math and science resources to share with other Volunteer teachers. Other Volunteers help students, teachers, and other school staff to gain basic computer literacy skills.

### **Environment**

Volunteers assist village communities in the management of their natural resources and in raising awareness of environmental conservation. They promote soil improvement techniques, agroforestry (including tree planting for fuel wood and fruit trees as well as the conservation of indigenous community natural forests), beekeeping, fish farming, improved vegetable gardening, and live fencing. Volunteers teach farmers how to construct and use appropriate technologies, such as energy-efficient stoves and rainwater harvesting. They also promote improved

livestock practices, including chicken vaccination and raising milk goats, milking cows, and pigs. Volunteers also engage youth in environmental education activities through school clubs, eco-camps, and experiential education. Particular emphasis is given to working with women and youth. One Volunteer worked with a village to vaccinate 4,000 chickens to protect them from Newcastle disease. Additionally, Volunteers have proactively disseminated messages on HIV/AIDS to students and out-of-school youth.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

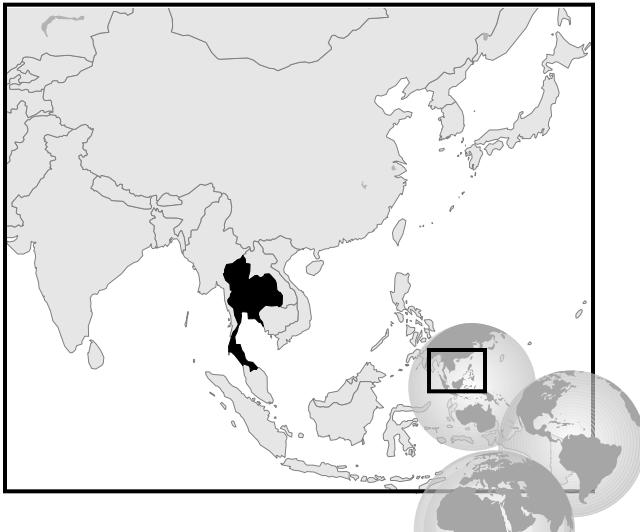
The school health education project was initiated in 2000 to empower youth with the knowledge and skills needed for making sound decisions about their health. Volunteers work with schools and communities on a variety of health issues, giving particular emphasis to HIV/AIDS. Volunteers train peer educators who then work with other youth to foster increased awareness about HIV/AIDS by using drama, discussion groups, and organized debates. Volunteers have worked successfully with question-and-answer boxes and health bulletin boards at their schools. Volunteers also work to train Tanzanian teachers in life skills and HIV/AIDS. Two Volunteers trained 60 teachers in Zanzibar through workshops and follow-up visits to their schools. Other Volunteers have trained nongovernmental organization staff and district education officers.

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**"At the country-to-country level, the ordinary citizens of the USA and those of Tanzania have to commend our two governments for continuing with the Peace Corps program. This is one of the best ways by which our people can have a better understanding of each other."**

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**Morogoro Regional Administrative Secretary  
Government of Tanzania**



## Thailand

Capital .....	Bang
Population .....	62 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$2,000
GDP growth .....	5.4%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 5% Female: 9%
Infant mortality rate .....	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 96% Measles: 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$900 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 95% Rural: 81%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1.80%
Religions.....	Buddhism: 94.6% Islam: 4.6%
Official Languages .....	Christianity Hinduism Brahminism Other

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	99	99
Program funds (\$000)	2,243	2,373

## Country Overview

Program dates	1962-present
Program sector	Business Development Education

Thailand has a constitutional monarchy and a relatively stable political system. The king has little direct power under the constitution but is a symbol of national identity and unity. Thailand's 76 provinces include the metropolis of greater Bangkok. Bangkok's governor is popularly elected, but those of the remaining provinces are career civil servants appointed by the Ministry of Interior.

Thailand has a free-enterprise economy and welcomes foreign investment. Exports feature computers and electrical appliances. Thailand's economy is set to record its fastest growth rate since the Asian financial crisis in 1998. Government stimulus programs and recovering export demand led to an economic turnaround in 2002, with the final gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate projected to be around 4.9 percent. The most recent government forecast points to a GDP of as much as 7 percent for 2004.

## Program Focus

The Peace Corps has collaborated with the Thai government and Thai communities since 1962. For more than 40 years, Peace Corps has been providing Volunteers to cooperate with Thai counterparts on activities in education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, the environment, and rural community outreach and development. Throughout this relationship, some of the most successful and compelling projects have been in the areas of English education and community development.

## Volunteer Focus

### Business Development

The Thai government initiated a historical change in the local government administration system in 1994 when it passed the Tambon Council and Tambon Administrative Organization Act, decentralizing its power to the tambon (subdistrict) administrative organizations for the first time. Since the implementation of constitutional reforms in 1997, decentralization has become a strong emphasis of the Thai government.

To support the government's initiative, Peace Corps/Thailand recently developed a community-based project to assist small businesses with organizational development. Volunteers in this sector share experiences, strategies, and resources to assist administrative officials and communities at the grass-roots level. They focus on capacity building of sub-district and community groups (such as small business groups, women's groups, youth groups, and farmers' groups) to improve the quality of their products and services in rural areas. They work to develop and enhance professional capacities in organizational development, project planning and management, project monitoring and evaluation, and basic business English. All Volunteers in this project are currently assigned to the northeastern region, the historically poorest area of Thailand.

### **Education**

Peace Corps/Thailand initiated a teacher collaboration and community outreach project in 2003. This project is a sequel to the integrated education and community outreach project that concluded in April 2004. Currently, there are 67 Volunteers serving in schools and education districts throughout Thailand. The project focuses on student-centered educational reform at the primary level and improvement of Thai citizens' quality of life through

sustainable community development initiatives. Volunteers and their Thai partners collaborate in English-language classrooms to institute reforms that support the government's 1999 National Education Act and to develop and enhance the skills of primary school teachers.

The flexibility of the project plan allows Volunteers to implement those activities that best match their interests and skills with the communities' needs and priorities. For example, one education Volunteer had a special interest in theater. She first worked with her counterparts in her own school district to organize a Shakespeare theater group for the students in local schools. It was so successful that many other school districts and the Volunteers serving there joined forces to establish the Thai Youth Theater. Performances are in English, and the performers are students from rural areas of Thailand. Many of them made their first trip to Bangkok this past year where they performed four Shakespeare plays in English. Funds were largely contributed by the local communities in which the students live.

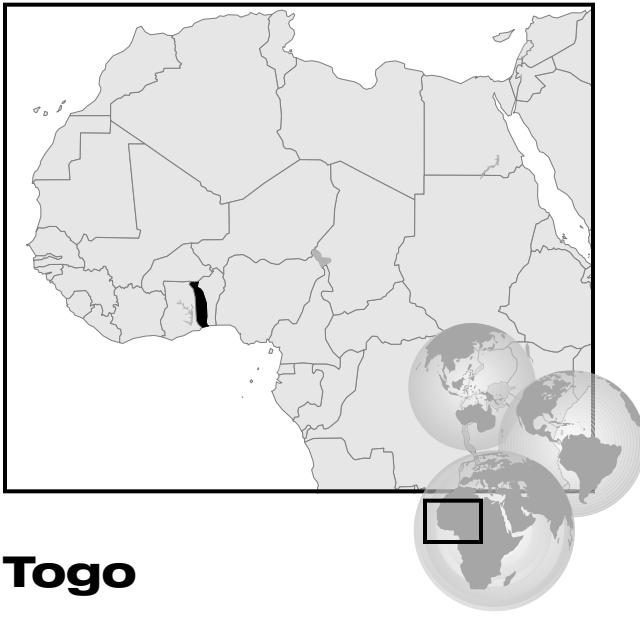
U.S. Ambassador Darryl Johnson attended the outdoor performance, and spoke highly of the accomplishment of these young students and the teachers and Volunteers who helped train them.

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"When first coming to my site of Nampong, I realized that community integration was my number one goal. If I couldn't understand these people, speak their language, or feel like a part of their community, then how could I help them or accomplish any of my goals as a Volunteer. There was never a question about whether or not I should integrate; it was a matter of how to do that effectively. I'll never be a Thai person. I'll never mesh totally into this complex culture, because I'll never understand it totally. But I think I've done the next best thing. I've found my place and the people if Nampong have found a place for me."

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**Thailand Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Togo

Capital .....	Lomé
Population .....	5 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$270
GDP growth .....	4.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	Male: 26% Female: 55%
Infant mortality rate .....	87 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 64% Measles: 58%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$75 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 85% Rural: 38%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	6.00%
Religions.....	Animism: 51% Christianity: 29% Islam: 20%
Official language .....	French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	129	113
Program funds (\$000)	2,585	2,616

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1962-present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Togo attained independence from France in 1960. The country's first-elected president was killed in a coup d'état on January 13, 1963. In 1967, General Gnassingbé Eyadéma became president and has remained in the position ever since, making him Africa's longest-serving head of state. Despite the facade of multiparty elections instituted in the early 1990s, the government continues to be dominated by President Eyadéma. Consequently, many development agencies that once served communities in Togo have either left the country or reduced their operations. In addition, Togo has come under fire from international organizations for human rights abuses and is plagued by political unrest. Most bilateral and multilateral aid to Togo remains frozen, though recent negotiations with the European Union may lead to increased aid in the future.

Togo remains one of the poorest nations of the world, ranking 143 of 177 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index. However, its coastal location, good harbor, and better-than-average infrastructure have helped to make its capital, Lomé, a regional trading center. However, agriculture is the foundation of Togo's economy, contributing 40 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and employing 70 percent of its workers. Corn, sorghum, millet, cassava, yams, cowpeas, and rice are the major food crops. Cash crops include coffee, cocoa, and cotton. Togo is the fifth largest producer of phosphates. Industry and manufacturing account for about a quarter of Togo's GDP. More than a third of the total domestic output is accounted for in the service sector.

## Program Focus

Peace Corps began its work in Togo in 1962, and since that time has hosted over 1,700 Volunteers. 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 the areas of business development, education, environment, and health. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The economy's informal sector offers the best opportunity for economic development in Togo. The business development project improves basic business and entrepreneurial skills, thereby fostering opportunities for growth and job creation. Volunteers are assigned to local credit unions or nongovernmental organizations and offer business training and consulting to members to improve their business skills. Volunteers and their local counterparts have taught approximately 1,000 individual and cooperative member entrepreneurs in business practices. Workshops covering accounting, finance, marketing, and feasibility studies are offered to groups of tailors, retailers, and other small business people. Working with youth is also a focus of the program.

