

Peace Corps
Congressional Budget Justification
Fiscal Year 2005



Answering the Call
to Service
Around the Globe

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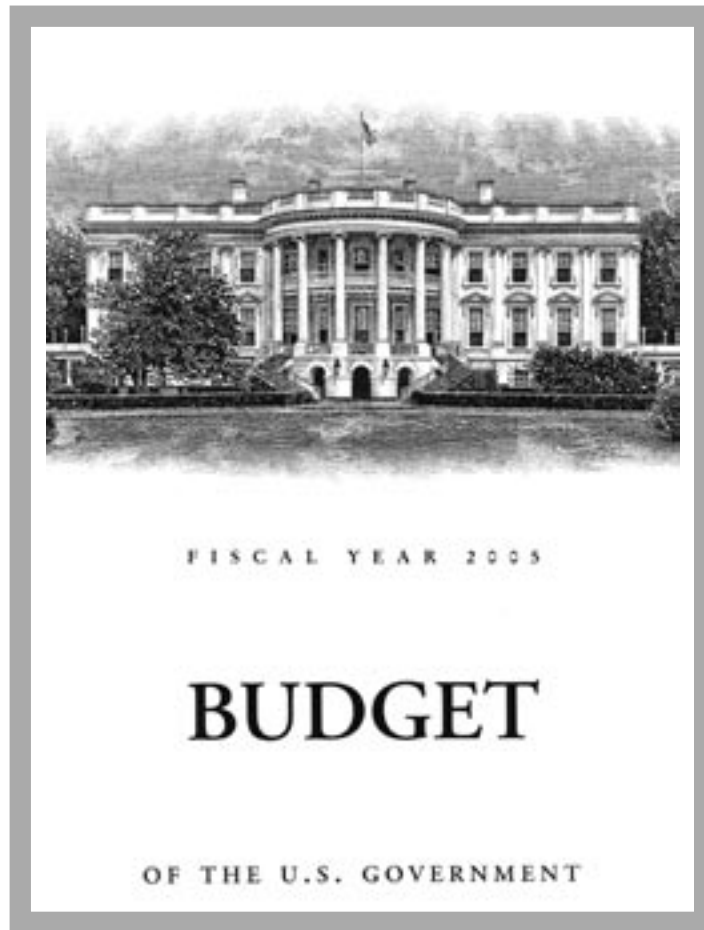
Front cover:

The women and men who serve as Peace Corps Volunteers reflect the rich diversity of America and represent some of the finest characteristics of the American people.

From left to right: Volunteers in Ghana, Guyana, Benin, and Belize.

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Peace Corps FY 2005 Budget Request

The Peace Corps budget request for FY 2005 is \$401,000,000, an increase of \$91,000,000 over the FY 2004 Appropriation of \$310,000,000¹. The FY 2005 request will enable the Peace Corps to increase the number of Americans serving abroad to 8,704 by September 30, 2005; provide for the safety and security of the Volunteers and staff; and broaden and strengthen the activities and strategies initiated in 2004 to recruit the trainees needed over the next several years in order to continue to pursue the growth goals of the President.

¹ *The FY 2004 Appropriations of \$310,000,000 was reduced by a rescission of \$1,829,000*

THE DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS
WASHINGTON, DC

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Americans currently serving in 71 countries all around the world as Peace Corps Volunteers, I am privileged to submit the Peace Corps' fiscal year 2005 budget request of \$401 million. This funding level reflects President Bush's strong commitment to the Peace Corps, the relevance of the agency's mission abroad, and its ongoing goals for growth.

While over 170,000 Volunteers have served in 137 countries since the inception of the Peace Corps in 1961, thousands more Americans are eager to serve their nation 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 the ranks of Volunteers who carry out the Peace Corps' three goals of 1) providing training in host country communities, 2) educating people of host countries about America, and 3) informing Americans about the country and culture in which they have served.

The sentiments of many host government officials toward American Peace Corps Volunteers are summed up by the grateful comments of President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali during an official visit to Peace Corps Headquarters. President Touré declared with admiration that Peace Corps Volunteers "live in the same villages as the Malian people, sleep on the same mats, eat the same food, and get bitten by the same mosquitoes." 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 a way that will have long-term, life-changing consequences.

As we assess what the face of America looks like in large cities and tiny villages around the world, we can be proud of the Peace Corps Volunteers who are committed to grass-roots efforts to empower people in emerging countries to take charge of their futures. 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 who are 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 am continually grateful for the bipartisan support that the Peace Corps receives from Congress and I look forward to working with you throughout the appropriations process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Vasquez", written in a cursive style.

Gaddi H. Vasquez
Director

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The Peace Corps Strategic Plan: Answering the Call to Service Around the Globe

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 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 two 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 2003, inquiries were up by 9 percent, new applications

rose 10 percent, and the Peace Corps website had a 32 percent increase, for a total of 5.7 million visitor sessions. Since January 2002, over 30 countries have requested Peace Corps programs, 24 country assessments have been conducted, and the Peace Corps has entered or reentered 14 countries.

In September 2003, the Peace Corps achieved a 28-year high of 7,533 Volunteers serving in 71 countries. Peace Corps is pleased to be on a pathway for growth; however, the amounts provided in the appropriations process for the past two years have fallen significantly short of that needed to meet the goal of doubling the number of Volunteers over five years. Thus, we are pursuing the strongest growth possible within the constraints of our resources, 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 43 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. This serves as a crucial foundation for peace and friendship for generations to come.

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.

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.

This year's agency planning process began in the spring with the issuance of Director Vasquez's guidance. In addition to reaffirming the agency's mission and goals, the offices specifically addressed the impact of, and planned for the heightened focus on, safety and security of Volunteers and staff. The

offices then aligned their individual plans to the agency's overall direction and each IPBS submission was presented to the director and reviewed. Upon concluding these review activities, each overseas post, sub-office, and major office assembled its respective performance plan for the coming strategic plan period FY 2003 through FY 2008 with 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, and 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 increasing the number of Volunteers in the field 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 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 is focusing on growth while providing a positive experience for all Volunteers in a safe and secure environment. This document presents the four strategic goals the Peace Corps seeks to achieve from FY 2003 through FY 2008. 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 increasing the number of 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 health care 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.

Strategic Goal 1

Assist interested countries with their identified needs by increasing the number of 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.

Strategy

The Peace Corps is committed to growing the number of Volunteers in the field. This growth, which is strategically and incrementally implemented, is 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 for growth in 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. 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 increase 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 strategic venues. To date, this campaign has earned over 2 million dollars in free media and has garnered over 251 million 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 training framework 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 responsibility requirements, which increase their chances for success. The Peace Corps also completed an applicant dropout study and a newly expanded early termina-

tion 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, both the programming and training and 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 next Peace Corps Volunteer Survey and the newly designed completion-of-service study. Outcome goals related to the satisfaction levels of Volunteers in this area will be established next year.

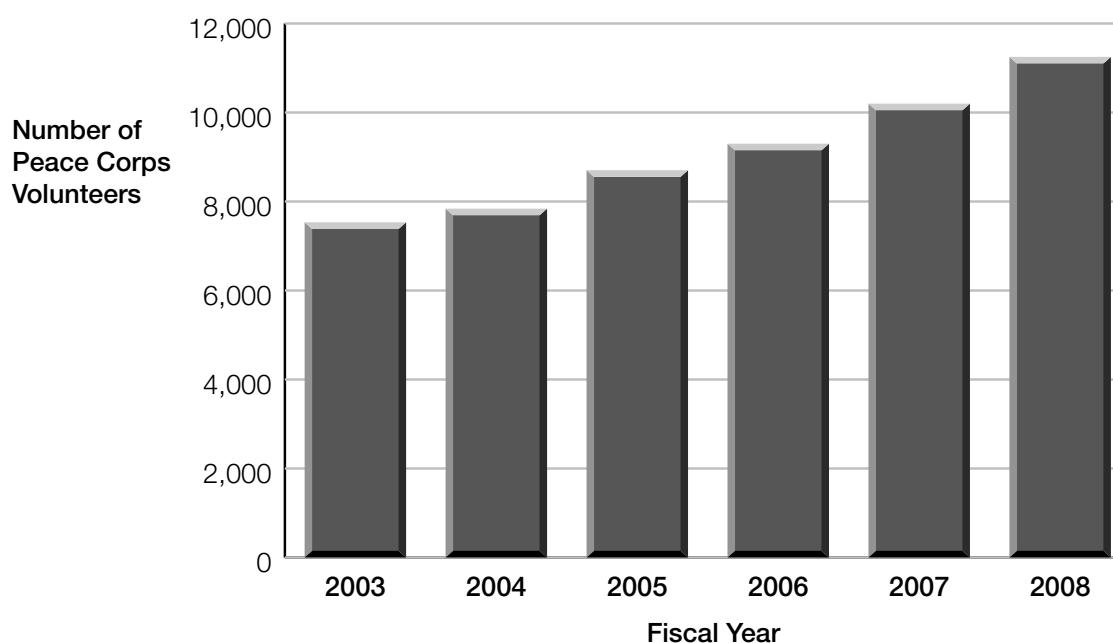
Outcome Goal 1.1

Increase the number of Volunteers in the field from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 11,250 (49%) by FY 2008, assuming full funding for FY 2005 and future requests.

Performance Goal

- 1.1.1 Incrementally increase in subsequent performance years Volunteers/trainees on board from the FY 2003 level of 7,533 to 11,250 (49%) by FY 2008.
 - 1.1.1.1 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 7,840 (4%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2004.
 - 1.1.1.2 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 8,704 (16%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2005.
 - 1.1.1.3 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 9,300 (23%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2006.
 - 1.1.1.4 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 10,200 (35%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2007.
 - 1.1.1.5 Increase the number of Peace Corps Volunteers to 11,250 (49%) over FY 2003 level by FY 2008.

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



Outcome Goal 1.2

Increase the combined number of applications to the Peace Corps from under-represented 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 under-represented groups by FY 2004.

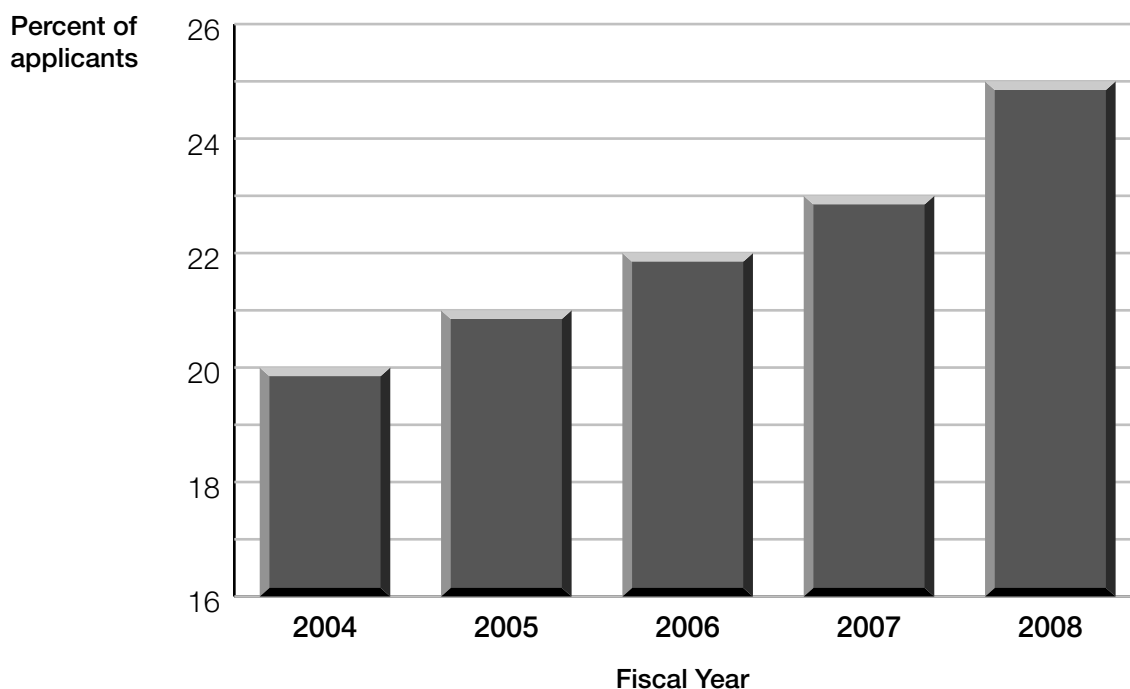
1.2.1.2 21% of applicants will be from under-represented groups by FY 2005.

1.2.1.3 22% of applicants will be from under-represented groups by FY 2006.

1.2.1.4 23% of applicants will be from under-represented groups by FY 2007.

1.2.1.5 25% of applicants will be from under-represented groups by FY 2008.

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



Outcome Goal 1.3

Reduce overall Volunteers' 12-month 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 Volunteers' 12-month 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.

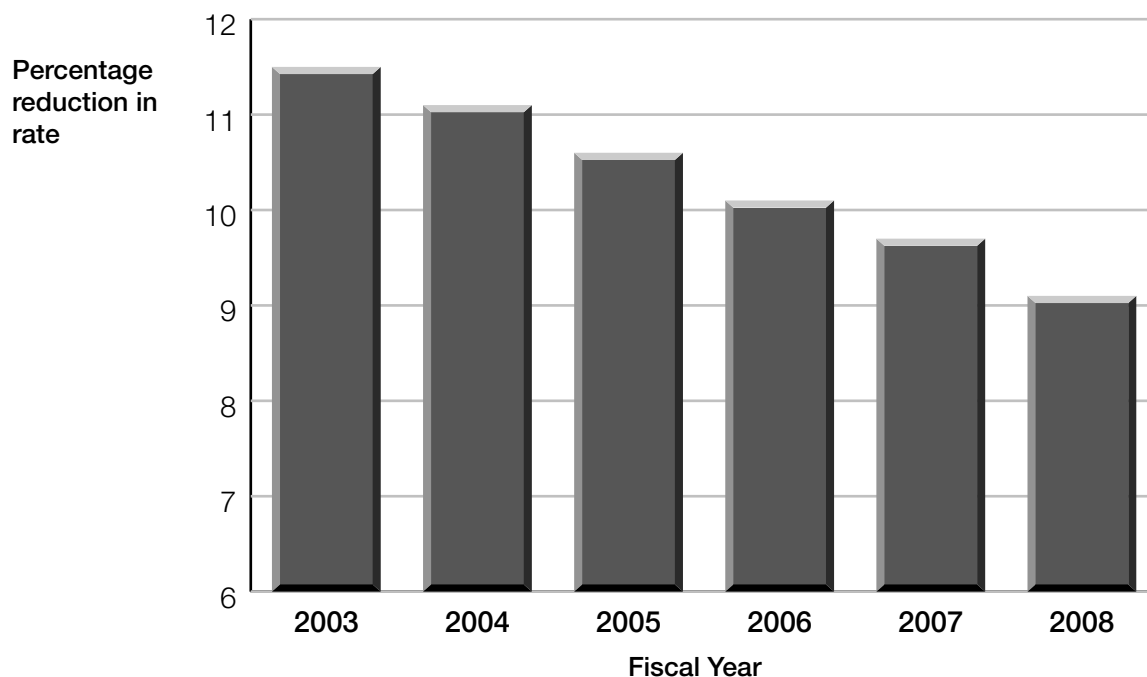
1.3.1.2 Reduce the overall 12-month ET rate to 10.6% by FY 2005.

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.

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



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% in FY 2008; and increasing Volunteers' perceptions of their personal safety where they live by 3%, from 86% in FY 2002 to 89% in FY 2008.

Strategy

Because the Peace Corps Volunteer Survey in 2002 captured this 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 preventative 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 that is reviewed every two years.

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 country.

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 that is at site, well known, accepted, and integrated into the community. This comes by learning the local language, the culture, working in a well designed project, and staying close to host families. The safe Volunteer takes responsibility for his or her own behavior and knows 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.

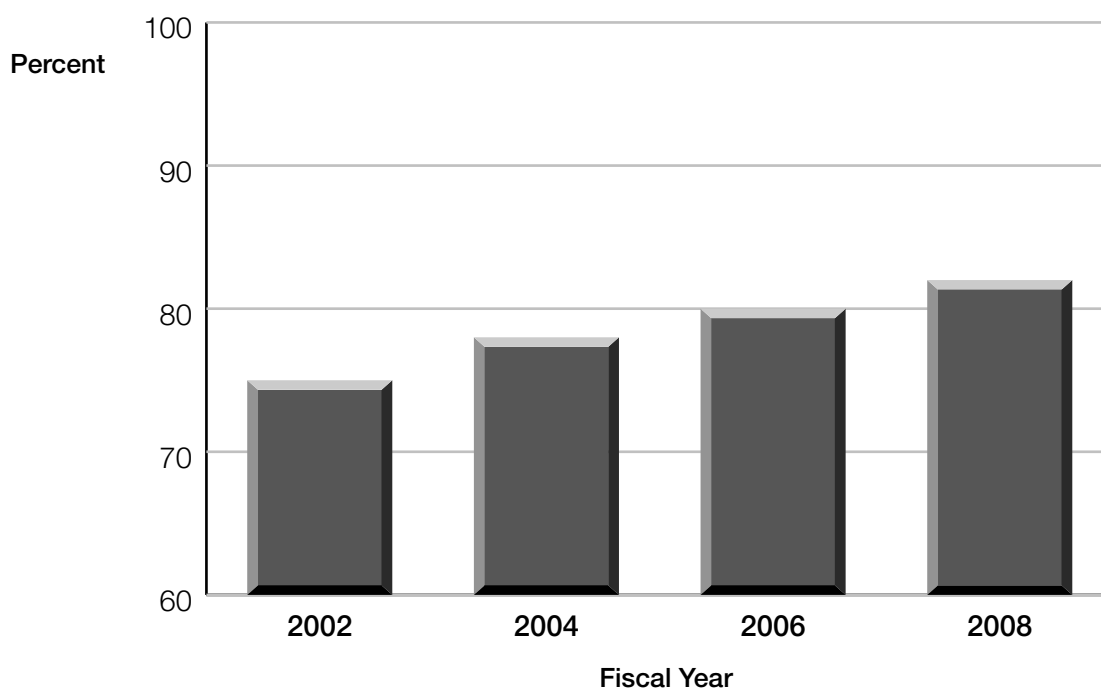
Outcome Goal 2.1

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
-

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



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.

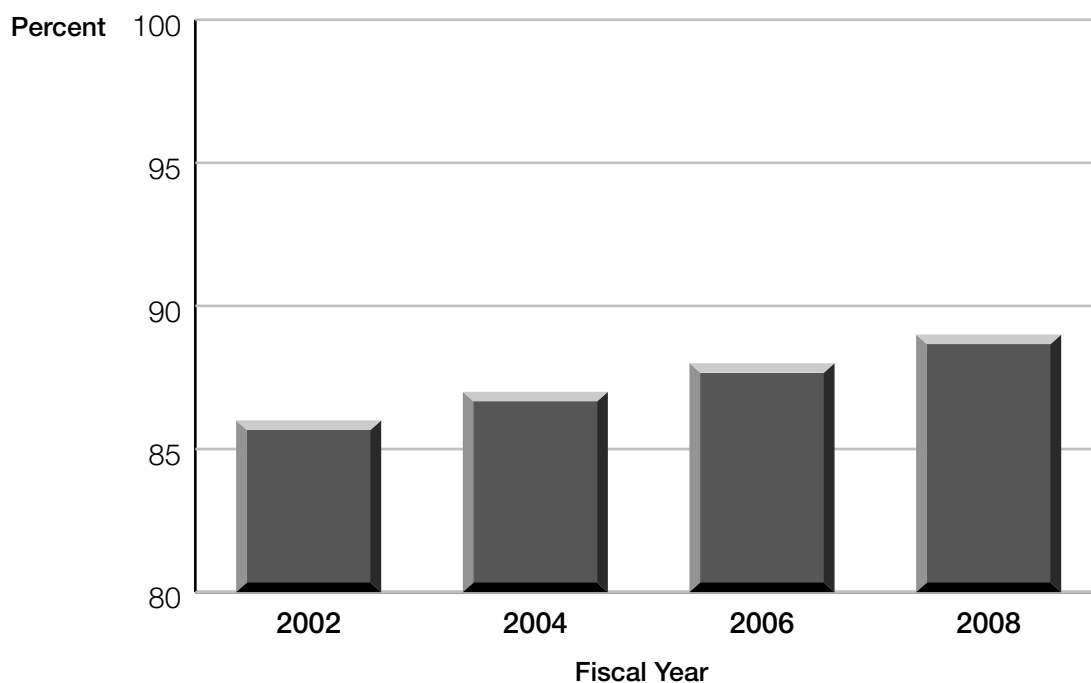
2.2.1.1 86% of the Volunteers feel safe most of the time where they live by FY 2002.

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.

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



Strategic Goal 3

Improve Americans' understanding of other peoples by increasing returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and community organizations by 28%, from 7,000 in FY 2003 to 9,000 by FY 2008.

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

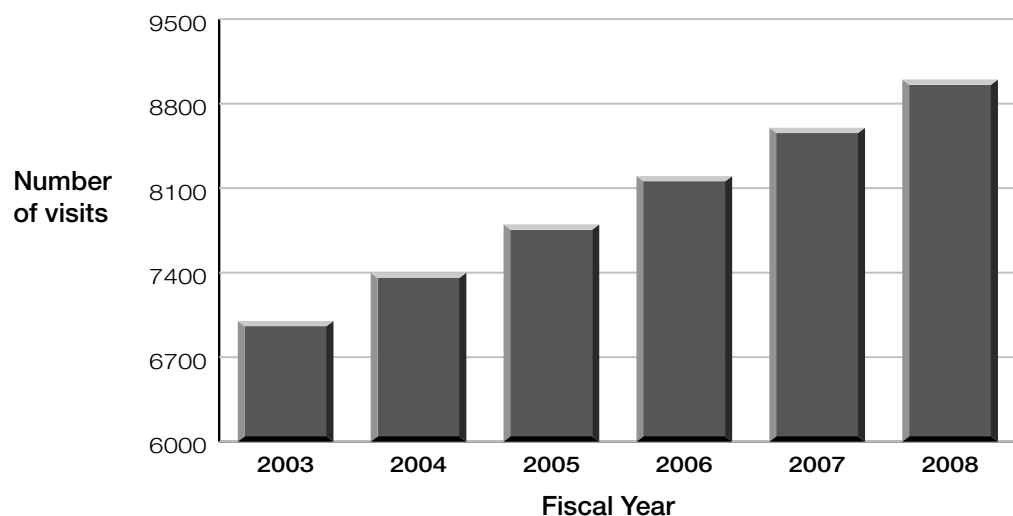
Outcome Goal 3.1

Increase the number of RPCV visits to schools and organizations by 28% 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 28% 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.
-

Figure: Projected increase in the number of returned Peace Corps Volunteers' visits to schools and organizations, FY 2004–2008



Strategic Goal 4

Reduce the Peace Corps' overall response time for those applying to the Peace Corps by 5% from 222 days in FY 2003 to 212 days by FY 2008.

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 an average of 70 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.

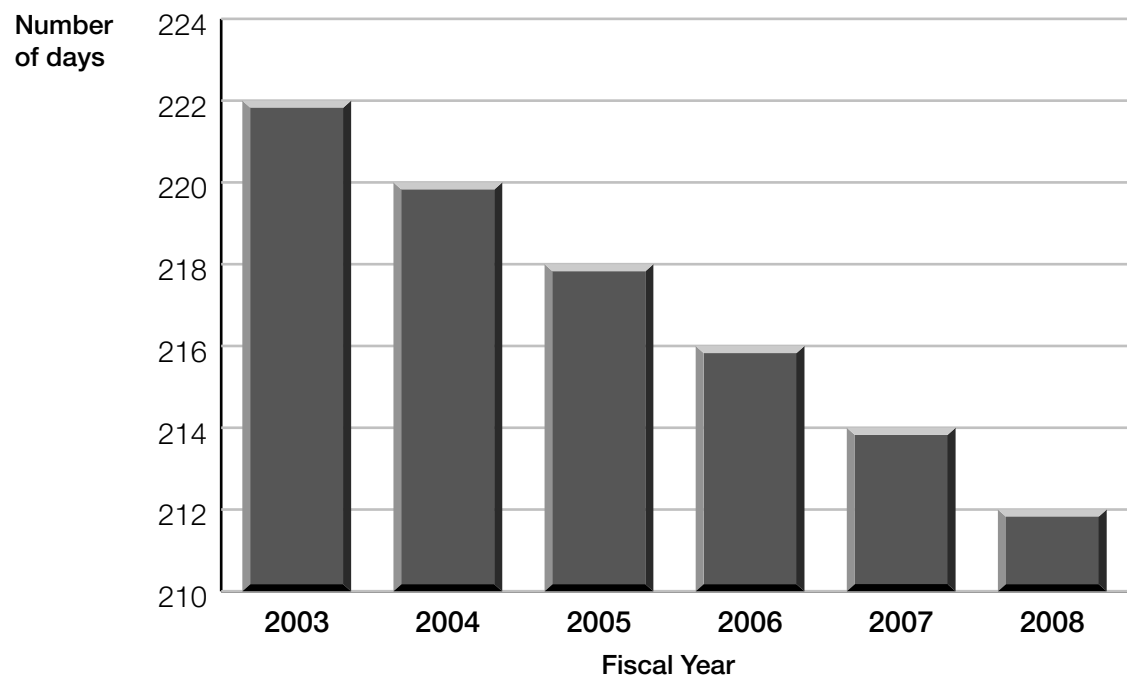
Outcome Goal 4.1

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 222 days to 212 days by FY 2008.
 - 4.1.1.1 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 1% (to 220 days) by FY 2004.
 - 4.1.1.2 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 2% (to 218 days) by FY 2005.
 - 4.1.1.3 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 3% (to 216 days) by FY 2006.
 - 4.1.1.4 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 4% (to 214 days) by FY 2007.
 - 4.1.1.5 Reduce overall response time to applicants by 5% (to 212 days) by FY 2008.

Figure: Projected reduction in the Peace Corps' response time to applicants, FY 2004–2008



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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), \$401,000,000, including the purchase of not to exceed five passenger motor vehicles for administrative purposes for use outside of the United States: Provided, that none of the funds appropriated under this heading shall be used to pay for abortions: Provided further, that funds appropriated under this heading shall remain available until September 30, 2006.

Peace Corps FY 2005 Budget Request by Program Operations

(in thousands of dollars)

Direct Volunteer Operations

	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Estimate	FY 2005 Request
Overseas Operational Management¹			
Africa	63,271	62,223	75,727
Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA)	42,609	42,566	52,934
Inter-America and Pacific (IAP)	50,741	50,629	61,739
Crisis Corps	832	1,460	1,618
United Nations Volunteers	223	205	174
Subtotal, Overseas Operational Management	157,675	157,083	192,192
Overseas Operational Support			
Volunteer Support Operations	6,944	7,193	8,722
Safety and Security Division*	1,869	2,385	2,766
Federal Employees' Compensation Act	10,888	10,923	10,482
Medical Services Centrally Shared Resources	11,929	10,644	15,965
The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research	6,075	5,904	7,722
Volunteer Recruitment and Selection	14,762	15,615	20,159
Private Sector Initiatives	589	634	719
Centrally Processed Overseas Equipment and Supplies	5,154	6,009	6,495
International Financial Operations	3,648	3,048	2,947
Volunteer Readjustment Allowance ²	15,232	21,217	29,212
Reimbursements to Department of State	5,039	5,764	6,554
Subtotal, Overseas Operational Support	82,129	89,337	111,742
SUBTOTAL, DIRECT VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS	239,804	246,420	303,933

Volunteer Operations Support Services

Third Goal Programs			
World Wise Schools	492	625	659
Fellows U.S.A. Program	293	457	482
Returned Volunteer Services	868	839	876
Subtotal, Third Goal Programs	1,653	1,921	2,017
Agency Administration			
Director's Office, General Counsel, Congressional, and Press	3,833	4,640	5,023
Communications	2,478	2,175	14,349
Office of Planning, Budget and Finance	10,822	12,113	14,500
OPBF Centrally Managed Resources	1,429	1,738	1,780
Office of the Chief Information Officer	9,256	9,723	14,501
Information Technology Centrally Managed Resources	13,782	11,628	19,556
Office of Management	4,556	6,734	7,966
Office of Management Centrally Managed Resources	14,728	13,206	14,996
Inspector General	2,144	2,551	2,714
Subtotal, Agency Administration	63,027	64,507	95,383
SUBTOTAL, VOLUNTEER OPERATIONS SUPPORT SVCS	64,679	66,428	97,400

**This budget amount represents a portion of the funding for the Office of Safety and Security. The total budget for the Office of Safety and Security also includes domestic security. Overall safety and security spending is much larger and spread across many operational areas, including the regions of Africa, EMA, and IAP.*

	FY 2003 Actual	FY 2004 Estimate	FY 2005 Request
TOTAL AGENCY PROGRAM LEVEL	304,483	312,848	401,334
EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND	1,099	2,111	
GRAND TOTAL AGENCY	305,582	314,959	401,334
APPROPRIATED RESOURCES	297,000	310,000	401,000
RECISSION	-1,930	-1,829	
EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND REALLOCATION	-1,200		
TOTAL ENACTED	293,870	308,171	401,000
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	12,782	4,344	0
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE FROM EMERGENCY FUND	4,410	2,111	0
TOTAL APPROPRIATED RESOURCES	311,062	314,626	401,000
MISCELLANEOUS RESOURCES	1,775	1,133	1,133
RESERVE FOR UNRECORDED OBLIGATIONS	-800	-800	-800
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE EMERGENCY FUND	-2,111	0	0
UNOBLIGATED BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	-4,344	0	0
TOTAL AVAILABLE BUDGETARY RESOURCES	305,582	314,959	401,334

(Details may not add due to rounding.)

Notes:

- ¹ Distribution of amounts by region for FY 2004 and FY 2005 differ from those published in the FY 2005 Budget of the U.S. Government, Appendix, due to an error in electronic transmission of data to OMB via MAX. However, there are no differences in the agency totals.
- ² Amount for FY 2005 assumes the current allowance of \$225 is increased to \$300 effective October 1, 2004.

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.

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 2005

(thousands of dollars)

Fiscal Year	Authorized	Budget Request ^{a/}	Appropriated ^{a/}	Trainee Input	Volunteers and Trainees On Board ^{b/}
1962	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$30,000	3,699	N/A
1963	63,750	63,750	59,000 ^{c/}	4,969	N/A
1964	102,000	108,000	95,964 ^{c/}	7,720	N/A
1965	115,000	115,000	104,100 ^{c/}	7,876	N/A
1966	115,000	125,200	114,000	9,216	N/A
1967	110,000	110,500	110,000	7,565	N/A
1968	115,700	124,400	107,500	7,391	N/A
1969	112,800	112,800	102,000	6,243	N/A
1970	98,450	109,800	98,450	4,637	N/A
1971	94,500	98,800	90,000	4,686	N/A
1972	77,200	71,200	72,500	3,997	6,632
1973	88,027	88,027	81,000	4,821	6,194
1974	77,000	77,000	77,000	4,886	6,489
1975	82,256	82,256	77,687	3,296	6,652
1976	88,468	80,826	81,266	3,291	5,825
Transition Qtr	27,887	25,729	24,190	—	—
1977	81,000	67,155	80,000	4,180 ^{d/}	5,590
1978	87,544	74,800	86,234	3,715	6,017
1979	112,424	95,135	99,179	3,327	5,723
1980	105,000	105,404	99,924	3,108	5,097
1981	118,531	118,800	105,531	2,729	4,863
1982	105,000	121,900	105,000	2,862	4,559
1983	105,000	97,500	109,000	2,988	4,668
1984	115,000	108,500	115,000	2,781	4,779
1984/5 Supp	2,000	2,000	2,000	—	—
1985	128,600	115,000	128,600	3,430	4,828
1986	130,000	124,400	124,410 ^{e/}	2,597	5,162
1987	137,200	126,200	130,760	2,774	4,771
1987/8 Supp	7,200	—	7,200	—	—
1988	146,200	130,682	146,200	3,360	4,611
1989	153,500	150,000	153,500	3,218	5,214
1990	165,649	163,614	165,649 ^{f/}	3,092	5,241
1991	186,000	181,061	186,000	3,076	4,691
1992	—	200,000	197,044	3,309	4,927
1993	218,146	218,146	218,146	3,590	5,414
1994	219,745 ^{g/}	219,745	219,745 ^{h/}	3,541	5,644
1995	234,000	226,000	219,745 ^{i/ j/}	3,954	5,884
1996	—	234,000	205,000 ^{k/ m/}	3,280	6,086
1997	—	220,000 ^{v/}	208,000 ^{n/}	3,607	5,858
1998	—	222,000	222,000 ^{o/}	3,551	5,757
1999	—	270,335	240,000 ^{p/}	3,835	5,729
2000	270,000 ^{q/}	270,000	245,000 ^{r/}	3,919	7,164
2001	298,000	275,000	267,007 ^{s/ t/}	3,191	6,643
2002	327,000	275,000	278,700 ^{u/ v/}	4,047 ^{w/}	6,636
2003	365,000	317,000	297,000 ^{x/}	4,411	7,533
2004	—	359,000	310,000 ^{y/}	3,801 ^{est.}	7,840 ^{est.}
2005	—	401,000	—	5,150 ^{est.}	8,704 ^{est.}

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.



Safety and Security: The Overarching Priority

“Recognizing that Peace Corps Volunteers are working on the cutting edge in an ever-changing world, it is essential that we continue to make their safety and security our number-one priority. The Peace Corps has strong research, planning, training, and compliance systems in place so that Volunteers can do what they signed up to do—effectively carry out their mission of training men and women and building cross-cultural relationships.”

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 inevitably an inherent part of Volunteer service. Peace Corps staff and Volunteers work together to create a framework that safeguards their well-being to the greatest extent possible, enabling them to carry out the Peace Corps’ mission. The Peace Corps takes responsibility for ensuring that safety and security issues are fully integrated in all aspects of Volunteer recruitment, training, and service and that the Peace Corps’ safety and security policies and training curricula are adjusted as situations change. Volunteers do their important part by taking personal responsibility for their behavior at all times and assimilating successfully into their host communities. Volunteers can also reduce risks by following recommendations for locally appropriate behavior, exercising sound judgment, and abiding by the Peace Corps’ policies and procedures.

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

In addition, the country director communicates regularly with the embassy’s regional security officer, who 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 of the 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. The mission of this office is to foster improved communication, coordination, oversight, and accountability for all the Peace Corps' safety and security efforts. The Office of Safety and Security is involved in the training and monitoring of the safety and security coordinators at each post, the collection and analysis of data related to Volunteer safety, emergency preparedness planning and training for domestic and overseas operations, and the activities of the regionally based safety and security officers. There are currently nine of these officers, and there are plans in place to bring an additional three officers in the field, for a total number of 12 in FY 2005.

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 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 new two-day pre-departure orientation, and as part of in-country training of new 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 all three of the Peace Corps' regions. The twofold objective of the publication is to (a) identify and analyze trends in safety conditions among in-service Volunteers and (b) provide useful feedback on the noted trends in an effort 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, working on well-designed projects, and close to their host families. The Peace Corps, therefore, takes an integrated approach to Volunteer training. Through language, cross-cultural, and health and safety instruction, Volunteers are made aware of their new environment, shown how to effectively cope with the many challenges they will face, and given the tools to adopt a safe and appropriate lifestyle. Volunteers also receive instruction about the Peace Corps' policies and procedures and their responsibility to abide by these. Throughout pre- and in-service training, which is provided regularly for the entire duration of their tour of service, Volunteers develop skills and receive information that help them understand their surroundings, cope with unwanted attention, and develop personal safety strategies. This integrated safety training begins long before Volunteers report to the communities where they will live and work.

Assessing the Safety of Peace Corps Countries

A safety-and-security assessment is conducted for every country that the Peace Corps considers entering. A team from the Peace Corps made up of representatives from several offices reviews work and housing sites in advance 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, among them:

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

- United Nations agencies in the country
- Other nations' volunteer organizations (e.g., British, French, Japanese)
- Humanitarian relief agencies

The 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 try to resolve the situation or move the Volunteer to another location.

Emergency Communications and Planning

Typically, Volunteers live and work in communities at some distance from the Peace Corps office in a country's capital. 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 office to prepare for, respond to, and recover from such crises. The Peace Corps works very 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 Volunteers and staff members out of harm's way.

In addition, in FY 2003 and FY 2004, the agency formalized and strengthened its response to emergency situations, particularly those that require evacuation of Volunteers. To better manage emergencies, the Peace Corps has created a fully equipped "situation room" at headquarters that is dedicated to the handling of emergencies as they arise. The room includes 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 Peace Corps to provide uninterrupted support of post operations in the event of an emergency at Peace Corps headquarters.

“Americans are volunteering in every region of the country, and in nearly every part of the world....And the Peace Corps expanded to over 7,500 volunteers in 2003—the highest level of participation in almost three decades.”