### **Education**

Although women comprise 52 percent of Togo's general population, they are severely under-represented in the development process of the country. Girls' education and empowerment Volunteers work with different community groups to develop an understanding of the importance and benefits of girls' education in order to increase the girls' access to for-

mal and nonformal education. They also work with teachers to create an environment that will keep girls in school and students in clubs and classrooms. In recent years, the project has expanded to address the educational needs of apprentices and the trafficking of children. Volunteers help coordinate boys' and girls' camps during the summer.

### **Environment**

Traditional farming practices cannot meet the needs of Togo's growing population. Volunteers work with farmers to introduce sustainable farming practices that will lead to improved farm yields and reduced environmental degradation. In addition, some Volunteers are developing environmental education projects in primary and secondary schools. In 2003, Volunteers trained over 1,000 villagers in concepts and techniques of natural resource management, such as composting, improved cooking stoves, tree production, and animal husbandry.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

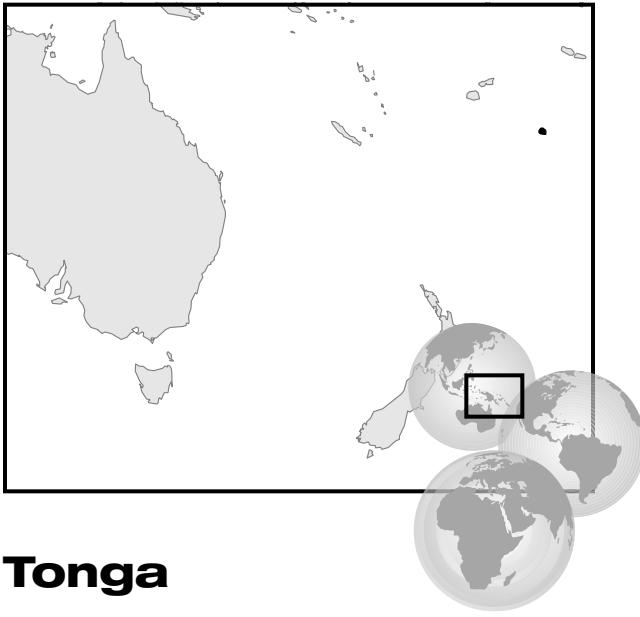
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**"I plan on becoming a lawyer. My experience as a girls' education and empowerment Volunteer in Togo has already taught me much about the nature of being an advocate."**

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**Togo Volunteer  
Education Sector**



## Tonga

Capital .....	Nuku'alofa
Population .....	101,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,440
GDP growth .....	3.6%
Adult illiteracy rate .....	1.5%
Infant mortality rate .....	14 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 98.5% Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2 million
Access to safe water .....	100%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Not Available
Religions.....	Christianity
Official languages .....	Tongan English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	64	52
Program funds (\$000)	1,187	1,110

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1967–present
<b>Program sector</b>	Business Development Education Environment Youth

Since the adoption of its constitution in 1875, Tonga has been a kingdom with a monarch whose heirs are entitled to perpetual succession to the throne. The past two decades have seen the biggest changes in Tonga, especially its international status. In 1975, Tonga developed economic and political ties with the European Economic Community (now the European Union), and in 2000, Tonga became a full member of the United Nations. The most obvious benefit has been an inflow of foreign aid from developed nations and international agencies. This aid has enabled Tonga to improve social services and construct essential infrastructure.

The vast majority of Tongans are dependent on subsistence agriculture and fishing, which they supplement with monies from relatives who have emigrated. The pressures on these traditional sectors are depleting already scarce natural resources and degrading topsoil, rainforests, coastal reefs, and freshwater supplies. Also, with well over half its population under age 18 and a stagnating economy, Tonga faces many challenges in providing its youth with educational and economic opportunities. These problems are compounded by a chronic shortage of secondary school teachers, especially in science and information technology.

## Program Focus

At the request of the Ministry of Education, the Peace Corps projects focus on preparing youth to become productive members of their communities. The community education project works primarily with in-school students, while the youth development project addresses the needs of out-of-school youth. Both projects emphasize building communities' capacity to prepare young people by developing leadership skills and income-generation opportunities. Volunteers in both projects help interested young people and communities develop computer centers at the regional, district, and village levels. These centers provide opportunities for out-of-school youth and others to attend basic computer

classes, bridging the technical gap between these community members and the small sector of the population that has access to formal training.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers work with community groups to implement small businesses for income generation. These small businesses are developing improved business practices, better products and greater community employment. One Volunteer worked with youth in her community who were selected for a Pacific regional workshop on enterprise development and marketing. The workshop was followed by a trade fair in which the youth participated and sold their products.

### **Education**

Volunteers in the education project are placed in remote villages where the greatest needs exist. Volunteers introduce innovative teaching techniques and enhance teacher skills through modeling, team teaching, and workshops. A second component of the project provides community education, especially in computer skills, business skills, and nonformal education for out-of-school young women. Volunteers also teach 10–15 hours per week in classroom settings, focusing on English literacy, business education, basic computer skills, and industrial arts. One education Volunteer, teaching English in a remote island, worked extensively with her students to improve their English language skills. As a result, all of her students passed the national exams and one attained the highest mark in the entire kingdom.

### **Environment**

Volunteers focus on coastal management and the degradation of coastal resources through environmental education, conservation, solid-waste management, and village beautification. Volunteers have worked with communities in four different provinces to institute World Coastal Clean-Up Day and World Environment Day. Trash bins have been placed in public areas and weekly collection systems have been established. As a result, waste is taken to specified dump areas instead of being emptied on the beach, destroying valuable environmental resources.

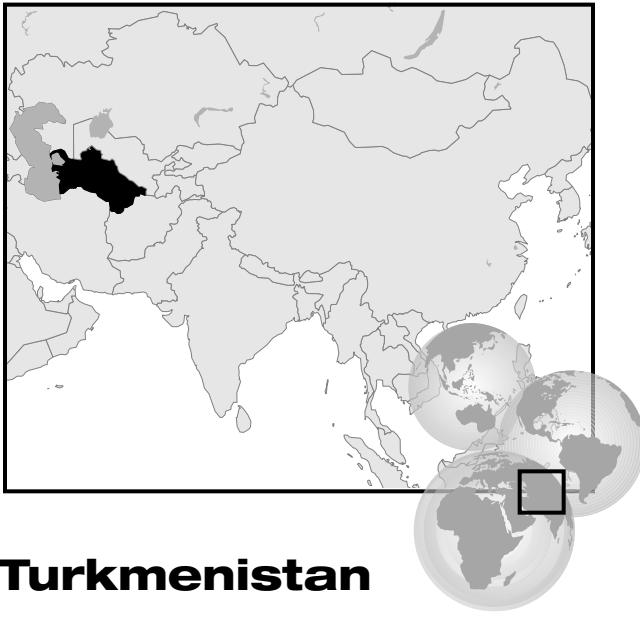
### **Youth**

Volunteers build the capacity of individuals, service providers, organizations, and communities. The youth project emphasizes community and family development and the role of youth as citizens and future leaders. Volunteers work with youth groups to carry out community projects, create income-generating opportunities, and develop employment skills. They are developing a curriculum accredited by the government that will allow youth to receive a certificate in information technology skills, increasing their employment options. Volunteers have also implemented a certificate program that gives school dropouts the opportunity to earn the equivalent of a high school diploma and thus continue their education.

The Peace Corps helped create the Tonga National Volunteer Service, which is a vehicle for Tongan youth, including those living abroad, to serve as volunteers in Tonga. This has become a model for other Pacific island countries. Many Tongan volunteers work alongside Peace Corps Volunteers in this project. One youth Volunteer worked with youth in his community to establish a catering service for funerals, which in Tonga requires tea and bread to be served throughout the night. Using grant-writing skills to acquire financial assistance, the youth purchased a bread-slicing machine and several gas burners, boilers, and large pots for cooking. The project continues to grow and is making a profit for the primary and neighboring villages.



*Tonga education Volunteer teaching information technology skills*



## Turkmenistan

Capital .....	Ashgabat
Population .....	5 million
Annual per capita income .....	Not applicable
GDP growth .....	14.9%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	70 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 98% Measles: 88%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$100 million
Access to safe water .....	58%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	<0.10%
Religions .....	Islam: 89% Eastern Orthodoxy: 9% Other: 2%
Official Language:.....	Turkmen

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	96	74
Program funds (\$000)	1,672	1,486

## Country Overview

Program dates	1993–2001 2002–present
Program sectors	Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Turkmenistan is controlled by one political party, the Democratic Party of Turkmenistan, which is led by President Saparmurat Niyazov (Turkmenbashi), appointed leader for life. Independent political activity is not allowed and citizens do not elect their government democratically. Turkmenistan has officially declared itself a neutral state. It has had diplomatic relations with the United States since 1992.

Turkmenistan still has a Soviet-style command economy, with industries and services provided almost entirely by government-controlled entities. It is the 10th largest producer of cotton worldwide and has large reserves of natural gas. These two products drive the economy. However, its gas and oil exports are dependent upon access to Russian pipelines and therefore Russia's cooperation. Cotton harvests have been poor over the past few years.

After ninth grade, schools send young people into the workforce with the expectation that they will work for two years to gain "practical experience." Since unemployment is already very high, especially for men, there is little opportunity for these young people to profitably occupy their time before higher education, which is limited at best. Readily available cheap drugs and alcohol further threaten the future of these youth.

## 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/TEFL (teaching English as a foreign language), which provides training to English teachers and school children; and community health education, which trains health professionals and grass-roots communities.

The program was suspended following the events of September 11, 2001. After a favorable reassessment in February 2002, seven Volunteers returned to Turkmenistan in April 2002 to complete their service. Since that time, approximately 50 Volunteers per year have been trained and sent

to sites throughout the country, serving in schools and clinics and working with a broad base of community people.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Education**

In 2004, 43 TEFL Volunteers helped conduct 15 English immersion camps for approximately 200 teachers and 800 students. These week- to 10-day-long camps allowed participants to work as counselors and junior counselors. Many teachers helped organize the camps and were able to practice their English-speaking skills while learning how to plan and carry out a project. The teachers also gained insight into student-centered teaching methodologies and activities, while they increased their leadership skills and self confidence. Camps are held in partnership with the Ministry of Education and regional educational departments. Most camps cover healthy lifestyle and hygiene education; self-esteem and leadership building; sportsmanship; and sessions on topics such as English, history, geography, civics, environmental awareness, art, and sports.