**Radio Address of President Bush to the Nation
Saturday, December 20, 2003**



*Photo:
Volunteer in Turkmenistan sharing
a meal with her host family*

The Volunteer



Program Priorities: How Peace Corps Volunteers Serve Around the Globe

The work of the Volunteer is central to the Peace Corps' operation and purpose. It is the individual Volunteer who best reflects the meaningful work of the agency. Volunteers, who become familiar with a community's cultural traditions, learn the local language, and respond to the community's needs, are involved in a wide variety of host country programs. The following six sectors describe the Peace Corps' primary program priorities. In response to the growing number of youth in the world, the Peace Corps has designated a new "Youth" sector to specifically address their unique and pressing needs. In addition, Volunteers continue to report meaningful work in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT); these activities take place throughout the projects in the six program sectors described below.

Agriculture

Food production is the primary economic activity for most of the world's people. Many countries, however, are unable to produce adequate supplies of affordable and nutritious food contributing to serious malnutrition, particularly among children. As part of the ongoing struggle to produce sufficient food supplies, many communities need to learn how to employ farming practices that do not contribute to soil erosion and deforestation.

Peace Corps Volunteers strive to improve agricultural production in developing countries by working directly with farmers and their families, training extension agents, farmer leaders, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) partners, and advising agriculture cooperatives and women's groups. Volunteers promote practices that help farmers realize income generation as well as provide basic food for the family. These practices focus on crop diversity that include basic grains and staple crops, improved land use practices, better food storage and post-harvest processing. Volunteers teach that maintaining the proper balance of crops produced and stored contributes to livelihood security in addition to income derived from secondary processing and marketing activities. A growing area of agriculture activity is teaching youth necessary skills for gardening, orchard production, and marketing.

Volunteers assist farmers with small animal husbandry and fisheries projects to increase protein consumption in the local community. They also collaborate with farmers to grow gardens with fruits and vegetables that are high in nutrients to alleviate iron, iodine, and Vitamin A deficiencies among children. They often work with schools to produce healthy food for student meals. In FY 2003, 549 Volunteers provided agricultural assistance in 18 projects.

Business Development

In many countries where Volunteers serve, economic growth is impeded by high unemployment, an unskilled workforce, and lack of private-sector investment. Volunteers are often effective at working with individuals and communities to promote economic opportunities at the grass-roots level. Their activities usually focus on five major areas:

- (a) increasing family income,
- (b) encouraging community economic development,
- (c) educating young people to enter the workforce and participate in the market economy,
- (d) helping businesses find markets for traditional and value-added products, and
- (e) increasing the capabilities of business professionals through training and skills transfer.

Business Volunteers worldwide continue to increase their level of activity related to ICT training that includes multimedia communications as well as the Internet and computers. Volunteers find that computers and Internet technology can increase the impact of their work. Overall, Volunteers focus on ICT capacity building at the local level by concentrating on training host country nationals to use basic software applications, Internet skills, and Web page development. These activities support e-commerce and tourism, and are used as employment training especially for youth.

Volunteers also focus on community economic development in many ways, including business development support such as teaching financial management to NGOs, helping artisan cooperatives in rural Africa market their handmade goods, advising women's groups about access to credit, and training people in Central Asia to take advantage of new free-market practices. Volunteers support microenterprise development in both rural and urban areas by training entrepreneurs in marketing, business planning, and bookkeeping. Business education is a growing sector for Volunteers who teach marketing and management skills at secondary schools and universities and train out-of-school youth to increase their job opportunities. In FY 2003, 1,132 business Volunteers helped strengthen the local economy in more than 37 projects.

Education

Education is critical for economic development and human advancement. Yet 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, and Volunteers in all sectors are "educators" to some extent. Worldwide education projects in the Peace Corps focus primarily on teaching English, math, science, and computer skills; working in special education; promoting early childhood education; working in teacher training counterpart mentoring; advising curricula development; assembling education resource centers; and teaching adult education while encouraging school-to-community links.

More and more frequently, governments worldwide 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 development. Schools with Internet access and community information centers that function like public libraries were unimaginable just a few years ago. Recognizing the significant worldwide need for technology training and the valuable contribution Volunteers are making in this area, the Peace Corps has identified ICT as an ongoing high priority for the future.

Volunteer ICT activities also include radio and television broadcasting. Volunteers in the Africa region utilize community radio broadcasts as a way to disseminate HIV/AIDS and other health awareness messages. In the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region, Volunteers use television and radio broadcasts to promote English language instruction and to facilitate distance learning. Volunteers in the Inter-America and Pacific Region employ radio and television to broadcast health and environment messages.

Volunteers also have been making significant contributions in the area of girls' education. They promote activities that help expand girls' educational opportunities in both formal and nonformal set-

tings. While the gender gap has narrowed in recent years, women and girls continue to have far lower rates of school enrollment and literacy than men and boys, and economic opportunities for women continue to lag well behind those of men. 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 2003, 2,415 Volunteers in the education sector participated in 60 projects worldwide.

Environment

In many developing countries, people are directly dependent on their local environment, and its degradation can have enormous and unintended consequences for their livelihood. In the context of sustainable development, well-planned natural resource projects can work toward growing the economy while protecting the environment. In response, Peace Corps Volunteers are actively engaged in activities that promote environmental education and conservation programs in schools and communities; instruct community members to use fuel-conservation cook stoves; help establish nurseries for orchards, windbreaks, live fencing, woodlots, and reforestation; promote markets for natural resource-based enterprises; and help train staff to monitor and manage community natural resources.

Volunteers work primarily at the community grass-roots level and focus their efforts 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 2003, 1,338 environment Volunteers participated in 42 projects worldwide.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Over 1 billion people around the world cannot obtain safe drinking water and over 2 billion lack access to adequate sanitation facilities. Unsafe drinking water often results in high infant mortality rates due to increased vulnerability to waterborne and gastrointestinal illnesses, especially in communities with minimal health care. In addition to unsafe drinking water and inadequate sanitation, communities face problems such as high infant and maternal mortality, malnutrition, poor health care, and low immunization coverage. Additionally, the consequences of the HIV/AIDS pandemic deeply affect the health and livelihood of communities already struggling with other challenges.

Volunteers serving in the Health and HIV/AIDS sector spend much of their time assisting in maternal and child health clinics, constructing and managing water systems, supporting community sanitation efforts, providing nutrition and hygiene education, teaching about HIV/AIDS prevention, and promoting healthy lifestyles, especially for youth. Volunteers work to increase the participation of community members in activities that promote their health. Activities may center around improved hygiene and sanitation practices or gardening for improved nutrition. For pregnant women or those with children, Volunteers help facilitate prenatal consultations, vaccinations, and baby weighing sessions. In addition to traditional workshops and meetings, Volunteers use radio broadcasts and other methods of communication to promote health topics and HIV/AIDS education and prevention.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic, which has claimed over 20 million lives and left over 40 million people infected to date, is the single greatest development challenge of our time. In response to the federal government's commitment to global action to combat HIV/AIDS, an increasing number of Volunteers are directly engaged in specific activities that address the devastating social, economic, cultural, and health effects of the pandemic. Peace Corps Volunteers and staff, in tandem with local communities, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and private donors, have greatly

intensified their efforts and expanded the scope of existing HIV/AIDS activities, particularly in Africa. The agency is also collaborating with the Department of State's Office of the Global AIDS coordinator to support the U.S. commitment. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in HIV/AIDS prevention and education because they live and work in local communities and are able to present information in culturally sensitive ways.

The Peace Corps is training Volunteers who serve in Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia as advocates and educators on HIV/AIDS prevention. To enhance Volunteers' training, the agency published the *Life Skills Manual* to aid in teaching adults and peer educators how to address issues such as self-esteem, communication, decision-making skills, and HIV prevention. Using these resources, Volunteers have trained youth as peer educators, collaborated with religious leaders to develop appropriate educational strategies, provided support to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS, and developed programs that provide emotional and financial support to families and communities affected by the disease.

In FY 2003, 1,494 Volunteers conducted 43 health and HIV/AIDS projects worldwide. 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 2004.

Youth

In many countries, young men and women between the ages of 10 and 24 constitute up to 40 percent of the population. These youth are often struggling to have their basic living needs met, and include AIDS orphans, street children lured into drugs and prostitution, and disenfranchised, out-of-school youth. Volunteers, serving as mentors to young people and as counterparts in youth service organizations, 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 prepare young women and men for their roles in family life, in the world of work, and as active, participating citizens.

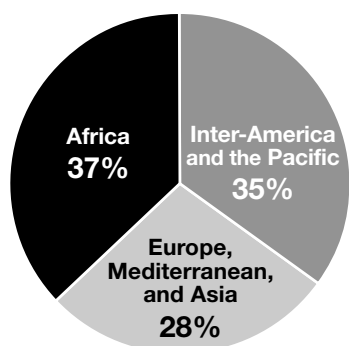
The Peace Corps' youth development projects continue to grow worldwide. From 2001 through 2003, youth oriented activities increased by nearly 45 percent. Volunteers most often focus their work on family life skills, wellness, prevention of substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. Sports, recreation, drama, and the arts are common activities that are often linked with leadership skills building and health prevention messages. Volunteers helped prepare youth for employment by teaching computer proficiency, technical vocational skills, and entrepreneurial expertise. In FY 2003, 243 youth development Volunteers worked in 18 projects worldwide.

“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.”

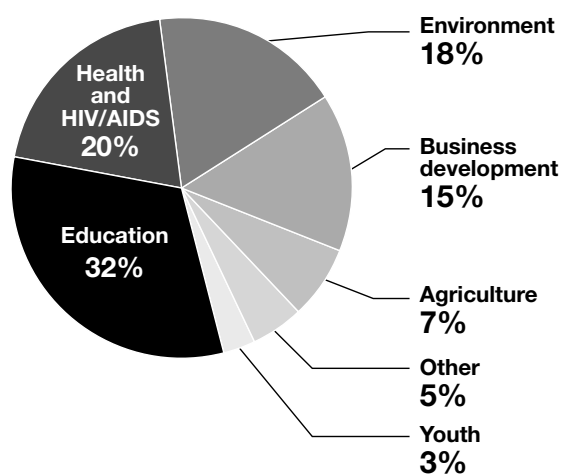
President John F. Kennedy
March 1, 1961

Volunteer Statistics

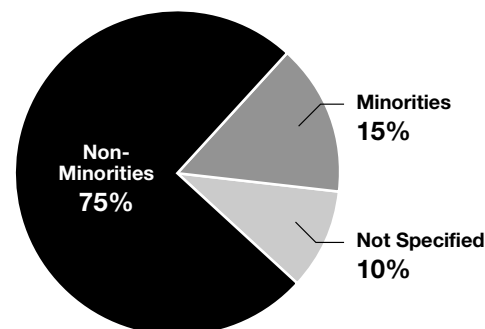
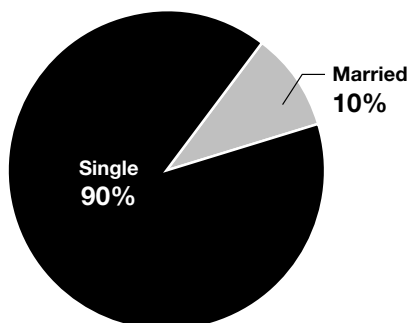
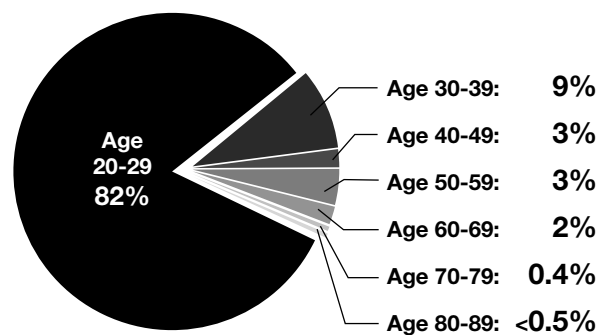
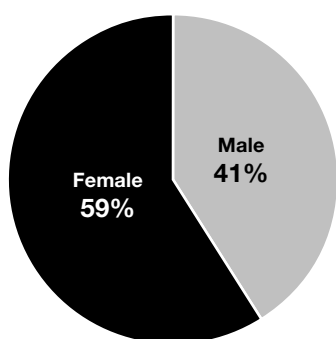
Volunteers by Region



Volunteer Projects



Volunteer Profile*



*Totals may not add to 100 percent because of rounding. Data current as of September 30, 2003.

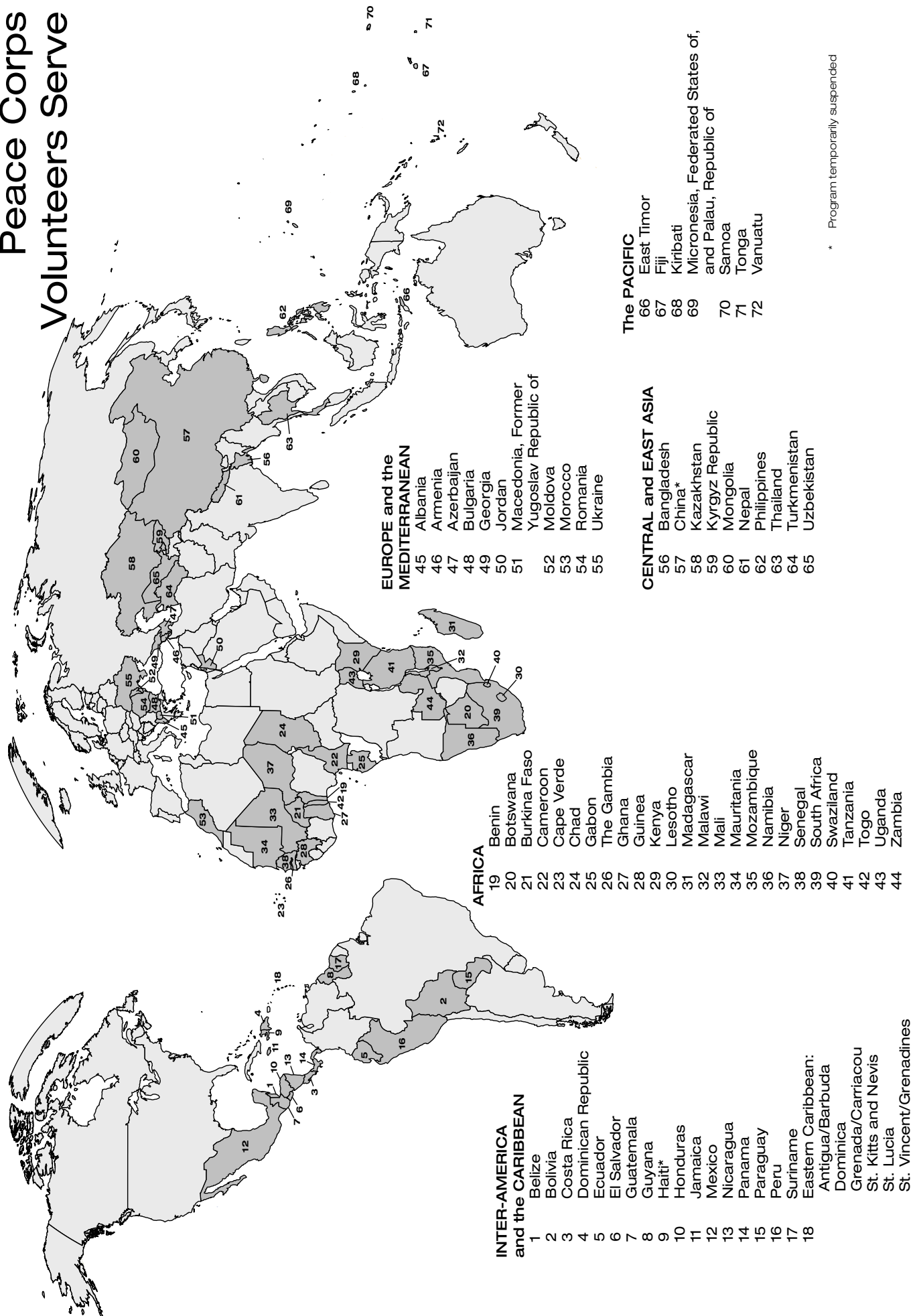
Number of Peace Corps Volunteers Working in HIV/AIDS Activities FY 2003

Africa		Inter-America and the Pacific		Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia	
Country	Volunteers	Country	Volunteers	Country	Volunteers
Benin	43	Belize	14	Armenia	3
Botswana	12	Costa Rica	12	Bulgaria	14
Burkina Faso	72	Dominican Republic	31	China	13
Cameroon	126	Eastern Caribbean	87	Moldova	65
Cape Verde	43	Ecuador	62	Morocco	15
Gabon	56	El Salvador	25	Nepal	16
Ghana	70	Guatemala	12	Philippines	3
Guinea	83	Guyana	52	Romania	4
Kenya	111	Haiti	57	Thailand	21
Lesotho	87	Honduras	66	Ukraine	11
Madagascar	60	Jamaica	18	Uzbekistan	4
Malawi	94	Kiribati	29	TOTAL	169
Mali	30	Micronesia	5		
Mauritania	7	Nicaragua	43		
Mozambique	45	Panama	30		
Namibia	76	Paraguay	24		
Niger	62	Samoa	15		
Senegal	32	Suriname	10		
South Africa	78	Tonga	5		
Swaziland*	36	Vanuatu	6		
Tanzania	55	TOTAL	603		
The Gambia	48				
Togo	87				
Uganda	60				
Zambia	83				
TOTAL	1,556				

Grand Total: 2,328

* Volunteers in Swaziland arrived in September 2003.

Countries Where Peace Corps Volunteers Serve



* Program temporarily suspended

Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

Africa

Benin

Adja
Bariba
Dendi
Ditemari
Fon
French
Goun
Gourmatche
Ife
Kotafon
Mina
Naténi
Yom
Yoruba (Nagot)

Botswana

Setswana

Burkina Faso

French
Fulfulde
Gulmancema
Jula
Lobiri
Mooré

Cameroon

Bulu
Creole (English based)
Fang
French
Fulfulde
Ghom alà
Kako

Cape Verde

CV Criolo
Portuguese

Chad

Chadian Arabic
French

Gabon

Fang
French
Mitsogo
Nzebi
Obamba
Punu
Teke

The Gambia

Creole
Jola
Mandinka
Pulaar
Wolof

Ghana

Buli
Gurun
Dagare
Dagbani
Dangme
Ewe
Fanté
Ga
Gonja
Hausa
Kasem
Kusaal
Mampruli
Moar
Sisaali
Twi

Guinea

French
Guerzé
Maninka
Pulafuta
Soussou

Kenya

Kalenjin
Kenyan Sign Language
Kikuyu
Kiswahili
Luo
Luyha

Lesotho

Sesotho

Madagascar

French
Malagasy

Malawi

Chichewa
Chilomwe
Chisena
Chitonga
Chitumbuka
Chiyao

Mali

Bambara
Dogon
French
Fulfulde
Malinke
Minianka
Senoufou
Songhay

Mauritania

Arabic
French
Hassynia
Pulaar
Soninke
Wolof

Mozambique

Bitonga
Portuguese
Ronga
Shangan
Shona
Tonga

Namibia

Damara/Nama
Ju/'hoansi
Khoekhoegowab
Oshikwanyama
Oshindonga
Otji Herero
Rugciriku
Rukwangali
Silozi

Niger

French
Fulfulde
Hausa
Kanuri
Zarma

Senegal

French
Jaxanke
Mandinka
Pulaar
Seereer
Wolof

South Africa

Isi Ndebele
Isi Zulu
Sepedi
Setswana
Siswati
Northern Sotho
Venda

Swaziland

Siswati
Tsonga
Zulu

Tanzania

Kiswahili

Togo

Akposso
Bassar
Cotocolis
Ewe
French
Gourma
Ife (Ana)
Kabiye
Komkonba
Lamba
Mina
Moba
Naodem (Losso)
Tchamba
Tchokossi

Uganda

Ateso
Luganda
Lugwere
Lumasaaba
Runyakore
Runyoro
Uhopadhola

Zambia

Bemba
Kaonde
Lunda
Nyanja
Tonga
Tumbuta

Languages Spoken by Peace Corps Volunteers Across the World

Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia

Albania	Albanian
Armenia	Armenian
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijani (Azeri) Russian
Bangladesh	Bangla
Bulgaria	Bulgarian
China	Mandarin
Georgia	Georgian
Jordan	Arabic
Kazakhstan	Kazakh Russian
Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyz Russian

Macedonia, FYR	Albanian Macedonian
Moldova	Romanian Russian
Mongolia	Mongolian
Morocco	Arabic French Tamazight Tarifit Tashelheet
Nepal	Nepali
Philippines	Aklanon Asi Bilol Bikol-Albay Bikol-Naga Cebuano Hiligaynon Ilonggo Loocnon Romblomanon Sorsoganon Tagalog Waray-waray

Romania	Hungarian Romanian
Thailand	Thai
Turkmenistan	Russian Turkmen
Ukraine	Russian Ukrainian
Uzbekistan	Russian Uzbek Tajik

Inter-America and the Pacific

Belize	Creole English Spanish
Bolivia	Ayamara Quechua Spanish
Costa Rica	Spanish
Dominican Republic	Spanish
Eastern Caribbean	Caribbean English Dialect French Creole (Kweyol)
East Timor	Tetun
Ecuador	Quechua Spanish
El Salvador	Spanish
Fiji	Fijian
Guatemala	Cakchiquel Kek'chi Spanish

Guyana	Creole
Haiti	French Haitian Creole
Honduras	Miskito Spanish
Jamaica	Creole (Patois) English
Kiribati	I-Kiribati
Mexico	Spanish
Micronesia and Palau	Chuukese Halls Island Kapingamarangi Kosraean Namonuito Nukuoro Palauan Pingilapese Pohnpeian Sapwuafik Satawalese Ulithian Woleain Yapese

Nicaragua	Spanish
Panama	Spanish
Paraguay	Guarani Spanish
Peru	Quechua Spanish
Samoa	Samoan
Suriname	Dutch Ndjuka Saramaccan Sranan Tongo
Tonga	Tongan
Vanuatu	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 10 to 12 weeks 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

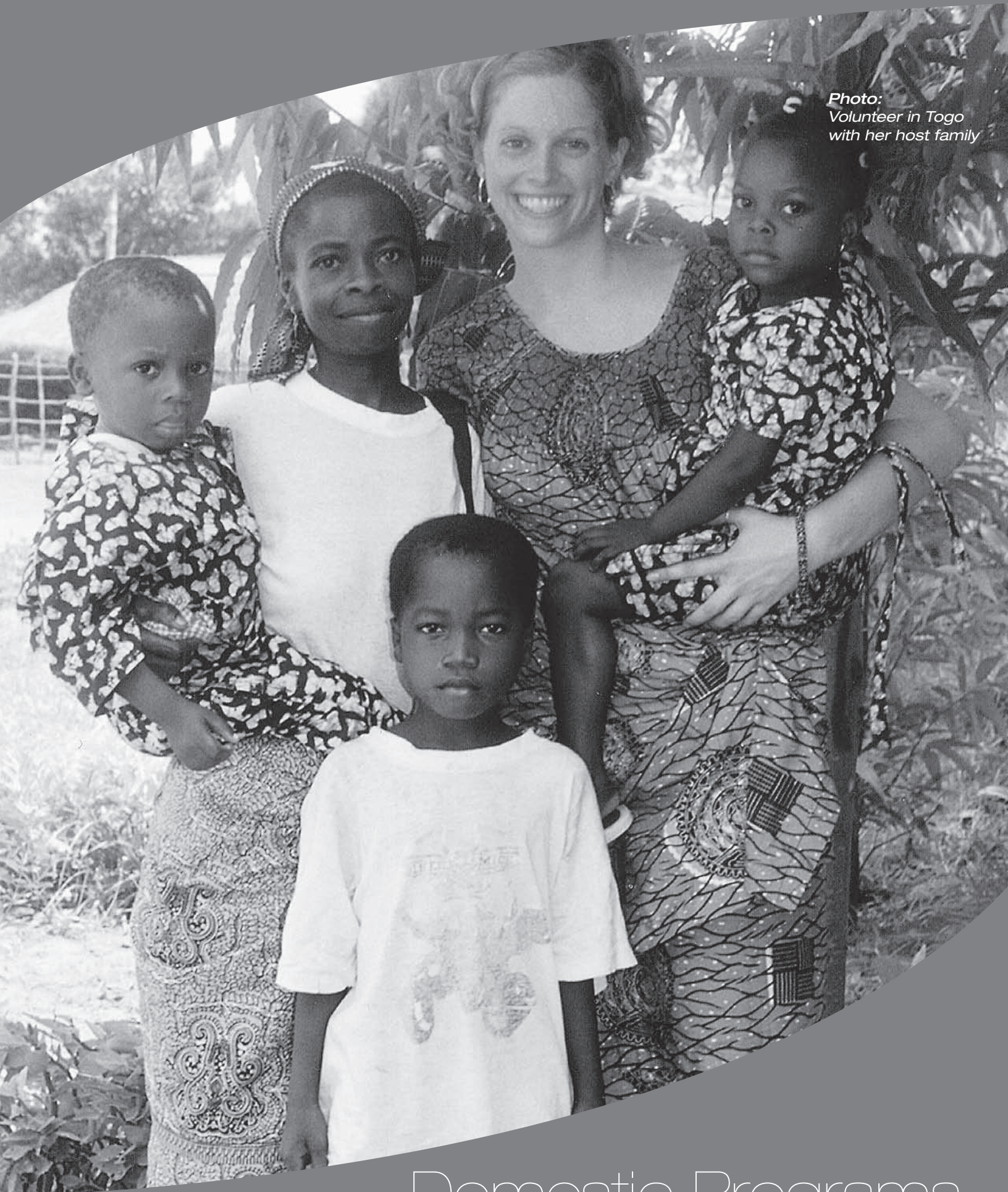
Each of Peace Corps' 11 regional offices are equipped with computers and other resources to assist returned Peace Corps Volunteers in obtaining career and educational information. The Peace Corps publishes the "Hotline," a bi-weekly jobs bulletin, as well as manuals focusing on careers in teaching, business, 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:
Volunteer in Togo
with her host family*



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 are designed to 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 downloading. 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*; and *Building Bridges: A Peace Corps’ Classroom Guide to Cross-Cultural Understanding*.

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 are relating their experiences through correspondence exchanges, and approximately 380,000 students, in all 50 states, are benefiting 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. Over 300 returned Volunteers pursue graduate studies annually as Peace Corps Fellows at more than 30 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 community or economic development, nursing, or environmental education interns with local nonprofits, 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 currently serve communities in 19 states and the District of Columbia. Since the inception of the program in 1985, more than 1,800 Peace Corps Fellows have worked to improve the lives and the international awareness of thousands of Americans.

Master's International Program

Through partnerships with nearly 50 colleges and universities across the United States, the Master's International (MI) program offers people the opportunity to incorporate Peace Corps service into a master's degree program. 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 a participating graduate school and 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 a Peace Corps assignment overseas. Assignments are developed by overseas Peace Corps' staff at the request of host countries.

During Peace Corps service, Volunteers participating in the MI program work on a thesis, profes-

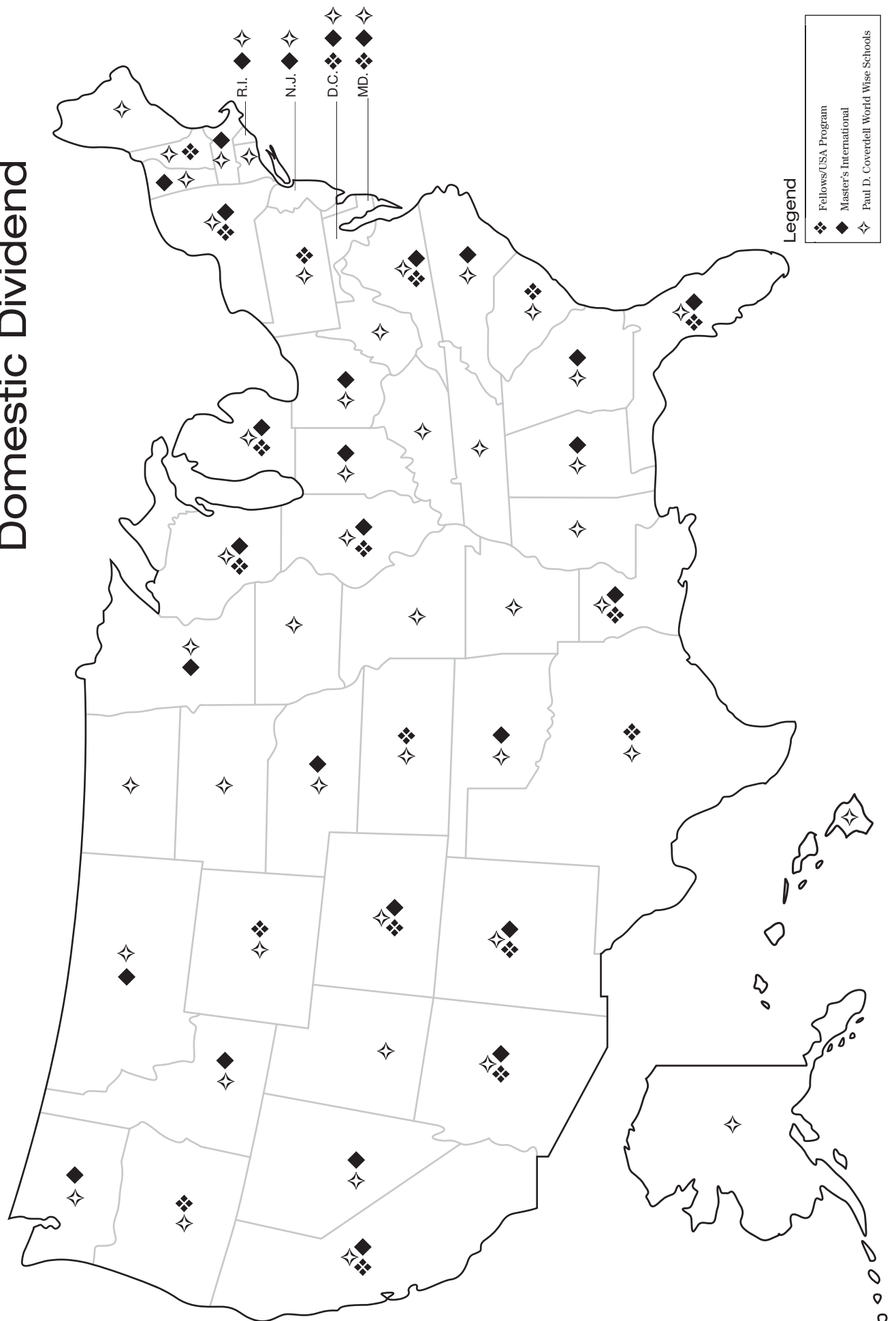
sional paper, or other culminating project under the direction of the school's faculty and with the approval of Peace Corps overseas staff. Participating faculty recognize that while serving overseas, an MI student's primary responsibility is his or her Volunteer duties. Rather than determining a research 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. MI students graduate with a unique combination of an advanced degree and two years of substantive professional experience in an international setting.



A Peace Corps Fellow at the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing takes the blood pressure of a girl at Wald Community Nursing Center in Baltimore. The center is located within an old elementary school that was converted into a community center with a transitional housing facility, an Early Head Start program, and a day care center. Peace Corps Fellows take courses and work at the nursing center part time where they mostly practice preventative medicine. Wald is open to anyone in the community who is in need of free medical care.

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	
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	
Colorado	Colorado State University–Fort Collins University of Colorado–Denver University of Denver	University of Denver
Florida	Florida A&M University 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
Maryland	Johns Hopkins University University of Maryland–Baltimore County	Johns Hopkins University 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

States	Master's International Colleges/Universities	Fellows/USA Colleges/Universities
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 New School University
North Carolina	North Carolina State University–Raleigh North Carolina A&T State University–Greensboro	
Ohio	University of Cincinnati	University of Cincinnati
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State University–Stillwater	
Oregon		University of Oregon
Pennsylvania		Carnegie Mellon University Duquesne University Temple University
South Carolina		University of South Carolina–Columbia
Texas		University of North Texas
Vermont	School for International Training St. Michael's College	
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, 2003

State	Today	Since 1961	State	Today	Since 1961
Alabama	53	834	Montana	58	1,066
Alaska	30	789	Nebraska	48	1,069
Arizona	126	2,706	Nevada	38	743
Arkansas	34	769	New Hampshire	51	1,324
California	885	24,331	New Jersey	160	3,998
Colorado	267	5,532	New Mexico	59	1,781
Connecticut	132	2,731	New York	412	11,145
Delaware	18	370	North Carolina	187	2,951
District of Columbia	46	2,033	North Dakota	25	479
Florida	245	5,893	Ohio	292	5,563
Georgia	135	2,369	Oklahoma	47	1,003
Guam	1	76	Oregon	220	4,757
Hawaii	22	1,211	Pennsylvania	299	6,240
Idaho	48	1023	Puerto Rico	9	358
Illinois	350	6,736	Rhode Island	37	850
Indiana	124	2,463	South Carolina	74	1,073
Iowa	112	1,824	South Dakota	21	495
Kansas	82	1,296	Tennessee	77	1,228
Kentucky	52	1,149	Texas	353	5,379
Louisiana	33	894	Utah	51	815
Maine	76	1,451	Vermont	36	1,215
Maryland	225	4,689	Virginia	303	5,704
Massachusetts	216	7,012	Virgin Islands	0	65
Michigan	280	5,504	Washington	342	7,207
Minnesota	253	5,298	West Virginia	31	530
Mississippi	14	383	Wisconsin	278	4,704
Missouri	137	2,546	Wyoming	26	408

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Regional Summaries

Sahel

Burkina Faso, Cape Verde,
The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania,
Niger, Senegal

Coastal West and Central Africa

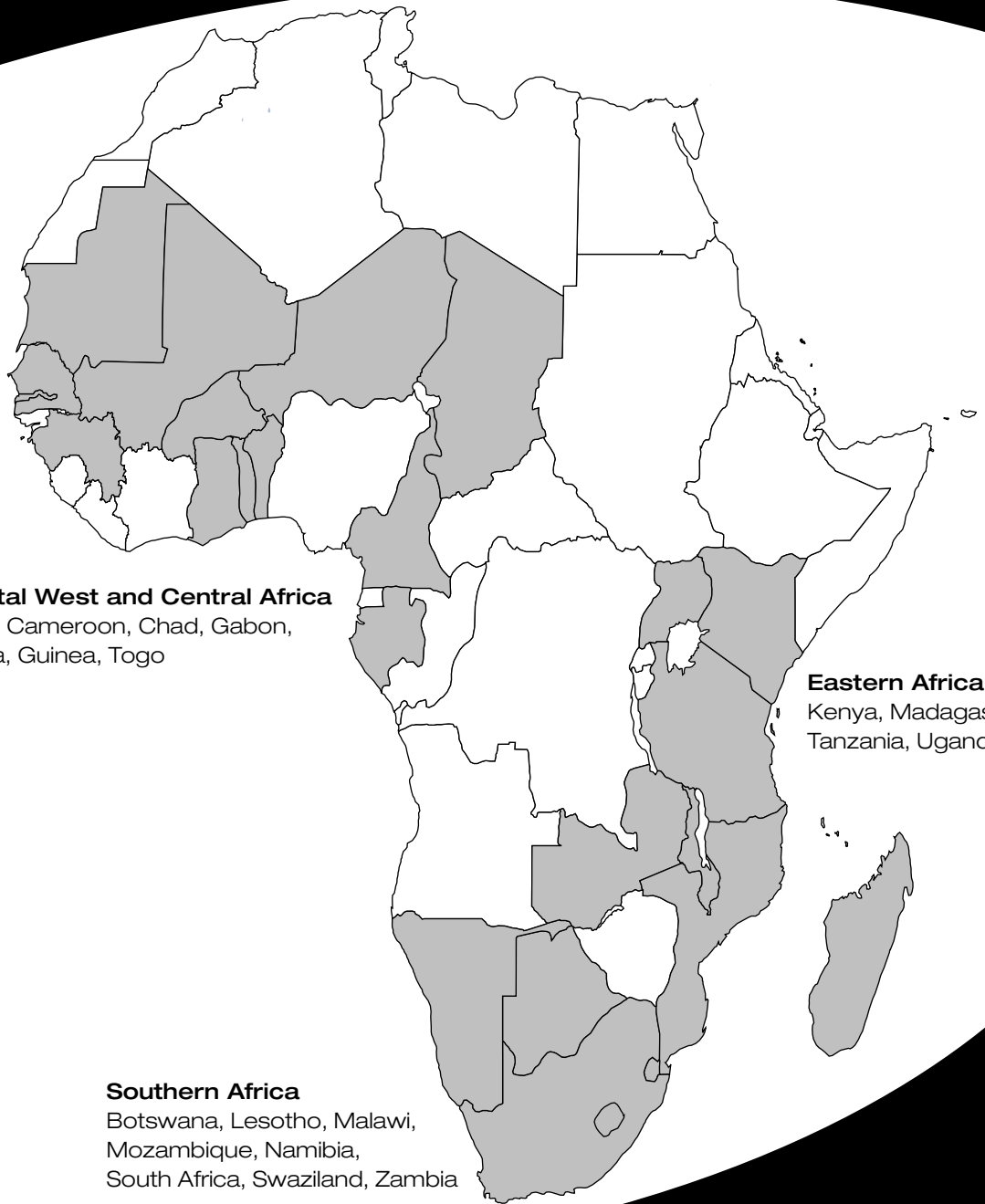
Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Gabon,
Ghana, Guinea, Togo

Southern Africa

Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi,
Mozambique, Namibia,
South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia

Eastern Africa

Kenya, Madagascar,
Tanzania, Uganda



Africa Region

“ I find [the Peace Corps] approach quite appropriate and rewarding, and I believe that we can benefit from their experience, notably their spirit of volunteerism.”

– Dr. Leopold Zekeng
Permanent Secretary
National AIDS Control Committee, Cameroon

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, approximately 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 2004, 2,733 Volunteers and trainees will be on board and working in 26 countries in all six of the program sectors—agriculture, business development, education, environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth as well as initiatives in information technology. With increases at existing posts and possible new country entries, the Africa region of Peace Corps is poised for substantial growth and expansion in the coming years. In 2003, the Peace Corps reentered Chad with programs in education and health and HIV/AIDS, and Swaziland with Volunteers working in the health and HIV/AIDS sector. Assessments have been conducted for entry into Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, and Sierra Leone.

The Africa region continues to make the safety and security of Volunteers its number-one priority, and has a total of 30 employees dedicated strictly to safety and security. All 26 posts have 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 ground in Africa. These officers—located in Lesotho, Togo, and Uganda—provide support to country directors in all areas of safety and security. Along with the extensive safety and security training all Volunteers and staff receive on an ongoing basis, Peace Corps staff continues to cooperate with local leaders and officials to help make Volunteers safe.

While visiting the United States, two African heads of state honored the Peace Corps with official visits to Peace Corps headquarters. On June 25, 2003, President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh of The Gambia expressed his gratitude for the work of the Peace Corps in his country by stating that the positive spirit and “can do” attitude of the Volunteers

lifts the hopes, spirits, and dreams of the Gambian people. President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali visited Peace Corps headquarters on June 24, 2003, and declared his country's profound gratitude and respect for the work of Peace Corps in Mali. With admiration, President Touré said that Peace Corps Volunteers “live in the same villages as the Malian people, sleep on the same mats, eat the same food, and get bitten by the same mosquitoes.” In the early 1990s, President Touré worked with Volunteers in the areas of water, health, and Guinea worm eradication. Peace Corps/Mali continues to work in the areas of environment, agriculture, health and HIV/AIDS, and business development.

Africa remains the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic. In May 2003, as part of President Bush's Global AIDS Relief Package, the Peace Corps committed 1,000 new Volunteers to work on HIV/AIDS-related activities. Although the dimensions and the human needs continue to be staggering, the Peace Corps is strengthening its commitment to fighting the spread of this terrible disease by training new Volunteers in HIV/AIDS awareness, beginning new programs with an emphasis on educational outreach, and expanding projects in endemic areas. Volunteers are uniquely suited to work in the field of HIV/AIDS prevention and education because they live and work in the communities where they serve. Volunteers are trained in the local language and are able to share information in a culturally sensitive way. In addition to committing new Volunteers to targeted African countries, Peace Corps trains all Volunteers bound for Africa, regardless of their primary assignment, in HIV/AIDS prevention and education.

All Volunteers and staff are engaged in projects addressing the multiple health, social, and economic problems related to HIV/AIDS. As governments increasingly call on civil society to join in efforts to prevent the spread of AIDS, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) become a pivotal part of the national response. In South Africa, Volunteers help NGOs to be more effective and take up their role in the fight against AIDS by strengthening the organizational and management capacity of these organizations. Additionally, Volunteers continue to favor

HIV/AIDS prevention activities that target youth, and many posts work with orphans and out-of-school youth in HIV/AIDS peer education. Project Panther in Benin has significantly increased youth involvement in HIV/AIDS education. In Uganda, the Peace Corps has spearheaded a “Positive Living and Well-Being” project that focuses on helping communities and orphans of the HIV/AIDS scourge cope and live fruitful and productive lives. In Ghana and Mali, Volunteers work with youth who travel countrywide in drama groups and puppet theaters to provide HIV/AIDS education at community gatherings and traditional councils. In Lesotho, Volunteers have helped people form networks to identify common myths and misconceptions about the disease.

In response to a direct request from Botswana’s President Mogae to President Bush, in March 2003 Peace Corps Volunteers returned to Botswana after a five-year absence to assist with HIV/AIDS prevention activities. Currently, Botswana has one of the highest prevalence rates in the world with nearly 40 percent of the adult population infected with HIV. Volunteers are assigned to work with district AIDS coordinators to develop organizational capacity and assist with the planned implementation of HIV/AIDS programming and mobilization of community-led responses to the epidemic.

Furthermore, in September 2003, 36 Volunteers arrived in Swaziland in to reestablish the Peace Corps/Swaziland program with projects in HIV/AIDS prevention and education. The new Peace Corps program assists the government of Swaziland in the execution of its national HIV/AIDS strategy on risk reduction and impact mitigation. Volunteers currently are working on a project that targets youth to address behavior modification as well as supporting efforts of those working with AIDS orphans and vulnerable children.

Information technology is making significant inroads into African social and business arenas. Internet cafes can be found in virtually all national capitals. E-mail service is quickly making its way into isolated areas, which only a few years ago had no basic telephone service. Volunteers across the continent are being called upon to serve as advisors

in bridging the technology gap. They are teaching their counterparts basic keyboard skills, Internet and computer lab management and maintenance, hardware and software troubleshooting, and website design. Throughout Africa, Volunteers have been instrumental in helping communities and schools obtain computer equipment and Internet connectivity. In Mali, Volunteers have begun a new initiative working with a nationwide network of Community Learning and Information Centers to provide training in basic computer and Internet skills to young Malians. Volunteers will work in approximately nine centers in Mali, as well as with the University of Bamako. In Kenya, a Volunteer designed a website to boost sales of a women’s handicraft group and provided advisory services that enhanced the women’s technical skills. Volunteers are also using radio technology to provide forums for addressing health issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention.

The Peace Corps is playing an important role in the Digital Freedom Initiative (DFI), a partnership with the government of Senegal and the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the USA Freedom Corps, the Peace Corps, and private-sector businesses. The goal of the DFI is to promote economic growth by transferring the benefits of information and communication technology to entrepreneurs and small businesses in the developing world. Peace Corps Volunteers will equip Senegalese with essential information technology skills to enable them to apply technology to stimulate economic growth and opportunity. This initiative will help Senegal expand the potential business and human capacity of over 12,000 telecenters and 300 cybercenters across the country. If successful in Senegal, the DFI partners will expand to other countries in Africa.

Another sector of expected growth for Peace Corps is business development. Volunteers in 10 African countries teach basic business skills to youth, farmers, artisans, small NGOs, credit institutions, business schools, and universities. Promoting small business training for girls and women is an important focus of these efforts. In Lesotho, several Volunteers have trained women’s groups in skills such as knit-

ting, sewing, and quilting, allowing them to sell their products to schools, communities, and the tourist market. In Burkina Faso, Volunteers with traditional business backgrounds will be working with credit unions, handicraft associations and agribusiness cooperatives to improve business practices and the viability of commercial activity in peri-urban and rural areas.

Education is the Peace Corps largest program sector in Africa, with over 34 percent of all Volunteers in Africa participating in education projects in 21 countries. These projects place an emphasis on cross-sector collaborations such as girls' education, information technology, HIV/AIDS prevention, and environmental education. In Mozambique, a group of Volunteer education specialists are preparing Mozambican primary-school teachers to introduce English in sixth grade as a part of a major curriculum overhaul in the education system. In Namibia, a Volunteer in the education sector has been able to impact educational opportunities in his community by securing funds from the Ambassador's Self-Help Project to help establish 14 kindergartens in the northern part of Namibia. Special education for students with special needs is also a growing area of intervention.

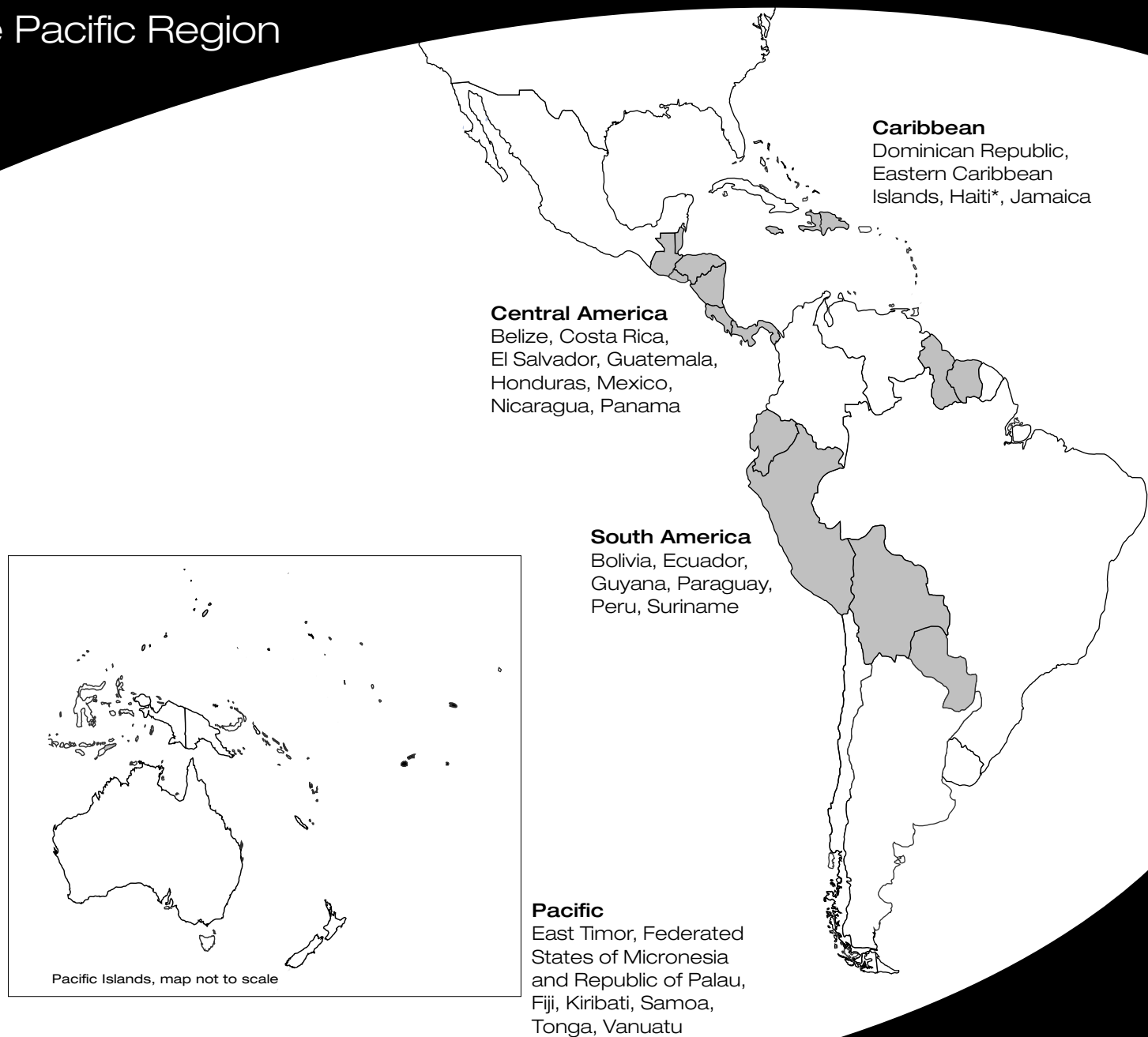
The Peace Corps continues its long-standing tradition of improving basic health care, potable water, and sanitation services for communities in Africa. Volunteers help villages and small towns take responsibility for their health-care and form committees to expand the services offered by a limited number of trained health care professionals. In addition to their concerted effort to promote HIV/AIDS education throughout the continent, health and water/sanitation Volunteers are working to prevent ill effects of Guinea worm, polio, and other diseases.

Volunteers and their counterparts address environmental issues by promoting environmental education in schools and by encouraging environmentally responsible agricultural practices among farmers. Volunteers also work to improve food security in rural areas and introduce unique community-based

approaches to natural resource management, such as ecotourism. Maintaining reliable food supply sources and protecting environmental health have emerged as important aspects of integrated agricultural and environmental programming. Volunteers teach counterparts and their families how to improve agricultural production and earn income to supplement their food supply. In Ghana, Volunteers are agroforestry managers and direct the planting and sale of over 1 million seedlings each year around community schools, clinics, churches, community forest reserves and woodlots. Increasingly, agriculture and environment projects incorporate small business development skills as an objective.

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. They then 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 has left a long and positive legacy.

Inter-America and the Pacific Region



*Program temporarily suspended.

“Our service in Honduras has taught us a great deal about the challenges of urban and regional planning in a developing country. We’ve been able to provide needed technical assistance to [the members of] our community, who, in turn, have shared with us their experiences and perspectives regarding planning and development. Working extensively in another culture, in a foreign language, and directly with community members has given us experiences that would be impossible to gain outside of the Peace Corps.”

– Honduras Volunteer Couple
Business Development Sector

Inter-America and the Pacific Region

Since the Peace Corps inception in 1961, over 71,000 Volunteers have served in the Inter-America and Pacific (IAP) region. They have served in over 32 countries in the Inter-Americas and 16 countries in the Pacific Islands. At the end of fiscal year 2004, 2,615 Volunteers will be working in 25 countries in all six of the agency's sectors: agriculture, business development, education, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth.

The region is committed to helping the agency meet President Bush's challenge for growth through new country entries and selective growth in existing countries while providing Volunteers a safe and secure environment. Safety and security issues remain a top priority agencywide, and the IAP region has 29 employees who are specifically designated to safety and security. The region maintains a full time safety and security desk officer at headquarters who oversees the implementation of safety and security systems and policies throughout the region. Additionally, IAP has safety and security coordinators for each of the 25 posts, as well as three regional Peace Corps safety and security officers located in El Salvador, Fiji, and Peru to assist posts in assessing risks and ensuring appropriate training for staff and Volunteers.

The IAP region is prepared for increased numbers of Volunteers at existing posts as well as possible new country entries. Growth rates within each country are based on an assessment of each country's capacity to provide sound projects that promote sustainable grass-roots development. In response to emerging and compelling needs in the IAP region, Volunteers' work emphasizes the areas of youth development, information technology training, and HIV/AIDS prevention.

IAP reopened operations in Fiji in 2003, and nearly 30 new Volunteers arrived in September. Initially, Volunteers will be working on projects in environmental education, youth, and community development. Later, as the Volunteers gain more experience in the country, HIV/AIDS prevention and information technology will be incorporated into the

youth and community development projects. Additionally, an assessment team has visited the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific to determine the feasibility of returning there.

The Peace Corps will enter Mexico for the first time in 2004. The Peace Corps and the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia, National Council on Science and Technology, (CONACYT) of Mexico signed a Partnership Accord on June 10, 2003. The agreement was formalized at a signing ceremony at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., on November 12, 2003. The Peace Corps began exploring the possibility of entering Mexico after President Bush and Mexican President Vicente Fox announced the "Partnership for Prosperity" initiative during their summit in September 2001. Volunteers assigned to Mexico will work in partnership with CONACYT in the areas of information technology, small business development, and science and technology. A Peace Corps assessment team has worked closely with CONACYT to select sites and determine the best way to utilize the Volunteers. The Peace Corps will send its first group of approximately 15 to 20 Volunteers to Mexico in 2004.

Besides expanding the number of Volunteers and activities through new country entries, IAP continues to actively seek creative programming through new partnerships and initiatives. In support of the agency's recent memorandum of understanding with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), collaboration between the CDC and Peace Corps/Haiti has been formed to synchronize activities in HIV/AIDS education and training. Volunteers, trained in cross-cultural sensitivity and the Créole language, are uniquely suited to the delivery of sensitive education and training topics at the grass-roots level. This complements CDC's mandate to reduce the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in Haiti by concentrating on lowering mother-to-child transmission through voluntary counseling at testing sites. Volunteers work in the health extension program with a general emphasis on maternal health, child development and AIDS awareness. They are organizing youth groups committed to peer education and AIDS awareness. According to one Volunteer, in a country such as Haiti

where the majority of the population is young, the best way to mobilize awareness is through organized outreach to youth.

The region adapts Volunteer assignments to accommodate each country's changing development needs and to promote sustainable projects. Volunteers in newly independent East Timor work with counterparts to reestablish infrastructure through projects in local governance promotion and community health services. One Volunteer, working as a local government advisor on community development, together with his counterpart rehabilitated the local kindergarten and developed it into one of the first community-managed schools in East Timor. They organized community meetings and helped form a local management team that secured grants and donations, rebuilt a school building destroyed in the post-referendum violence of 1999, and coordinated with the Ministry of Education to recruit and train two teachers and a volunteer teacher trainer.

In urban youth development, a Volunteer in Paraguay began a small business endeavor of making bracelets with the youth in her community. A year and one month later, they have expanded to making homemade cleaning supplies: detergent, bleach, soap, and fabric softener. The business is completely run by the youth. The Volunteer acknowledges that the project has helped dozens of young people with the necessary skills and practice to become the business leaders of tomorrow in Paraguay.

Additionally, Volunteers in the IAP region continue to tackle the traditional development challenges throughout the program sectors. For instance, Volunteers work in the health sector to address

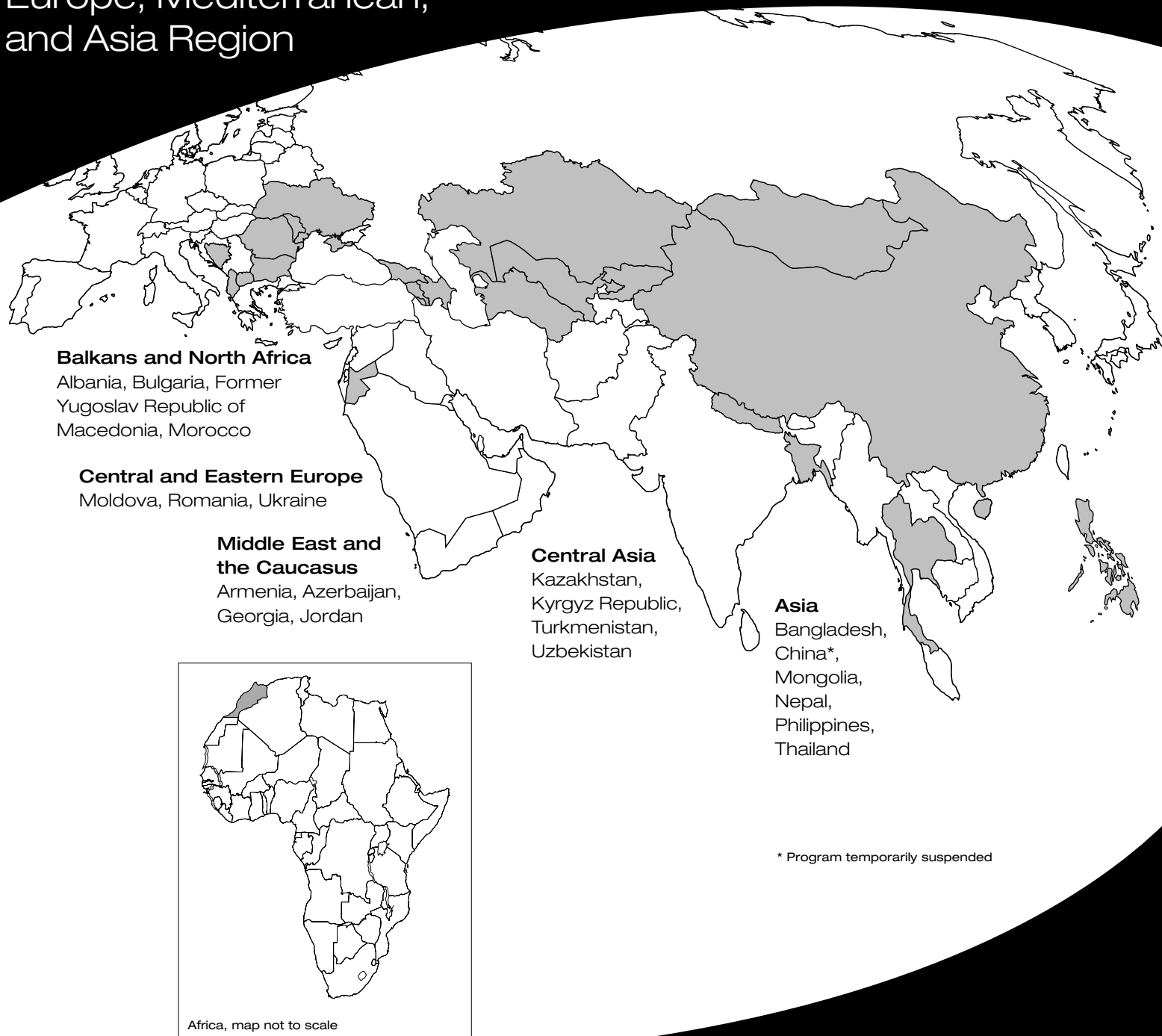
the myriad of issues that arise from poor personal hygiene and lack of access to safe drinking water. In Guatemala, Volunteers are working with families in rural areas to introduce low-cost technologies to improve family health, such as latrines, rope pumps, and wood-saving stoves.

In areas where deforestation and environmental degradation threaten the livelihood of communities, Volunteers are working on soil conservation projects, environmental education, and alternative income projects. In the Dominican Republic, Volunteers helped plant over 140,000 trees and establish tree nurseries whereby 20 percent of farmers will have increased their income as a direct result of improved conservation practices.

Volunteers working in the education sector provide both formal and nonformal education activities. For instance, Volunteers in Suriname have helped set up libraries, developed computer training, set up clean drinking water systems for schoolchildren, and assisted them in creating community service projects to benefit their village. Activities in Paraguay have trained teachers in institutional settings such as workshops on didactic materials and participative methodologies in the areas of communication and mathematics.

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

Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region



“We note with satisfaction and highly value the activities carried out by the Peace Corps in Georgia. The more than 70 Volunteers who have already been involved in the activities in Georgia represent the best traditions of Peace Corps Volunteers—dedication, compassion, and commitment.”

– Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Irakli Menagarishvili

Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region

Over 45,500 Volunteers have served in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) region since 1961. By the end of fiscal year 2004, EMA will have 2,460 Volunteers and trainees working in 21 countries, most of which are undergoing rapid economic and social changes. Volunteers help strengthen the capacity of local communities to address changing needs in education, health and HIV/AIDS, business, agriculture, and the environment.

Safety and security continues to be a top priority in the region, and EMA has 25 employees specifically devoted to safety and security. In addition to the EMA safety and security desk officer at headquarters and 21 safety and security coordinators at post, there are three regional Peace Corps safety and security officers based in Romania, Kazakhstan, and Thailand. Both Volunteers and staff receive constantly updated training based on the premise 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. Each country in the region continually monitors safety and security activities according to agency guidelines.

Adverse safety and security conditions led to the suspension of both the Jordan post in November 2002 and the Morocco post in April 2003. Safety and security assessments that took place in both countries in July 2003 had favorable results. Trainees reentered Morocco in October 2003 and Jordan in February 2004. Additionally, the Peace Corps program in China was suspended in April of 2003 due to the outbreak of the SARS virus.

In the winter of 2003, Volunteers were again welcomed into Albania, where they will focus on advising those in business and NGO development, as well as community service and health. The agency also entered one new country, Azerbaijan, for the first time. Volunteers in Azerbaijan concentrate on strengthening the English language skills of Azeri youth.

Many of the EMA countries are opening up to outside influences and becoming part of the world

stage. Although they face difficulties related to unstable monetary systems, outdated technology, and adaptation to free-market economies, they are moving toward being a part of the world economy. Volunteers provide assistance toward meeting these goals through English education, business skill-building, environmental protection, and health education.

In the business development sector, Volunteers disseminate information about new economic laws to micro-entrepreneurs and local businesses, introduce youth to business basics, and explain marketing concepts to entrepreneurs. Volunteers have helped to strengthen the management of local chambers of commerce and NGOs, which are becoming increasingly important as central governments delegate responsibility to the local level. Volunteers also offer training in how to strengthen the infrastructure of local institutions and how to use the Internet to access resources.

For example, the Peace Corps' business project in Morocco strengthened the management and technological skills of local counterparts by having Volunteers offer training and advice about office management and technology directly to their staff co-workers in artisan complexes. While working on other projects, a small enterprise development Volunteer in Mongolia spent almost a year shepherding a project to publish a brochure at her host-country agency, the Agricultural Bank. She met daily with the bank manager to discuss pressing issues, such as customer service and management techniques—often stressing the benefit of creating an informational brochure. It took weeks to convince the manager that a brochure was good publicity and months to create a prototype brochure with co-workers. When the finished brochure arrived, workers at the bank were proud of their collaboration on a high-quality product that reflects their expertise in a professional organization.

The education sector is the largest sector in the region. Although many countries identify English language proficiency as an important aspect of full participation in the global economy, they often suffer from a critical shortage of qualified English teachers and educational materials. Volunteers respond

to these needs by serving as English teachers at the secondary school level, helping to develop the professional skills of local teachers, implementing curriculum reforms, expanding access to improved teaching materials, and promoting school-community linkages.

While a majority of education projects in the region continue to emphasize the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL), there is an increased focus on comprehensive, content-based education projects that use English as a vehicle to address both the English curriculum and other subjects. Increasingly, Volunteers and their counterparts use the community content-based instruction approach to link local community development issues to the academic curriculum. Developing students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as their awareness of local and global issues, continues to be of high importance in EMA. Through in-school, after-school, and summer activities, Volunteers and their counterparts have helped students explore environmental awareness, HIV/AIDS, roles of men and women, leadership skills, and civic responsibilities. Volunteers also explore innovative ways to incorporate more information and communication technology in education. Activities range from training teachers in computer skills to recording radio broadcasts of English language lessons to creating videos for teacher-training seminars.

Youth development activities are an area for growth in the EMA region, and they cover a wide spectrum of at-risk youth. These girls and boys are often struggling to have their basic living needs met, and include AIDS orphans, street children lured into drugs and prostitution, and disenfranchised, out-of-school youth. In recent years, youth development projects were established in Jordan, Morocco, and Bangladesh and are currently under development in Bulgaria and Turkmenistan. Volunteers working in youth development projects and activities in EMA work to engage and prepare youth for their roles within family life, the world of work, and civic responsibility.

Health is a growing issue of concern in the Region, with three posts, Albania, Kyrgyz Republic and

Bangladesh, planning new health or water sanitation projects. Countries in the EMA region have been identified by the World Health Organization as at-risk for a potential explosion in HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. Volunteers in countries with no stand-alone health projects have been addressing HIV/AIDS prevention activities across sectors through working groups. Ukraine, Moldova and Uzbekistan have already established strong peer-education components, with other posts, such as Morocco, Mongolia, Thailand, and Philippines, planning to strengthen their work in this area.

Throughout the region, Volunteers work with schools and local organizations to increase awareness of the quality of the environment and its relationship to public health. To ensure greater sustainability of their efforts, Volunteers help environmental groups gain access to technical information and to long-term funding opportunities. Volunteers also work with community groups and students to protect national and community parks and organize environmental restoration projects. A Volunteer in Kazakhstan developed an ecology theater curriculum that emphasizes ecology education, critical thinking skills, and the performing arts. This curriculum is implemented jointly by the National Parks, Protected Area Offices, and secondary-school teachers, providing a comprehensive program for involving the local community in the conservation efforts. In the Philippines, Volunteers and counterparts have developed management plans for coastal communities that harvest ornamental fish. These plans now serve as models for other municipalities interested in ensuring that marine resources are extracted in an environmentally friendly and sustainable manner.

Volunteers across all project sectors continue to find that computers and Internet technology can increase the impact of their work. Volunteers in the education, small business development and health sectors, in particular, tend to incorporate technological tools in their project activities. Likewise, community development, TEFL, environment and natural resource management, and youth development Volunteers increasingly are using technology as part of their project endeavors.

For the most part, Volunteers focus on Information and Computer Technology (ICT) capacity building at the local level. This capacity-building effort primarily concentrates on training host country nationals to use basic software applications, such as word processing, spreadsheets, and databases. While many Volunteers are conducting direct computer skills-building training for end users, other Volunteers are expanding their work to a more complex level by focusing on the training of trainers. In the EMA region, the next most frequently mentioned ICT activities were the establishment of computer centers, e-commerce training, and Internet research and use. Volunteers, for example, led Internet training workshops and designed websites to promote tourism. They also conducted sessions about Internet marketing.

A community economic development Volunteer in Straldja, Bulgaria, helped create a virtual crafts shop (www.craftecenter.org) to facilitate the sale of local crafts to buyers in America and Western Europe. The shop opened in October 2002. The works of craftspeople from Straldja and other regions of Bulgaria are featured in the store. Purchasers can buy the products with a major credit card and products are shipped within two days. Craftspeople receive the same price for the products as if they sold them locally, and the crafts shop takes no commission from the sales.

The Peace Corps recognizes that men's and women's lives are interconnected and that both men and women need to be involved in the economic development process. Volunteers in the region pro-

mote the participation of women and girls in the development process in a variety of ways. They use participatory community development tools to increase community members' (especially women and youth) participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives. For example, as a result of using participatory analysis for community action, community members in Georgia are now participating in meetings to discuss social issues and problems in their villages and towns and are forming groups and committees to design interventions to address solutions. Programs give special focus to the empowerment of girls, who are often more disadvantaged than boys, especially in the areas of girls' education, leadership skills, and self-esteem. Volunteers also work with local and international organizations to increase awareness regarding trafficking of women and girls in certain high-risk countries. For example, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration, Volunteers in Moldova held 18 workshops for 1,586 individuals to raise awareness of the reality of trafficking in Moldova. As a result, women and girls are more aware of the problem of trafficking and have increased awareness of their own power and responsibility to make informed decisions to address the problem.

Overall, Peace Corps Volunteers have contributed to the improvement of countless lives of those living in the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia region since the first program began in 1961. Volunteers will continue to have a significant impact on the grass-roots level in the EMA region by building cross-cultural relationships and transferring essential skills.

Country Profiles

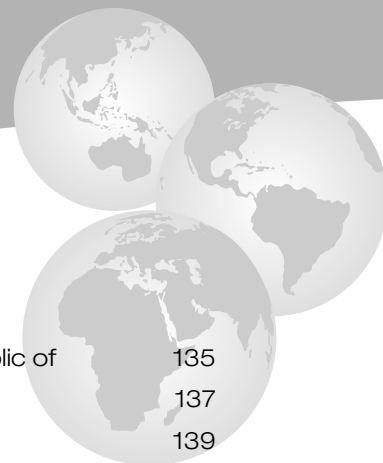


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Albania

Capital.....	Tirana
Population	3 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,340
GDP growth	6.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 8%
	Female: 22%
Infant mortality rate.....	23 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 97%
	Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$207 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 99%
	Rural: 95%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.01%
Major religions	Islam: 70%
	Albanian Orthodoxy: 20%
	Roman Catholicism: 10%
Official language	Albanian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	56	90
Program funds (\$000)	1,389	1,737

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. Irregularities in the 1996 parliamentary elections and executive interference in the judiciary demonstrated the frailty of Albania's governing structures. The country overwhelmingly approved a new Constitution in 1998, which was a major step toward strengthening democracy. Local elections in 2000 marked significant progress toward institutionalizing democratic practices, and local elections in 2003 again demonstrated progress. 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 (\$400 million to \$600 million annually) supplement the economy and help offset a large foreign trade deficit. Most agricultural land has been privatized to help improve the incomes of traditional farming families. Nearly half of Albania's GDP and employment derives from agriculture, but barriers to production persist. Lack of sufficient fertile land, land disputes, the remoteness of schools and health centers, lack of agricultural equipment, and very limited rural credit have led to urban migration, especially among the younger population. Poor educational facilities and a shortage of teachers in rural areas also contribute to migration to urban and coastal areas.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps initiated a program in Albania in 1992, and 73 Volunteers were serving in Albania by 1997, assisting in the areas of secondary English teaching, small business development, and agro-forestry 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 suspend the program in the summer of 1997.

The current programming strategy was derived from a Peace Corps assessment conducted in April 2002. The assessment team recommended that the Peace Corps reopen its program in Albania with a project to help improve the organizational and management capacities of local government staff members. The project also facilitates the development of collaborative activities with community organizations, businesses, and citizen groups. The assessment team also recommended that the Peace Corps address needs in basic health, sanitation, and HIV/AIDS education, primarily at the local level. The resulting project works with local clinics, schools, and community groups on a wide variety of local health issues.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

In September 2003, the first group of 32 Volunteers arrived to begin working with local governments and development associations to improve the organizational and management capabilities of local government staff members and strengthen collaborative activities with local nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and citizen groups. The Volunteers also assist all sectors of the community in project design and management and support the development of nongovernmental organizations, local businesses, and youth groups, depending on locally identified needs.

Education

Beginning in 2004, Volunteers will work in Albania's public secondary schools and universities to teach English as a foreign language and work with teachers of English to improve their skills. They will also develop and implement extracurricular and community activities—such as math and science clubs, computer classes, art workshops, HIV/AIDS awareness classes, and sports—to promote the use of conversational English.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Also beginning in 2004, Volunteers will 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 will also help develop health education programs and materials for use at the local level.

“The single most important asset I’ve found in Albania is the goodwill and openheartedness of the Albanian people toward the American people. This opens doors and provides a fertile base for the success of our municipal projects.”

**Albania Trainee
Business Development Sector**



Armenia

Capital.....	Yerevan
Population	4 million
Annual per capita income	\$570
GDP growth	9.6%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	31 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 94% Measles: 93%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$70 million
Access to safe water	81%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.2%
Major religion.....	Armenian Apostolic Christianity
Official language	Armenian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	87	93
Program funds (\$000)	1,836	2,032

Country Overview

Program dates	1992–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Armenia voted overwhelmingly for independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. At that time, fighting with Azerbaijan over the region of Nagorno-Karabakh escalated. The government's goal for a Western-style democracy has been questioned by observers; although there have been improvements in fairness and efficiency, the government has yet to meet international standards.

Armenia is the second most densely populated of the former Soviet republics. It previously exchanged manufactured goods with fellow republics in return for raw materials and energy. Armenia has switched to small-scale agriculture that requires updated technology and investment. The economic effects of the 1988 earthquake—which killed 25,000 people and left 500,000 homeless—are still being felt. The continuing blockade along the country's borders as a result of the conflict with Azerbaijan has devastated the economy because of Armenia's dependence on external supplies of energy, food, and raw materials. In 1994, Armenia launched an International Monetary Fund-sponsored economic program that has resulted in positive growth rates; privatization of small and medium-size enterprises; improvements in the agriculture, transportation, health, and education sectors; and ongoing rehabilitation in the earthquake zone.

Program Focus

Armenia, the smallest of the former Soviet republics in area, is in the midst of historic change. Despite a decade that has included war, blockades, political turmoil, a devastating earthquake, and chronic shortages of power, the country is slowly making progress in its transition to a market economy and democratic society. Private sector activities are beginning to emerge, and wide-scale entrepreneurship needs to be supported through training and education. Armenians recognize the importance of English fluency in linking them to economic, educational, and technological opportunities in their region. And they are also starting to recognize the importance of the environment as

both a priceless, yet threatened, national resource. In addition, more attention is being given to health education and prevention as an alternative to the traditional curative approach practiced since the Soviet era. The Peace Corps is supporting the country's ability to confront its many developmental challenges with programs in business development, education, the environment, and health.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

The breakup of the Soviet Union—combined with the collapse of its trade, payment, and financial system—dealt a crippling blow to Armenia's antiquated industrial base. Thus, a key problem facing Armenia is how to initiate and sustain appropriate new industries, technologies, and services that will grow, attract foreign direct 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.

Currently 23 Peace Corps Volunteers are committed to developing the capacity of Armenian organizations and communities. Volunteers support business support centers and consult with over 30 businesses in the areas of marketing, organizational development, and management. Volunteers also work with their Armenian counterparts to train and teach over 250 youth and adults in business administration, management, and business English.

Education

The English language education program is designed to assist the Republic of Armenia in enhancing its participation in the international community by increasing the quality of English education and providing other educational opportunities throughout Armenia.

Volunteers teach English in secondary schools, colleges, universities, and educational NGOs. English language instruction is provided through regular classroom teaching as well as nonformal educational activities. Volunteers also provide professional development opportunities for local teachers through ongoing feedback and assistance, such as lesson observations, team teaching, and teacher workshops. Over one-third of the education Volunteers assist with information and communication technology projects at their sites.

Environment

The Republic of Armenia has a rich natural environment. However, environmental degradation, both as a legacy of the Soviet era and as a consequence of the economic crisis, is a significant issue for Armenia's future. Environmental awareness activities have been initiated on governmental, public, and educational levels, but they lack coordination and resources, both intellectual and financial to address environmental issues.