One of the outcomes of Volunteers' work with English teachers was the selection of 26 teachers by a Teacher Excellence Program. The teachers each received \$2,000 to buy equipment and English teaching materials for their schools. Six were selected as Best English teachers of Turkmenistan and sent on a seven-week study tour to the United States.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

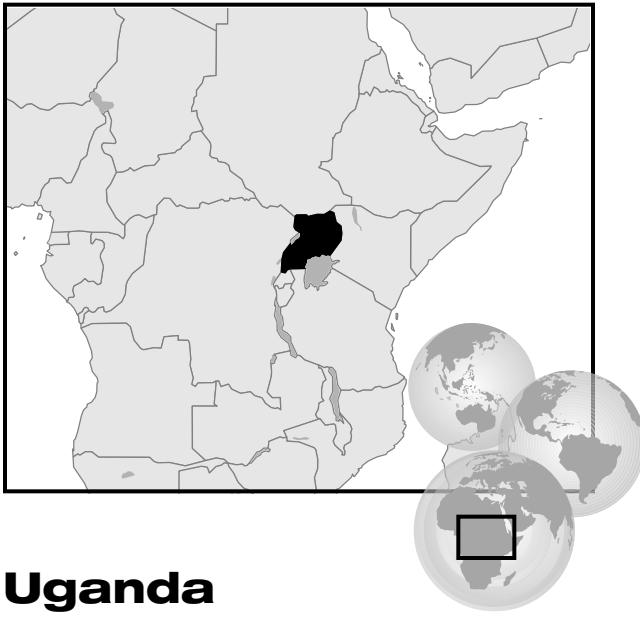
A lack of supplies, training, and technology has contributed to a decline in basic health and health-care services since independence. In support of recent reforms and initiatives of the government and the Ministry of Health of Turkmenistan, Peace Corps activities focus on maternal and child health-care issues in rural communities, with an emphasis on community health education including initial efforts to incorporate education about HIV/AIDS, a problem not openly acknowledged by the current government.

In 2004, Volunteers conducted lectures and seminars about environmental health, anatomy and physiology, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, healthy cooking, first aid, dental hygiene, potable water, and the importance of exercise that reached approximately 1,000 women and 2,400 children.

Volunteers have helped organize a project to draft a Turkmen/Russian/English dictionary of medical terms that will soon be released to the medical school and become a textbook for local physicians and future health-care-workers. Another team of Volunteers, in conjunction with local health workers, is preparing to publish and distribute a substance abuse education and activity book. Volunteers also helped with the design and printing of an Immunization Passport. Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the booklet will help parents keep a record of their children's immunizations and the dates of the next shots.

"The accomplishments I'm particularly happy with are my teachers' clubs. By channeling the enthusiasm and energy of Lebap Teachers Summer Conference I have been able to establish and maintain five successful weekly teachers' clubs in Charjew. These clubs usually draw a total of between 25 and 30 teachers a week. They represent a majority of the English language schools in the city. After camp, I was approached by many teachers and asked to visit their schools and present material similar to that of the camp. After scheduling an initial meeting, the teachers acquired the proper ministry permissions and invited and encouraged their colleagues to attend."

**Turkmenistan Volunteer Education Sector**



## Uganda

Capital .....	Kampala
Population .....	25 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$240
GDP growth .....	6.7%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 21% Female: 41%
Infant mortality rate .....	83 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 72% Measles: 77%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$150 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 80% Rural: 47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	5%
Religions .....	Christianity: 66% Indigenous beliefs: 18% Islam: 16%
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	54	60
Program funds (\$000)	1,635	1,689

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1964–1973 1991–1999 2000–present
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<b>Program sectors</b>	Education Health and HIV/AIDS
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In Uganda, economic change has accompanied political reform. The government is composed of broad-based political groupings brought together under the country's no-party system. 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. The government will face elections in the next two years, and a potential constitutional crisis exists if the current president decides to seek a third term. Corruption is an increasingly significant issue with the potential to bring growth to a halt 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 major export crop, accounting for over 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 to reduce inflation and boost production and export earnings. Significant donor assistance has been vital in supporting policies leading to this growth. Growth has been moderate over the past few years because of the continuing conflict in the north of the country. Growth has also been hampered by the perception by potential investors of increased levels of corruption, a lack of commitment to democratic principles, and close to a 20 percent drop in the value of the Ugandan shilling over the past year.

## Program Focus

The first group of Volunteers in Uganda arrived as teachers in November 1964. A year later, the secondary education program consisted of 35 Vol-

unteers, and by 1967, the program had more than doubled. A health program was initiated in 1968 with the placement of 15 Volunteers. As the Peace Corps program in Uganda expanded, the major programming area was education, but Volunteers also worked in fisheries, agriculture, computer programming, and surveying. The Peace Corps terminated its program in 1973 during the civil unrest under the presidency of Idi Amin.

The 1964 agreement between the Ugandan government and the Peace Corps was reactivated in 1990, and Volunteers returned in June 1991. Peace Corps/Uganda continued to grow until local security problems led to a second program suspension in May 1999. At that time, there were 75 Volunteers in-country working in three programs: primary education teacher training, women in small enterprise, and natural resource management. An expansion into the health sector was also planned.

In 2000, the Peace Corps reopened its program in Uganda at the invitation of the Ugandan government. Field staff began work in August 2000, and the first education Volunteers arrived in March 2001. Currently, Peace Corps/Uganda has an education project and a community health project focusing on HIV/AIDS, both 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, multisectoral effort to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. Though the HIV infection rate among pregnant women has decreased from 21 percent in 1991 to 6 percent in 2000, serious challenges remain. Uganda has more than 1 million AIDS orphans, and 2 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, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **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, administrative management, and school resource development. More broadly, education 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 the links between a school and its community through a variety of projects. For example, elementary school students in the schools around their teacher training resource center gathered stories in the local language from their parents and grandparents. The students wrote down the stories and illustrated them, creating reading materials for lower grades. This is the first local language reading material available for the primary level in the Dhopadola language. The activity empowered older students, engaged their parents, and provided simple but necessary instructional material for the lower grades. This design for making literacy education fun and collaborative has now been incorporated as a best practice by many primary teacher colleges in Uganda.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers working in the community well-being and positive-living project are assigned to small, community-based organizations, hospitals, and government health centers. Volunteers help these organizations provide information and support to people and families affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In 2004, Volunteers worked with more than 40 communities to transfer the knowledge and skills needed to increase the communities' capacity in areas such as sanitation, nutrition education, health education, life-skills education, gardening, hygiene, clean water, collaborating and networking, management training skills, and immunization. For example, a Volunteer working with a local Red Cross affiliate coordinated the training of a group of secondary school peer educators in HIV/AIDS. In addition to their activities in their own secondary schools, these young people have become life skills trainers for primary school programs in their areas. They recently practiced their skills as co-trainers, along with teachers and Red Cross community workers, at a life skills/self-esteem day camp for primary school students during the three-week school holidays.



## Ukraine

Capital.....	Kiev
Population.....	49 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$780
GDP growth .....	6.7%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: <0.5% Female: <0.5%
Infant mortality rate.....	16 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 99% Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment .....	\$693 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 100% Rural: 94%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	1%
Religions .....	Ukrainian Orthodoxy, Ukrainian Greek Catholicism, Judaism, Roman Catholicism, Islam
Official language .....	Ukrainian

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	313	286
Program funds (\$000)	4,642	4,345

## Country Overview

Program dates	1992-present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Youth

Ukraine, a country of 48 million people, has a well-educated, skilled labor force. Sixty-eight percent of the population lives in urban areas. Since January 2000, the country has embraced a strong economic reform program and focused its attention on the areas with the most critical economic and social impact.

Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and adopted its first post-Soviet constitution in 1996. Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991 and adopted its first post-Soviet constitution in 1996. The Presidential elections in October 2004 and disputed results of run-off voting brought international attention to this major political transition.

The basis for economic growth has moved beyond traditional industrial export goods to encompass agriculture, construction, and food processing. Privatized companies have figured prominently in economic expansion. Agriculture has been significantly strengthened by eliminating the collective farm system and following the legalization of private ownership. The country's unique geographic position, along with its possession of crucial ports on the Black Sea, has made it a trade link of growing importance between the former Soviet Union and Europe.

Ukraine has undertaken efforts to synchronize its trade policies with those of its neighbors and trade partners in both directions through a partnership agreement with the European Union and membership in a "single economic area" with Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. Ukraine seeks to become a transit center for oil from the Caspian Sea region, which is expected to increase significantly over the next decade. The leading potential conduit for this oil in Ukraine is a pipeline, which extends from Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odessa northward to the city of Brody. To world energy markets, Ukraine's real significance is as an intermediary connecting Russia, the world's largest natural gas producer, with growing European markets.

## **Program Focus**

The Peace Corps program supports the Ukrainian government's declared goal of entry into the global community. Volunteers teach business skills, English, and environmental protection, positively affecting Ukrainians' capabilities to develop their country, to operate in a global economy, and to communicate globally. A youth development project will begin in 2005 that will teach high school students in villages and other disadvantaged areas computer, information technology, and basic business skills; healthy lifestyles; career development; and environmental awareness.

Volunteers also work as change agents in Ukrainian towns and villages, carrying out community projects that address youth leadership training, HIV/AIDS education and awareness building, teacher training, curriculum and textbook development, Internet and computer training, and civil society development.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

Volunteers transfer free-market business skills and expertise at multiple levels through teaching and consulting assistance to individual entrepreneurs, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), universities, management institutes, and government structures at the regional, and local levels. An important emphasis of Volunteers' work is the introduction of computers, including Internet technology, in business centers, educational institutions, and NGOs. Volunteers teach economics, marketing, management, and related disciplines in schools. They assist in business education curriculum design and introduce new teaching methodologies that promote student participation and independent thinking.

Business education is an important component of Peace Corps Ukraine's business development project. Six Volunteers are working in regional centers on a coordinated project to reform Ukrainian graduate school curricula and introduce graduate programs in business administration at local universities that will follow Western-type syllabi and ensure a global standard in the courses that are offered.

### **Education**

Volunteers work in secondary schools, colleges, universities, and in-service teacher-training institutes as English teachers and English teacher trainers. They bring new knowledge and methodologies to the Ukrainian educational system and foster teacher-to-teacher links to promote the exchange of information on effective practices. Volunteers working in the pilot phase of the teacher-trainer project developed materials and activities that attracted the interest and participation of Ukrainian teachers, devised a two-year timetable for working with their teacher counterparts, and started compiling a syllabus for a practical course in English language teaching.