As a result of the convergence of interest and an increase in activities by the Armenian public and by Volunteers, Peace Corps/Armenia initiated a new environment project in 2003. Five Volunteers have recently been placed in NGOs in different communities in Armenia.

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. In addition, health Volunteers train health workers in clinics and hospitals to aid in their professional development.

While many of the health Volunteers use information technology in their work, two Volunteers have implemented projects that specifically focus on using technology to enhance health practices and outcomes. They both helped create computer and medical resource centers in their hospitals, where health personnel can use computers to globally access the most recent medical information.

“...working in the garden was like a
rite of entry into the true Armenian
experience. The warmth and
acceptance of the entire town have
more than doubled since [we]
started our physical labor! ...
I have had more than one person
tell me: “I didn’t know Americans
knew how to really work! Now I
see that you are real people.”

**Armenia Volunteer
Education Sector**



Azerbaijan

Capital	Baku
Population	8 million
Annual per capita income	\$650
GDP growth	9.9%
Adult illiteracy rate	3%
Infant mortality rate	77 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 98%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment	\$227 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 93%
	Rural: 58%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major 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 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	46	74
Program funds (\$000)	1,428	1,946

Country Overview

Program dates	2003–present
Program sector	Education

The government of Azerbaijan consists of three branches: The executive branch is made up of a president, his apparat, 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. 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 the new administration has much to do in the way of support building, both domestically and internationally, in the next year.

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 focusing on developing agribusiness is being launched this year to help diversify Azerbaijan's economy. 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 is 25 strong and the Volunteers are posted at sites outside the capital. A second cohort of English language teachers is expected to arrive in July 2004. With over 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 in the fact that hundreds of schools submitted applications requesting the assignment of a Volunteer to their institution. The head of education in Neftchala, for example, urged the Peace Corps' visiting team to place all of the Volunteers in his district. His counterpart in Oguz, when told of the application deadline, asked his school directors to submit their applications much sooner so that they would be early enough to get Volunteers before the other regions scooped them all up.

Volunteers began their assignments at the same time that the Azerbaijani English language curriculum was undergoing a significant change. This change was characterized by a shift from rote memorization of literature and grammatical rules to a communicative process. Most Azerbaijani English language instructors have never had native English speakers as teachers and team teaching with a native speaker who can assist in the transition to an emphasis on spoken English is an opportunity that scores of teachers are eager to grasp.

In addition to their teaching duties, Volunteers are involved in secondary activities in their communities: sponsoring English clubs, providing adult education, conducting outreach in information and communication technology, and organizing sports leagues and summer camps for young women. Volunteers have undertaken these activities with community-based and national nongovernmental organizations as well as international development assistance providers.

"The presence of Peace Corps Volunteers in our classrooms will have a triple payoff for Azerbaijan. First, our students will benefit from hearing English spoken by native speakers. Second, our teachers will learn new methods of teaching and improve their speaking abilities. Third, when the Volunteers return home, Azerbaijan will have additional 'ambassadors' to tell the American people about our people."

Misr Mardonov
Minister of Education

"I have 1,200 students in a school that was created to teach Russian language. Now, 900 of them want to learn English! We are determined to meet this need and have hired nine new English teachers. You must provide us with a Peace Corps Volunteer to help my new staff provide these students with proper English language skills."

Director
Secondary School, Salyan



Bangladesh

Capital.....	Dhaka
Population	133 million
Annual per capita income	\$360
GDP growth	5.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 50%
	Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate.....	51 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 83%
	Measles: 76%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$78 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 99%
	Rural: 97%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Islam: 83%
	Hinduism: 16%
	Others: 1%
Official language	Bangla

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	108	144
Program funds (\$000)	1,575	2,133

Country Overview

Program dates	1998–2001 2002–present
Program sector	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. As a result, primary school enrollment has increased considerably, with girls comprising two-and-a-half 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 as a means of discrediting the 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 for the past five years. The agriculture sector continues to support the majority 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 2004, 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, 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. In 2003, an additional 60 Volunteers arrived in Bangladesh to serve as English language teachers in both youth development centers and government secondary schools.

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. The people of East Pakistan, however, speak Bangla (Bengali), an ancient language that is integral to the history, literature, and overall cultural identity of the region. The outcome of the war was the creation of Bangladesh and a declaration of Bangla as the official language of the country. As a matter of national pride, public schools switched from teaching in English to teaching entirely in Bangla. For 30 years, teachers and students therefore 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 schoolchildren for the future.

Youth

Thirty percent of the total population of Bangladesh is in the 15-to-30-year-old age group, and 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 or a significant role in local decision making. One of the ways the government wants to accomplish this is through youth development centers that provide young men and women with training that will help them to earn a living, which in turn will allow them to assume a role in meeting local needs.

Peace Corps/Bangladesh currently provides English instruction, as well as some vocational 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.

"I came from a working middle-class family with absolutely no world travel experience, and I can't express enough how much I've learned about new cultures and life outside the U.S., and also about myself. All in all, this is the best experience I've had in my life. I would encourage anybody who is looking to do something different, and willing to challenge themselves, to consider joining the Peace Corps."

**Bangladesh Volunteer
Youth Sector**



Belize

Capital.....	Belmopan
Population	247,000
Annual per capita income	\$2,940
GDP growth	5.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	7%
Infant mortality rate	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 89% Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$34 million
Access to safe water	92%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	2%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 60% Anglicanism/Methodism: 40%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	58	63
Program funds (\$000)	1,569	1,918

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Education Environment

Belize, which encompasses approximately the same land area as El Salvador, is the most sparsely populated nation in the Central American peninsula. Belize has historically focused its development on export of tropical crops but has recently begun to shift 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 been struggling to address the impact of this constant cycle of natural disasters on the growing rural population, which has left poor immigrants from surrounding Central American countries without equal 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. Recently, Belize, with the assistance of the Organization of American States, brokered a long awaited compromise with Guatemala over their shared border.

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 recently began to move away from placing Volunteers exclusively with

government agencies and toward placing them in community councils. This has enabled Volunteers to become more integrated into 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 and communication technology Volunteers have trained over 1,400 primary school teachers in 55 communities to integrate computers into the curriculum. They have also taught advanced computer skills to 112 university students and basic computer literacy to 2,847 primary school students and 63 adults. HIV/AIDS Volunteers have provided assistance to the National AIDS Commission, district AIDS committees, the School Health and Physical Education Services of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and local NGOs. The Volunteers have developed training modules on HIV/AIDS prevention strategies and cooperated in training 446 teachers, 1,509 community members, 7,561 schoolchildren, and 157 peer educators.

Environment

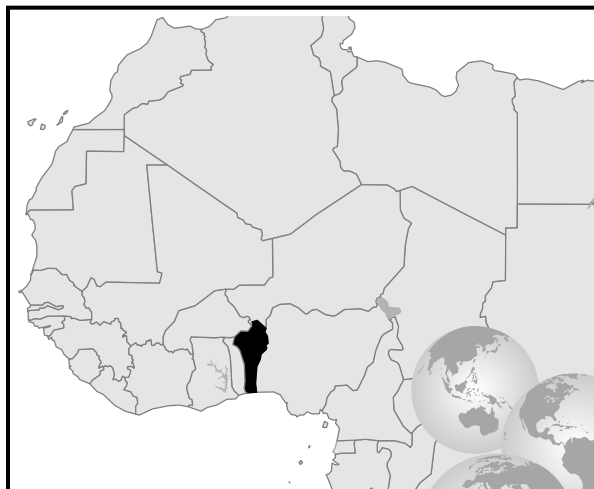
For a small country, Belize boasts a diverse natural resource base, from tropical forests to the second largest barrier reef in the world. Peace Corps/Belize has been an active participant in the start-up of a national environmental education program, focusing first on primary schools and more recently on the general population. It is also supporting new conservation NGOs in focusing their energies on environmental education and community co-management of protected areas. Volunteers assist a wide spectrum of local conservation NGOs, community-based development organizations, and government agencies responsible for environmental management and protection. Among their activities are organizing, assessing priority needs, programming and fundraising, and most recently, viable business planning.

“What are the increments of progress and how do they apply to community conservation? I know we are making headway, and the longer I work in the environment field the more questions I have about measuring success and progress. One thing is for sure: There is a whole heck of a lot that I—and future Volunteers—can do to assist the way forward to meaningful and true sustainable development.”

**Belize Volunteer
Environment Sector**



A Volunteer instructs students in the use of office software.



Benin

Capital.....	Porto-Novo
Population	6 million
Annual per capita income	\$380
GDP growth	5.0%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 47%
	Female: 75%
Infant mortality rate	94 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 76%
	Measles: 65%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$131 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 74%
	Rural: 55%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	3.6%
Major religions	Indigenous beliefs: 50%
	Christianity: 30%
	Islam: 20%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	112	111
Program funds (\$000)	2,667	2,972

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 perceived to be free and fair. The government continues its efforts to reform the educational system, provide opportunities for private economic initiatives, improve health care delivery, and decentralize governmental functions. While Benin has experienced economic growth over the past few years, it remains among the world's poorest countries. 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 care (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, TEFL, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. It is important to note that all Volunteers, regardless of sector, receive training in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Local nongovernmental organizations and microentrepreneurs need assistance with basic management skills. Volunteers work directly with entrepreneurs, village associations, women, and NGOs to teach marketing, accounting, business management, and organizational techniques. For

example, in 2003, Volunteers trained more than 1,000 women in basic accounting using materials tailored to their needs and vision. Volunteers also conducted training-of-trainers courses for women's association leaders and others in order to sustain these training activities. Additionally, Volunteers developed an accounting record-keeping system for nonliterate populations that is being replicated and used in many communities across the country.

One Volunteer produced a "Remote Training System" that uses a television and a Sony PlayStation to deliver information on credit, HIV/AIDS, accounting, and more to nonliterate populations in their local language. Her counterpart at the Ministry of New Technology expanded the project by including a second local language.

Education

This 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. In 2003, the management and funding responsibilities for gender and development activities were transferred to Beninese partners who have formed an association for this purpose.

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 2003, Volunteers conducted trainer-of-trainers programs for teachers and NGO staff in the use of the Environmental Guide to incorporate environmental education into the official school curriculum. Volunteers further expanded their activities to include waste management, promotion of mushroom farming, agriculture, and demonstration projects to produce dried fruit and moringa oil.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Rural communities in Benin face a myriad of 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 work in partnership 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. In 2003, Volunteers trained peer educators to educate approximately 6,800 youth about HIV/AIDS through informal discussions, skits, videos, games, and other presentations.

Two Volunteers produce radio programs on HIV/AIDS education. The HIV/AIDS theater group started by a Volunteer in 2002 continues to educate Beninese.

"Two years is a long time to be a temporary resident. You owe your service to your community."

Benin Volunteer Environment Sector



Benin Volunteer teaching mathematics



Bolivia

Capital.....	La Paz
Population	9 million
Annual per capita income	\$950
GDP growth	1.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 8% Female: 20%
Infant mortality rate	60 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 81% Measles: 79%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$662 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 95% Rural: 64%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	150	154
Program funds (\$000)	2,818	3,392

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1971 1990–present
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Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Environment Health
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Bolivia has faced several years of political change and challenges. The presidential elections in 2002 resulted in a new government that hoped to revitalize the economy, address corruption, and promote greater social inclusion. In October 2003, the continuing economic downturn, together with issues concerning the rights of indigenous people and the use of natural resources, set in motion mass protests. President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada resigned, and Vice President Carlos Mesa was sworn in as president on October 17, 2003.

Bolivia's main exports are tin, gold, and timber. Although the nation has experienced macroeconomic stability over the past decade, with about 60 percent of the population living in poverty, it remains one of the least developed countries in South America. Rural Bolivia suffers from one of the highest child mortality rates in South America and an average life expectancy that is among the lowest in the hemisphere. The economy grew by less than one percent in 2002, and inflation is estimated at about 4 percent.

Program Focus

From 1962 through 1971 approximately 1,550 Volunteers served in Bolivia. On December 14, 1987, the government of Bolivia formally requested that the Peace Corps, after an absence of nearly 16 years, return to Bolivia. In 1990, Peace Corps operations resumed with a group of 11 Volunteers. Today there are approximately 165 Volunteers in the country, working in health, agriculture, business development, education, and environment 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 their 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, assisting farmers in improving crop production and increasing family income through improved farm management and commercialization of agricultural products.

In 2003, agriculture Volunteers trained over 1,000 Bolivians in integrated agricultural techniques, seeded more than 2,000 fruit trees, and presented nearly 70 workshops on agribusiness and marketing.

Business Development

To address endemic rural poverty, Volunteers assist communities in developing income-generating activities and business skills. Volunteers help improve microenterprise practices—including training local artisans, teaching basic business skills, and developing local tourism plans—to create greater economic opportunities for poor people in rural and periurban areas. In 2003, business Volunteers trained over 500 Bolivians in business techniques and helped more than 450 entrepreneurs secure microcredit business loans. They also helped over 400 students receive computer training, assisted 300 Guaraní basket weavers in exporting their products, and trained 382 people as local tourism guides.

Education

Volunteers focus on reducing 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 ways to incorporate health education curricula in the classroom. These activities aim to improve student health practices and strengthen Bolivia's educational reform efforts. Women and children in rural areas are the focus of projects that promote family gardens and nutrition education.

In 2003, education Volunteers used nonformal education techniques and health curricula development methodologies to train over 300 teachers, educate more than 1,200 Bolivians in healthy nutrition and hygiene, and teach nearly 150 people how to compost solid wastes to improve environmental health conditions.

Environment

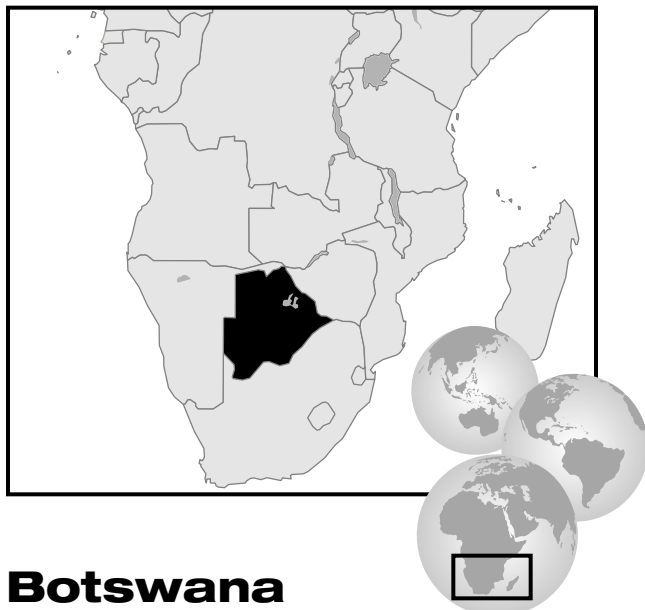
Bolivia faces rapidly deteriorating natural resources resulting from both mineral extraction and agricultural practices that deplete soil and water resources. The natural resources management project aims to protect the environment and create an ethic of environmental stewardship. Volunteers work with local communities on soil conservation, watershed management, and revegetation activities. Youth conservation clubs and teacher training focused on environmental sciences and conservation help expand conservation practices and develop a stewardship ethic.

Over the past year, environment Volunteers trained 300 teachers in environmental education methodologies, helped plant over 12,500 trees, established and strengthened seven youth ecology clubs, and assisted four organizations in successfully obtaining municipal government funds for local environmental projects.

Health

Access to potable water and latrine systems is a major development challenge in Bolivia. Partnering with a range of local and national organizations, Volunteers work to improve 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 help strengthen the ability of municipalities to meet ongoing local water needs. Volunteers have also spearheaded Peace Corps/Bolivia's efforts to improve solid waste management, focusing on recycling and composting practices.

In 2003, health Volunteers installed 25 new water systems, providing 302 families with access to safe water. They trained nearly 500 families in proper sanitary practices and helped build 120 latrines. Volunteers were also instrumental in initiating gray water reclamation and solid waste recycling projects.



Botswana

Capital.....	Gaborone
Population	2 million
Annual per capita income	\$3,100
GDP growth	6.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 25%
	Female: 19%
Infant mortality rate.....	80 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 87%
	Measles: 83%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$57 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 100%
	Rural: 90%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	38.8%
Major religions	Christianity: 60%
	Indigenous beliefs: 40%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	41	68
Program funds (\$000)	1,509	1,788

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, 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 the 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 Botswanan 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, in many cases, made important contributions to the steady progress of Botswana. There are many leading figures in Botswana today who have been

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 serving as chairman of 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 have given momentum to Botswana's war on AIDS. The government has enlisted the assistance of 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. In April 2002, a Peace Corps assessment team visited the country to determine how Volunteers could assist and decided to reopen the program. The first group of trainees dedicated to combating HIV/AIDS arrived in March 2003.

Volunteer Focus

Health and HIV/AIDS

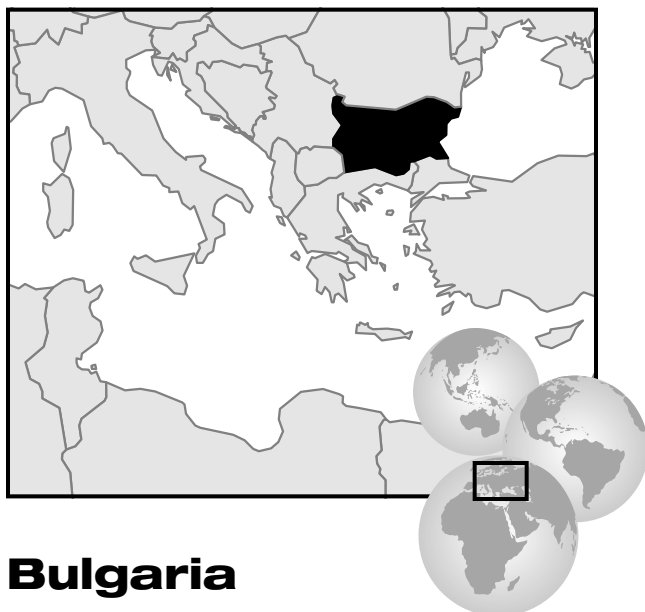
Under the guidance of the National AIDS Coordinating Agency, the Peace Corps began its activities in partnership with the Ministry of Local Government, specifically with the AIDS Coordinating Unit. The unit is playing a key role in the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS education and programming at the national, 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 15 districts, with planned expansion to all 24 health districts in 2004. Volunteers, who were assigned as counterparts to district AIDS coordinators in June 2003, are responsible for facilitating district plans to mainstreaming; the following assistance to the district AIDS committees in developing multisector, districtwide responses to

HIV/AIDS and developing village AIDS committees; the monitoring, evaluation, and documentation of HIV/AIDS programming and its impacts; promotion of strategic partnerships with traditional leaders, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector; and promotion of increased use of government-sponsored HIV/AIDS programs and resources (e.g., voluntary counseling and testing centers, the anti-retroviral program).

In 2004, Peace Corps/Botswana plans to place additional Volunteers with the AIDS Coordinating Unit. Two new projects will be developed at the village and district levels: One will work with home-based and orphan care and the other with the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission program, which is being implemented in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Botswanan Ministry of Health.

"This work is not easy; it does not come naturally. Quite frankly it scares me. I think it is important for me to recognize this. Yet it is equally, if not more, important for me to step out from behind this fear and remember how much this work intrigues me, how I truly care about it and the long-term positive effects it brings to people, and how at the end of the day—even bad days—I still love it."

**Botswana Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Bulgaria

Capital.....	Sofia
Population.....	8 million
Annual per capita income	\$6,200
GDP growth	4.0%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 1%
	Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	14 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 96%
	Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$692 million
Access to safe water	100%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Bulgarian Orthodoxy: 83.5%
	Islam: 13.0%
	Others: 2.0%
	Roman Catholicism: 1.5%
Official language	Bulgarian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	179	241
Program funds (\$000)	2,814	3,457

Country Overview

Program dates	1991–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Youth

Bulgaria has made substantial progress in the transformation of its political, economic, and social systems. Efforts to create stability, prosperity, and opportunity have begun to pay dividends, particularly in the larger urban areas. In 2002, Bulgaria was invited to become 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. Western integration remains a fundamental challenge for Bulgarian society, which gives the Peace Corps many opportunities for meaningful development work.

Despite notable progress over the past five years, 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% of Bulgaria's population lives below the poverty line. Paradoxically, over the past four years, inflation has been low while growth in gross domestic product has been steady, leading multilateral observers of the macroeconomic situation to conclude that Bulgaria is moving in the right direction. The leading sectors contributing to Bulgaria's GDP are manufacturing (28%), service industries (23%), and agriculture (15%).

Program Focus

Bulgaria's importance to stability in the Balkans provides a compelling reason for continued Peace Corps work. Peace Corps serves Bulgaria in four principal areas: English language education, the environment, business development, and youth. Peace Corps launched its new Youth and Child Development Program this year in recognition of the important leadership role that youth play in Bulgaria's transition.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

This project assists small to medium enterprises, business centers, non-governmental organizations, and district and municipal administrations to mobilize assets for local economic development. Currently, 45 Volunteers advise small businesses in the areas of marketing, management, and training, as well as assist business service providers in organizational strengthening, project design and implementation and more efficient delivery of core services.

Volunteers increasingly address technology issues. For example, one Volunteer helped his community establish the first Bulgarian virtual crafts shop which boasts over 3,500 items and 26,000 hits in less than a year.

In FY 2003, Volunteers trained, consulted, or otherwise aided more than 2,700 Bulgarians and 150 organizations—entrepreneurs, farmers, local governments, agribusiness and business centers, schools, hospitals, retirement homes, museums, libraries, tourist associations, and Junior Achievement student companies. Volunteers designed and completed more than 80 community projects.

Education

As Bulgaria continues its economic reforms, the need for English language fluency has increased significantly. Volunteers work in the primary and secondary schools to improve students' and teachers' English language skills. They are involved in community projects such as youth camps, adult English courses, and diversity training. Volunteers also raise awareness of the dangers of human traffickers who prey on vulnerable and unsuspecting youth and force them to work in slave-like conditions. Many Volunteers also work with students and counterparts on fundraising, teaching basic business skills and offering opportunities to reach out to their communities.

In 2003, Volunteers taught 6,615 primary and secondary students in 49 schools and established eight English language centers. A teachers' web site has been designed for Volunteers and Bulgarian counterparts to collaborate and easily access teaching resources. Volunteers also helped upgrade existing language resource centers and equip them with books and other materials. Peace Corps Volun-

teers created a *Bulgarian Life Skills Manual* for a peer education program aimed at teaching youth life skills and AIDS awareness.

Environment

Protecting and restoring the environment is an important need in Bulgaria. The Peace Corps began its environmental management and training program in 1995. Currently, 35 Environmental Volunteers work in 33 communities throughout Bulgaria and concentrate their efforts on educational and training activities, capacity-building, and small municipal projects to promote effective solutions for local environmental issues.

In 2003, Volunteers helped organize environmental awareness campaigns, worked for establishing community environmental awareness centers, and were actively involved in the promotion of ecotourism development activities. Volunteers assisted with modernization of tourism information centers, the creation of promotional materials and the development of a national adventure tourism web site.

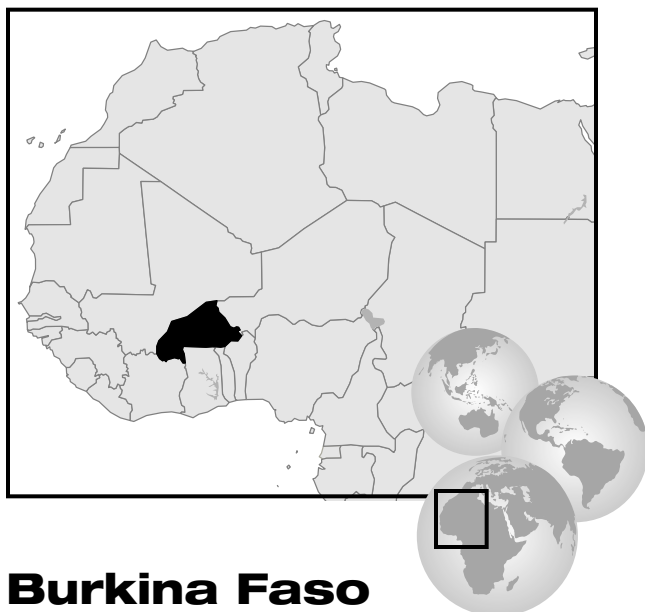
Youth

Since many Bulgarian youth strive for reform, Volunteers from this sector will be assigned to local organizations, including those administered by young people, which otherwise lack the manpower and practical experience required to effectively manage and lead youth initiatives.

Since an estimated 34,000 children are institutionalized in Bulgaria, Volunteers will also contribute to the Bulgarian government's efforts to improve the care of children in orphanages and special schools and to develop the community support networks necessary to prevent the institutionalization of a new generation of at-risk children.

"We highly appreciate Peace Corps' assistance in the field of education as its Volunteers provide new incentives to students. They support the education system by introducing new teaching techniques. We need more Volunteers in Bulgarian schools."

**Deputy Minister
Bulgarian Ministry of Education
and Science**



Burkina Faso

Capital.....	Ouagadougou
Population	12 million
Annual per capita income	\$220
GDP growth	5.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 65%
	Female: 85%
Infant mortality rate	104 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 41%
	Measles: 46%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$26 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 66%
	Rural: 37%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	6.5%
Major religions	Indigenous beliefs: 40%
	Islam: 40%
	Christianity: 20%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	89	99
Program funds (\$000)	2,688	3,113

Country Overview

Program dates	1966–1987
	1995–present

Program sectors	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 Compaore, 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 173 out of 175 on the 2003 UN Human Development Index. The majority of its population is engaged in subsistence agriculture, which is hampered by frequent droughts. Foreign investment and private sector development are increasing, but health care remains inadequate and conditions such as malaria and malnutrition are endemic.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps entered Burkina Faso in 1966, and approximately 1,550 Volunteers have served there to date. Major past projects 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

In September 2003, Peace Corps/Burkina Faso expanded into the small enterprise development sector with a project that promotes both business development and environmental awareness. Burkina Faso has a number of areas that are unique for tourism and rich in arts and crafts. Volunteers in these sectors work with entrepreneurs and cooperatives to market crafts as well as cultural tours and ecotourism. Volunteers with a background in the environment work with tour operators and park managers to develop interpretive information. Volunteers with a more traditional business background work with savings and credit unions, handicraft associations, and agribusiness cooperatives to improve business practices and the viability of commercial activity in periurban and rural areas.

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 over 100 students, and are expected to teach up to 25 hours per week. Math and science teachers teach all their classes in French. Education Volunteers conduct secondary projects during school breaks in collaboration with their communities and schools. Primary among these projects is a girls camp that is run in provincial capitals during the summer vacation period. Girls are invited to attend a one-week camp, where they engage in activities such as sports, personal health lessons, life skills education, career counseling, and shadowing of professional women. During the camps, counterparts and Volunteers work together to increase awareness of basic human rights for women and girls and the importance of their access to education, health care, and mobility. One Volunteer achieves this by introducing girls to sports, something unheard of in many villages.

Volunteers also encourage girls to excel in mathematics and science, subjects traditionally limited to boys. Peace Corps/Burkina Faso plans to create a girls education and empowerment project that will enable Volunteers to focus on this area as their primary assignment.

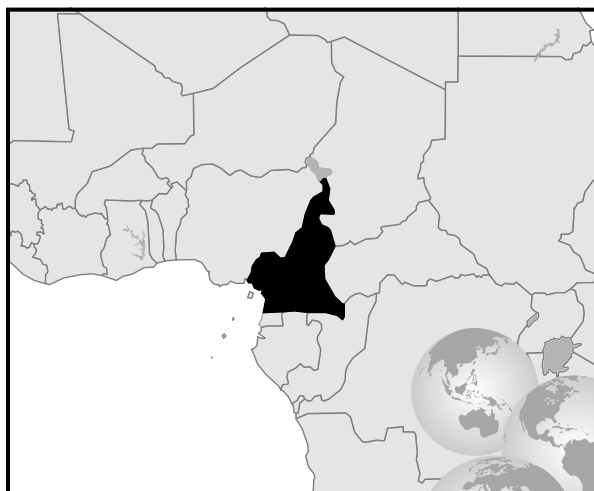
Health and HIV/AIDS

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 and work with communities to strengthen local health management committees and 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 at the central and regional level to coordinate the planning and execution of a series 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.

Additionally, Volunteers work with local community groups to create, train, and support "Stop AIDS" theater troupes. Interested community members create and perform pieces geared at increasing awareness of the HIV/AIDS transmission cycle, and provide villagers with strategies to prevent HIV/AIDS. Volunteers over the past year have created a training manual for use in health centers across the country. The Volunteer-produced manual has been adopted by the Ministry of Health as the standard manual for all health centers. Health sector Volunteers have also collaborated with education Volunteers and their counterparts to create a primary school health curriculum titled "Sante avant tous," or "Health Before All," which the Ministry of Education is incorporating into its standard curriculum.

**"By giving resources, they see my pity. By volunteering at the clinic,
they see my concern. By choosing to spend two years of my life in a
tiny village, they witness my courage. But when I greet my village friends
in their own language, they feel what is inside my heart."**

**Burkina Faso Volunteer
Health Sector**



Cameroon

Capital.....	Yaounde
Population	15 million
Annual per capita income	\$580
GDP growth	5.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 20%
	Female: 35%
Infant mortality rate.....	96 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 43%
	Measles: 62%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$75 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 78%
	Rural: 39%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	11.8%
Major religions	Christianity: 53%
	Indigenous beliefs: 25%
	Islam: 22%
Official languages	French, English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	143	178
Program funds (\$000)	3,446	3,989

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Cameroon, an independent republic, has a National Assembly of 180 members, who serve for five-year terms. A multiparty system has been established and elections continue to grow more competitive. The presidential term was recently changed from five years to seven years. Cameroon is representative of the general wind of change and drive for political reforms and democracy sweeping the African continent.

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/Cameroon's program grew and diversified to include inland fisheries, credit union and cooperatives education, English, community forestry, health, and community development. Since then, more than 4,000 Volunteers have served in Cameroon.

Currently, four robust projects are being executed throughout the 10 provinces of Cameroon: English, math, and science education; health and water/sanitation; agroforestry; and small business development. The common themes that run through all Peace Corps/Cameroon projects are impact, focus, counterpart involvement, Volunteer competence, and organizational professionalism.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

As a result of population growth and increasing competition for land in Cameroon, some farmers have begun 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 will understand the benefits of agrofor-

estry and permanent farming systems and teach these activities to other farmers. Volunteers and their counterparts trained farmers in agroforestry techniques by establishing demonstration plots on their farms. Volunteers and their counterparts also assisted farm families in establishing 185 nurseries that produced over 50,000 seedlings and cuttings of agroforestry species. Additionally, 59 seed banks were active during the year.

Business Development

This project links Volunteers with microfinance institutions through technical assistance that promotes small enterprise development in Cameroon. Business and credit management are integral components of this project. In 2003, 3,458 males and 3,599 females participated in meetings, workshops, and other forms of training that Volunteers organized to improve business, credit, and loan portfolio management skills of bank staff, clients, and the general population. Additionally, campaigns were presented to the banking community and the general public on 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, 173 males and 88 females 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, 29 small enterprise development Volunteers work in 29 microfinance institutions throughout the 10 provinces of Cameroon.

Education

Providing the ever-expanding school-age population with a quality education remains a challenge for the government of Cameroon. Volunteers help improve the quality of education through classroom instruction in English, 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. TEFL, math, and science Volunteers in the teacher skills upgrade project taught English and didactics, math, and science skills and knowledge to a total of 2,500

(1,200 men and 1,300 women) student teachers in teacher-training colleges in 2003. Volunteers note that approximately 23 percent more females have indicated increased interest in math compared with the previous year. In the TEFL project, Volunteers and their counterparts have developed transferable educational materials, including a manual for teacher skills upgrading and 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 have helped establish libraries, science labs, school-based farms, gardens, wells, pit latrines, and a health center.

Health and HIV/AIDS

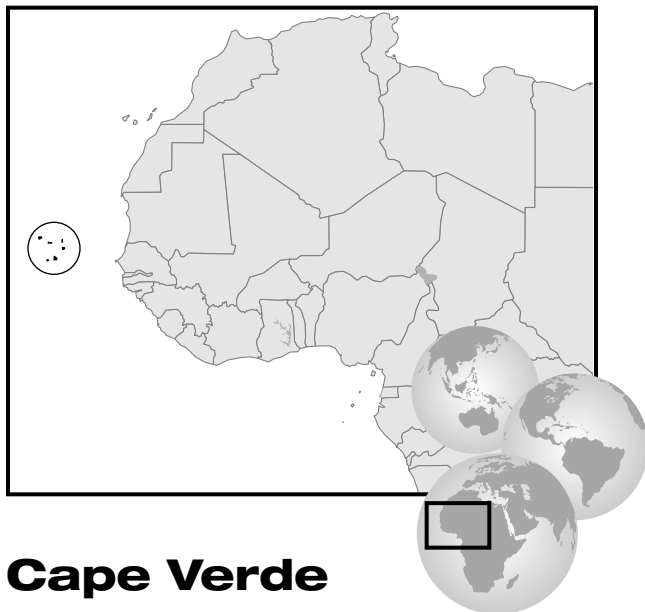
The HIV/AIDS pandemic has emerged as one of the most pressing public health concerns, with up to 17 percent of the population infected in certain urban areas. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in prevention, mitigation, and behavior change with regard to HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, enabling them to act as 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 2003, health Volunteers trained almost 800 peer educators on HIV/AIDS and STD issues and trained 133 primary school teachers to integrate appropriate information on HIV prevention in the classroom. Pre-tests and post-tests indicated that at least 80 percent of those reached understood and retained the material presented.

In addition, health Volunteers worked on health promotion and community development activities that enabled communities to identify and prioritize local health and water/sanitation problems and to design and carry out appropriate interventions. In collaboration with counterparts, in 2003 Volunteers trained 25 technicians and 29 community groups to construct 60 latrines, 14 wells, and 10 spring boxes using local labor and participatory community approaches. As a result, over 17,000 individuals now have access to potable water and over 4,000 have access to sanitary human waste disposal.

"As development workers we can only hope our contributions are sustainable.

little by little I hope my contributions will make a difference in the lives of the Cameroonians I have worked with. I cannot change the world in two years, but I believe our efforts as Peace Corps Volunteers are steps in the right direction."

**Cameroon Volunteer
Business Development Sector**



Cape Verde

Capital.....	Praia
Population	446,000
Annual per capita income	\$1,340
GDP growth	3.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	25%
Infant mortality rate	29 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 94%
	Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$14.8 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 64%
	Rural: 89%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.04%
Major religions	Protestantism
	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Portuguese

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	38	37
Program funds (\$000)	1,553	1,692

Country Overview

Program dates	1988–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Youth

Cape Verde is a stable and 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 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 GDP resulting in large part from 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. Agriculture represented only 13 percent of GDP in 1998, although nearly 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas. The potential of fishing has not been fully exploited, and about 90 percent of Cape Verde's food supply is imported. Cape Verde annually runs a high trade deficit, 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, the Constitution was changed to remove state control from all sectors of the economy (except the central bank) and 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 worked on all nine inhabited islands. Volunteers now work on eight islands because of the closure of an island airport. Cooperating closely with the government's stated development goals, Volunteers work in education, business, and youth development (including information technology, vocational education, and small business). Many are active in the women and development program, which has initiated activities

such as career-planning events for girls, training for women by the National Association of Women Lawyers, and celebration of International Women's Week. The Peace Corps is considered a major 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

Education

The goal of the TEFL project is to assist the Ministry of Education in providing quality learning opportunities to students and teachers mainly at the high school level. Volunteers are involved in both classroom teaching and teacher training. They assist in preschool education, in training of Cape Verdian preschool employees, and in vocational education, helping increase the employability of youth at technical high schools. Volunteers have trained Cape Verdian TEFL teachers at the Institute for Higher Education since the program began. Many education Volunteers work with youth after school in sports, music, or service organizations. For example, one Volunteer helped students participate in a World AIDS Day celebration on their campus. Several students took leadership roles in putting on the event, which included theater, music, and dance performances; guest speakers; games; and a poster and slogan contest. Volunteers have also worked with colleagues on a three-week summer camp and tutored business people in English.

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 the use of information technology as a tool for implementing sustainable, small-scale community development projects. They also advise small business entrepreneurs with the aim of increasing the profitability and viability of businesses and their access to credit. In 2002, vocational education Volunteers began teaching

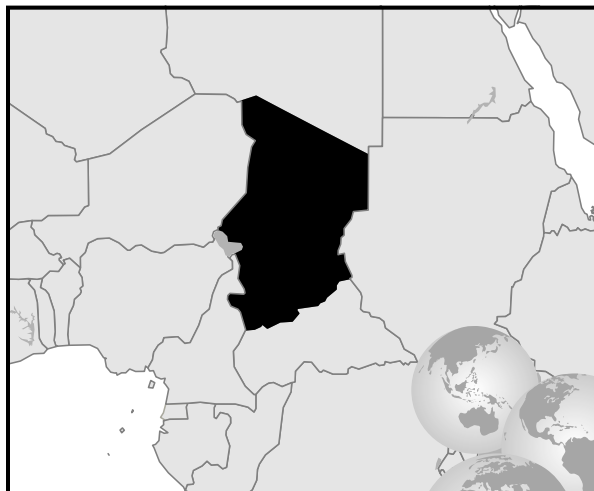
construction and electrical and mechanical engineering at technical high schools. Because of the high unemployment rate in Cape Verde and the need for vocational skills, vocational education will become an integrated part of the Peace Corps' community development program.

Youth

Because 41 percent of the population in Cape Verde is less than 15 years old, youth has become a major focus for Volunteers. In 2001, the Peace Corps agreed to provide Volunteers in municipal youth centers. 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.

"[In addition to my assigned work], I will be participating in an English teaching program on the local radio station, beginning my involvement with the women in development program by initiating an online newsletter, and hope to write and publish a basic naturalist's guide to my site to educate incoming Volunteers. My experience here has been extraordinarily positive. The people are engaging and intelligent, and the environment continually stimulating."

**Cape Verde Volunteer
Education sector**



Chad

Capital.....	N'Djamena
Population	8 million
Annual per capita income	\$200
GDP growth	8.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 47%
	Female: 64%
Infant mortality rate.....	117 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 27%
	Measles: 36%
Foreign direct investment.....	80 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 31%
	Rural: 26%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	3.6%
Major religions	Islam: 55%
	Christianity: 35%
	Indigenous beliefs
Official languages	Arabic, French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	28	56
Program funds (\$000)	1,522	2,202

Country Overview

Program dates	1966–1979
	1987–1990
	1990–1998
	2003–present

Program sector	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.

Over 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 proactive in maintaining civil order and internal security, especially with regard to 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—in 1979–1987, 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 will reestablish its program initially with a TEFL project. This project will provide a structural framework for Volunteers and their Chadian counterparts to follow, facilitating the development of future initiatives. In addition, the Peace Corps expects the Ministry of Education to provide support and advocacy at the ministerial level for future initiatives.

After six to eight months of experience in Chad, the Peace Corps program should be able to branch out with strategic planning for addressing community health and HIV/AIDS problems. All Volunteers in Chad, regardless of sector, will be trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteer Focus

Education

Approximately 20 Volunteers were recruited to teach English at the secondary school level in the Kanem, Lac, Chari-Baguirmi, Mayo-Kebbi, Tandjile, and Guéra prefectures. These regions are within a day's drive of N'Djamena, contain well over one-third of the total population, and have good relations with the current government, headed by Idriss Deby. Upon completion of their pre-service training in December 2003, Volunteers will work in secondary schools teaching English, incorporating HIV/AIDS education and prevention into their lessons. In addition, Volunteers will present innovative and participatory methodologies to their colleagues.

"We have been waiting for the Peace Corps with open arms to return to Chad. Our students as well as our country will greatly benefit from their presence."

Abdoulaye Beri
Counselor at the Embassy of Chad



President Amadou Touré of Mali made the Peace Corps the first official stop on his U.S. visit.



China

Capital.....	Beijing
Population.....	1.3 billion
Annual per capita income	\$890
GDP growth	7.3%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 7%
	Female: 21%
Infant mortality rate.....	31 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 79%
	Measles: 79%
Foreign direct investment	\$44.2 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 94%
	Rural: 66%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.10%
Major religions (<i>officially atheist</i>)	Buddhism
	Christianity
	Islam
	Taoism
Official language	Mandarin

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	47	84
Program funds (\$000)	782	1,221

Country Overview

Program dates 1993–2003
Suspended April 2003

Program sectors Education
Environment

Since 1979, China has been engaged in an effort to reform its economy. The Chinese leadership has adopted a pragmatic perspective on many political and socioeconomic 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 introducing 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 has exacerbated China's environmental problems, especially air pollution and soil erosion.

Program Focus

To assist in addressing 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 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 Chinese government has been extremely supportive of the Peace Corps, and the agency anticipates returning to China in the summer of 2004. The paragraphs that follow describe the sectors in which Volunteers were active prior to their departure.

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 desperately needed 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. But Volunteers also introduce American culture, history, and literature; stimulate critical thinking; and 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, started English language drama clubs for their students, and offered community lectures on American culture.

For two consecutive years, this senior was the oldest actively serving Volunteer. After completing her assignment in June 2003, she returned to the United States determined to recruit a new wave of seniors for the Peace Corps.

Environment

The purpose of the environmental education project is to bring about improvements in the health and living conditions of Chinese people by increasing their knowledge of environmental protection and sustainable development. Volunteers are posted at universities, colleges, and middle schools and work with Chinese teachers of English, biology, chemistry, and other topics relevant to the environment. They teach students, train Chinese teachers, and help develop curriculum for environmental education classes.

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 serve to protect local ecosystems. One Volunteer, who served as an environmental studies instructor at Sichuan University, designed and implemented an outdoor education summer course that centered on ecotourism. His university was so pleased with the success of the course that it now offers a semester-long course focused on developing students' outdoor survival skills.





Costa Rica

Capital.....	San Jose
Population	4 million
Annual per capita income	\$4,060
GDP growth	0.9%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 4%
	Female: 4%
Infant mortality rate.....	9 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 88%
	Measles: 82%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$454 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 99%
	Rural: 92%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.6%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 76%
	Evangelical Protestantism: 14%
	Others: 7%
	None: 3%
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	73	85
Program funds (\$000)	1,337	1,734

Country Overview

Program dates	1963–present
Program sectors	Education Youth

Costa Rica has maintained democratic institutions and an orderly, constitutional system for leadership succession. 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.

Costa Rica's major economic resources are fertile land, a well-educated population, and its location in the Central American isthmus, which provides easy access to North and South American markets and direct ocean access to the European and Asian continents. One-fourth of Costa Rica's land is dedicated to national forests, often adjoining picturesque beaches, which has made the country a popular destination for affluent retirees and eco-tourists. The number of tourists increased from 780,000 in 1996 to more than 1.1 million in 2001. In recent years, Costa Rica has successfully attracted important investments by companies such as Intel Corporation, Microsoft, Procter and Gamble, Abbott Laboratories, and Baxter Healthcare.

Program Focus

Since 1963, over 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. In the 1990s, the focus changed to support economic liberalization, community education, and environmental issues and, more recently, the problems of youth at risk 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

Volunteers assigned to this program work on project planning and community development conducted in collaboration with Dirección Nacional de Desarrollo de la Comunidad, the national community 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: (1) organizational development of local associations and governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including women's and youth groups; (2) income generation for small businesses and households; and (3) formal and nonformal education.

One Volunteer in this program worked with a community association to locate local resources provided by Habitat for Humanity to construct homes for families in need of safe and healthy homes. Other Volunteers are coordinating with women's groups to plan, design, and implement income-generating projects. Two of the groups are already in business (with a butterfly farm and agricultural production). Additionally, two Volunteers have trained board members of a community association how to prepare and write project proposals to seek funding for projects. A project to build a community park has already received funding.

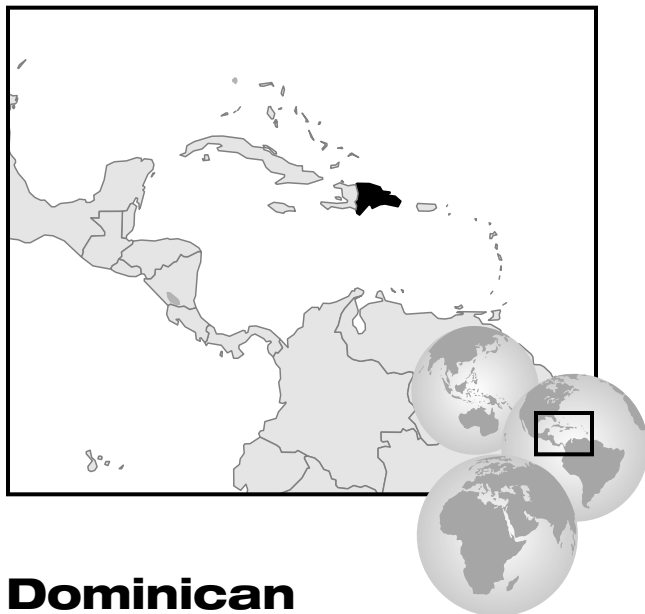
Youth

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; strengthen the capacity of Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (Costa Rica's child welfare agency), as well as marginal communities, by developing projects that address the needs of youth and families; and provide information and training to increase awareness of the rights of children and the needs of youth and families.

One Volunteer has worked to create a prevention program focused on the increasing problem of domestic violence. The Volunteer works with sixth graders and in high schools, helping empower young women to recognize the cycle and young men to break the cycle of a social illness hidden in many aspects of the culture. Further, 15 Volunteers provided individual tutoring for students enrolled in the educational system. Participants included students with learning difficulties, hostel residents, students at risk of failing, and night school students.

"In our institutions as well as in our communities, the support of the Volunteers, who bring an attitude and aptitude for work with this type of population, is supremely necessary."

**Alvaro Montoya Martinez
Former Associate Director
Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI)**



Dominican Republic

Capital.....	Santo Domingo
Population	9 million
Annual per capita income	\$2,230
GDP growth	2.7%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 16%
	Female: 16%
Infant mortality rate	41 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 62%
	Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.2 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 90%
	Rural: 78%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	2.5%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	171	163
Program funds (\$000)	2,351	2,970

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Agriculture 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 last election, held in August 2000, brought President Hipólito Mejía to power. The next presidential elections are scheduled for May 2004.

While the Dominican economy grew at a strong rate through most of the 1990s and until 2001, significant human development needs still exist. The country suffers from marked income inequality; the poorest half of the population receives less than one-fifth of GNP, while the richest 10 percent enjoys 40 percent of the national income. In 2002 and 2003, inflation began to grow significantly as economic growth became stagnant.

Program Focus

Since 1962, 3,700 Volunteers have provided development assistance to the people of the Dominican Republic. Volunteers work in six sectors in rural and marginalized urban areas.

The Peace Corps enjoys a great deal of support from the government of the Dominican Republic, not only because of Volunteers' commitment but because Volunteers contribute to those areas identified by the government as priorities: assisting the rural and urban poor and striving to improve agriculture, health, education, the environment, and community economic development. The youth program is both a stand-alone program aimed at marginalized youth and families and a common focus of all other programs. Information and communication technology is also a major component of Peace Corps programming in the country. The Peace Corps has a comprehensive strategy to develop the border region with Haiti.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

Volunteers assist in improving the technical knowledge of small-scale farmers, encouraging them to adopt more efficient and sustainable agricultural practices, such as soil conservation, integrated pest management, organic farming, and water management. Volunteers promote improved nutrition and income generation among women and youth by providing support in the areas of small-animal production and organic gardening. They also provide technical assistance to over 680 persons in 73 agricultural organizations.

Business Development

Volunteers assist farmer associations, micro-finance institutions, and rural communities by strengthening their capacity and providing training in business and information and communication technology. Volunteers also develop and conduct business and leadership training for youth. In 2003, Volunteers trained 1,200 persons in 68 community organizations in aspects of economic and organizational development, project planning, and accounting.

Education

The primary focus of the education project is to use information and communication technology to improve teaching and learning. Volunteers train teachers and students in basic computer skills and assist in improving the quality of education by incorporating technology in the classroom. Volunteers also create technology youth groups and help schools develop ways in which the community can access their technology resources. A large number of Volunteers are assigned to communities in the border area with Haiti, one of the poorest areas of the country. In 2003, Volunteers trained more than 500 teachers to use technology as a teaching methodology and trained over 1,700 students to use computers to facilitate learning.

In addition, Volunteers work to create awareness among teachers and their community of ways to best support students with special learning needs. They train teachers in techniques to identify special-needs students and methodologies to provide those students with quality education. In

2003, Volunteers held workshops to train over 200 teachers on identifying and working with children with special needs and trained over 700 teachers to develop didactic materials and classroom management skills.

Environment

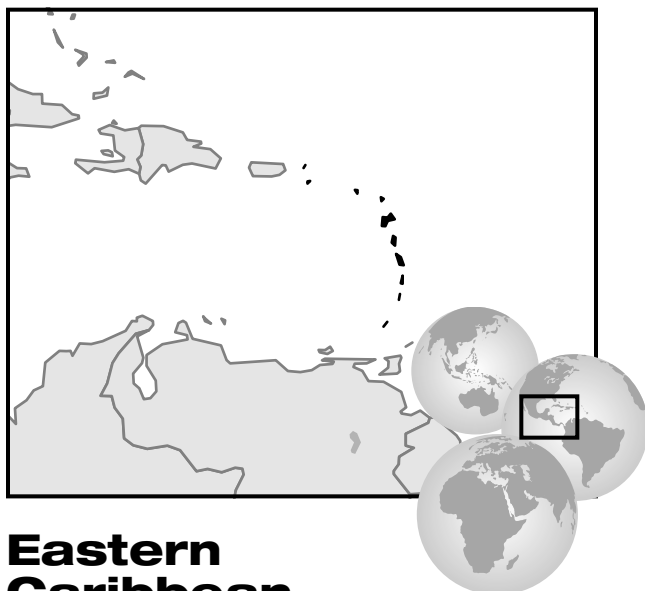
Volunteers work with project partners to address the problems of deforestation and general deterioration of the environment. In 2003, Volunteers helped plant over 140,000 trees and establish tree nurseries whereby 20 percent of farmers will increase their income as a direct result of improved conservation practices. Also in 2003, Volunteers trained over 1,100 rural schoolteachers and youth in environmental education and integrating this subject into the curriculum. The project has evolved to reach rural community leaders, nongovernmental organizations, the urban poor, and protected areas with a focus on ecotourism and biodiversity.

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 the rate of HIV infection. Therefore, all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness. In 2003, Volunteers trained over 30 youth as HIV/AIDS prevention trainers. In addition, water and sanitation Volunteers helped build six gravity flow aqueducts, which provide potable water to over 2,000 community members. They also helped build over 100 latrines and trained 330 families in hygiene and sanitation.

Youth

In 2002, Peace Corps/Dominican Republic launched a project aimed at youth, families, and communities in marginalized areas. Volunteers provide assistance in strengthening youth groups and community organizations that improve family communication and parenting skills. They also strengthen groups that work with highly vulnerable youth. Also in 2002, the Peace Corps helped launch a national initiative to engage all Dominican youth in service learning.



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 93,000

Average annual per capita income \$4,480

Average GDP growth..... -1.9%

Average adult illiteracy rate 7.5%

Average infant mortality rate 15 per 1,000 live births

Average immunization rate..... DPT: 92%
 Measles: 93%
 (excluding St. Kitts and Nevis)

Average foreign direct investment \$28.7 million
 (excluding St. Kitts and Nevis)

Average access to safe water 94%
 (excluding St. Kitts and Nevis)

Average HIV/AIDS prevalence..... Not available

Major religions Protestantism
 Roman Catholicism

Official language English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	121	133
Program funds (\$000)	3,010	3,579

Country Overview

Program dates	1961–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

One major advantage of working in the Caribbean is the ability of the Peace Corps to operate in an environment of political stability. 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 among the member states. They were also successful 30 years ago in establishing CARICOM, a union that governs trade in the region. All of the governments of the Eastern Caribbean 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. In addition, 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 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 3,100 Volunteers have served on various island nations throughout the region. Peace Corps/Eastern Caribbean placed new Volunteers on the island nation of St. Kitts and Nevis in February 2004. Volunteers were initially assigned to work in education, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, business, and health. However, given the many social and economic problems facing Eastern Caribbean youth, who make up about 60 percent of the population, the program was redesigned to focus on the educational, health, employment, and life-skills needs of

at-risk youth. Volunteers work under the umbrella of one youth and community development project in several subsectors: special education, health and HIV/AIDS, information and communication technology, and small business development.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers work with nongovernmental organizations, village councils, and other community-based organizations in developing business plans, in improving management and communication systems, and in grant writing and fundraising. Volunteers are collaborating with nongovernmental organizations to set up an umbrella agency that will enable the organizations to network and effectively use available resources. On two of the islands, Volunteers have been instrumental in the establishment of Big Brothers Big Sisters programs and in the training of the organization's executive members.

Volunteers also assist institutions that work with the disabled. One Volunteer worked through a government ministry to provide support to seven homes for the elderly. The Volunteer, through a Small Project Assistance grant, was able to train all staff members of the homes in basic care techniques. She established a network among the managers, who now meet monthly and publish a quarterly newsletter that is circulated to several islands in the Caribbean.

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 have also transferred teaching techniques and methodologies to their counterparts in schools and provided support to parents.

One Volunteer worked with autistic children in primary schools by helping to develop their artistic skills. The children's progress was so phenomenal that several of their entries were submitted in international competitions and a national exhibit was held of the children's work.

In secondary schools and vocational training institutions, Volunteers provide training in the use, maintenance, and repair of computers. In teacher-training institutions, they strengthen the capacity of teachers to deliver similar programs in schools. Three Volunteers are working with ministries of education and technology to develop and integrate IT policies into schools' curricula.

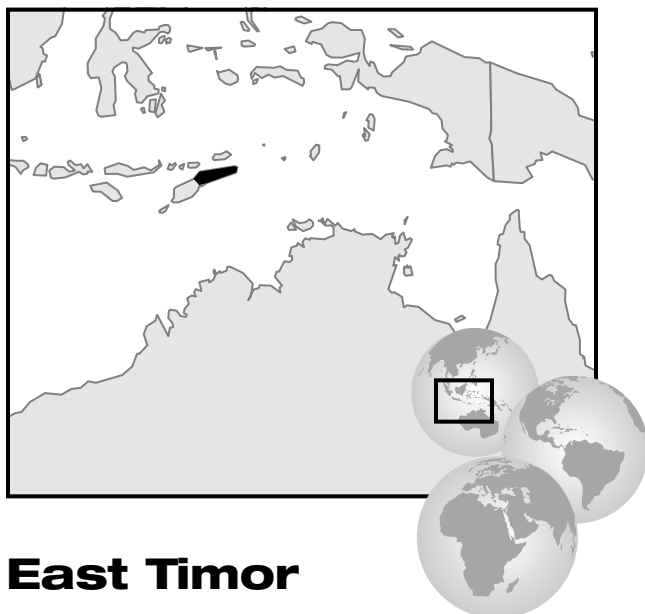
Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work in ministries of health, assisting in the development of national HIV/AIDS policies. In primary health care centers, Volunteers provide training and disseminate information to nurses and other health professionals. Three Volunteers collaborated to produce a health education manual that focused on primary health care and HIV/AIDS. The 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.

Some Volunteers are working at the preschool, primary, and secondary levels in an attempt to bring health messages to the classroom. One Volunteer who works with preschool and nursery classes has used dolls and puppets to emphasize basic health and improve self-awareness and self-esteem among her young students. Another Volunteer has developed a manual to assist students in the areas of assertiveness, decision making, behavior modification, and HIV/AIDS. The manual is now used as a guide for teachers and Volunteers on the island.

Youth

With many communities composed predominantly of out-of-school and out-of-work youth, there are plenty of opportunities for meaningful intervention by Volunteers in providing life skills to at-risk youth. Volunteers capture the imagination and energies of youth in after-school programs. One Volunteer is engaged in the rehabilitation of female juvenile delinquents. Another worked in a rural community at a home for abandoned boys, where he introduced alternative correction methods, a merit system for good behavior, and individual counseling sessions for the boys. The Volunteer's work as a caring mentor and role model has improved the morale of both the boys and the staff at the home.



East Timor

Capital.....	Dili
Population	794,298
Annual per capita income	\$478
GDP growth	18%
Adult illiteracy rate	57%
Infant mortality rate	80 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	Not available
Foreign direct investment.....	\$54 million
Access to safe water	46.3%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.64%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 91%
	Protestantism: 3%
	Islam: 2%
	Hinduism: 0.3%
	Buddhism: 0.1%
Official language	Portuguese

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	35	49
Program funds (\$000)	1,413	1,823

Country Overview

Program dates	2002–present
Program sectors	Business Development Health and HIV/AIDS

East Timor achieved independence on May 20, 2002, after three years of governance by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, whose mandate was to help the Timorese form their own government. While that mission was largely accomplished, the United Nations still plays a significant supporting role under the United Nations Mission in East Timor. Although the nation is fully independent, the special representative to the secretary-general of the United Nations holds advisory powers and, together with remaining UN-funded project managers, still has considerable influence.

East Timor's domestic economy is slowly being created based on the cultivation of coffee (for export) and rice (for both local consumption and export). Among the poorest nations in the world, East Timor in 2002 ranked as the poorest nation in eastern Asia. Over 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 be able to recover nearly \$180 million per year in royalties from oil sales in five years' time, although treaties with the Australian government are still being negotiated. There is also evidence of oil and gas deposits on the island itself, but so far no economically exploitable fields have been identified.

Program Focus

The first group of 19 Volunteers in East Timor arrived on June 21, 2002, and began working in municipal development and community health services promotion, which were identified as the first two development sectors to be addressed. Peace Corps Volunteers were the first international volunteers to be trained in the local language and to use these skills to work at the grass-roots level.

After just over a year, the Peace Corps expanded its projects in health to include water and environmental sanitation. It is pursuing an integrated rural health strategy whereby Volunteers in the health ex-

tension project complement the work of Volunteers who focus on safe drinking water and improved domestic sanitation systems. The Peace Corps anticipates that both the health and the municipal development programs will continue to grow and incorporate additional initiatives focused on youth, gender, and community planning.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers focus on community development by helping emerging local governments establish efficient administrative and management practices in providing basic services to communities. Volunteers work with community leaders and organizations to plan community development projects and identify local and national resources to meet the needs of community members. Many Volunteers have assisted districts in rebuilding damaged or destroyed schools and public buildings, allowing these institutions to again deliver education to youth and public services to the greater community. One Volunteer worked closely with the district administration to rehabilitate the sole kindergarten in the area. The project involved local women's groups, youth groups, and a variety of other community organizations to ensure popular participation and ongoing support for the school. Another Volunteer wrote a

guide on small business development in the local language and secured funding to distribute it to local organizations such as a farmers cooperative.

Health and HIV/AIDS

The target populations of health Volunteers are primarily youth and women (and their young children). Volunteers teach general health education in coordination with existing programs; assist teachers, especially in primary schools, in the design of lesson plans and the creation of didactic materials for health care education; investigate the availability of local resources for health promotion; and promote the activities of existing health systems in communities. A Volunteer working with the Ministry of Health created a series of coloring books for children under seven. The books, which are the first materials for young children in East Timor, were illustrated by a local artist and cover key topics such as hygiene and hand washing.

Volunteers have been directly involved in the design and implementation of the country's first national health promotion strategy and were actively involved in the success of the first series of national immunization campaigns. In addition, a Volunteer trained all community health workers in her district to facilitate interactive workshops, using skits and participatory activities to teach communities about health issues.

"The challenges I face as a Volunteer in East Timor are many times greater than what I've seen in other countries, but then the need for the kind of work

Peace Corps Volunteers do is many times greater as well."

**East Timor Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Ecuador

Capital.....	Quito
Population	13 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,080
GDP growth	5.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 7%
	Female: 10%
Infant mortality rate	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.3 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 90%
	Rural: 75%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.3%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	150	161
Program funds (\$000)	2,970	3,684

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth Development

Ecuador's government, peacefully elected in 2002, is focusing on poverty alleviation, economic reforms, and anticorruption efforts. The new government faces an array of challenges, including the need for serious fiscal and governmental reforms and the impact of Colombia's civil war on its northern border.

The Ecuadorian economy is based on petroleum production and exports of bananas, shrimp, and other primary 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 the poverty level.

Program Focus

Ecuador first welcomed Peace Corps Volunteers in 1962. Since then, more than 5,300 Volunteers have served in this Andean nation. 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. To better help poor communities deal with the economic crisis, 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 assist farmers and cooperatives in improving their business and marketing skills.

In 2003, Volunteers worked with Ecuadorian communities to perform approximately 30 feasibility and marketing studies that introduced over 150 small business leaders to the topic and led to the marketing of recycled products by a small business over the Web.

Business Development

In 2003, Volunteers continued to expand an innovative community banking project that has been successful in over 100 communities. The microbanks help teach people how to save and manage their finances. They also provide available funds to rural families, which has become particularly important in the midst of 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 2003, Volunteers promoted environmental education in schools, land management by farmers in buffer zones, soil conservation, and income-generating activities to the benefit of 5,000 Ecuadorians. Results can be seen in outputs such as the sale of 200 native tree species in one community's weekly market and the doubling of two women's vegetable production.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Malnutrition affects 60 percent of Ecuadorian children under the age of five. To respond to this critical problem, Volunteers provide their communities with training in nutrition and family gardens. They also provide HIV/AIDS education in their communities.

In 2003, Volunteers trained more than 1,000 persons and 100 teachers in education on HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. In addition, micronutrient classes, in conjunction with family gardening, have enhanced the nutritional intake of many families.

Youth

Volunteers work with youth and families at-risk 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 2003, Volunteers coordinated a range of activities that directly reached more than 12,000 at-risk youth. Volunteers worked with them to improve reading skills, self-esteem, and critical thinking skills. They also trained youth and families at risk in HIV/AIDS prevention. Volunteers helped young people develop and strengthen their own microenterprises and encouraged them to participate with their families in community banking projects.

"Living in the U.S., I had no idea what the term 'marginalized urban youth' meant.

When I arrived in my site in Ecuador, I learned that all of the youth had some pretty amazing talents and abilities under their rough exteriors. Some of them were artists or musicians; some knew about carpentry and masonry; some were excellent athletes.

So we started capitalizing on their skills. We painted murals, we built a community library, and we organized a soccer tournament for the neighborhood children. And little by little, I began seeing them less and less often sitting on the street corner with their cigarettes."

**Ecuador Volunteer
Youth Sector**



El Salvador

Capital.....	San Salvador
Population	6 million
Annual per capita income	\$2,040
GDP growth	1.8%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 18%
	Female: 23%
Infant mortality rate.....	33 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 99%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$268 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 91%
	Rural: 64%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.6%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 55%
	Protestantism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	115	111
Program funds (\$000)	2,102	2,675

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1979 1993–present
Program sectors	Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The government of El Salvador is currently 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, 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 have assisted the government and local NGOs in distributing resources to the most affected communities.

As the smallest and 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 the displacement of communities. Furthermore, these natural disasters 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. Since then over 1,500 Volunteers have served in the country. The program was closed in 1979 because of civil war and reopened in 1993 after the war ended. Currently, approximately 150 Volunteers are working in the areas of business development, environmental education and agroforestry, and health.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

The progress of municipal development in El Salvador has been stalled by low levels of formal education, a lack of administrative experience, low revenues, and an unstructured tax base. As decentralization continues throughout the country, Volunteers are helping municipal governments improve service delivery to citizens through public awareness activities, strategic planning, budget development, and use of information technology.

One Volunteer set up a computer learning center under a local government's auspices. Another conducted a needs assessment with the local health promoter, going door to door to 450 households in the urban center.

Environment

Deforestation and the resulting soil erosion have affected over 80 percent of the nation's territory, according to El Salvador's Hydrological Census Service, and have thus 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 assisted a coffee growers cooperative in connecting with a U.S. buyer to market their organic and gourmet coffee. Another promoted and helped teachers carry out a reforestation campaign with students.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work to increase access to potable water and improve sanitation for rural residents by building and maintaining water systems. Community groups formed to strengthen monitoring continue to be the primary method by which Volunteers educate people on the maintenance and management of water systems and latrine projects. Volunteers work with these groups to expedite communication and cooperation with several 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 sanitation project. Working with rural health promoters from the Ministry of Health and local NGOs, Volunteers develop educational materials, provide organizational support, conduct house visits, and assist with seminars on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

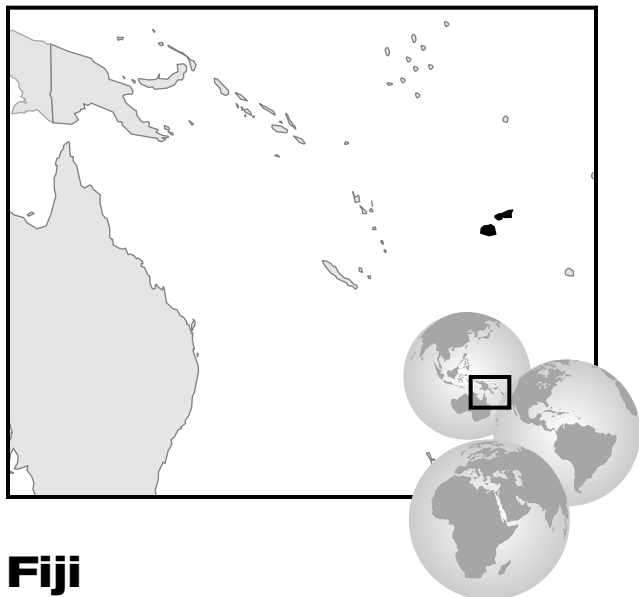
"My first thought upon hearing of my assignment was what I could do to help build a water system.

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."

**El Salvador Volunteer
Health Sector**



A Volunteer shares her IT knowledge with local youth in a community center.



Fiji

Capital.....	Suva
Population	817,000
Annual per capita income	\$2,150
GDP growth	2.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	7%
Infant mortality rate	14.5 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90%
	Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	-\$3 million
Access to safe water	47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Major religions	Christianity: 52%
	Hinduism: 33%
	Islam: 7%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	45	68
Program funds (\$000)	1,363	1,717

Country Overview

Program dates	1968–1998 2003–present
Program sectors	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. The Indo-Fijians' major voting bloc is made up of sugar cane farmers, who have used widespread boycotts of the sugar industry as leverage to gain political influence. 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, resulting in shortages in service sectors such as education and health care. Furthermore, a recent study found that 50 percent 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 low foreign investment rates and uncertain property rights.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps has a long history of service in Fiji, as Volunteers served there from 1968 to 1998. In those 30 years, Volunteers worked in a variety of 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. After a positive assessment, the Peace Corps reentered Fiji, with the first group of Volunteers, 26 in all, arriving in September 2003. Ample programming opportunities exist, but initial projects will address nonformal education needs in the environmental education, health, and youth sectors.

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 is expected to result in increased food security, improved diet and nutrition, greater awareness and involvement from women and youth in environmental projects, and increased income generated from sustainable ecological tourism.

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. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health's Center for Health Promotion and Australian Aid, 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.

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 concentrate on building organizational capacities and improving the outreach programs conducted by youth-related service providers, both locally and internationally.

**"We need the Peace Corps' energy
and enthusiasm—right now!"**

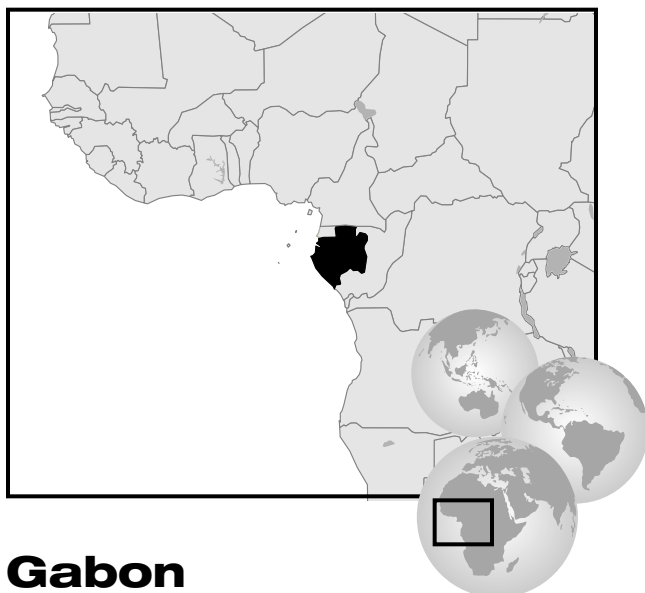
**Operations Director
Fijian Affairs Board**

**"I wouldn't be who I am today without
knowing a Peace Corps Volunteer.
She gave me confidence."**

Former Health Educator

**"This generation needs to know
the Peace Corps, needs
to know what hope is."**

**Minister of
Regional Development**



Gabon

Capital.....	Libreville
Population	1 million
Annual per capita income	\$3,160
GDP growth	2.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 20%
	Female: 38%
Infant mortality rate	60 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 38%
	Measles: 55%
Foreign direct investment:.....	\$200 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 95%
	Rural: 47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	4.16%
Major religions	Christianity
	Indigenous beliefs
	Islam
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	52	55
Program funds (\$000)	2,797	2,653

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. Abundant natural resources, a small population, and considerable foreign support have helped make Gabon one of the more prosperous African countries.

Gabon enjoys a per capita income more than 12 times that of most nations of sub-Saharan Africa, with a per capita purchasing power parity estimated at \$6,400. This has led to a sharp decline in extreme poverty; yet, because of income inequality, a large proportion of the population remains poor. 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. The emphasis is 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.

Education

At the request of the government of Gabon, the Peace Corps started a new education program in June 2002. Twelve TEFL Volunteers have been teaching English to 2,317 students (1,214 males and 1,103 females) using a variety of teaching methods. For example, about two-thirds of 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. Their instruction is designed to develop critical thinking, build self-esteem, develop goal-setting abilities, and encourage responsible behavior. Volunteers also serve as role models for their counterparts by demonstrating motivation to work and 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.

Environment

Environmental education Volunteers work with schoolteachers and students to incorporate environmental themes into the classroom and organize environment clubs in secondary schools. In addition, they work with communities to address environmental issues and promote HIV/AIDS awareness. In 2003, six Volunteers procured funding to promote agroforestry and biodiversity conservation and to plant fruit trees in various communities. Volunteers and school inspectors participated in a community

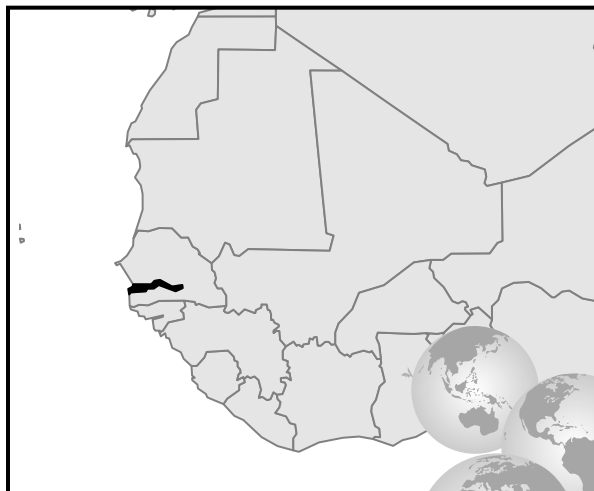
content-based instruction seminar, which promoted partnerships between schools and the community in addressing community issues. Peace Corps/Gabon also worked with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Water and Forest to help Gabon join GLOBE (Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment). Volunteers work equally with local and international NGOs on various biodiversity conservation and ecotourism initiatives in Gabon. 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 are also involved in establishing peer educator groups, organizing vaccination campaigns, and developing seminars for village health workers. In 2003, Volunteers and their counterparts taught health lessons at medical centers in 20 districts and four provincial hospitals. With women and girls as the target group, they provided educational sessions to 650 women and 450 girls. Some of the mothers who participated came back to seek further information regarding reproductive cycles, how to treat diarrhea, and the type of food to give to babies who have diarrhea.

**"Volunteers establish the bridge to the grass-roots level communities
that national health specialists barely do with a lot of difficulties."**

**National Director of Information
Education and Communication Department
Government of Gabon**



The Gambia

Capital.....	Banjul
Population	1 million
Annual per capita income	\$320
GDP growth	6.0%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 55%
	Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate	91 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 96%
	Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$36 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 80%
	Rural: 53%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.6%
Major religions	Islam: 92%
	Christianity: 4%
	Animism: 3%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	111	127
Program funds (\$000)	1,655	2,266

Country Overview

Program dates	1967–present
Program sectors	Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The Gambia has had a series of stable governments since its independence from Great Britain in 1965. 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 has a limited agricultural base. Seventy-five percent of the population depends on the agriculture and natural resource sectors for its livelihood, but over the past two decades, production of cash and food crops has steadily declined. This decline is directly attributable to environmental degradation. Small-scale manufacturing features the processing of peanuts, fish, and 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 over 1,300 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.

Volunteer Focus

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 are heavily engaged in the promotion of e-learning, teaching computer literacy, and streamlining business operations using computer technology. Two Volunteers have improved the operation of Internet cafes in the greater Banjul area. Math and science education Volunteers have established science labs at the local university and work with teachers to promote the use of the labs as a complement to classroom teaching.

Environment

Volunteers work on a variety of environmental education projects. 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). Others work extensively with women on community garden projects. In 2003, several Volunteers held beekeeping workshops in different villages that each attracted over 100 community members. The classes ensured that rural Gambians could construct and maintain beehives and enabled them to look forward to a proven revenue stream from the honey they will produce.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work in rural areas, where the majority of the population lives, most engaged in subsistence farming. Volunteers design and implement activities that raise awareness of common health problems and strategies for preventing them. In 2003, a Volunteer mobilized a community to construct 86 pit latrines, one in each compound, where none had previously existed. Two Volunteers worked with local counterparts to combine HIV/AIDS education and sports coaching, reaching many young Gambian boys and girls with important information about preventing HIV/AIDS. Another Volunteer designed a system that enabled the divisional health team to track disease trends and the consumption rate of drugs by local health facilities.