Several Volunteers in Ukraine teach English in villages and other depressed areas of the country. By learning English, rural youth have a chance to pursue information about technology and gain valuable life and career skills. Volunteers in rural areas also introduce ideas about civic participation, community action, leadership, health, gender and critical thinking that the children otherwise would not encounter.

### **Environment**

Through community-based projects, environment Volunteers promote interest in environmental learning and activism in schools, extracurricular educational institutions, and community clubs. They help build links between local and international programs to facilitate information exchanges and program support. They also promote participation in environmental camps, nature conservation, Earth Day celebrations, community cleanups, and the creation of environmental resource centers. Environment Volunteers work with local counterparts to promote ecotourism among Ukrainians and help develop nature trails, parks, water sports, and bed-and-breakfasts in villages.

### **Youth**

In 2005, approximately 20 Volunteers will begin work on a pilot project to help disadvantaged youth gain needed skills that will enable them to compete successfully in Ukraine's rapidly growing modern sector. This project will begin under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Science and will be tested in various parts of the country with a view toward producing a national curriculum that will be used in all schools.



# **Uzbekistan**

Capital:	Tashkent
Population	25 million
Annual per capita income	\$310
GDP growth	4.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: <0.5% Female: 1%
Infant mortality rate	55 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 98% Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment	\$65 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 94% Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.10%
Religions	Islam: 88% Eastern Orthodoxy: 9% Other: 3%
Official language	Northern Uzbek

## **Anticipated Number of Volunteers**

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	153	167
Program funds (\$000)	2,305	2,293

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1992–2001 2002–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

President Islam Karimov has ruled Uzbekistan, the most populated of the central Asian republics, since it declared its independence from the Soviet Union in September 1991. Presidential elections in 1991 and subsequent national referendums in 1995 and 2002 extended Karimov's rule were not considered free or fair by international observers. The judicial and legislative branches of government were considered weak and transitional. Recently, the parliament has been reorganized, moving from a unicameral body to a bicameral structure.

Agriculture continues to be the principal focus of the economy, accounting for 40 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Cotton is the major export crop. The country is rich in natural resources, including gold, natural gas, and oil. The government's expressed commitment to transformation to a free-market economy has been hindered by continued restrictions on currency convertibility, which was finally instituted on October 15, 2003. The Aral Sea environmental crisis is also affecting the country's economic performance. Despite a period of positive economic growth after independence, the economy has slowed and nearly 30 percent of the population still lives in poverty with Uzbekistan having one of the lowest standards of living in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

# **Program Focus**

The first Volunteers arrived in Uzbekistan in 1992. Since then, more than 630 Volunteers have served in this country rich in history from the days of the ancient Silk Road linking Europe to China. After a temporary suspension of the Peace Corps program following the events of September 11, 2001, the program was reopened in April 2002. Currently, close to 200 Volunteers are working in-country.

The people of Uzbekistan are working hard to make the difficult adjustment to democracy and a free-market economy and to cope with the many changes inherent in such a transition. The ability to communicate in English is viewed as vital to Uzbekistan's development and its status as a new na-

tion in the international community. In response to these needs, one focus of Volunteers in Uzbekistan is English instruction.

The government of Uzbekistan also recognizes the need to improve access to government health care by the rural population. Villagers often live far from medical facilities and cannot pay for travel to urban centers for specialized treatment. In support of government efforts to improve rural health-care services, the Peace Corps places health Volunteers at rural clinics.

Since independence, there has been a major effort to institutionalize a civil society. One of the outcomes of this process has been the recognition of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as important facilitators in a democratic society. Currently, more than 6,000 NGOs are operating and more than half of these are officially registered with the government. In January 2004, the Peace Corps signed a memorandum of understanding with the Supreme Council's Committee on Democratic Institutions, Non-Government Organizations, and Self-Governing Bodies of the Republic of Uzbekistan, initiating an NGO/business development program. Volunteers in the program strengthen the initiatives of local NGOs throughout the country.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Business Development**

The first group of Volunteers in the business development program work closely with the staff of local NGOs to increase the community's awareness of the NGO and their services, strengthen their organizational structure, and teach them fundraising strategies. Volunteers and their counterparts are also working to create a national network of NGOs to share skills and resources. One Volunteer is working at a youth English center started more than five years ago by a previous Volunteer. This center provides English language resources and classes to area youths.

### **Education**

Volunteers work closely with Uzbek universities and secondary schools to improve the quality of English instruction and to increase access to internationally available resources. Emphasis is placed on teacher training and information exchange. Volunteers also work in primary schools, teaching

and working with English teachers to improve their skills.

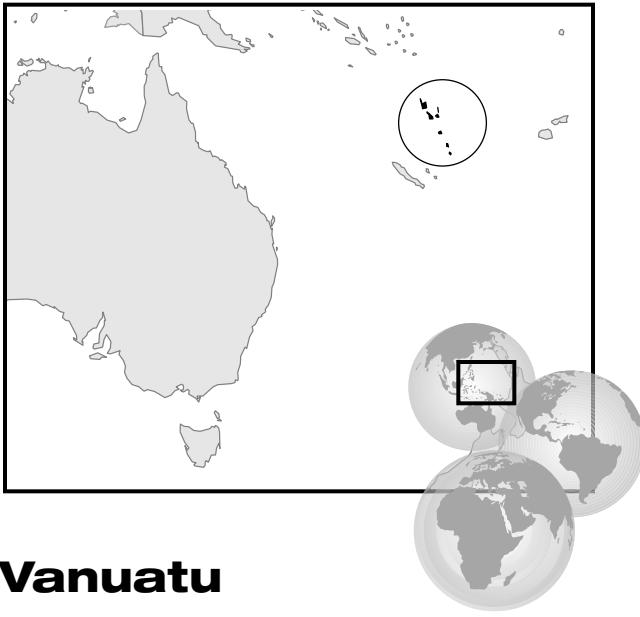
Local teachers attend workshops where they learn about contemporary teaching methodologies and materials development and improve their English skills. Volunteers were integral in the development of a new national curriculum for English instruction introduced in primary schools in September 2001. They recently finished a teacher's manual for first through third grades, which is currently being reviewed by the government for inclusion in the national curriculum for elementary English classes. Volunteers have also initiated community outreach activities, including English camps; HIV/AIDS peer education workshops; Earth Day activities; dance classes; and debate, ecology, and English clubs.

This summer, Volunteers and their local counterparts conducted 18 summer camps for children throughout Uzbekistan. The camps focused on leadership skills, health and hygiene, and English language skills. Many of these camps have become a tradition in the areas where Volunteers have served, and now, some of the children who attended camps years ago held by previous Volunteers work as counselors at the camps in their communities.

One Volunteer worked with his community to build a new school through a grant. The construction began in March 2004 and the school opened in September 2004. More than 300 students attend the school, which has greatly upgraded facilities from the previous school.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers focus on improving the health status of women and children in rural communities. Their activities emphasize prevention and health education to increase the capacity of staff to manage rural clinics. They also raise the level of English among health-care workers so they can make better use of current medical literature written in English. Volunteers conduct education seminars to address medical topics, such as anemia, first aid, reproductive health, and sight testing; as well as nonmedical topics, such as self-esteem, team building, and decision-making. In addition, they develop teaching aids that address hepatitis, HIV/AIDS, physiotherapy, and oral hygiene. During routine home visits, Volunteers distribute educational materials on anemia, goiter, nutrition, and breastfeeding.



## Vanuatu

Capital.....	Port-Vila
Population.....	206,000
Annual per capita income .....	\$1,070
GDP growth .....	-0.3%
Adult illiteracy rate:.....	47%
Infant mortality rate.....	60 per 1,000 births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 93% Measles: 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$20.3 million
Access to safe water .....	Not available
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	Not Available
Religions .....	Christianity
Official languages .....	Bislama English French

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	73	68
Program funds (\$000)	2,055	2,162

## Country Overview

Program dates	1990–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Environment Youth

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 completely 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 transportation and communication infrastructure. Although the majority of Vanuatu's population still lives in isolated rural areas, urbanization is increasing.

## Program Focus

There is a growing awareness in Vanuatu that the education system is not meeting the social or economic needs of all people in the country. The government is also turning its attention to practical training and vocational education that will enhance the skills, self-sufficiency, and employability of young people. Moreover, the capacity of the government and civil society to provide services to rural populations is extremely limited. The Peace Corps has responded with a strategy that increases access to quality education, particularly in rural areas. It also addresses the needs of the Vanuatu people for training and service provision through nonformal community education and development activities that focus on income generation, food security, sus-

tainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and youth development. Volunteers also educate communities about disaster preparation to help them mitigate damage.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers promote sustainable farming practices and agroforestry to improve food security and income generation opportunities for Vanuatu's population. Volunteers also work with farming communities to expand opportunities for local value-added processing and marketing of crops. The Peace Corps program focuses on the production of higher value crops, such as vanilla, pepper, cocoa, and spices, as well as small livestock and staple foods. For instance, more than 20 Volunteers helped their communities and schools develop chicken egg-laying projects for income generation and to promote more balanced diets.

### **Business Development**

Volunteers work with rural retail and marketing cooperatives to provide training in business and organizational management, bookkeeping, credit management, cooperative philosophy, and product diversification. They work with entrepreneurs and other clients to conduct business feasibility studies, start small businesses, identify local and regional markets, and undertake small-scale processing of local resources. Volunteers also promote the formation of small community savings-and-loan groups. The main target populations are youth and women. One Volunteer is helping to establish the first producer's organization of coffee growers enabling them to improve the quality of their produce and sell it at a competitive price with the effect of providing a sustainable source of income for their families.

### **Education**

Volunteers serve either in primary and secondary schools or in community-based rural training centers, and their work has benefited more than 11,500 students and 450 teachers. Volunteers support the teaching of disadvantaged students in secondary schools, teaching math, science, information technology, and English. They also

enhance the quality of education through teacher training, curriculum and resource development, and school-based strategic planning. For example, 12 Volunteers have helped community-managed rural training centers provide vocational and basic life skills to young people who cannot be accommodated in the secondary education system.