“The Peace Corps has contributed greatly to the computerization efforts of the Department of State for Education. It is our desire to provide computers to all schools in the Gambia. Peace Corps/The Gambia’s Take Our Daughters to Work program and science clinics for girls have brought increased attention to possibilities available to girls.”

Gambian Secretary of State for Education

“I received way more than I gave, but I also feel I have made a major impact on at least ten people and a minor impact on many more. I enjoyed my experience. I was very fulfilled in my project.”

Gambia Volunteer Education Sector



Georgia

Capital.....	Tbilisi
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$590
GDP growth	4.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	1%
Infant mortality rate	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 86%
	Measles: 73%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$160 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 90%
	Rural: 61%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major 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 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	41	49
Program funds (\$000)	1,477	1,861

Country Overview

Program dates	2001–present
Program sector	Business Development Education

Georgia is located between the Black Sea and Azerbaijan to its west and east and Russia and Armenia to its north and south. The country faces the possible loss of two of its regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, because ethnic separatists, poor governance, and the presence of Russian military bases have prevented the government from exerting effective control over the entirety of its internationally recognized territory. Also because of the conflicts in these regions, Georgia has a large internally displaced population.

The Parliament, under the presidency of Eduard Shevardnadze, instituted wide-ranging political reforms that supported higher human rights standards, including religious freedom. Reforms were also being slowly implemented in education, health, and the judicial system, under guidelines set by the World Bank. However, violence against religious minorities, detainment of suspects before trial, and corruption continued. On November 23, 2003, President Shevardnadze resigned in response to demonstrations in Tbilisi protesting the results of the November 2 parliamentary elections. Following his resignation, the Georgian Supreme Court nullified the results of the elections and, in accordance with the Georgian Constitution, the speaker of the Parliament elected in 1999, Nino Burjunadze, became acting president. Presidential elections were held in January 2004, and Mikhail Saakashvili was inaugurated as Georgia's new president.

Georgia's main economic activities are agriculture (nuts, citrus fruits, wine, and spring water), manganese and copper mining, small industry, tourism, telecommunications, and transport. The country imports the bulk 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 activity remains below potential because of a poor fiscal situation, pervasive corruption, and arbitrary regulation implementation. Foreign direct investment has declined in recent years, and many donors are shifting their focus from humanitarian aid to technical and institution-building programs with an emphasis on key sectors such as energy.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps began operations in Georgia in 2001 with an education project. The Ministry of Education, individual schools, and communities recognize that English language skills can provide Georgians with many advantages. These include furthering education and advancing careers, accessing information and technology, forging closer relationships with Western democracies, 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 established a secondary English language education program, a university English lecture program, and a teacher-training program that focuses on English language skills and new teaching methodologies. 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 was organized in 2003. The program aims to provide organizational support to local NGOs, encourage accountability and transparency to target communities, and assist the 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 because of the work Volunteers already do with NGOs in their secondary projects—such as education and rehabilitation of internally displaced children—and the demand for more Volunteer assistance in NGO development has thus increased. 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

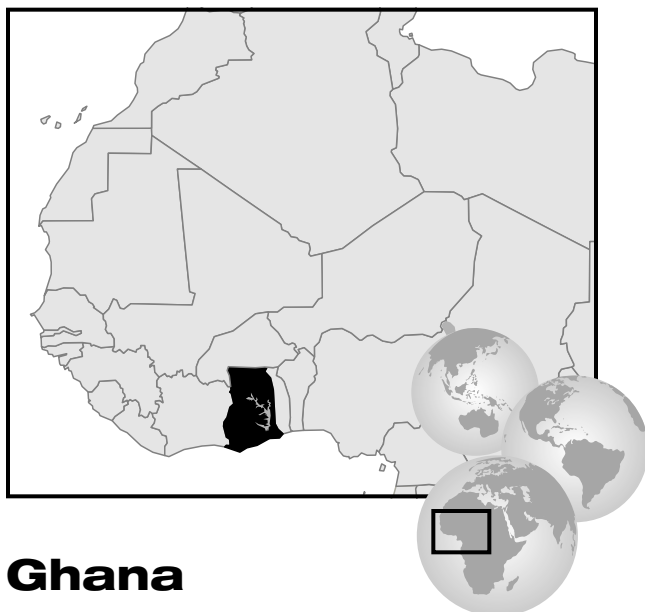
in provincial and rural public schools. Their primary activities are team teaching with Georgian colleagues, initiating and implementing extracurricular activities for the school community, collaborating with counterparts to develop curricula, and instituting alternative teaching methods. These activities complement the ongoing World Bank organized education reform program in Georgia.

As a result of the Peace Corps' activities, 60 secondary schools in nine regions of Georgia were able to pilot new English textbooks, introduce interactive teaching methodologies, and train over 100 Georgian teachers of English in new approaches in teaching, testing, assessment, and evaluation. Additionally, over 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. In addition, Volunteers arranged summer schools, Girls Leading Our World camps, and ecology camps through which over 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 school and community projects such as gym renovations, school reconstructions, creation of language labs, and garden and farm projects.

“We note with satisfaction and highly value the activities carried out by the Peace Corps in Georgia. The more than 70 Volunteers who have already been involved in the activities in Georgia represent the best traditions of Peace Corps Volunteers—dedication, compassion, and commitment.”

**Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Irakli Menagarishvili**



Ghana

Capital.....	Accra
Population	20 million
Annual per capita income	\$290
GDP growth	4%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 19%
	Female: 35%
Infant mortality rate.....	57 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 80%
	Measles: 81%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$89 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 91%
	Rural: 62%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	3%
Major religions	Christianity: 69%
	Islam: 16%
	Indigenous beliefs: 9%
	None: 6%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	151	165
Program funds (\$000)	2,565	3,010

Country Overview

Program dates	1961–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Ghana continues to enjoy a stable political environment despite increasing instability in West Africa. The presidential elections in late 2000 were peaceful and are leading Ghana in a new direction. When the current government assumed power in January 2001, it promoted a private-sector-led development approach heralded as the “Golden Age of Business.” The government remains committed to maintaining stability by extending and strengthening democratic institutions at the community level. Civil society organizations are emerging as active participants in framing the agenda of government. Parliament’s prominence as a dynamic arm of government is growing, and the press is free and vibrant. These measures are an incentive for the continued presence of international development and donor agencies.

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, and health trends are steadily improving. However, the economy grew by less than 4 percent in 2001, the lowest growth rate in a decade, and inflation is estimated at over 30 percent. As a result of these economic and social conditions, 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.

Program Focus

Ghana was the first country to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers. The first group arrived in Ghana on August 30, 1961, and since then, nearly 4,000 Volunteers have served in the nation. The work of Volunteers continues to be regarded by the government as a significant contribution to Ghana’s efforts to achieve community and national development.

The Peace Corps’ programming strategy is derived from a government economic recovery program initiated in 1983, and its current programs are consistent with the Ghana Poverty Reduction

Strategy of 2002. These strategies have served as the bases for the 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 in this sector are assigned to work with international and local nongovernmental agencies, local governments, and private sector associations, in both urban and rural areas. They focus on training in ecotourism, small business and microbusiness development, financial management, marketing, product quality, client servicing, standards, and credit availability for small entrepreneurs. Volunteers have won several awards from the Ghanaian government for their work in ecotourism. Volunteers also organize youth clubs to build self-esteem in young people, organize income-generating projects with People Living with HIV/AIDS, and teach HIV/AIDS awareness seminars to youth and adults.

Education

Education Volunteers work in 15 percent of Ghana's public senior secondary schools. They teach science, mathematics, and visual arts to over 7,600 students in rural schools and schools for the deaf. In addition to classroom teaching, Volunteers work closely with Ghanaian counterparts in the development of subject resource manuals, establish science resource centers and laboratories, and help identify and acquire computer and library resources in their schools. One Volunteer collaborated with her parents (who live in the United States and collectively have over 50 years of teaching experience), school administrators and teachers to organize a two-day workshop titled "Principles of Education Across Cultures" to present new teaching methodologies to 40 educators.

Environment

Volunteers in this sector partner with governmental and nongovernmental agencies to reduce environmental degradation—characterized by deforestation, diminished soil fertility, erosion, and disappearance of naturally occurring bodies of water—a constant issue in this region of the world. As agroforestry managers, Volunteers direct the

planting and sale of over 1 million seedlings each year around community schools, clinics, churches, community forest reserves, and woodlots. They help develop sustainable organizational structures among community groups in over 60 communities in order to transfer management of natural resource management projects to the groups and make the projects income generating. Twenty Volunteers work with over 50 junior secondary schools and 1,500 students each year to develop and implement environmental education and tree-planting projects.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers collaborate with community water and sanitation committees to promote behavioral change and help communities understand how they can address their own water and sanitation challenges. In 2003, 19 Volunteers assisted 42 communities with training to improve and maintain water wells and boreholes for clean drinking water and sanitation facilities. In some communities, Volunteers are working with outside organizations to extend piped water where the ground structure makes sinking of boreholes economically impractical. All health Volunteers work with the Ghana School Health Education Program to extend school-based health knowledge to homes and with local health clinics to extend services to the full community. In 2003, Volunteers conducted conferences on HIV/AIDS awareness that reached over 400 men, women, and children. They have integrated local groups of People Living with HIV/AIDS into their educational programs with support from a Volunteer coordinator fully dedicated to HIV/AIDS programming. Nearly one-third of health Volunteers are assisting the Ministry of Health and Global 2000 in awareness and training to eradicate the debilitating Guinea worm, which is endemic in the northern regions of Ghana.

"The Peace Corps' focus on combating HIV/AIDS in Ghana is crucial for the nation's progress. The disease, which could wipe out the nation's most dynamic population, [also] threatens the productivity and growth of Africa's economy."

**Ghanaian Vice President
Aliu Mahama**



Guatemala

Capital.....	Guatemala City
Population	12 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,680
GDP growth	2.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 23% Female: 38%
Infant mortality rate.....	43 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 82% Measles: 90%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$456 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 98% Rural: 88%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1%
Major religions	Protestantism Roman Catholicism Traditional Mayan
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	203	190
Program funds (\$000)	4,050	4,146

Country Overview

Program dates	1961–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth Development

Guatemala is a democratic republic with separation of powers and a centralized national administration. Reforms essential to implementing the 1996 peace agreement with rebel groups still await legislative action. The judiciary is independent. In 2001, the government raised several tax rates, increasing its tax burden to 12 percent of GDP; however, its tax burden still is one of the lowest in the region. Two candidates in the November 2003 presidential elections face a runoff on December 28, 2003. The new president will take office on January 14, 2004.

Guatemala is one of the most culturally and biologically diverse countries in Central America. It continues to struggle to meet its population's basic needs while also creating economic growth and preventing environmental degradation. About two-thirds of the population lives in poverty; many are of Maya origin and live at the margins of modern society. Lack of access to safe drinking water, proper waste disposal, and proper nutrition in rural areas has led to high rates of disease and malnutrition.

Program Focus

The program in Guatemala, which began in 1963, is one of the Peace Corps' oldest. Since the program started, some 4,000 Volunteers have served in Guatemala. Over 200 Volunteers now work in agriculture, business development, the environment, health, and youth.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

Fifty-two percent of Guatemala's economically active population works in agriculture. Peace Corps/Guatemala supports food security initiatives for subsistence-level rural families and improved income for small producers. 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 activities.

In 2003, a Volunteer formed a women's group to help them add value to their homemade products and taught the women marketing and negotiating skills.

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. Seventy-five percent of micro-enterprises are owned and operated by women. 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 -operated businesses and through the schools to teach practical skills designed to encourage entrepreneurial activity and teamwork. A Volunteer helped a small group of women increase their production and sale of crocheted blouses by setting up a website accessible by customers in the United States, who can pay by credit card.

Volunteers also work in municipal development to strengthen the capacity of municipal authorities to deliver quality services, to enhance municipal planning, and to increase citizen participation by directly involving local people in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of local development projects. Two Volunteers and local committees set up libraries with computers for public service. A Volunteer working with a small group that produces decorative candles from a natural wax saw the potential for growth and helped the group connect with U.S. fair-trade vendors, which led to a 30-fold increase in production.

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

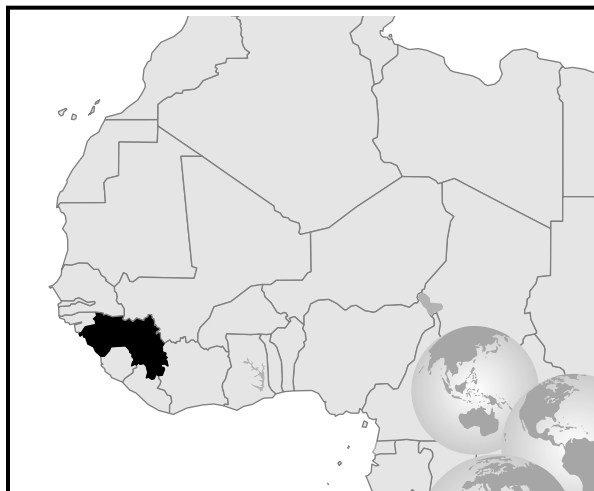
The poor health of rural families is related to poor personal hygiene, respiratory problems resulting from indoor cooking fires, and lack of access to safe drinking water. Volunteers work to improve the health of rural elementary school students through education, improved school and community sanitation, and promoting the participation of rural teachers and parents in activities to improve student health and hygiene. Volunteers also work to introduce a variety of low-cost technologies to improve family health, including wood-saving stoves, latrines, rope pumps, solar water heaters, water catchment systems, water tanks, and grain storage silos. One Volunteer started a radio program in which she speaks on different health themes each week.

Youth Development

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. Volunteers recently created a youth leadership manual that includes modules on organizing youth groups, planning small group activities, and the details of human development.

"I will never forget the honor I felt when the indigenous community with whom I work allowed me to take part in the religious ceremonies dedicated to the corn planting. I have been given the opportunity to see the beauty and magic of this country and the resiliency of its people. This experience has changed my perception of humanity."

**Guatemala Volunteer
Agriculture Sector**



Guinea

Capital.....	Conakry
Population	8 million
Annual per capita income	\$410
GDP growth	3.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 45%
	Female: 73%
Infant mortality rate.....	109 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 43%
	Measles: 52%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 72%
	Rural: 36%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.5%
Major religions	Islam: 85%
	Christianity: 8%
	Indigenous beliefs: 7%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	96	92
Program funds (\$000)	2,500	2,663

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1966
	1969–1971
	1985–present

Program sectors	Business Development
	Education
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS

Guinea was the first French colony in Africa to gain its independence, which occurred in 1958 under the leadership of Sekou Touré. Soon after President Touré's death in 1984, a military coup led by a colonel of the Guinean Army, Lansana Conté, took charge in the midst of a political dispute among high-ranking officials over succession. Conté subsequently became president and 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 the country's first multiparty elections. He was reelected at the end of 2003 in an uncontested election.

In 2001, a referendum was passed to extend 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, providing 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, over 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

Peace Corps/Guinea will initiate a small enterprise development project that will focus on two major cross-sector initiatives: empowering women and information technology. Volunteers will be placed in large to medium-size cities and towns in rural areas that have NGOs, local government agencies, businesses, cooperatives, or community groups in need of assistance with business training, marketing, and establishing sound accounting systems. Volunteers will also help individuals develop ideas into structured plans that can help fuel a successful business.

Education

Volunteers have been working 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 to nearly 6,000 students at 39 schools. 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. For example, Volunteers in each region of the coun-

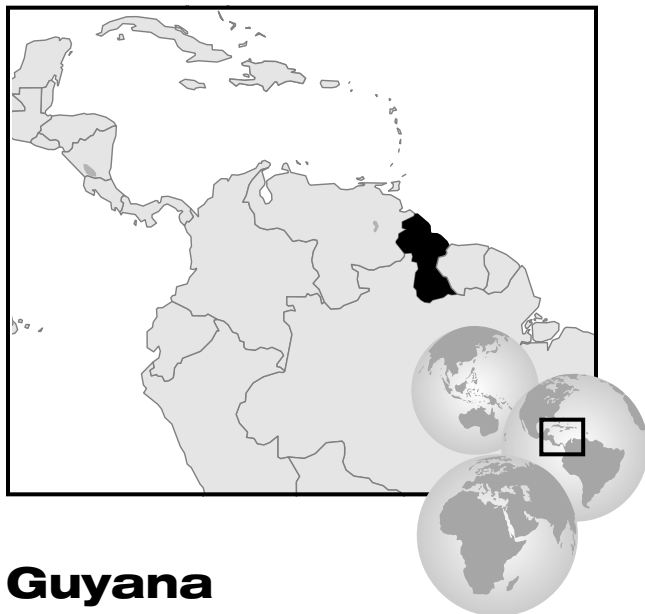
try hold an annual conference for high-school-age girls to help build self-esteem; teach health education, including protection against HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; and introduce career options for Guinean women.

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 communities' 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. In 2003, one Volunteer and his two counterparts introduced a new crop in their region and started an income generation project at the same time: They planted 27 hectares of cashews, which the community will harvest and reap benefits from.

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 (reproductive health, diarrheal control, malaria control, 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. In 2003, health Volunteers put extra emphasis on nutrition education, using the Hearth FARN (Foyer Amelioration et Rehabilitation Nutritionnel) model. In one village, over 80 percent of mothers with malnourished babies altered their cooking while still using local ingredients and significantly improved the health of their children.



Guyana

Capital.....	Georgetown
Population	766,000
Annual per capita income	\$840
GDP growth	1.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	1%
Infant mortality rate.....	54 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 95%
	Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.6 million
Access to safe water	94%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	2.7%
Major religions	Christianity: 57%
	Hinduism: 33%
	Islam: 9%
	Other: 1%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	60	64
Program funds (\$000)	1,369	1,757

Country Overview

Program dates	1967–1971
	1995–present

Program sectors	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, with people of African descent constituting 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 represents 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. The economy grew by an estimated 2.8 percent in 2001. Significant emigration since the 1960s has resulted in 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, over 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 nongovernmental organizations. They assist existing efforts to 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

Volunteers work with youth organizations and the Ministry of Education to provide at-risk youth with educational, personal, and life-skills development opportunities and thus enable 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 by giving them assignments such as developing a resume, writing letters of application, creating a personal job network, and laying out goals and plans.

Health and HIV/AIDS

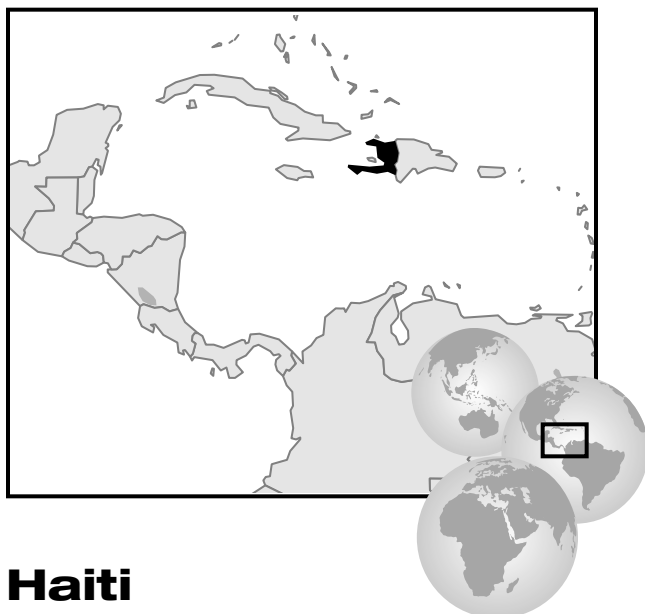
Volunteers work directly with health centers, NGOs, and communities to help them identify local and national resources, conduct community health assessments, design and implement health education, and train health center staff and community leaders. In their training and outreach efforts, Volunteers address the country's high HIV/AIDS rates in collaboration with nongovernmental organizations and provide health education sessions on HIV/AIDS prevention to youth. 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 global HIV/AIDS initiative.)



“Teaching is by far the hardest but most rewarding thing that I have ever done. I taught every day, and somehow it is I who learned the most from the lessons that I gave. I learned patience, dedication, motivation, and the most important element of education—the relationships that I made with the students. There were many obstacles and many challenges that I overcame with a smile and a ‘Good afternoon’ from a student.”

**Guyana Volunteer
Education Sector**

This naturalized American couple, serving together as Volunteers, “consider it a tremendous honor as Guyanese Americans to be able to return to our native land as representatives of our adopted country.”



Haiti

Capital.....	Port-au-Prince
Population	8 million
Annual per capita income	\$480
GDP growth	-1.7%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 47%
	Female: 51%
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	6.10%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 80%
	Protestantism: 16%
	Voodoo
Official languages	Creole, French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	71	74
Program funds (\$000)	1,601	2,074

Country Overview

Program dates	1982-1987
	1990-1991
	1996-2004
	<i>Suspended February 2004</i>

Program sectors	Agriculture
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS

Disputes resulting from the election of Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president in 2000 led to the withholding of millions of dollars in international aid to the government of Haiti. As a result of continuing disputes between the government and the opposition, political, social, and economic conditions in Haiti continue to deteriorate. Although the Organization of American States recently resumed its support of international aid to the government, poverty remains a serious problem.

With approximately 80 percent of the population living below the poverty level and unemployment 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. As a result, agricultural production has steadily declined, and the country's forest cover has been almost completely eliminated.

While Haiti continues to struggle with complex development challenges, millions of Haitians support themselves through microenterprise in the vast informal-sector economy. Over 90 percent of working-age Haitians, the majority of whom are women, earn income by selling goods in the streets or in crowded urban markets. Few have access to credit.

Program Focus

The work of Volunteers has become well known and respected in the country. The Peace Corps continues to enjoy an excellent relationship with the Ministry of Planning, whose former head has

frequently remarked in public that the Peace Corps is the best assistance the U.S. government provides to Haiti.

In the past seven years, Peace Corps/Haiti has set about to establish a sustainable development program that meets the needs of the Haitian people and, at the same time, sets up its Volunteers for success by ensuring their safety, security, and health.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

Volunteers serve as catalysts for local farming organizations and individual farmers by helping them identify community assets and use them to improve living standards. Volunteers also work to help farmers increase agricultural production. Over 100 families now have gardens that produce food for over 500 community members. One Volunteer helped organize a seminar on techniques for raising healthy goats in conjunction with the Rotary Club and the Veterinary Agents Association. The dozens of farmers who benefited from this seminar will be able to obtain continuing technical assistance from the veterinary agents. A strain improvement component was also part of the project.

Environment

Volunteers work with their communities to rehabilitate the environment through reforestation, soil conservation, and environmental education. As a result of their work, seven schools now include environmental education in their curricula. Some Volunteers work on alternative energy, offering sessions on the use of solar stoves and the making of briquettes (an alternative to wood charcoal that is composed of agricultural by-products and paper).

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers promote health education and raise health standards by teaching communities how to fight chronic malnutrition, stressing the importance of immunizations, sanitation, child and maternal health, and the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work primarily with women and children in collaboration with health agencies. One Volunteer and project partners built two irrigation systems to improve crop production and thus help decrease malnutrition. All Volunteers, regardless of their

project focus, are trained in HIV/AIDS prevention and education. Volunteers work in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to provide education and training to rural community members on the use of the CDC's testing stations.

"Unfortunately, I did not have a Peace Corps Volunteer 30 or even five years ago. But I've worked with one Volunteer for the last two years and I now know that the trees we planted and the fruit they produce are my retirement plan. My family will have food and money even when I don't have the energy to work."

**Haiti Project Partner
to Agriculture Volunteer**



Health Volunteer in Haiti



Honduras

Capital.....	Tegucigalpa
Population	7 million
Annual per capita income	\$900
GDP growth	2.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 25%
	Female: 24%
Infant mortality rate.....	31 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 95%
	Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$195 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 95%
	Rural: 81%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.60%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	256	281
Program funds (\$000)	3,615	4,436

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 to the presidency, outpolling the Liberal Party candidate by 8 percent. Observers considered the elections free and fair. During his campaign, President-elect 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. Plummeting world coffee prices in 2001 caused coffee export revenues to fall by 50 percent that year. Poverty and food insecurity are exacerbated by the effects of natural disasters such as Hurricane Mitch and the recent drought in which southern Honduras suffered a 100 percent grain loss. In addition, damaged and poorly protected water sources have placed millions at risk for malnutrition and disease. 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 over 5,000 men and women having served as Volunteers since the program's inception in 1963. Over the past 40 years, the Peace Corps

has helped Honduras achieve many positive results, including the creation and implementation of a national park system, expansion of the national education curriculum to include environmental education, reductions in infant mortality through education, and construction of water and sanitation systems.

Honduras is currently the largest program in the Peace Corps' Inter-America and the Pacific region, with over 250 Volunteers who work in the areas of child survival and health, business development, 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 exacerbated 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 2003, Volunteers held a workshop with members of four surrounding communities to train them in integrated farming and in pig and chicken care.

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 microentrepreneurs 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 work to increase the capacities of municipal governments by training municipal employees and authorities to better

manage the services they provide. In 2003, one Volunteer worked with municipal employees to write a manual outlining positions, work requirements, and duties, which will help in transitions between administrations.

Environment

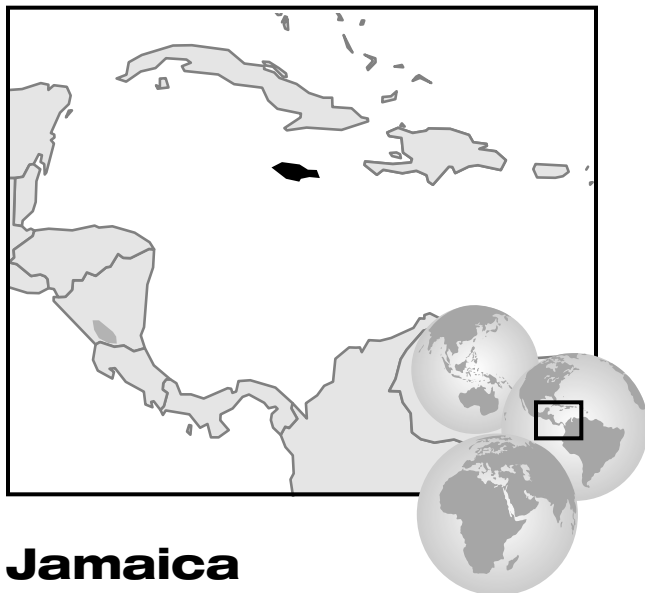
Honduran forest reserves are at risk of over-exploitation. Urbanization poses a major threat to watersheds and protected areas throughout the country. Volunteers work with the national forest service and local nongovernmental organizations to promote environmental awareness, sound micro-watershed management practices, and ecotourism among farmers and schools in communities adjacent to protected areas. In 2003, one Volunteer collaborated with several NGOs and municipal governments to train 30 teachers from three municipalities in how to integrate environmental education in schools and how to form environmental youth clubs.

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 2003, one Volunteer developed, implemented, and facilitated training programs to promote child survival strategies, maternal health care, and HIV/AIDS prevention activities among local health care professionals, volunteer health workers, traditional midwives, and students.

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 in their development as humans, citizens, family members, and professionals. This project was initiated in July 2003 with a group of 15 Volunteers.



Jamaica

Capital.....	Kingston
Population	3 million
Annual per capita income	\$2,800
GDP growth	1.7%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 17% Female: 9%
Infant mortality rate.....	17 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90% Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$614 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 98% Rural: 85%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.20%
Major religions	Anglicanism Judaism Rastafarianism Protestantism Roman Catholicism
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	122	131
Program funds (\$000)	2,527	3,165

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

In 2002, Jamaicans went to the polls to elect parliamentary representatives, returning the People's National Party to power. The historical election violence in urban areas did not occur, and the elections were deemed fair by international observers. In 2003, in a well-contested election for local government officials, the main opposition party, Jamaica Labor Party, won by a landslide, and most towns and major cities are now run by the JLP.

Pressures on the land and the rapid expansion of mining, tourism, and farming have caused significant degradation of watersheds, the pollution of ground and surface water, and urban sprawl. Ongoing hillside farming also contributes to soil erosion.

Jamaica is striving to strengthen its economy and escape from a burden of debt. Increased poverty resulting from inadequate educational programs, urbanization, and a sluggish economy has had a tremendous impact. Between 30 and 35 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and the government is struggling to provide the services and education that are needed to improve people's standard of living and promote productive enterprise. Providing opportunities to marginalized youth in urban areas is a main concern. With lack of opportunities in Jamaica, many Jamaicans immigrate to the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Last year's remittances from overseas translated into 12.2 percent of the GDP, making this inflow of money the largest source of net foreign exchange.

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, 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 investment and tourism on the island.

In response to Jamaica's development priorities, the Peace Corps is addressing these issues through programs in environmental education, health, water and sanitation, and education focusing on youth at risk. To take advantage of new development opportunities, in 2003 a pilot project was developed on information and communication technology. In 2004 a small business project will be integrated across all sectors to help urban and rural youth become more employable, develop their small business and marketing skills, and get access to microloans.

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, overfishing, removal of coral reef, and damaging hillside-farming practices. Volunteers work with NGOs, community colleges, and schools in establishing ecotourism and heritage tourism activities to educate primary school students on environmental awareness and protection. Community college students give tours of protected areas to local schoolchildren as a way to increase awareness and involve students in the conservation of Jamaica's environment. Volunteers have worked on projects ranging from designing and producing fisheries education posters to taping a radio program on goat-raising techniques.

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. To increase awareness of HIV/AIDS, Volunteers coordinate community

activities to coincide with World AIDS Day, such as assisting in radio programming and developing a best-practices manual in coordination with an HIV/AIDS nongovernmental organization.

Youth

Volunteers work with at-risk youth in rural and urban areas, focusing on three main activities: HIV/AIDS education and prevention, information and communication technology education, and youth development. Volunteers have helped agencies build computer laboratories and develop curricula to integrate computer education in remedial learning and after-school programs in schools and in alternative programs for school dropouts and street kids. Volunteers are also engaged in conflict resolution at the school and community levels.

"I am fascinated by the range of activities

Volunteers are involved in. Peace Corps/

Jamaica's [development work ranges] from

well-focused community projects in rural

areas to national policy formulation and in-

frastructure improvement. Although no two

Volunteer services are alike, there exists an

unbroken and common thread that charac-

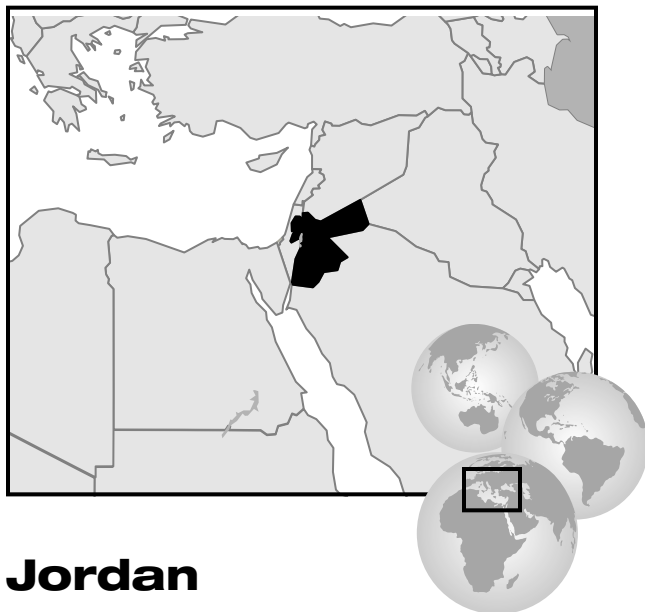
terizes the Volunteers' mere presence in a

community: the sense of warmth, satisfac-

tion, and accomplishment that comes from

working with the Jamaican people."

**Jamaica Volunteer
Health Sector**



Jordan

Capital.....	Amman
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,750
GDP growth	4.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 5% Female: 15%
Infant mortality rate.....	27 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 99% Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$100 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 100% Rural: 84%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Islam: 94% Christianity: 6%
Official language	Arabic

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	37	83
Program funds (\$000)	1,323	1,640

Country Overview

Program dates	1997–2002 <i>(suspended November 2002; reopened February 2004)</i>
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Program sectors	Education Youth
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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 inadequate education and primary health care services. These are areas to which the Peace Corps can contribute through programming initiatives and collaborative arrangements with other development and donor agencies.

Jordan is a small country with limited natural resources. Agricultural production has been impacted 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 second education, with specific emphasis on English fluency and computer literacy.

Because of security concerns, the Peace Corps suspended its program and withdrew its Volunteers in November 2002. The country director and Jordanian staff have 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 a relationship with the Peace Corps that began in 1997.

The Peace Corps plans to send two groups of Volunteers to Jordan in 2004: 25 English teachers arrived in February for placement in rural primary and secondary schools, and 10 special education and 15 youth and community development workers will begin service in July. This plan was developed in close cooperation with Jordanian partners—the Ministries of Social Development and Education and the Higher Council for Youth. A single group of 50 Volunteers scheduled to arrive in July 2005 will bring the average annual Volunteer population to 75, judged optimal for Jordan's size and development priorities. Possible areas for 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, thereby increasing access to higher education and employment. The project's focus is less on carrying full class loads and more on maximizing Volunteers as resources, as native speakers, and as modelers of innovative and interactive teaching methodologies. Volunteers also serve as consultants on design and delivery of regional teacher-training workshops. The success of this project is reflected in a recent statement by the Minister of Education that he would welcome as many teachers as the Peace Corps could recruit.

Special Education

The University of Jordan recently initiated a degree program in special education, and Queen Rania takes a strong interest in early childhood development and children with special needs, so this project represents a fruitful area for Peace Corps contributions. Volunteers are assigned to rural and semirural special education centers (some residential, some day) under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development. Beneficiaries served are challenged by a multitude of physical and mental disabilities.

Prior to the suspension of the program in Jordan, two Volunteers assigned to a regional residential center for the care and rehabilitation of the mentally disabled undertook a major art project, enlisting the aid of several notable Jordanian artists. Although they had to end their service prematurely, their Jordanian counterpart, the artists, and Peace Corps staff oversaw the successful completion of the project. An art exhibition held at a popular Amman restaurant was widely covered by the media, resulted in strong sales for the residential center, and enjoyed royal patronage. The momentum begun by Volunteers, and carried on by others, resulted in increased awareness of and respect for disabled citizens of Jordan and encouragement for their productive participation in the life of their country.

Youth

Volunteers are assigned to centers with a range of community services, predominantly youth-oriented. Activities include sports and recreation programs, health and fitness classes, and computer training, based on community priorities and the Volunteers' talents and interests.

For example, a collaboration by two Volunteers, one working with the Boy Scouts and the other with the University of Jordan's Community Services Office, brought together a group of 60 young Jordanians (boys from the village and students from the university) for a village clean-up project. The initial objective was environmental, but the personal exposure and organizational cooperation between these two groups were equally important.

"The new Volunteers have the strong support of the Jordanian government to make Peace Corps a featured program and a model program for the Middle East. King Abdullah II has reaffirmed his support of Peace Corps personally to me, and I am confident that the Volunteers will find the people of Jordan supportive, eager and excited to work with them."

**Peace Corps Director
Gaddi H. Vasquez**



Kazakhstan

Capital.....	Astana
Population	15 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,350
GDP growth	13.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: <0.5% Female: 1%
Infant mortality rate.....	21 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 98% Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.3 billion
Access to safe water	91%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.04%
Major religions	Islam: 47% Russian Orthodoxy: 44% Other: 7% Protestantism: 2%
Official languages	Kazakh, Russian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	146	169
Program funds (\$000)	2,052	2,724

Country Overview

Program dates	1993–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education

Since its independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has been a constitutional republic led by Nursultan Nazarbayev, its only president to date. Kazakhstan, the ninth largest country in the world, is enormously rich in natural resources, particularly oil and natural gas. Managing these opportunities for the benefit of citizens is a major challenge faced by the government. Kazakhstan's road from the centrally planned economy of the Soviet era to an ever-changing market-driven economy is an arduous one. The dichotomy between Soviet and Western lifestyles, values, and thinking has set the stage for an extended transition period.

In 1997, the capital was moved from Almaty to Astana, but many businesses and foreign organizations still operate out of the commercial district to the south. In addition to an abundance of petroleum resources, there is considerable agricultural potential throughout the country's vast steppe lands, which can be ideal for grain and livestock production.

Program Focus

In 1993, not long after the country declared its independence, President Nazerbayev 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. Volunteers create opportunities for those they work with through imparting knowledge in classrooms, computer labs, nongovernmental organizations, and communities.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers help improve the operations of local entrepreneurs, microfinance organizations, business incubators, and community development and business-related NGOs by creating business plans, developing office procedures, conducting seminars and workshops, and providing individual consultations.

With guidance from one Volunteer, the Almaty Chamber of Artisans hosted Kazakhstan's first Silk Road Festival, which attracted more than 70 artisans from all over Central Asia and thousands of visitors. Unfortunately, at the end of the festival, 32 artisans from Uzbekistan were stopped by the "tax police" and asked to pay a fine of \$3,500. Responding immediately, the Volunteer quickly sought financial support from the Eurasia Foundation to conduct seminars in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on the rights and responsibilities of artisans selling crafts in Kazakhstan.

Education

Education Volunteers teach English, economics, technology, American studies, and environmental subjects in secondary schools, colleges, universities, and teacher-training institutes. They also work in regional Ministry of Education centers, where they provide input on teacher-training and curriculum issues. One Volunteer and her students rewrote a popular guidebook's section on their city. Students researched all the local attractions, restaurants, and hotels, and their submission was accepted for publication.

Volunteers also work with educational institutions and environmental NGOs. They form partnerships with local teachers, students, scientists, and community members to raise the public's awareness of environmental issues, establish local and international networks, and organize environmental resource centers and environment-themed summer camps.

One Volunteer couple is involved in a community trash management project in which 40 large trash containers will be placed in public areas and emptied on a routine basis. Educational activities related to this project include advertising in the local paper the benefits of properly disposing of trash, holding an environmental awareness day in the town park, creating a small ecological resource center, and organizing a series of six continuing education and curriculum development workshops focused on trash and waste management for teachers of the town and surrounding villages.



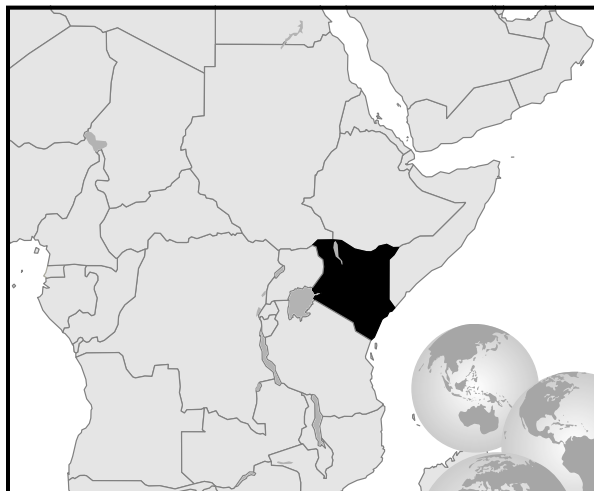
Market day, Kazakhstan

"I guess the thing that I didn't expect from the Peace Corps was the general fun, laughing and just having a great time with the locals, and also the innovative American Volunteers. It's hard work and serious business, but it has been such a great experience."

Kazakhstan Volunteer Education Sector

"Unselfishness and kindheartedness are the qualities young Kazakhstani citizens need to learn from Volunteers."

**Former Prime Minister
Kasymzhomart Tokayev**



Kenya

Capital.....	Nairobi
Population	31 million
Annual per capita income	\$350
GDP growth	1.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 11%
	Female: 23%
Infant mortality rate.....	78 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 76%
	Measles: 76%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$5 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 88%
	Rural: 42%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	15%
Major 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 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	199	202
Program funds (\$000)	2,942	3,635

Country Overview

Program dates	1965–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Since Kenya's independence from Britain in 1963, the first successful transfer of political power took place 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.

Kenya experienced economic growth after independence until the 1970s, but in the past two decades, Kenya's economy has been in decline, especially with regard to 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 suitable for cultivation. Kenya's economy is also heavily dependent on tourism.

Kenya ranks 146 out of 175 on the 2003 UN Human Development Index. About 50 percent of 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. Priorities of the new government include free primary education for all children, good governance, and combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Program Focus

Since 1965, more than 4,300 Volunteers have assisted the people and government of Kenya in meeting 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 involved in HIV/AIDS education, girls education, and information technology education across all current project sectors.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Business Volunteers assist Kenyans in establishing businesses and other income-generating activities by providing training and technical assistance in market expansion. Volunteers also work with Kenyan businesses to monitor the quality of their products, and gain access to credit, which increases their sales. Volunteers also teach computer skills to organizations and community members at local colleges. One Volunteer works with a women's handicraft group, providing advisory services and enhancing the women's technical skills. She has designed a website to boost sales. She also advises on product research and assists with product design to increase the quality of the goods that the group produces. Additionally, she promotes HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in every workshop and training session.

Education

Volunteers serve as HIV/AIDS educators in secondary and primary schools and work with schools and teachers to implement the government's new AIDS education syllabus.

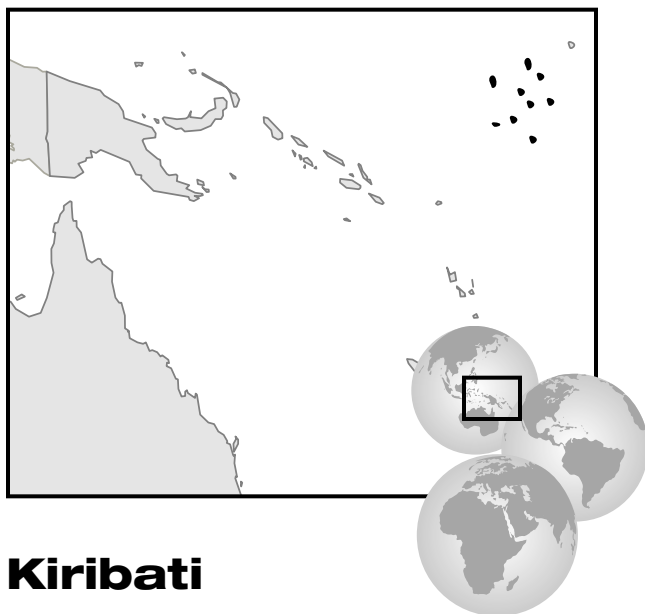
Kenyan teachers learn new teaching techniques from Volunteers to create more stimulating learning environments. One Volunteer has developed an HIV/AIDS resource manual for her school that is being used by other Volunteers in Kenya. Another Volunteer set up a computer laboratory powered by solar energy. Students now have the opportunity to learn new skills via the Internet to enhance their classroom learning. Volunteers teach at primary schools for the deaf and integrate deaf education into other educational activities. One Volunteer taught Kenyan sign language to a nursery school class of 17 students. By the end of the school term, students who previously had no language skills were able to express their needs and desires and tell the Volunteer stories about their lives.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, address key public health challenges through attitude and behavior change in local communities and among youth to reduce incidences of HIV/AIDS infection and waterborne diseases and to prevent malaria. Activities focus on prevention of mother-to-child transmission of AIDS, building pit latrines, building fuel-efficient stoves, and managing household waste through composting. The total number of individuals, service providers, organizations, and communities assisted in 2003 through these activities was 500 church members, 7,145 students, 14 peer educators, 50 pastors, and 28 community leaders.

"The look on the faces of these rural school-teachers says everything about my Peace Corps experience. As they get excited after a couple of days of computer training at our technical institute, they learn that computers are not such a scary thing and can be very useful to them and their students. Also, I know that working on finance, marketing, and operations issues with my Kenyan counterparts at the institute will help make this project sustainable so more teachers will have the same experience in the future."

**Kenya Volunteer
Business Development Sector**



Kiribati

Capital.....	Tarawa
Population	93,000
Annual per capita income	\$830
GDP growth	1.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Not available
Infant mortality rate	69 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 85% Measles: 76%
Foreign direct investment	\$1 million
Access to safe water	48%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 53% Protestantism: 39%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	46	49
Program funds (\$000)	1,230	1,479

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 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 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. The Ministry of Education recently noted that the contribution of Volunteers to outer island primary schools has helped to raise scores on national exams, resulting in more students winning admittance to secondary schools. Volunteers have also helped schools obtain teachers' reference books, children's reading books, encyclopedias, and more.

Since the inception of the Peace Corps program, several junior secondary schools have been established in the outer islands, providing youth with greater access to basic education. Volunteers are also involved in the revision of 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. Volunteers trained over 200 junior and senior secondary school teachers in new teaching techniques through observation and in-serving training. Sev-

eral Volunteers conduct after-school reading groups for underachieving students to encourage them to stay in school.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers in the health project educate communities on the prevention of common diseases and encourage behavior that promotes health and well-being. Volunteers work directly with families and communities at the village level, managing outreach 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, antismoking, and sports development. One Volunteer works on food security issues, including improving the labeling of food and expiration dates. An HIV/AIDS workshop, attended by Volunteers and their counterparts, broke new ground in raising the awareness of HIV/AIDS in a region that is only beginning to understand it.

"I-Kiribati always recognize me

as a Peace Corps Volunteer

because I speak the language.

Nothing is more fulfilling

than telling an I-Kiribati

a joke in their own language

and then both of us laughing!"

**Kiribati Volunteer
Education Sector**



Kyrgyz Republic

Capital.....	Bishkek
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$308
GDP growth	5.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 1% Female: 5%
Infant mortality rate.....	52 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 99% Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$5 million
Access to safe water	77%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Islam Russian Orthodoxy
Official languages	Kyrgyz, Russian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	155	159
Program funds (\$000)	1,496	1,940

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 multicandidate presidential elections in Central Asia. Although the Kyrgyz Republic has generally been viewed as one of the most democratic former Soviet republics, the government recently has made moves to curb press freedom and corruption continues. The Kyrgyz Parliament has shown independence from the executive branch, but the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe declared that the parliamentary elections held in early 2000 were neither free nor fair. The next parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in 2004.

The demise 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, as real GDP growth has averaged 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. With a per capita income of just \$308 per year, however, the country remains one of the poorest in the world.

Program Focus

The first group of Peace Corps Volunteers arrived in the Kyrgyz Republic in 1993. Since then more than 300 Volunteers have served 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 was 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 and 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 throughout the country.

The Kyrgyz Republic also has placed a high priority on English education as a means of linking 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

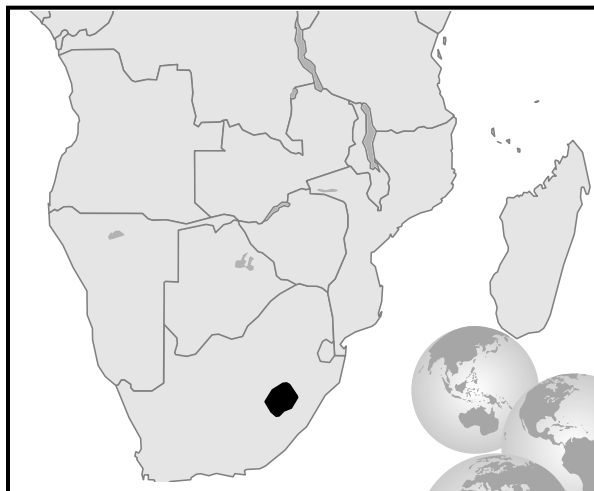
The business development project has renewed its efforts to place Volunteers directly at the grass-roots level. The business development project assists community-based organizations in developing into sustainable, participatory, and effective organizations. Volunteers help improve access to information at the local level and work with organizations to develop effective networks and programs consistent with the organizations' missions and the needs of the community. The project focuses on organizations that work with communities to develop sustainable rural tourism projects, increase economic opportunities for women, and assist small farmers in marketing their goods. Also at a grass-roots level, Volunteers help organizations and communities link with resources that are part of international development efforts.

Education

The education project helps Kyrgyz students and English teachers improve their level of 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 other business-related courses. In addition to their teaching assignments, Volunteers work to develop students' computer and Internet skills and to develop libraries and resource centers. Volunteers have also 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. Additionally, Volunteers have initiated various nonformal education projects, such as summer day camps. More than 60 children from three villages participated in day camps held at a local school.

**“The Peace Corps’ activity in
Kyrgyzstan is a bright example of
friendship and cooperation between
the peoples of Kyrgyzstan and
the United States. Returned
Peace Corps Volunteers have
become the real ambassadors of
the Kyrgyz people.”**

**Askar Akayev
Kyrgyz President**



Lesotho

Capital.....	Maseru
Population	2 million
Annual per capita income	\$530
GDP growth	4.0%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 27%
	Female: 6%
Infant mortality rate.....	91 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 85%
	Measles: 77%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$117 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 88%
	Rural: 74%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	24%
Major religions	Protestantism
	Roman Catholicism
Official languages	English, Sesotho

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	94	97
Program funds (\$000)	2,292	2,583

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 whose 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 fourth 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 more than 1,800 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 in this sector seek to improve the lives of rural communities by strengthening the capacity of nongovernmental organizations, vocational training institutes, community-based organizations, 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. Several Volunteers have trained women's groups in skills such as knitting, sewing, and quilting, allowing them to sell their products to schools, communities, and the tourist market. At vocational institutions, Volunteers transfer skills by training staff in business management. One Volunteer taught a group of women weavers to use a computer as a means to market their products. One weaver went to Washington, D.C., for a week-long marketing tour. 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 four areas: early childhood development, primary teacher training, special 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. In addition to providing support to teachers and students, Volunteers promote girls' education, deliver lessons on HIV/AIDS awareness, train counterparts and parents in international sign language, and establish community libraries and youth clubs. Fifteen Volunteers have participated in girls' education activities, including youth exchanges, career days, and life-skills workshops, involving almost 300 students. Volunteers work with district centers to implement distance education programs through the use of information technology such as radio, video, television, and computers.

Education Volunteers also help major educational institutions integrate various types of technology into distance education and teaching programs. They teach computer skills to university students and train teachers who work in early childhood programs.

Health and HIV/AIDS

The Peace Corps has started a new project to help the people of Lesotho fight the spread of HIV/AIDS. Volunteers work with district AIDS task forces and nongovernmental organizations to design and implement HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and support programs for vulnerable groups. Volunteers also work in permaculture in rural communities to promote sustainable practices that increase the diversity of food and improve nutrition. Health Volunteers are placed in all 10 districts of Lesotho to work with communities to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS on infected and otherwise affected people. Volunteers are assigned to nine of Lesotho's district AIDS task forces and assist in delivering home-based-care kits and providing HIV/AIDS prevention education to 240 villages, reaching more than 13,000 adults and children across the country. All Volunteers in Lesotho are involved with HIV/AIDS activities as secondary projects, reaching more than 3,000 youth and 300 community members. In addition, Volunteers have worked with 40 schools, 10 nongovernmental organizations, and seven ministries on HIV/AIDS activities.

"Living and working with people infected with HIV and AIDS has been a difficult, rewarding experience."

**Lesotho Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of

Capital.....	Skopje
Population	2 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,690
GDP growth	-0.4%
Adult illiteracy rate	6%
Infant mortality rate	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90%
	Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$443 million
Access to safe water	Not available
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Macedonian Orthodoxy: 66%
	Islam: 30%
	Other: 3%
	Roman Catholicism: 1%
Official language	Macedonian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	72	90
Program funds (\$000)	1,473	1,852

Country Overview

Program dates	1996–1999
	1999–2001
	2002–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment

The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is making significant efforts to develop a society based on democratic principles, to establish a viable market economy, and to explore new ideas about human rights. 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 establishing higher growth rates, sharing the benefits of growth more equitably among groups and regions, 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 the Stabilization and Association Agreement, 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-level political and economic development.

Security within Macedonia has steadily improved since the signing of the peace agreement in 2001. In 2004, the EU's military presence will be replaced by an EU police force that will, in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, continue the process of training and deploying the newly integrated Macedonian police force. This process is considered essential to long-term political stabilization of the country.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps began operating in Macedonia in 1996 with a group of seven Volunteers. They were assigned to the Ministry of Education and worked in the secondary school English education program. Over the next several years, as new Volunteers arrived, the program expanded to include projects in business development and the environment as well. Despite early successes in each of these areas, the program was not able to develop fully because of regional political instability that required the suspension of 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. In addition, new projects are being developed in the agriculture and health and HIV/AIDS sectors.

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 the increased public administration responsibilities associated with decentralization of power. Volunteers assist local 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 computer skills training, share expertise in donor resource research methods, conduct community outreach in the areas of health and environmental awareness, and initiate small project assistance for community playgrounds. During a celebration of the completion of one community playground, a Volunteer said, "The process of instituting an inclusive style of management, where all stakeholders were included, lengthened the completion date but was as important as the delivery of the final product."

Education

The Ministry of Education is in the process of refining its curriculum and is making concerted efforts to improve the skills of teachers, particularly in smaller towns where the need is greatest. The Peace Corps' involvement in this challenging endeavor is to improve the effectiveness of instruction through teacher training, resource center development, and special projects in two subject areas: English and the environment. Volunteers serve as English resource teachers and facilitators to help meet the need for continued improvement of English language programs in primary and secondary schools. In addition, Volunteers conduct summer camps in girls leadership training and conduct English clubs after school, incorporating technology skills into the clubs when possible. They also participate in HIV/AIDS education and prevention projects.

Environment

The environment program in Macedonia has evolved over the years. Environmental degradation and lack of access to clean, 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 poor people build sustainable livelihoods. The Peace Corps program focuses on strengthening the policy framework for environmental management. Volunteers support the development of environmental lesson plans with public school teachers, introduce environmental topics in other academic subjects, and participate in community projects with local clubs and nongovernmental organizations. One Volunteer is developing unit and lesson plans for a new ecology curriculum that was started in 2003. He will teach a few classes each week with his counterpart to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable, renewable natural resources.

"I don't know about others, but the Peace Corps really changed the course of my life. I was a young teacher, with just a year of teaching experience, when I first heard about the Peace Corps through a Volunteer. I must admit that at that time I was skeptical about it and was wondering about its role. It was a difficult time when mistrust was visible in every pore of the society. Soon afterward I met the Volunteer by chance and we became great friends, and another Volunteer followed who became my even greater friend. I asked them to come and spend some time in my classroom speaking English to my students, and the students' motivation increased. Their impact on the students was visible and undeniable."

Aneta Bozhinova
English Language Teacher
and Vice-Coordinator of the
Women's Center in Debar

Country Overview

Program dates 1993–present

Program sectors Education
Environment
Health and HIV/AIDS

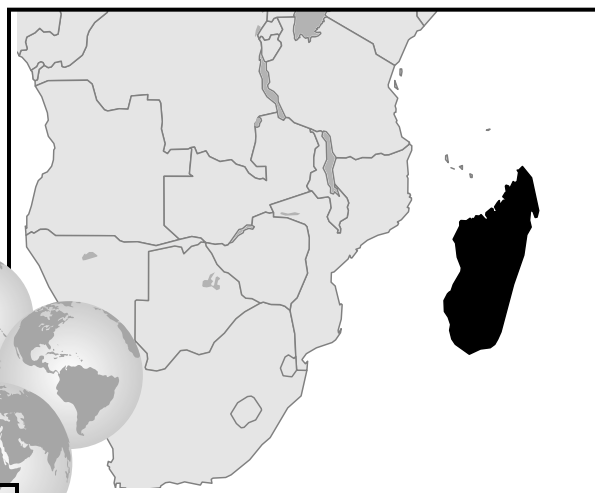
The government of President Marc Ravalomanana, backed by its international partners, has embarked on economic recovery and poverty reduction and is committed to fighting environmental degradation, poor health, and the HIV/AIDS scourge. Numerous international development agencies and volunteer organizations have been welcomed to Madagascar, joining the growing number of Malagasy nongovernmental organizations, to work with the people of Madagascar on their development efforts.

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 have a negative impact on the economy and the people. A great need continues for teachers, health specialists, and environmental counselors, particularly in rural areas.

Program Focus

The first group of education Volunteers arrived in late 1993. In subsequent years, the Peace Corps began 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, while others teach English and train teachers. Volunteers also work with communities and national parks to find ways of balancing human needs with environmental conservation. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.



Madagascar

Capital.....	Antananarivo
Population	16 million
Annual per capita income	\$260
GDP growth	6.0%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 26% Female: 39%
Infant mortality rate.....	84 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 55% Measles: 55%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$11 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 85% Rural: 31%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.3%
Major religions	Indigenous beliefs: 47% Christianity: 45% Islam: 7%
Official language	Malagasy

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	121	125
Program funds (\$000)	2,158	2,558

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 their 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 capacities in lesson planning and creating 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, nongovernmental organizations, 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 150 communities have learned about environmental conservation through theater projects, videos, and workshops. Volunteers have helped establish 20 tree nurseries, plant more than 500 trees, and build over 100 wood-saving mud stoves in 35 villages. One Volunteer worked with a community on a gravity-fed water system. The community planted fruit trees and vetiver grass on the hillsides of the watershed that feeds this spring, learning the important connection between clean water and tree-protected watersheds. Community members now have a clearer understanding of the symbiotic relationship between the health of the environment and their personal health.

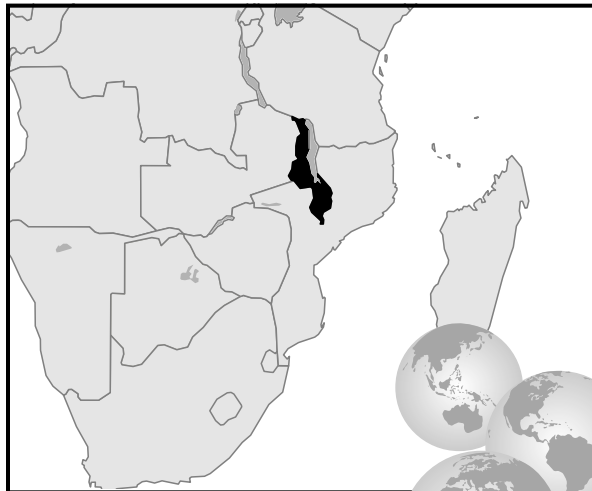
Health and HIV/AIDS

The community health project focuses on assisting communities in addressing health issues through behavioral change methodologies and the effective dissemination of health messages. Volunteers concentrate on prevention of the five 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 an awareness of how to prevent HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Through their outreach programs, Volunteers disseminate vital health information to over 300 communities a year. Volunteers from all sectors often collaborate on projects that teach HIV/AIDS awareness. For example, a small town on the northern tip of Madagascar draws tourists who are known to prey on economically disadvantaged young women. Several Volunteers from all three sectors organized a four-day camp with 30 girls from the surrounding villages. The camp included environmental education sessions, English-learning games, and, most important, lessons about health and prevention of HIV/AIDS.

**“My Peace Corps experience has
been the best time of my life.**

**Of course not free of challenges,
my service has been a wonderful
opportunity for cross-cultural
collaboration and progress in water
and sanitation projects. But even
more so, I’ve grown and developed
personally. Living in another culture
has been an incredible learning
experience.”**

**Madagascar Volunteer
Environment Sector**



Malawi

Capital	Lilongwe
Population	11 million
Annual per capita income	\$160
GDP growth	-1.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 25%
	Female: 52%
Infant mortality rate	114 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90%
	Measles: 82%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$58 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 95%
	Rural: 44%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	15%
Major religions	Protestantism: 55%
	Roman Catholicism: 20%
	Islam: 20%
	Indigenous beliefs: 3%
	Other 2%
Official languages	Chichewa, English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	111	118
Program funds (\$000)	2,125	2,565

Country Overview

Program dates	1963–1969
	1973–1976
	1978–present
Program sectors	Education
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS

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 are next scheduled for 2004. Although there has historically 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 over 70 percent of export earnings, with tobacco providing the majority (over 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 Peace Corps involvement at the community level. Currently, Volunteers are working 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, approximately 40 Volunteers help provide quality education to 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. Volunteers use local resources to produce teaching and learning materials such as model lungs and globes. One Volunteer organized a school library with a textbook section, teacher reference section, and other resources for students and teachers, while other Volunteers have helped schools get new labs and lab equipment so that students can perform science experiments.

Environment

The community-based natural resource management project focuses on community management of natural resources in protected areas. Volunteers partner with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife and the Department of Forestry and are placed in and around parks and forest reserves. These Volunteers work with government staff and surrounding communities on issues of resource use such as agroforestry, income generation, appropriate technology, co-management of protected areas, and extension training. Approximately 35 parks, wildlife, and forestry Volunteers work with communities that want to use protected-area resources more efficiently and in a more sustainable manner. Volunteers have worked in areas such as increasing the productivity of fish farming and propagating trees and other plant species that are critical to the rural farming system in Malawi.

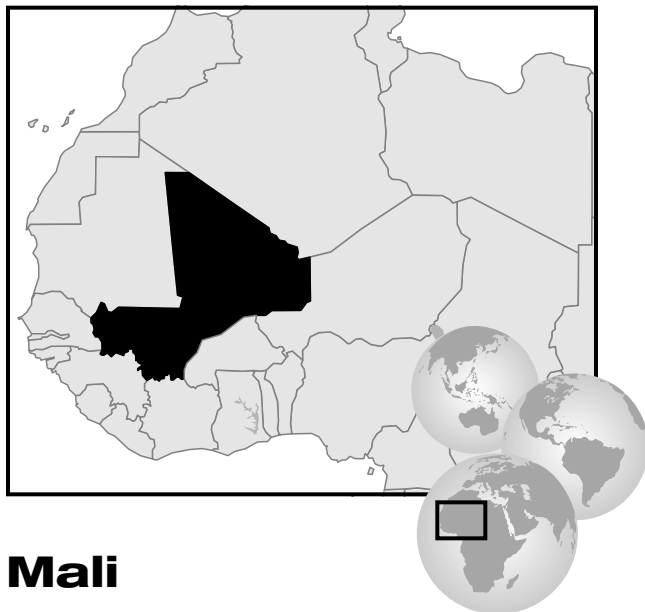
Health and HIV/AIDS

Malawi ranks among the countries most severely affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and faces many other serious health conditions. The community health project works in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and Population and the National AIDS Commission to address health issues in rural parts of the country. Volunteers work in the areas of 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 over the years from HIV/AIDS education to focus on behavior change and now is integrating other health concerns linked with the HIV/AIDS epidemic (e.g., other STDs and infectious diseases). The project has made strides in behavioral change through life-skills training offered to a wide range of Malawians, particularly youth. Volunteers have assisted in the creation of 50 support groups for people living with AIDS. They have trained 3,600 community members, teachers, and government employees and 2,300 youth in life skills. Volunteers have also initiated the establishment of a revolving fund in nine villages to increase the availability of medicine for AIDS patients. In addition, Volunteers help coordinate the registration of orphans in collaboration with district social welfare officers.

Starting in 2000, Peace Corps/Malawi began inviting Crisis Corps Volunteers to work with local organizations, mostly community based, that are striving to address the critical issues of HIV/AIDS, food security, and cholera. To date, 35 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.

**"Malawians and Peace Corps
Volunteers together are breaking
the silence, upholding human dignity,
and showing compassion for all
those with HIV/AIDS."**

**Malawian Vice President
Justin Malewezi**



Mali

Capital.....	Bamako
Population	11 million
Annual per capita income	\$230
GDP growth	1.4%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 63%
	Female: 83%
Infant mortality rate	141 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 51%
	Measles: 37%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$103 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 74%
	Rural: 61%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.70%
Major religions	Islam: 90%
	Indigenous beliefs: 6%
	Christianity: 4%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	190	175
Program funds (\$000)	3,688	3,701

Country Overview

Program dates	1971–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

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. Though Mali continues to experience political instability, it has held two elections since 1992 and experienced a transfer of power to a democratically elected leader in 2002. The government continues to promote democratization and administrative decentralization.

Mali is among the poorest countries in the world, with 65 percent of its land being desert or semidesert. A landlocked country, it is dependent on its neighbors for port facilities. Economic activity is largely confined to the area irrigated by the Niger River. About 80 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. Mali has a growing tourism industry centered around the city of 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. Since then, more than 2,500 Volunteers have served in the country. Mali is not self-sufficient in food production, a problem that is exacerbated by frequent droughts, and its rapidly increasing population continues to strain 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 will 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 in this sector serve as technical resources for community members, associations, and youth groups on a variety of projects, such as 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 assist microfinance institutions in establishing 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. Volunteers work in approximately nine centers in Mali as well as with the University of Bamako. Volunteers in this sector are also working to assist artisans open up channels for their products in foreign markets.

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. In the area of water and urban sanitation, Volunteers seek to increase sources of safe drinking water and encourage proper disposal of wastewater and solids.

Health and HIV/AIDS

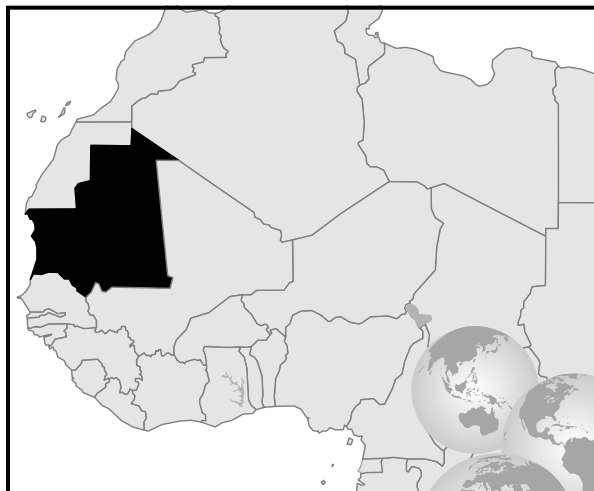
Volunteers play an active role in the restructuring of the public health sector at the local level through their work with health care providers, local associations, and individual community members. Volunteers raise awareness of health issues and promote preventive care measures such as nutritional practices, breast-feeding, diarrheal 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

The Malian Ministry of Youth recently approached Peace Corps/Mali for help in developing better employment opportunities for youth. This newly identified need, along with an ongoing focus on HIV prevention and other health education issues, has created the inspiration for a new program focusing specifically on the needs of youth. The program will focus on three initiatives: employment skills (primarily small enterprise development and training for youth and information technology), formal and nonformal education (through both in-school and out-of-school programs), and leadership skills (helping youth to assume responsibility and gain respect in their communities).

"What you at the Peace Corps do is one of the most successful forms of human integration ever undertaken. As Volunteers, you don't simply talk about what you have heard...but what you have seen and lived. Volunteers in Mali know Mali better than most Malians. You have visited places that most of us have never seen; you have lived lives that many of us have never known."

**Malian President
Amadou Toumani Touré**



Mauritania

Capital	Nouakchott
Population	3 million
Annual per capita income	\$360
GDP growth	4.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 49%
	Female: 69%
Infant mortality rate	120 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 61%
	Measles: 58%
Foreign direct investment	\$30 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 34%
	Rural: 40%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.52%
Major religion	Islam
Official language	Arabic

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	68	76
Program funds (\$000)	2,005	2,330

Country Overview

Program dates	1967
	1971-1991
	1991-present

Program sectors	Business Development
	Education
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS

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 independence. Sparsely populated, with most of its land covered by the Sahara Desert, Mauritania is one of the least developed countries in the world. Besides mining, the only industry that has any real presence in the commercial economy 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 what is now 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 the past two years, Peace Corps/Mauritania has reinstated the TEFL project and created a new environmental education project. Two pilot projects in girls education and information technology 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 in an effort 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 in the Ministry of New Technology and Cisco Academy to teach the skills that are needed to succeed in the new millennium.

Education

Volunteers teach English in middle and high schools all over Mauritania. They have also begun coaching Mauritanian teachers in English as they seek to become more qualified, creative, and effective in a work environment with few resources. In 2003, Volunteers worked at the University of Nouakchott doing teacher training and developing materials for use in the classroom. Three Volunteers organized and facilitated a one-day conference in their region's capital city. The event called on 50 educators from the region to explore and debate the various ways in which Mauritanian society could adopt a more effective approach to promoting girls education and inclusion in the classroom setting. Key issues such as teachers' views of what makes a

good student and the causes for the lower participation of female students were debated. Issues such as teachers' and students' attitudes, choice of in-school activities, and content of materials were brought up as obstacles to girls' participation. Participants discussed how to best alleviate these obstacles.

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 and to 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.

"The bond I felt with my community and host family has grown stronger.

**Their concern for me during this trying time was very evident. I feel
safe and well looked after when I am in my host community.**

This is reassuring and comforting."

**Mauritania Volunteer
Environment Sector**



Mexico

Capital	Mexico City
Population	99 million
Annual per capita income	\$5,530
GDP growth	-0.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 7%
	Female: 11%
Infant mortality rate	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 97%
	Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment	\$24.7 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 95%
	Rural: 69%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.3%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 89%
	Protestantism: 6%
	Other: 5%
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	15	36
Program funds (\$000)	1,403	1,621

Country Overview

Program dates 2004

Program sectors Business Development

Mexico achieved its independence early in the 19th century after three centuries of Spanish rule. As a nation of more than 100 million people, it is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. Elections held in July 2000 marked the first time since the Mexican Revolution that the opposition defeated the party in power, the Institutional Revolutionary Party. In July 2000, Vicente Fox of the National Action Party was elected president in what were considered to have been the freest and fairest elections in Mexico's history. Fox began his six-year term on December 1, 2000.

In late 1994 the devaluation of the Mexican peso sent the country into economic turmoil, 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. However, the distribution of wealth, social welfare, and education among the Mexican people is extremely uneven. Despite recent macroeconomic advances, 45 million Mexicans are still classified as living below the poverty line, and a quarter of the working population earns \$2 per day or less. Ongoing economic and social concerns include low real wages, underemployment for a large segment of the population, inequitable income distribution, and few advancement opportunities for the largely Amerindian population in the impoverished southern states.

Program Focus

Peace Corps Volunteers anticipated to arrive in the summer of 2004 will be the first Volunteers to serve in Mexico. The Peace Corps and CONACYT (National Council for Science and Technology) signed a partnership accord on June 10, 2003, and the agreement was formalized at a signing ceremony at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., on November 12, 2003. CONACYT is a 33-year-old governmental institution devoted to research and development in support of Mexico's economic growth. Based on preliminary assessments, the Peace Corps will assign approximately 15 Volunteers to CONACYT-affiliated centers throughout Mexico. Many

programming opportunities exist for the future, but projects will initially address diverse technology needs in Mexico.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

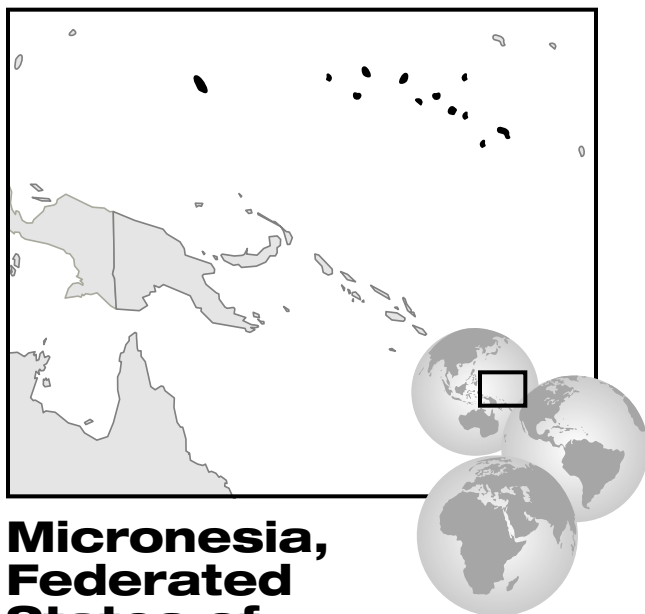
Volunteers will be assigned to one of several CONACYT centers and will work to strengthen their organizational capacity in information technology, small business development, and municipal development.

“The citizens of the United States and Mexico have shared culture, family connections, history, and common triumphs; and now, for the first time, Peace Corps Volunteers will be part of that tradition and history.”

**Peace Corps Director
Gaddi H. Vasquez**



Director Vasquez and Jaime Parada of the National Council on Science and Technology (with staff from the Embassy of Mexico looking on) sign the agreement that will send Volunteers to Mexico for the first time.



Micronesia, Federated States of, and Palau

Capitals	Micronesia: Palikir Palau: Koror
Average population.....	80,000
Average annual per capita income.....	\$4,465
Average GDP growth.....	0.95%
Adult illiteracy rate (<i>Micronesia only</i>).....	19%
Average infant mortality rate	22 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate (<i>Micronesia only</i>)	DPT: 75% Measles: 84%
Foreign direct investment.....	Not available
Access to safe water	Not available
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 50% Protestantism: 47% Modekngei
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	68	84
Program funds (\$000)	1,918	2,309

Country Overview

Program dates	1966–present
Program sectors	Environment Youth

Both the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau are democratic republics closely modeled on the federal system of the United States, with each state having a state government. The states of Micronesia are highly autonomous, exercising great independence from the federal government. Both countries have economies and governments that are dependent on Compact of Free Association funds, which are scheduled to decline over time. They are ill-prepared to develop self-sustaining programs to provide for the needs of the population.

Ninety percent of the people of the FSM and Palau still have subsistence lifestyles. Despite efforts spelled out in the compact, the FSM and Palau have failed to develop a viable private sector. The expectation is that any funds the U.S. proposes in the next compact agreement will be more encumbered and require greater accountability. This is already happening in the FSM, where a new compact agreement designed to provide greater accountability has been negotiated. The geographic isolation and small size of the FSM and Palau hinder exports and the development of viable industries. Additionally, the nations' fragile natural resources are in danger of exploitation.