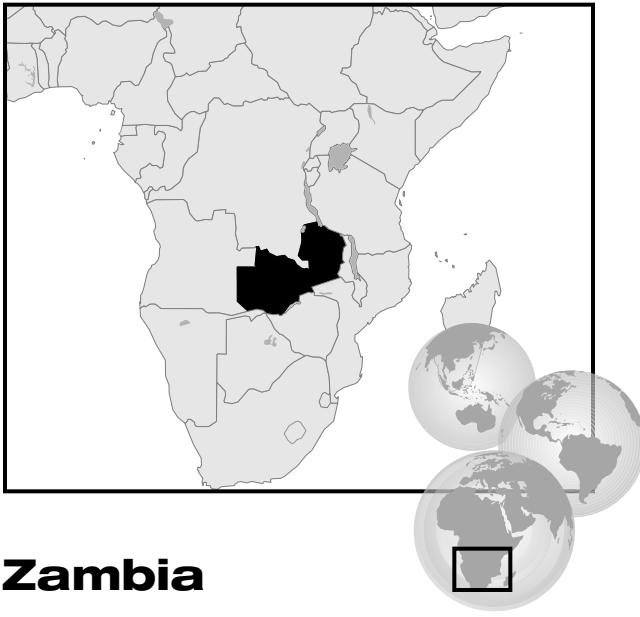
### **Environment**

Communities have a strong interest in improving the management of their natural resources, including coral reefs, forests, wildlife, and agricultural lands. Volunteers work with communities to 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. Volunteers working on three islands this year helped their communities establish the first three marine-protected areas in the country, ensuring the sustainability of natural resources and the potential for tourist income generation.

The Peace Corps' disaster preparedness and mitigation project has inspired communities to raise awareness about natural disasters, produced risk assessment maps, and assisted community leaders in producing community disaster preparedness plans. This year, the Peace Corps helped Vanuatu respond to a devastating hurricane, providing the only comprehensive damage assessment so that government could effectively provide relief to the hardest-hit areas.

### **Youth**

Volunteers work in both urban and rural settings to reach out-of-school youth, particularly those who are school dropouts or otherwise disadvantaged. Volunteers encourage youth to organize under the banner of the Vanuatu National Youth Council and work together to address their needs. They work on issues such as youth leadership, self-esteem, employability, food and livelihood security, HIV/AIDS awareness, basic literacy, conflict resolution, and culture. One Volunteer helped establish the first youth "drop-in" center in the northern provinces, providing opportunities for out-of-school youth to acquire income-generation skills and healthy attitudes.



## Zambia

Capital .....	Lusaka
Population .....	10 million
Annual per capita income .....	\$340
GDP growth .....	3.3%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 14% Female: 26%
Infant mortality rate.....	102 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate .....	DPT: 78% Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$197 million
Access to safe water .....	Urban: 88% Rural: 48%
HIV/AIDS prevalence .....	21.50%
Religions .....	Christianity Indigenous beliefs Islam Hinduism
Official language .....	English

### Anticipated Number of Volunteers

*Calculated September 30 each year*

	FY 2005	FY 2006
Volunteers	142	155
Program funds (\$000)	3,061	3,230

## Country Overview

<b>Program dates</b>	1993–present
<b>Program sectors</b>	Agriculture Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The Republic of Zambia, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, gained its independence from Britain in 1964. Kenneth Kaunda, the leader of the United National Independence Party, was named the first president and remained in power until 1991. After nearly three decades of one-party rule and worsening economic conditions, the Kaunda era came to an end. In November 1991, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) won Zambia's first free presidential and general elections since 1968. Frederick Chiluba was subsequently sworn in as the nation's second president and was reelected in 1996. He was succeeded by Levy Mwanawasa, also a member of the MMD, who was elected president in January 2002. Today, Zambia is a multiparty, participatory democracy.

Zambia is one of sub-Saharan Africa's most highly urbanized countries. Approximately half of the country's 10.2 million people are concentrated in a few urban zones strung along major transportation corridors. Unemployment and underemployment are serious problems, and Zambia has a relatively low per capita income. It has a mixed economy with a large urban public sector dominated by government, nonprofit nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and parastatal organizations, many of which have or are in the process of being privatized. Maize is the principle cash crop of a predominantly private rural agricultural sector.

Zambia contains one of the world's largest copper deposits. Historically, copper exports contributed to most of the country's foreign exchange earnings and provided the leading source of employment. The drastic decline of the copper market values in the mid 1970s, the slow rate of industrialization, and a high dependence on foreign imports drove Zambia's economy into an extended decline. However, Zambia remains a leading world producer of refined copper and cobalt, which together make up 95 percent of all exports.

## **Program Focus**

In April 2004, the Peace Corps celebrated its 10th anniversary in Zambia. Peace Corps/Zambia opened its program in 1994 with a group of 12 water and sanitation/hygiene education Volunteers. In 1996, the program expanded to include a community action for health project and the rural aquaculture project. In 2003, a new education sector project was launched called Learning at Taonga Market (LTM). Using funding from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, an HIV/AIDS project began in late 2004. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

## **Volunteer Focus**

### **Agriculture**

Volunteers are assisting the Department of Fisheries in the development of fish-farming projects aimed at improving livelihoods in rural communities. Volunteers provide technical assistance in establishing dams, furrows, fishponds, 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 also assist in enhancing development capacity of fish farming associations.

### **Education**

Peace Corps Zambia's education project builds on the success of a national radio education program called "Learning at Taonga Market" (LTM). This interactive program, produced by the Zambian Ministry of Education, is broadcast over the national radio station and covers the primary school curriculum. The program provides a vehicle for the delivery of education that does not require a trained teacher or a school building, allowing for improved access to basic education for Zambia's most needy children. In

2004, the number of Volunteers increased to 17, and they continue to work with community partners in towns and rural villages to develop new sites, train mentors, and assist in the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

### **Environment**

In 2000, the Zambian Wildlife Authority invited Peace Corps/Zambia to join a new environmental initiative to help communities living near national parks gain an economic stake and a voice in managing protected areas. Volunteers are helping to strengthen and facilitate the participation of rural communities in natural resource management and economic resource allocation. Volunteers have assisted more than 75 community groups in enhancing critical decision-making skills for this new responsibility. They have worked in 41 schools with 54 teachers to enhance environmental education curricula and delivered lessons to pupils in schools near national parks. Other Volunteer activities have addressed food insecurity and livelihood diversification within these communities, thus reducing pressure on park resources.

### **Health and HIV/AIDS**

Volunteers work with counterparts from rural health centers to build and strengthen the capacity of neighborhood health committees to address health problems at the village level. Volunteers strengthen the skills of rural Zambians and facilitate better links among the committees, the rural health centers, and district health management boards. They also help communities implement cost-effective, sustainable health interventions.

Volunteers also work closely with neighborhood health committees to help village residents understand the role they can play HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support. They also enhance community awareness of good nutrition and food security as it relates to HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

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**"The zeal of the young people is apparent in Peace Corps Volunteers,  
who come as Americans but leave as ambassadors to Zambia."**

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**We stand shoulder to shoulder."**  
**Dr. Nevers Mumba  
Vice President, Republic of Zambia**

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# Government Performance and Results Act



# The Peace Corps' Performance Plans as Required Under the Government Performance and Results Act

## FY 2004 Report, FY 2005 and FY 2006 Plans

### **Strategic Goal 1:**

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by gradually expanding the existing number of Volunteers in the field at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support, up to 8,000 Volunteers by September 30, 2008.

### **Outcome Goals:**

- 1.1 Maintain the approximate number of Volunteers in the field from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 8,000 (6.2 percent) by FY 2008, assuming full funding for FY 2006 and future requests, and incrementally expand Volunteer programming to include the development of innovative responses to natural disasters and humanitarian crises.
- 1.2 Increase the combined number of applications to the Peace Corps from underrepresented ethnic and age groups from 19 percent to 25 percent by FY 2008 in order to provide Volunteers to interested countries that better reflect American diversity.
- 1.3 Reduce Volunteers' overall 12-month early-termination (ET) rate by 2.5 percent from FY 2003 level of 11.6 percent to 9.1 percent by September 2008 through improved matching of Volunteers' skills and primary assignment, and improved satisfaction rate of Volunteer health and safety.

### **Performance Goal 1.1.1.**

Incrementally increase in subsequent performance years Volunteer/trainees on board from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 8,000 (6.2 percent) by FY 2008.

### **Means and Strategies:**

The Peace Corps will:

- refine recruitment business processes to make it easier for potential applicants to enter Peace Corps service;
- coordinate the increased use of returned Peace Corps Volunteers in awareness, recruitment, and retention activities for new applicants and Crisis Corps Volunteers;
- increase the number of Crisis Corps projects in humanitarian relief and responses to natural disasters;
- conduct annual public service announcement campaigns for radio, print, and television distribution;
- conduct strategic recruitment and media campaigns designed to cast a wide net for prospective Volunteer candidates at communities and 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;
- 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 is tracked bimonthly and reported to the chief of staff by a group composed of staff from each of the three overseas Regions, the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, and the Office of Medical Services.

<b>Performance Indicators 1.1.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 actual</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
i. Number of new country entries	2	1	2
ii. Number of new country assessments	3	3	5
iii. Percentage of focus countries participating in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief	60%	90%	100%
iv. Number of Crisis Corps Volunteers responding to natural disasters or humanitarian crises	38	65	112
v. Overall traffic to website	7 million	7.3 million	7.7 million
vi. Online applications completed	10,062	10,300	10,600
vii. Increase number of inquiries originating from website	147,872	155,000	160,000
viii. Rate of applications started vs. submitted	22%	22.5%	23%
ix. Value of earned/donated media based on \$250K cost to produce (millions of dollars)	\$7.9	\$5*	\$5*

\* Value of earned/donated media tied to when the material is produced. Goals for FY 2005 and FY 2006 reduced slightly based on placement of existing material from FY 2004 campaign.

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### **Performance Goal 1.2.1.**

Increase the combined number of under-represented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps from 19 percent to 22 percent by FY 2006.

### **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 percentage of minority trainees has continued to rise over the FY 1999 level and is reflected in quarterly minority recruitment reports of the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection.

<b>Performance Indicators 1.2.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 actual</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
i. Percentage of minority trainees	16.5%	Measured on actual data only. No targets established.	Measured on actual data only. No targets established.
ii. Recruitment and support efforts focusing on applicants over age 50, diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, and level of education	10 Diverse Conferences/ 5 Panel Presentations	10 Diverse Conferences/5 Panel Presentations	10 Diverse Conferences/5 Panel Presentations
iii. Percentage of Volunteers over age 50	5.8%	Measured on actual data only. No targets established.	Measured on actual data only. No targets established.
iv. Total visitors to website who access minority recruitment pages and/or scarce skills, family pages	304,336	350,000	400,000
v. Number of pieces of collateral used (i.e., all marketing material printed by Peace Corps) that target diverse audiences	2M*	1.2M	1.2M
vi. Number of articles placed in newspapers and other media that target diverse audiences	257**	150	175

\* Collateral marketing pieces used exceeded targeted goals (see table p. 220 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

\*\* Placement of articles in FY 2004 far exceeded targeted goals (see table p. 220 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

### **Performance Goal 1.3.1.**

Reduce the overall 12-month Volunteer ET rate by 1.5 percent from FY 2003 level of 11.6 percent to 10.1 percent by September 2006.

### **Means and Strategies:**

The Peace Corps will:

- develop and maintain systems to identify, collect and disseminate promising practices in programming and training from posts and other sources;
- promote and support the exchange of 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
- develop materials and resources that address and integrate agency priorities.

### **Verification and Validation:**

The regions will review and assess ET data with the Office of Policy, Planning, and Analysis, and report on results. The Peace Corps' Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research will monitor the production and quality of programming and training (including the quality of materials provided to posts) with the regions through review of annual reports and evaluations.

<b>Performance Indicators 1.3.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 actual</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
i. Percentage of sites described “very well,” “well,” or “adequately” prepared in the biennial Volunteer survey	71%	N/A*	80%
ii. Percentage of skills requests that align with available applicants	85%	90%	95%
iii. Percentage of Peace Corps project plans complete and current	50%	75%	95%
iv. Percentage of Peace Corps projects and training programs reviewed annually	100%**	95%	95%
v. Number of field-based project reviews and evaluations	29	30	30
vi. Number of project and training technical assistance events for posts	105	105	120

\* Volunteer survey is conducted biennially.

\*\* Annual review of project and training programs exceeded expectations in FY 2004 (see table p. 221 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

## Strategic Goal 2

Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer health care satisfaction rate by 7 percent and increasing Volunteers' perceptions of their personal safety where they live by 3 percent by September 2008.

### Outcome Goals:

- 1.1 Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers indicating feeling “well” or “completely” satisfied with their in-country health care from FY 2002 level of 75 percent to 82 percent by September 2008.
- 1.2 Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteer survey responses indicating Volunteers feel safe “most of the time” where they live from FY 2002 level of 86 percent to 89 percent by September 2008.

## Performance Goal 2.1.1.

Increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey indicating feeling “well” or “completely” satisfied with their in-country health care by 5 percent from FY 2003 level of 75 percent to 80 percent by September 2006.

### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- identify, in a timely manner, areas within the health care system that need improvement; and
- monitor the impact of strategies designed to improve its health care system.

### 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.

<b>Performance Indicators 2.1.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 actual</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
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	93%*	90%	95%
ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting health training as effective or very effective as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey	N/A	N/A	90%
iii. Incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as hepatitis A & B (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years)	0.0496	Target <0.05	Target <0.05
iv. Incidence of falciparum malaria in Africa region (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years)	1.2397	Target <6.0	Target <6.0

\* Satisfaction rate exceeded targeted goal for FY 2004 (see table p. 222 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

#### **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 at home by 2 percent from FY 2003 level of 86 percent to 88 percent by September 2006.

#### **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; and
- monitor post compliance with *Peace Corps Manual Section 270 (MS 270)*—Volunteer Safety and Security.

#### **Verification and Validation:**

The Peace Corps will track its progress in meeting safety and security requirements through mandatory post reports to the regional director on MS 270 compliance. In addition, the agency will monitor results from the biennial Volunteer survey 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.

Peace Corps country desk units will compile documentation that posts are meeting MS 270 compliance. The regional directors will work to ensure that posts receive the necessary resources to meet compliance goals.

Performance Indicators 2.2.1.	FY 2004 actual	FY 2005	FY 2006
i. Percentage of Volunteer pre-service training programs including safety training	96%	100%	100%
ii. Percentage of Volunteers demonstrating 10 safety and security competencies at end of pre-service training	80%	90%	100%
iii. Posts undergoing safety and security assessments	92%*	85%	95%
iv. Posts receiving Emergency Action Plan training	85%	90%	100%
v. Percentage of posts testing Emergency Action Plans at least once a year	100%	100%	100%
vi. Percentage of posts complying with all sections of MS 270, beginning July 2003	95%	95%	98%
vii. 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	94%*	N/A	85%
viii. 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	88%*	N/A	85%

\* Safety and security assessments exceeded targeted goal for FY 2004; each post is assessed biennially (see table p. 224 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

\*\* Volunteer responses exceeded targeted goal for FY 2004 (see table p. 224 in FY 2004 Performance Results).

### Strategic Goal 3

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' (RPCVs) visits to schools and community organizations by 28 percent by September 2008.

#### Outcome Goal:

- 1.1 Increase RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 28 percent from FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 9,000 by September 2008.

#### Performance Goal 3.1.1.

Increase RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 17 percent from FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 8,200 by September 2006.

#### Means and Strategies:

The Peace Corps will:

- continue to sponsor and engage 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; and
- 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.

#### Verification and Validation:

The Office of Domestic Programs will monitor and assess implementation of events and delivery of services to ensure increased RPCV involvement and participation in improving Americans' understanding of other peoples.

Performance Indicators 3.1.1.	FY 2004 actual	FY 2005	FY 2006
i. RPCVs participating in Peace Corps Week activities	7,031	7,800	8,200
ii. RPCVs participating in career events	915	950	950
iii. RPCVs e-mailed the RPCV newsletter	7,702	10,000	15,000
iv. Percentage of active Volunteers (not trainees) during the year participating in the Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) one-to-one correspondence match program	47%	53%	53%
v. Average visitors per month to the CWWS section of the Peace Corps website	474,574	500,000	550,000

## Strategic Goal 4

Reduce the Peace Corps overall response time for those applying to Peace Corps by 5 percent from FY 2003 level of 223 days to 212 days by September 2008.

### Outcome Goal:

1.1 Reduce overall Peace Corps applicant response time by 5 percent by September 2008 through evaluation and integration of new technology and recruitment and placement of staff structures.

#### Performance Goal 4.1.1.

Reduce overall response time to applicants by 3 percent from FY 2003 level of 223 days to 215 days by September 2006.

### 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 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 (among other tools) the Peace Corps online application manager system that tracks online applications from the initiation of the process to submission of the application.

<b>Performance Indicators 4.1.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 actual</b>	<b>FY 2005</b>	<b>FY 2006</b>
i. Percentage of applicants who complete their Volunteer applications over the Internet	75%	77%	80%
ii. Percentage of applicants who complete their health status review for medical screening over the Internet	86%*	78%	80%
iii. Application to nomination (number of days)	65	64	63
iv. Nomination to medical qualification (number of days)	75	74	74
v. Medical kit received by applicant to medical qualification (number of days)	48	47	46
vi. Medical qualification to invitation (number of days)	35	34	32

\* *Health status reviews completed on the Internet exceeded targeted goal for FY 2004 (see table p. 227 in FY 2004 Performance Results).*



## The Peace Corps' Performance Results as Required Under the Government Performance and Results Act

### FY 2004 Results\*

In response to President Bush's challenge to increase the size of the Peace Corps, the agency is focusing on growth while providing a positive experience for all Volunteers in a safe and secure environment. This section discusses the four strategic outcome goals the Peace Corps seeks to achieve from FY 2003 through FY 2008. Each strategic outcome goal has a set of measurable performance goals with accompanying means and strategies. Also discussed are their relationship to the agency's annual performance goals in the performance budget; key factors potentially affecting their achievement; and the methods used to assess that achievement.

#### Strategic Goal 1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by increasing Volunteers in the field from 7,533 in FY 2003 to 11,250 by FY 2008, at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support.

#### Strategic Goal 2

Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer healthcare satisfaction rate by 7 percent, from 75 percent in FY 2002 to 82 percent in FY 2008; and increasing Volunteers' perceptions of their personal safety where they live by 3 percent, from 86 percent in FY 2002 to 89 percent by FY 2008.

#### Strategic Goal 3

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and community organizations by 28 percent, from 7,000 in FY 2003 to 9,000 by FY 2008.

#### Strategic Goal 4

Reduce the Peace Corps' overall response time for those applying to the Peace Corps by 5 percent, from 222 days in FY 2003 to 212 days by FY 2008.

\* As reported in the FY 2004 Peace Corps Performance and Accountability Report released on November 15, 2004.

As indicated earlier, the agency's FY 2004 performance plan results are based on reliable, actual data and/or a combination of actual data through most of the year with an estimate of results that covers the last quarter of the fiscal year. For example, as of October 12, 2004, the agency had received approximately 1,350 survey responses to the Peace Corps Volunteer survey via the Internet. The data from the online responses are instantly accessible, and have been used to create the responses in the performance report for questions pertaining to the Volunteer survey. However, these results are incomplete, as approximately 1,200 paper surveys have been received but not analyzed. Another 800 to 1,000 more responses are expected over the next couple of weeks. Thus, the results used to generate these findings represent only about 30 percent of the expected survey responses. Until the agency has a complete collection and analysis of all survey data, results are preliminary, incomplete, and could change.

Since we are in a transition year, and this document is Peace Corps' first ever Performance and Accountability Report (PAR), the agency has changes and improvements that it plans to undertake during FY 2005 to improve the quality, completeness, and accuracy of future PAR submissions. For example, the 2004 biennial Volunteer survey is scheduled to be tabulated and published in January 2005; the timing of this survey should be realigned to provide data for the PAR.

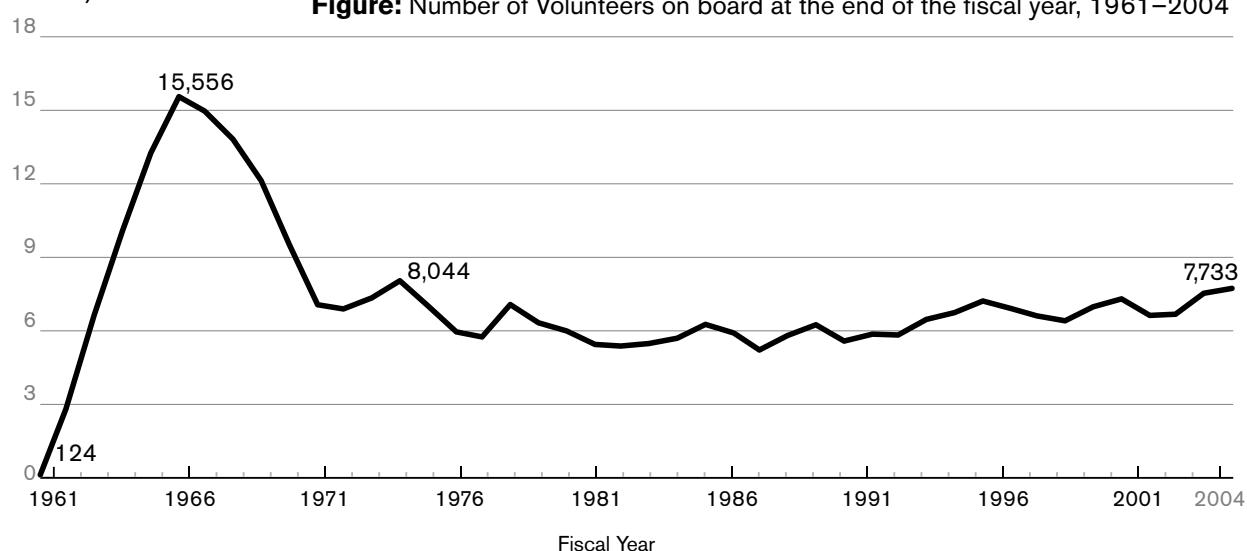
## **Strategic Goal 1:**

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by increasing Volunteers in the field from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 11,250 by September 2008, at a rate consistent with funding levels and infrastructure support.

### **Outcome Goals:**

- 1.1 Increase Volunteers in the field from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 11,250 (49 percent) by FY 2008, assuming full funding for FY 2005 and future requests.
- 1.2 Increase the combined number of applications to Peace Corps from underrepresented ethnic and age groups from 19 percent to 25 percent by FY 2008 to provide Volunteers to interested countries that better reflect American diversity.
- 1.3 Reduce overall Volunteers' 12-month early-termination (ET) rate by 2.5 percent from FY 2003 level of 11.6 percent to 9.1 percent by September 2008 through improved matching of Volunteers' skills and primary assignment, and improved satisfaction rate of Volunteer health and safety.

Volunteers  
(thousands)



**Figure: Number of Volunteers on board at the end of the fiscal year, 1961–2004**

### **Performance Goal 1.1.1.**

Incrementally increase in subsequent performance years Volunteers/trainees on board from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 9,300 (23 percent) by FY 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Actual
7,840	7,733 <sup>1</sup>

### **Results and Analysis**

The Peace Corps strives to recruit and place the most qualified and diverse Volunteers effectively and efficiently. In FY 2004, the agency came very close to achieving this goal—7,733 is the highest number of Volunteers in 29 years. However, the current appropriations levels and trends require a revision of the agency's strategic plan for growth.

Performance Indicators 1.1.1.*	FY 2004 Target	FY 2004 Actual
i. New country entries	0	2
ii. New country assessments	2	3
iii. Countries requesting programs	10	19
iv. Overall traffic to website	6 million	7 million
v. Online applications completed	8,000	10,062
vi. Inquiries originating from website	125,000	147,872
vii. Rate of applications started vs. submitted	22%	22%
viii. Value of earned/donated media (based on \$250K cost to produce)	\$8 million	\$7.9 million
<b>Resources Needed:</b>		
Dollars (in thousands)	229,033	226,147
Full-time equivalents	922	875

\* All data in Performance Indicators 1.1.1 as of September 2004.

<sup>1</sup> The number of Volunteers/trainees on board is calculated on September 30 of the fiscal year.

## Results and Analysis

The Peace Corps received more requests from countries than expected, including preliminary inquiries on programming options and possible locations. Follow-up assessments are being planned for FY 2005, but these will depend on FY 2005 appropriations. However, the rising demand for Peace Corps and its programs throughout the developing world supports the agency's goal of increasing Volunteers. One recent request came from Indonesia, reflecting an appreciation of Peace Corps by predominantly Muslim countries.

There was an increase in traffic to the Peace Corps' Internet site during FY 2004. Several factors contributed to the agency exceeding its target by nearly 25 percent. A redesign of the Peace Corps website and additional content placed on the Web has attracted many new and repeat visitors. A successful new marketing campaign also funneled additional visitors to the website. In addition, the current international climate has increased Americans' awareness of global issues. The Peace Corps provides an ideal way for Americans to exercise their sense of service and ambassadorship, and the successful reception of the marketing campaign, Internet resources, and related materials are key indicators of that success.

Along with visits to the website, nearly every aspect of the interactive site saw similar increases. Online applications were higher than expected. Inquiries about the Peace Corps made through the website were 33 percent higher than expected. The Peace Corps will review its goals and targets for subsequent fiscal year performance plans in light of these unexpected, positive results.

### Performance Goal 1.2.1.

Increase the combined number of underrepresented ethnic and age groups applying to the Peace Corps from 19 percent to 22 percent by FY 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Actual
20%	19.6% <sup>2</sup>

## Results and Analysis

While working to increase its numbers to meet the President's desire for growth, the agency is also attempting to increase underrepresented, racial, ethnic, and age groups applying to Peace Corps. This effort is essential to ensure that Peace Corps truly reflects the diversity of America.

2004 was the third year in a row in which the number of diverse applicants to the Peace Corps increased. Although FY 2004 results fell a bit short of the goal, the agency still saw an overall increase in the number of diverse applicants from 2,195 at the end of FY 2003 to 2,596 at the end of FY 2004. In comparison, at the end of FY 2002, 1,931 of all applicants were diverse backgrounds.

At the end of FY 2002, the agency formed a working group on overcoming barriers to Volunteer service and establishing priorities to increase recruitment. An important priority of this working group is to significantly increase the number of diverse applicants. For example, the working group has focused on increasing diversity outreach through targeted local recruiting venues, conferences, publications, and website materials, on having web based materials during the application phase that increases awareness, on giving credit for service by colleges and universities; on having non-credit certificate programs for service that facilitates employment post service; on targeting community college students and expanding country programs for them, and on reviewing readjustment allowance levels following their service.

<sup>2</sup> 7.2 percent of all applicants did not specify their ethnicity.

Performance Indicators 1.2.1.	FY 2004 Target	FY 2004 Actual
i. Percentage of minority trainees	Measured on actual data only (no targets established)	16.5%
ii. Recruitment and support efforts focusing on applicants over age 50, diverse ethnicities, backgrounds, and level of education	Expand recruitment and support for a diverse range of applicants and Volunteers, including seniors	10 diverse conferences, 5 panel presentations
iii. Percentage of Volunteers over age 50	Measured on actual data only (no targets established)	5.8%
iv. Visitors to website who access minority recruitment pages and/or scarce skills, family pages	200,000	304,336 *
v. Collateral pieces used (i.e., all marketing material printed by Peace Corps) that target diverse audiences	1 million	2 million *
vi. Articles placed in newspapers and other media that target diverse audiences	6	138 *
<b>Resources Needed:</b>		
Dollars (in thousands)	447	464
Full-time equivalents	4	4

\* Data as of August 31, 2004.

### Results and Analysis

It is critically important to the Peace Corps to attract underrepresented racial, ethnic and age group applicants. The redesigned website, with additional content targeted to underrepresented audiences, and the agency's overall marketing campaigns have attracted many new and repeat visitors to the website. This traffic is part of the significant growth in overall traffic to the website. The synergy of a new marketing campaign, international climate, improved Internet technology, and wide-reaching content again has caused results to exceed expectations. Based on this experience, the Peace Corps will review its goals for subsequent fiscal year performance plans.

The Peace Corps has targeted diverse audiences in all of its marketing materials, which were created for a variety of audiences. As this was the first year of a marketing campaign with all new materials, it was difficult to predict what number of pieces would be used during the year. Predictions based on previous recruitment materials generated these fiscal year goals; subsequent plans will allow the Peace Corps to review and revise targets with better information.

### **Performance Goal 1.3.1.**

Reduce the overall 12-month Volunteer early termination (ET) rate by 1.5 percent, from FY 2003 level of 11.6 percent to 10.1 percent by September 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Actual
11.1%	11.0%

### **Results and Analysis**

The ET rate is declining, which is an improvement sought in the strategic plan. The Peace Corps developed a new survey instrument to collect data not previously captured from Volunteers and trainees who ET. This looks at reasons why an individual terminates early and will provide feedback to posts and headquarters to better understand and analyze this issue.

Early termination and the reasons for it can be complex. The additional focus on the subject, and the additional data being collected, will allow the agency to adjust recruitment information, pre-service training, in-service training, site and program development, and other factors that may contribute to ET rates.

Performance Indicators 1.3.1.	FY 2004 Target	FY 2004 Actual/ Estimate
i. Percentage of sites described as “very well,” “well,” or “adequately” prepared in the biennial Volunteer survey	75%	N/A*
ii. Percentage of skill requests that align with available applicants	85%	85%
iii. Percentage of Peace Corps project plans complete and current	50%	50%
iv. Percentage of Peace Corps projects and training programs reviewed annually	95%	100%
v. Field-based project reviews and evaluations	30	29
vi. Project and training technical assistance events for posts	105	105
<b>Resources Needed:</b>		
Dollars (in thousands)	6,937	6,699
Full-time equivalents	78	79

\* Final tabulation of the results of the 2004 biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey is scheduled for January 2005. Thus, it is not possible to report on any of the indicators that rely on survey results. The agency plans to adjust the timing of future surveys to align with the timing of the PAR. At the time of producing this PAR, the agency had received approximately 30 percent of expected responses. This note applies to all indicators that rely on the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey for data.

### **Results and Analysis**

FY 2004 results of the work to reduce the ET rate were positive, as Peace Corps focused on training, matching skills with projects, and reviewing programs implemented in the field. Early termination is a complex issue, involving almost every aspect of the recruitment, application, training, and Volunteer experience. Significant attention was placed on

this area in FY 2004, and the Peace Corps plans to continue to review and modify indicators to reflect the data we receive.

The agency will review and analyze the results of “i.” above once the biennial Volunteer survey results are available—any lack of performance will be analyzed and addressed.

## **Strategic Goal 2:**

Improve the health and safety of Volunteers by improving the Volunteer healthcare satisfaction rate by 7 percent and increasing Volunteers' perceptions of their personal safety where they live by 3 percent by September 2008.

### **Outcome Goals:**

- 1.1 Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers indicating feeling "well" or "completely" satisfied with their in-country health care from the FY 2002 level of 75 percent to 82 percent by September 2008.
- 1.2 Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteer survey responses indicating Volunteers feel safe "most of the time" where they live from FY 2002 level of 86 percent to 89 percent by September 2008.

### **Performance Goal 2.1.1.**

Increase the percentage of respondents to the biennial Peace Corps Volunteer survey indicating feeling "well" or "completely" satisfied with their in-country health care by 5 percent, from FY 2003 level of 75 percent to 80 percent by September 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Actual
78%	N/A <sup>3</sup>

### **Results and Analysis**

The health, safety, and security of every Volunteer is the Peace Corps' highest priority and this is reflected in the agency's strategic plan. Greater emphasis on this priority in FY 2004 has placed increased attention on training, both before and after Volunteers travel overseas to their posts.

Actual results for FY 2004 will only be available by January 2005 because the biennial Volunteer survey is still in the process of tabulation and analysis. When the results become available to the agency, attention to this area will be made to ensure any lack of performance is analyzed, and addressed.

### **Performance Indicators 2.1.1.**

	FY 2004 Target	FY 2004 Actual/Estimate
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	95%	93%
ii. Percentage of Volunteer respondents reporting health training as effective or very effective as measured by the biennial Volunteer survey	85%	N/A*
iii. Incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases such as hepatitis A & B (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years)	Target <0.05	0.0496
iv. Incidence of falciparum malaria in Africa region (measure is in cases per 100 Volunteer/trainee years)	Target <6.0	1.2397

### **Resources Needed:**

Dollars (in thousands)	57,602	57,604
Full-time equivalents	103	90

\* See note for Performance Indicators 1.3.1., p. 221. Additionally, the 2002 Volunteer survey questioned overall physical health. In an effort to further understand how the Volunteers feel about their care, the 2004 survey makes a distinction between mental and physical health. Thus, the results will not be totally comparative—the agency will review this performance goal in FY 2005.

<sup>3</sup> See note for Performance Indicators 1.3.1., p. 219

## **Results and Analysis**

The results of FY 2004 medevac surveys were 2 percent lower than the FY 2004 goal; this small difference can be attributed to the overall circumstances of each situation. A medical evacuation is a stressful time, and Peace Corps does everything it can to ensure the safety and health of its Volunteers. Reviews will be made of the survey results to identify any trends and address any needs for additional training. The agency will also review the survey instrument to ensure it is appropriately designed and executed. Currently, 5 out of 21 questions ask the medevac Volunteer about the quality of their medevac care.

The incidence of falciparum malaria exceeds the FY 2004 goal for several reasons. First, the medication is effective. Also, Peace Corps medical officers provide comprehensive malaria education to Volunteers, and those Volunteers are complying with that training.

### ***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 at home by 2 percent, from FY 2003 level of 86 percent to 88 percent by September 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Actual
87%	N/A <sup>4</sup>

## **Results and Analysis**

The safety and security of every Volunteer is the Peace Corps' highest priority and is reflected as such in the agency's strategic plan. As shown in this measurement, this emphasis is paying off with Volunteers feeling safe and confident in their overseas homes. In light of the current global climate, this achievement is especially notable.

In FY 2004, all posts received a standardized template for an emergency action plan (EAP) and standard operating procedures that accompany that plan. The agency wants them to be fully operational by March 2005. This will help ensure continuous testing, monitoring, and operations of all emergency plans in the agency. Also in 2004, EAPs were placed in an electronic format allowing for easier transmission and tracking. During emergencies, headquarters can receive and transmit the latest information electronically, including consolidation points and maps for all Volunteers. This is the first time the agency has achieved this interactive emergency operations system.

<sup>4</sup> See note for Performance Indicators 1.3.1., p. 221.

Performance Indicators 2.2.1.	FY 2004 Target	FY 2004 Actual/Estimate
i. Percentage of Volunteer pre-service training programs including safety training	90%	100%*
ii. Percentage of Volunteers demonstrating 10 safety and security competencies at end of pre-service training	75%	80%
iii. Posts undergoing safety and security assessments	75%	92%
iv. Posts receiving emergency action plan training	85%	85%
v. Percentage of posts testing emergency action plans at least once a year	95%	100%
vi. Percentage of posts complying with all sections of MS 270, beginning July 2003	95%	95%
vii. 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%	N/A**
viii. 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%	N/A**

Resources Needed:		
Dollars in thousands	9,668	9,598
Full-time equivalents	12	11

\* Estimate based on FY 2003 Training Status Reports (TSR) results; FY 2004 TSR results will be available in the first quarter of 2005.

\*\* See note for Performance Indicators 1.3.1., p.221.

## Results and Analysis

The Office of Safety and Security is responsible for several training and review programs. Each region also continually reiterates the agency's emphasis on safety and security. FY 2004 reports indicate that this vigilance has been both meaningful and successful.

### **Strategic Goal 3:**

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' (RPCVs) visits to schools and community organizations by 28 percent by September 2008.

#### **Outcome Goal:**

- 1.1 Increase RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 28 percent, from FY 2003 level 7,000 to 9,000 by September 2008.

#### **Performance Goal 3.1.1.**

Increase RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 17 percent, from the FY 2003 level of 7,000 to 8,200 by September 2006.

**FY 2004 Goal**  
7,400

**FY 2004 Actual**  
7,031

### **Results and Analysis**

RPCV visits to schools and organizations in FY 2004 were at the highest level in the program's history. Though the agency fell slightly short of its projected goal, it has continued to witness a modest but steady growth in participation in Peace Corps Week (the anniversary devoted to RPCV outreach to schools, community centers, libraries, etc.). Peace Corps Week participation is driven by RPCV participation.

One factor that impacts the performance in this measure is the number of RPCVs that give talks to schools and organizations, but do not report these interactions to the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps is taking steps to better capture this information and to gain a clearer picture of the impact RPCVs are having on improving Americans' understanding of other peoples.

Improvements in gathering and maintaining contact information will allow the Peace Corps to organize activities for, and collect information from, Peace Corps Volunteers. Technology should make it easier to facilitate this, so improvements in meeting this goal are expected.

#### **Performance Indicators 3.1.1.**

	<b>FY 2004 Target</b>	<b>FY 2004 Actual*</b>
i. RPCVs participating in Peace Corps Week activities	8,000	7,031
ii. RPCVs participating in career events	800	915
iii. RPCVs e-mailed the RPCV newsletter	7,000	7,702
iv. Percentage of active Volunteers (not trainees) during the year participating in the Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) one-to-one correspondence match program	53%	47%
v. Average visitors per month to the CWWS section of the Peace Corps website	350,000	474,574

#### **Resources Needed:**

Dollars (in thousands)	1,451	1,671
Full-time equivalents	18	16

\* Data as of early September 2004.

## **Results and Analysis**

Though the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations in FY 2004 is the highest level ever recorded, much information is not being captured. Improvements in communication and database techniques will continue to make that task easier. In addition, more RPCVs than anticipated participated in a variety of career events, indicating a commitment to the agency's third goal. Although the Peace Corps exceeded its goal regarding the RPCV newsletter by about 10 percent, attaining next year's goal will require a concerted effort to build the database of e-mail addresses.

Forty-seven percent of active Volunteers participate in the CWWS match program. The absolute number of Volunteers participating in this program has not fallen. Transferring the application form for the correspondence match program to the online Volunteer toolkit should increase the number of Volunteers. The percentage in FY 2004 may have fallen due to the number of program closings, suspensions, and interruptions or to an anomaly with the new system reporting overall number of Volunteers.

The average number of visitors to the website as measured by page-view figures between October 2003 and August 2004 was 474,574, far exceeding the goal. This is attributed to user-friendly cosmetic and organizational changes to the website and the introduction of enhanced curriculum materials and programs. Plans are in place to continue adding new content and marketing it widely in FY 2005, which should increase visitors to the site.

## **Strategic Goal 4:**

Reduce the Peace Corps overall response time for those applying to the Peace Corps by 5 percent, from FY 2003 level of 222 days to 212 days by September 2008.

### **Outcome Goal:**

1.1 Reduce overall Peace Corps applicant response time by 5 percent by September 2008 through evaluation and integration of new technology and recruitment and placement of staff structures.

#### **Performance Goal 4.1.1.**

Reduce overall response time to applicants by 3 percent, from FY 2003 level of 222 days to 216 days by September 2006.

FY 2004 Goal	FY 2004 Estimated
220	N/A <sup>5</sup>

## **Results and Analysis**

The FY 2004 overall response time is an estimate based on the best available data. Changes in the online application and status check systems occurred in September 2004, with a launch of the online application system hosted by a new vendor. The new system will improve the timeliness and accuracy of data, and it will be a key tool in tracking this performance goal. It will be used to integrate the measurement of the various stages that compose overall response time.

In 2002, a task force was convened to look at ways to decrease the number of days that prospective Volunteer candidates spent in the application process. This task force documented the number of days in each of the following stages of the application process from application through invitation (to a Volunteer assignment).

<sup>5</sup> The Peace Corps does not currently have a system to track this performance goal other than ad hoc, partially anecdotal data. The agency plans to develop a tracking system in FY 2005.

In 2004, the agency initiated the process standardization and integration project (PSIP) and conducted a business practices survey. The results of this survey led to the creation of a test site in Rosslyn, Virginia to determine which recruitment practices in the application-to-nomination process

should be standardized and streamlined. The agency expects results from this test in FY 2005. Additionally, the PSIP is expected to help the agency develop a better system to ensure accurate measurement of the average time applicants are spending in the process.

<b>Performance Indicators 4.1.1.</b>	<b>FY 2004 Target</b>	<b>FY 2004 Actual*</b>
i. Percentage of applicants who complete their Volunteer applications over the Internet	75%	75%
ii. Percentage of applicants who complete their health status review for medical screening over the Internet	73%	86%
iii. Average months between application and departure for overseas assignment	9.5	N/A**
<b>Resources Needed:</b>		
Dollars (in thousands)	1,822	1,493
Full-time equivalents	4	4

\* See note for Performance Indicators 1.3.1., p. 221.

\*\* Data as of early September 2004.

## Results and Analysis

The September 2004 launch of the new online application system should further improve the overall application process and timeliness. Already, the health status review (HSR) is ahead of schedule, due to the solid technology and process behind it. HSRs completed online have dramatically surpassed the 2004 goal. Persons of all ages have adapted to us-

ing the Web for interactive purposes, and the HSR is well-formatted and easy to fill out.

Similar gains are expected in other aspects of the application process. As the data are collected in the following fiscal years, the targets will be reviewed and modified to coincide with the new performance.

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