Program Focus

The focus of Peace Corps/Micronesia and its approximately 75 Volunteers is to build the capacity of Micronesians to meet their needs, promote sound management of environmental resources, and leverage the benefits of information technology through two main projects: natural resource conservation and youth. Volunteers in these projects work in health, libraries and reading, information technology, small business enterprise, marine resources conservation, and terrestrial resources conservation.

Volunteer Focus

Environment

Volunteers are currently involved in marine and terrestrial resource conservation projects as well as environmental education activities. Volunteers work to promote an understanding of marine resources and watersheds and to increase community and government participation in the creation and implementation of sound, integrated coastal resource management policies and practices. Volunteers also partner with government agencies to demonstrate the viability of marine-resource-based and agricultural economic opportunities while providing training in business planning and operations. Volunteers work to build capacities of government agencies and local conservation organizations to foster community involvement in the sustainable management of terrestrial resources, including rain forests, watersheds, and mangrove ecosystems. In Pohnpei, one Volunteer helped the staff of the Conservation Society of Pohnpei create the Green Road Show program, in which staff focused on conservation education in six elementary schools. In Kosrae, a terrestrial resource conservation Volunteer helped with the development of the State Land Use Plan. Volunteers assigned to the natural resource conservation project focus on strengthening capacities of their partners to establish and maintain marine-protected areas in both the FSM and Palau.

Because of extensive damage to water systems, housing, and agricultural systems caused by Typhoon Chata'an in July 2002 in the state of Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia, Peace Corps/Micronesia requested the assistance of Crisis Corps Volunteers. In 2003, 10 Crisis Corps Volunteers received training and started their four-to-six-month-long stint in recovery activities focused on community organization for rebuilding water systems and agricultural systems and for stabilizing hillsides for

four lagoon islands. With a strong commitment and allocation of funds and materials by the Chuuk government, construction of new water systems and reforestation activities started in October 2003.

The Crisis Corps Volunteers work with the Chuuk Mayor's Council, Governor's Office, State Department of Agriculture, and Department of Health. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and USDA Forest Service have all collaborated to provide technical training and recommendations to the Crisis Corps Volunteers and community members. Community members and island mayors are an integral part of the project; they have been involved throughout the planning and decision-making process and are participating in the reconstruction activities.

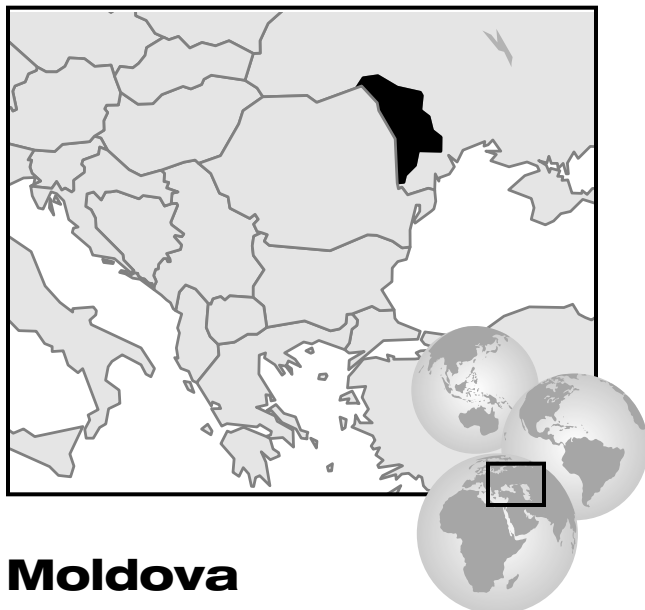
Youth

The purpose of this project is to increase participation of young people in social and economic development activities in their communities by targeting information technology and at-risk youth. Volunteers work with teachers to enhance literacy by sponsoring teacher-training workshops. They set up computer labs in schools and train teachers and students in computer skills. Volunteers also focus on developing programs to provide educational and vocational opportunities for youth at risk. They work with youth group leaders, teachers, traditional community elders, and families to promote and foster self-esteem, self-discipline, and decision-making skills in young people. One Volunteer planned and implemented Girl Scout camps for the state of Pohnpei, which promoted leadership and retention of cultural skills. A group of Volunteers collaborated with the Department of Health and local businesses to organize and conduct "Ironman" competitions and marathons. These races involved many Micronesians and stimulated them to take action to continue exercising for their health.

"I work with the Tobacco Control Program in Palau's Ministry of Health.

One of my projects has been to develop a youth group to work with the agency to educate young people about the dangers of tobacco use. ...After a year and a half, the group has finally come together and now has a life of its own. Working with teenagers, perhaps because it has been such a challenge, has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my service."

**Micronesia Volunteer
Education Sector**



Moldova

Capital.....	Chisinau
Population	4 million
Annual per capita income	\$400
GDP growth	6.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: <0.5% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	27 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 90% Measles: 81%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$94 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 97% Rural: 88%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.2%
Major religions	Eastern Orthodoxy Judaism
Official language	Romanian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	131	172
Program funds (\$000)	2,168	2,795

Country Overview

Program dates	1993–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Education Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Partly as a result of struggles to transform itself from a centrally planned to a market-based economy, Moldova elected a Communist Party majority to Parliament in February 2001. After a decade of deteriorating economic performance, Moldova has successfully stabilized its economy, launched some structural reforms to stimulate growth, and begun the process of establishing an effective social protection system. While the government has made notable progress in macroeconomic and structural reform in the past four years, a significant reform agenda remains. Today Moldova is the poorest nation in Europe, having started out at independence as a middle-income country. Moldova has also become one of the region's most heavily indebted countries, especially to Russia. The instability caused by separatist forces in the Transnistrian region, along the Ukraine border, keeps the government from having full control over its territory and increases the isolation and poverty of Moldova. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe continues to prod both sides with a proposed federal structure for an integrated Moldova. In autumn 2003 President Vladimir Voronin publicly expressed the desire to move toward accession into the European Union. However, to make progress toward EU membership, the Transnistrian issue must first be resolved.

Program Focus

All Peace Corps/Moldova programs focus on youth. 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 is in critical need of 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 and health care services have deteriorated considerably in recent years. Volunteers are helping address these issues with efforts in agriculture, education, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth. Volun-

teers 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, as well as with individual farmers, to increase incomes through the development of information dissemination channels, consulting and training centers, and networking and marketing opportunities among Moldovan farmers. Volunteers assist NGOs with strategic planning, development, and organizational management. They provide training in basic farm management and financial analysis. They work with both individual farmers and service providers to enhance computer literacy and Internet capabilities. Volunteers have assisted over 1,000 private farmers and dozens of organizations and communities.

Education

Volunteers teach English to more than 3,000 students each year. Working 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 more than 200 Moldovan teachers of English yearly through peer-training workshops on topics such as communicative methodologies, American civilization studies, current social and cultural issues, and environmental awareness education. Volunteers in

this project actively promote the use of information and communication technologies both inside and outside the classroom.

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 over 10,000 students for a minimum of eight hours per week. They also work intensively with students in creating and developing peer education activities focused on HIV/AIDS prevention and alcohol abuse. Volunteers have initiated numerous projects with their health care provider partners, including two nationwide projects: breast cancer awareness and education promoting nonviolence. Volunteers have helped train more than 60 physicians in breast cancer prevention and have created and distributed more than 10,000 brochures on breast self-examination throughout the country. One Volunteer, together with her partner, created a Web page to ensure that information in the local language is available to anyone with Internet access.

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 over 6,000 individuals and worked with almost 400 service providers in 45 communities.

"I believe the biggest strength of the health education program in general is our Moldovan counterparts and community partners. Not only do they give us an indication of what will and can work, they also are the sustainability of the program. Their dedication, interest, and spirit inspire me."

**Moldova Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Mongolia

Capital.....	Ulaanbaatar
Population	2 million
Annual per capita income	\$400
GDP growth	1.4%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	61 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 95% Measles: 95%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$63 million
Access to safe water	60%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Tibetan Buddhism: 96% Islam: 4% Shamanism
Official language	Halh Mongolian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	86	85
Program funds (\$000)	1,848	1,911

Country Overview

Program dates	1991–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

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, the changes have put severe stresses on the country's social welfare and education systems. The textbooks used in universities are outdated, reflecting Soviet-style economics. And although English acquisition is of primary importance to citizens and the government, most rural schools do not have enough qualified teachers and resources. The health system, meanwhile, faces challenges in moving away from a focus on Soviet-style curative treatment toward 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. To assist in addressing the challenges Mongolia faces, 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 the environment and health (since 1996) and in small business development (since 2000).

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers assist the government with Mongolia's economic transition through capacity building of NGO directors, strategic planning for small business owners and youth entrepreneurs, and teaching of business management techniques and principles. In Peace Corps/Mongolia's newest project, a small number of Volunteers in a short time have had a measurable impact on the small business community and struggling NGOs. Volunteers wrote a business plan workbook, which was translated into Mongolian and presented at four workshops for Volunteer counterparts and interested community members, reaching approximately 450 Mongolians. Volunteers train staff at their work sites in customer service, strategic planning, operational systems, accounting practices, marketing, and proposal writing. They also teach English to enable staff to conduct independent Internet research and take advantage of continuing education online. Volunteers have organized seminars on information and communication technology, networking, international relations, and how to plan for the future. At vocational high schools, Volunteers teach students directly and engage in capacity building of faculty members and administration officials. In addition, Volunteers have supported individual artisans in designing, producing, and marketing their wares.

Education

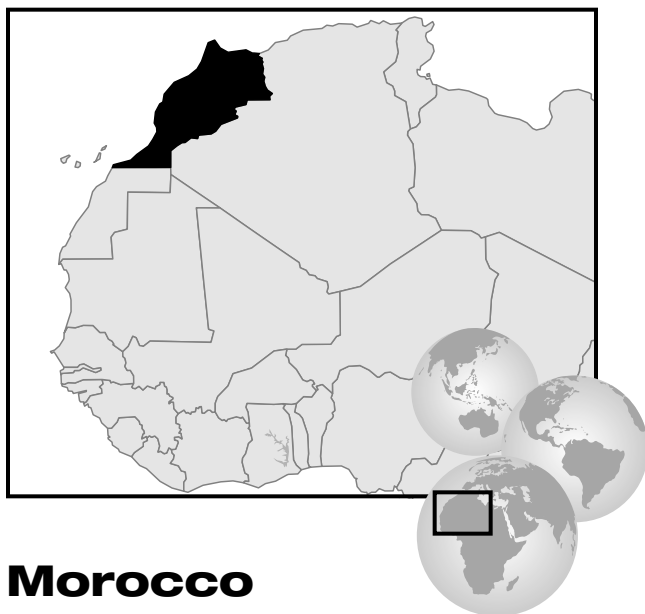
The Mongolian government has placed education at the forefront of its national agenda and chosen English as the primary foreign language of study. Thus, the primary focus of education Volunteers is teaching English to students and teacher training. They teach methodology, lesson planning, grammar, and communication skills as co-teachers in the classroom and in individual sessions with teachers and large workshops for the education community. Several also co-teach computer, economics, and health classes. The education project has a strong community development component, in which Volunteers engage in additional activities during schools' summer and holiday breaks. In addition, they support co-workers in creating life-skills, ecology, debate, technology, and drama clubs for students after school. They have also written teacher-training manuals, curricula guidebooks, a resource book for the development of visual aids, and a classroom management handbook.

Environment

Environmental education is at the heart of Volunteers' work in this sector. They promote the value of environmental conservation in community development activities and support the expansion of the ecology curriculum in secondary schools. A Volunteer with 37 years of experience in the United States has trained officials of the Ministry of Nature and Environment in strategic planning, forecasting, range management techniques, and the use of environment-related computer software. Six of the 20 Special Protected Area offices in the country are benefiting from Volunteers' presentations about deforestation, wildlife surveying and preservation, desertification, alternative income generation, ecotourism development, English language skills, and computer and Internet skills. Volunteers have written and published ecology curricula for students and teachers, including an "ecology theater" curriculum that was translated into Mongolian; books that list and picture endangered bird species in three regions of the country; and brochures and media campaigns promoting ecotourism and public awareness of environmental issues.

Health and HIV/AIDS

The purpose of Peace Corps/Mongolia's community-based health project is to train health professionals, students, and other community members in basic preventive health care and provide them with health-based English instruction. Health Volunteers placed at NGOs have helped create public awareness of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, which are on the rise in Mongolia's young and underemployed population. Volunteers are assisting with the Red Cross's health education efforts in primary and secondary schools, with maintenance of a teen counseling hot line provided by an NGO, with campaigns sponsored by the Public Health Institute and Nutrition Research Center to improve the typical Mongolian diet, with training in public health at medical colleges, and with designing and delivering education outreach by small community health providers. Volunteers also conduct computer training for co-workers and staff at their work sites, train teachers in life-skills training for students, and train staff at mental hospitals and schools for the disabled.



Morocco

Capital.....	Rabat
Population	29 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,190
GDP growth	6.5%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 37%
	Female: 63%
Infant mortality rate.....	39 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 96%
	Measles: 96%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2.7 billion
Access to safe water	82%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.03%
Major religions	Islam: 98.7%
	Christianity: 1.1%
	Judaism: 0.03%
Official language	Arabic

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	128	200
Program funds (\$000)	2,732	3,488

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1991
	1991–2003
	2003–present

Program sectors	Business Development
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS
	Youth

King Mohammed VI assumed the throne in 1999 following the death of his father, who had ruled for 38 years. Gradual political reforms in the 1990s resulted in the 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 during the late 1970s, but the final status of the territory remains unresolved.

Morocco faces problems typical of developing countries: 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. Reforms of the financial sector 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

Poverty continues to be mostly a rural phenomenon. 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 continue to hamper harvests, while drainage of wetlands, deforestation of public areas, and erosion in national park reserves present continuing environmental challenges. High unemployment rates and low wages have limited opportunities for Moroccan entrepreneurs to gain access to capital resources, putting them at a disadvantage in the rapidly evolving global economy. To help address these concerns, Volunteers are assigned to projects in business, the environment, health and HIV/AIDS, and youth development.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers assist artisan communities by providing more business structure, designing training sessions on management and computer techniques, and offering consulting services. A group of Volunteers organized three craft fairs for small enterprises directed by women and conducted a consumer survey to help the artisans learn about their target market. They also designed an educational program, titled “Building Better Business,” to increase sales and promotion for Moroccan artisans and provided small businesses with a better understanding of tourism. Volunteers helped create business plans and merchandising grids, carried out feasibility studies, and taught accounting and bookkeeping techniques to Moroccan counterparts. They also designed websites for small cooperatives and acquainted artisans with information technology to better equip them for e-commerce competition in their emerging crafts.

Environment

In Morocco, a country with 39 major ecosystems, natural resources undergo continual degradation because of deforestation and overgrazing. An estimated 30,000 hectares of vegetable cover disappear each year, with serious consequences for the country’s biodiversity. The environment project seeks to reinforce the Moroccan government’s conservation initiatives and help the country’s rural populations achieve a higher standard of living.

Environment Volunteers have written and taught environmental curricula, conducted nature field trips, introduced new technologies designed to promote conservation of natural resources (such as solar ovens), and assisted local authorities in systematic reforestation efforts. Five Volunteers organized an Earth Day event at primary schools to raise children’s awareness of local environmental concerns and to give the students hands-on projects.

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.

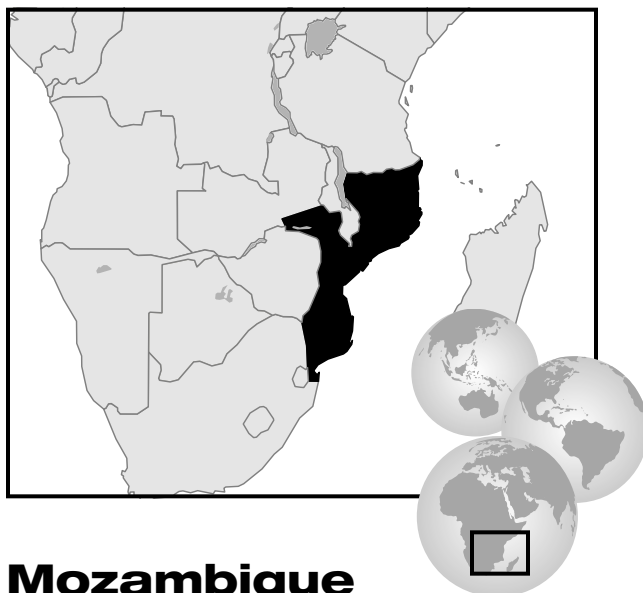
Youth Development

Youth age 15 and under constitute one-third of the country’s population. Volunteers encourage youth to become more involved in their communities through targeted activities designed to encourage citizenship and build leadership. Their initial contact with youth is primarily through theme-based English instruction at local youth centers, which is then used as the springboard for implementation of nonclassroom activities. Among these activities are organizing community clean-ups, building latrines, managing sports teams, youth mentoring, and teaching computer skills. Girls education is a priority of the Ministry of Youth, and Volunteers, their supervisors, and other community members are working together to address the needs of local girls. Volunteers also work with partners such as teachers, women’s centers, Parent-Teacher Associations, and other groups on capacity-building activities to find local solutions to local needs.

One youth development Volunteer assigned to a youth center focused on youth leadership and service activities. The students decided that they wanted a cinema in town and designed a project by using a participatory community-mapping tool. As a more realistic alternative, they organized a theater, song, and poetry show using their own resources that fulfilled the need for local entertainment. The show enjoyed a huge public turnout.

“Using English classes as a vehicle to educate youth about community issues, I strive to motivate the residents to find methods to improve their community. While I share my experiences from the U.S. and issues that youth face there, I hope to raise the awareness of my community and discover their needs.”

**Morocco Volunteer
Youth Development Sector**



Mozambique

Capital.....	Maputo
Population	18 million
Annual per capita income	\$210
GDP growth	13.9%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 39%
	Female: 70%
Infant mortality rate.....	125 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 80%
	Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$480 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 81%
	Rural: 41%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	13%
Major religions	Indigenous and other beliefs: 45%
	Christianity: 30%
	Islam: 17%
Official language	Portuguese

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	76	91
Program funds (\$000)	1,956	2,498

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 has announced that he will not run as the FRELIMO candidate in the 2004 presidential elections.

Despite impressive political achievements since gaining independence in 1975, Mozambique remains one of the poorest countries in the world. The country has not yet succeeded in exploiting the economic potential of its sizable agricultural, hydropower, and transportation resources. Foreign assistance programs supply the foreign exchange required to pay for the import of goods and services. The restoration of electrical transmission lines to South Africa, the completion of a new transmission line to Zimbabwe, the proposed construction of a natural gas pipeline to South Africa, and the reform of transportation services should have a positive impact on the economy.

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 will be 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

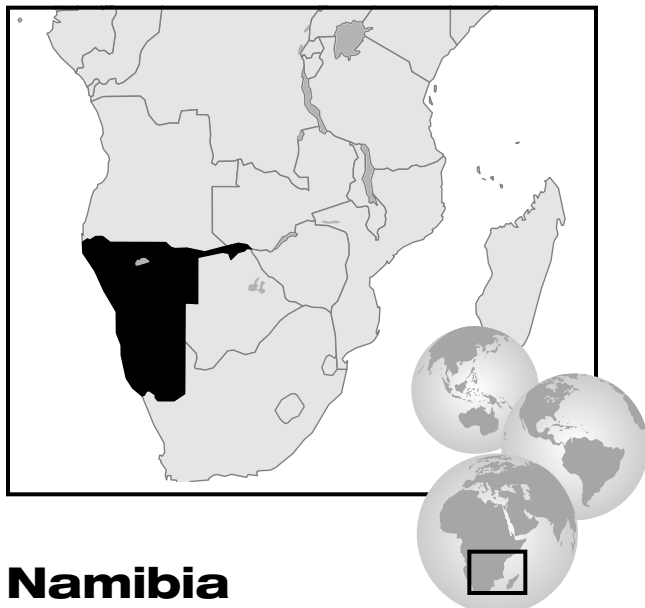
Volunteers provide quality English and science instruction to 8,000 students in secondary and technical schools. They also support Mozambican teachers in expanding their range of teaching methodologies, improving their English communication skills, developing educational materials, and completing their 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 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.

Health and HIV/AIDS

In April 2004, Peace Corps/Mozambique will receive its first group of health Volunteers. This development has been highly welcomed by the Ministry of Health and the numerous NGOs that are working diligently to improve the health status of Mozambicans, which is among the worst in the world as a result of widespread poverty, poor infrastructure, a dispersed population, low education levels, and the growing threat of HIV/AIDS. Treatable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, diarrhea, and respiratory infections are the most common causes of premature deaths, particularly of children and infants.

"I am tremendously impressed by what I saw in each individual presentation [of middle school students who represented their schools in a Volunteer-organized regional science fair]. It was very important for us to see students from our country acquiring such organizational skills, methods of research, power of knowledge, and method of study. Many of them did scientific tests with very well detailed information that gave them the confidence they needed in presenting the research. As a Mozambican impressed with the great job done by the Volunteers in emphasizing the importance of education in our society, I would like to address thanks to all Volunteer teachers who were present and the great contributions they made to students' capabilities in researching, acquiring, and defending their knowledge."

**Governor of Manica Province
of Mozambique**



Namibia

Capital.....	Windhoek
Population	2 million
Annual Per Capita Income	\$1,960
GDP growth	2.7%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 17%
	Female: 18%
Infant mortality rate.....	55 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 63%
	Measles: 58%
Foreign direct investment	\$99 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 100%
	Rural: 67%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	22.5%
Major religions	Christianity
	Indigenous beliefs
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	82	83
Program funds (\$000)	2,531	2,876

Country Overview

Program dates	1990–present
Program sectors	Education Health and HIV/AIDS

Just 13 years into its independence, 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 will have its first change of top political leadership since independence when the next presidential election is held in mid-2004. This election will be 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 a reform of 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, all Peace Corps/Namibia projects operate in collaboration 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.

An example of the Peace Corps' continuing efforts in the education sector is its 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 to improve the teaching of science. A pilot project to explore curriculum reform in primary and early secondary schools is being planned for implementation in early 2004.

Peace Corps/Namibia will also strengthen its HIV/AIDS efforts in 2004. A memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Health and Social Services will go into effect in 2004. 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. However, all Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteer Focus

Education

Peace Corps/Namibia has made substantial contributions to the reform of the educational system in teacher training, classroom teaching, and subject matter support for teachers, especially in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, and science. As an example, a Volunteer in the education sector has impacted educational opportunities in his community by securing funds from the Ambassador's Self-Help Project to help establish 14 kindergartens in northern Namibia. Many education Volunteers are directly engaged in initiating community activities for their students and teachers, such as libraries and computer labs, boys and girls clubs, HIV/AIDS awareness clubs, and computer classes.

One community recently named the computer lab in its community after the education Volunteer who helped secure funding for the lab's initial computer equipment. Given the remote location of most schools, libraries and computer labs offer significant support for learners without resources in their homes or schools. Volunteers have also been rigorous in their attempts to increase parental and community involvement in education and, in some instances, have been able to help 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. They 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 have become increasingly more comfortable in accessing and using resources to prevent the further spread of HIV. In 2004, Volunteers will begin working with the Ministry of Health to promote awareness of a new anti-retroviral treatment program and to help build the capacity of the regional staff to use instructional technology.

"[Volunteers in Namibia] get close

to people they serve. They help

people with their fight against

HIV/AIDS, they help people to read....

And the legacy they leave behind

lives on after they leave."

**Namibian Prime Minister
Theo-Ben Gurirab**



Nepal

Capital.....	Kathmandu
Population	24 million
Annual per capita income	\$250
GDP growth	4.8%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 39%
	Female: 75%
Infant mortality rate	66 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 72%
	Measles: 71%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$19 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 81%
	Rural: 87%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.29%
Major 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 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	114	119
Program funds (\$000)	2,505	2,887

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
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—lives 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.

The Nepali government has experienced many changes of leadership, and the political situation remains unstable. King Gynendra dissolved the House of Representatives in October 2002 and appointed the current nonparty government after the failure of the previous government to hold elections as scheduled. Almost all of Nepal’s 75 districts have experienced some sort of violence because of the Maoist insurgency. Peace talks were held but were not successful. The Peace Corps continually monitors the security environment for Volunteers in Nepal.

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 its 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 not only of capital and technology but also of raw materials and consumer goods. Consequently, external forces exert much influence on the direction of Nepal’s economy.

Program Focus

Peace Corps/Nepal celebrated its 40th anniversary in November 2002. Since 1962, over 4,300 Volunteers have served in a wide variety of programs in the development of Nepal. Today,

Volunteers help address challenges in the areas of education, health, the environment, small business, and urban and youth development by working with Nepali communities, schools, government offices, and organizations.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

There are two program initiatives in this sector. The first seeks to promote small business and improve local capacities to plan, implement, and monitor small business activities. The second aims to provide basic services to rural poor communities in health, education, income generation, and adult training by strengthening the capacities of local NGOs and community groups and increasing their coordination with government agencies and one another.

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 in three primary areas. English resource teachers teach English to students in grades four to seven and engage in skills transfer and exchange by working closely with Nepali counterparts. 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 assist with setting up and upgrading science labs and training science teachers in lab safety, use of lab equipment, integrating lab use into the science curriculum, and preparation and use of locally available, low-cost or no-cost science teaching materials.

Environment

The natural resources project works in five major areas: soil conservation, community forestry, forestry education, national parks, and environmental conservation. Volunteers provide support to community groups on everything from soil conservation techniques to watershed, wildlife, and forestry management plans. They conduct trainings, sometimes

focused on women and disadvantaged groups, on income-generating activities and networking among community groups, as well as assist staff in national parks in developing wildlife databases. Other Volunteers work with NGOs to raise conservation awareness in schools and communities.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Health Volunteers have three focus areas: reproductive health, nursing education, and NGO development. Some Volunteers support the Safe Motherhood Program and assist health staff in educating women about preventing and treating pregnancy-related complications, in increasing access to maternal and child health workers, and in training traditional birth attendants and female health volunteers at the community level. Nursing education Volunteers assist in improving the quality of nursing and auxiliary health training in both theory and practice through classroom instruction and at hospitals and health posts.

Other Volunteers assist with capacity building of NGOs by helping them establish networks with other NGOs, government agencies, and international organizations in order 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.

"Peace Corps Volunteers [fill] an important gap. They [are] really winning friends. They come from afar to live within the community as one of our own people, not beyond the means of the local community, sharing the level of poverty of the Nepalese people. What the Peace Corps [has done is] extraordinary."

**Bekh Bahadur Thapa
Minister of Foreign Affairs**



Nicaragua

Capital.....	Managua
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$420
GDP growth	-0.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 33%
	Female: 33%
Infant mortality rate.....	36 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 92%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$132 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 91%
	Rural: 59%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.2%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	201	228
Program funds (\$000)	2,314	2,931

Country Overview

Program dates	1968-1979
	1991-present

Program sectors	Agriculture
	Business Development
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS
	Youth

Nicaragua is a constitutional democracy with executive, legislative, judicial, and electoral branches of government. Both the president and the members of the unicameral National Assembly are elected to concurrent five-year terms. The turbulent events of the past few decades have been reported widely. Today's reconstruction and reconciliation under an elected government have replaced those days of social conflict.

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 and, consequently, 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; over 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 five sectors.

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.

One Volunteer helped interested community members create two 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. Some Volunteers teach business enterprise development, primarily in secondary and vocational schools.

Two Volunteers organized a teacher-training workshop for 48 teachers that introduced creative teaching methods to enhance student participation and learning, along with additional tools teachers can use in their classrooms. The workshop will be repeated in other areas of the country.

Environment

The environmental education project works directly with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. 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.

One Volunteer working near a nature reserve trained a group of 15 youth as field guides. They take visitors on tours of the reserve, providing information on the park's flora and fauna. The Volunteer also built a simple low-ropes course at the reserve and taught the guides how to facilitate group activities that enhance self-esteem and encourage teamwork.

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 family health. Volunteers also address maternal and infant mortality issues and conduct HIV/AIDS prevention education.

One Volunteer works with a group of dynamic teenagers who present health topics to other teens. They have started a weekly radio show that focuses on teen health issues.

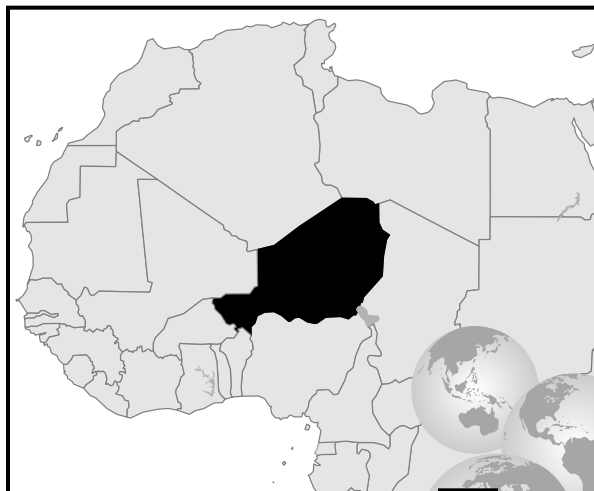
Youth

The purpose of this new project, which was launched in July 2002, is to provide Atlantic Coast youth with the skills and opportunities they need to lead healthy and productive lives and to serve as model citizens of their region. Volunteers cooperate with a counterpart agency to provide direct support to youth and local organizations that serve youth, including youth-led groups, churches, NGOs, ethnic identity groups, cultural groups, schools, and local government institutions.

One Volunteer helped reorganize an existing theater group that uses theater as a medium to address youth issues. The group prepares monologues on topics ranging from alcohol abuse to rape, AIDS, teen pregnancy, and machismo.

**"Here, work and life are not separate
realms. And senses—the senses
of smell, of sound, of humanity—
bleed into one another. No one can
really tell you what it is like to be in
a coastal community, developing
friendships and learning dozens
of ways to eat a mango."**

**Nicaragua Volunteer
Youth Sector**



Niger

Capital.....	Niamey
Population	11 million
Annual per capita income	\$180
GDP growth	7.6%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 76%
	Female: 91%
Infant mortality rate.....	156 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 31%
	Measles: 51%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$13 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 70%
	Rural: 56%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.35%
Major religion	Islam
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	120	126
Program funds (\$000)	2,775	3,210

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

At independence in 1960, Niger became a constitutional democracy with an elected president and National Assembly, but it was not until 1993 that it 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. Niger remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 174 out of 175 on the 2003 United Nations Human Development Index. Natural impediments to growth include its landlocked position, its limited arable land, and the vulnerability of its agriculturally based economy to drought. These obstacles are compounded by a large population with a limited supply of skilled personnel, intensive 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, and to date over 2,700 have served in the country. Volunteers 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. In 2003, Volunteers and counterparts dug new wells for irrigation and introduced gardening to villagers who had never gardened before.

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, protecting the fragile environment is not a priority for many people. However, land degradation and diminishing firewood supplies are major problems. Volunteers organize land reclamation work and tree planting and conduct environmental education sessions in schools. One very successful Volunteer innovation in recent years has been en-

vironmental education camps for village children. Volunteers also promote sustainable agriculture and organize women's cooperatives and school gardens.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Niger suffers from one of the world's highest infant mortality rates, and roughly 25 percent 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. There is also a successful Guinea worm eradication project, in which 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 regionwide basis through an annual AIDS ride.

Youth

This is Peace Corps/Niger's newest program, with the first Volunteers posted to a dozen small towns in September 2003. They help create education centers that focus on English teaching, adult literacy, and information technology training. They also promote girls education and gender equity in classrooms, assist Parent-Teacher Associations, and help with vocational training for out-of-school youth and in-service training for Nigerien English teachers.

"My biggest adjustment has been pulling my own well water. My hut is 50 feet away from the nearest well. I pull my water with a rubber bag (made from recycled inner tubes) on the end of a 16-foot rope. Two bags fill my plastic bucket. Then I carry the bucket on top of my head back to my hut. I am very proud of my newly acquired ability to carry water on my head. I can even use only one hand to steady it! I use at least four buckets of water a day."

**Niger Volunteer
Education Sector**



Panama

Capital.....	Panama City
Population	3 million
Annual per capita income	\$3,260
GDP growth	0.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 7%
	Female: 9%
Infant mortality rate	19 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 98%
	Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$513 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 87%
	Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.5%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 85%
	Protestantism: 15%
Official language	Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	154	153
Program funds (\$000)	2,333	2,843

Country Overview

Program dates	1963–1971 1990–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Panama's history has been shaped by globalization and the ambitious dreams of Europeans and Americans. Although the nation has a relatively high per capita income, 37 percent of its citizens live in poverty. The richest 20 percent of the population consumes more than 50 percent of the available resources, whereas the poorest 10 percent consumes 1.6 percent. Particularly impacted are indigenous communities, which have the worst sanitation systems, the highest rates of malnutrition and infant mortality, and inadequate education. Poor management of natural resources has caused deforestation, erosion, pollution, the loss of biological diversity, and the degradation of coastal and marine systems at alarming rates.

Program Focus

In light of the serious inequality facing the country, Peace Corps/Panama has dedicated its programming to identifying, developing, and promoting sustainable socioeconomic growth opportunities for rural families. Peace Corps/Panama maintains a commitment to send 30 percent of its Volunteers to indigenous communities and 70 percent to the poorest areas of Panama.

In recognition of the serious problems facing rural and indigenous communities, the Peace Corps' environmental health sector is helping build latrines and aqueducts and educating rural communities on basic sanitation and hygiene practices. The program emphasizes conservation by promoting environmental education in primary and junior high schools and by introducing sustainable agricultural techniques to rural farmers. Volunteers also work on developing income-generating activities, promoting small business skills for youth, and training rural communities and small businesses in information and communication technology.

Peace Corps/Panama enjoys the dedicated support of the Panamanian government. In particular, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture,

and the National Environmental Authority continue to be partners as the program builds stronger relationships with NGOs and indigenous group leaders.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

Traditionally, Panamanian agriculture has been based on “slash and burn” land-clearing techniques, causing extensive soil erosion. This erosion, exacerbated by unsustainable uses of agrochemicals, has led to a decrease in agricultural productivity. Many subsistence farmers have turned to other sources of income, like cattle production. Some have migrated to urban centers, where they have few or no employable skills. Understanding the need to both preserve natural resources and ensure viable sources of income for farmers, the Peace Corps has modified its goals and direction to form the permaculture (for “permanent agriculture”) project. The project works to improve the lives of subsistence farmers and their families by helping them increase production using permaculture principles. Additionally, a greater emphasis is being placed on promoting small-scale agribusiness.

Volunteers and their counterparts have created integrated farm plans over the past year, resulting in the development of experimental plots of vegetables, improved pasture grasses, an experimental papaya farm, a chicken project, a coffee plant nursery, a small irrigation system, and a goat project.

Business Development

The small business development project has evolved from strictly a business project to a project that integrates business skills into broader community development initiatives. The project continues to support cooperatives, associations, and artisan

groups and has recently begun a new partnership with Junior Achievement to provide support to business development youth groups. Volunteers also focus on information and communication technology by providing training to rural communities and schools interested in increasing computer literacy and preparing youth for work in the information age. Volunteers’ efforts have led to a women’s agribusiness group receiving legal status as a business, a computer lab becoming self-sustaining as a result of improved planning and financial management, and an increase in the number of farmers who are eligible for certain government loans.

Environment

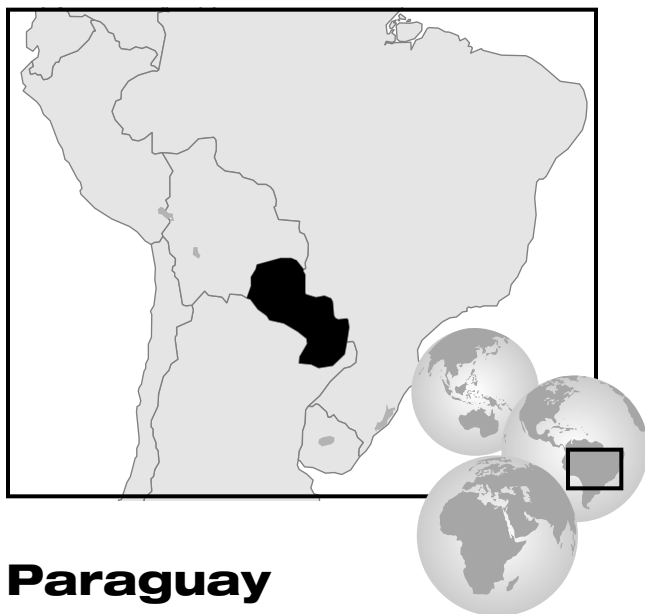
In addition to training teachers and assisting in curriculum development, environment Volunteers focus on rural community and family-based conservation activities using a nonformal environmental education approach. Volunteers assigned to coastal areas and national park buffer zones play an important role in designing and implementing environmental conservation projects. In 2003 Volunteers trained over 500 environmental extension agents in environmentally sound practices and community development techniques.

Health and HIV/AIDS

This project reaches the poorest areas of Panama. The majority of Volunteers live and work with indigenous groups, including the Kuna, Ngöbe-Buglé, Wounaan, and Emberá. The program focuses on access to potable water, availability of proper sanitation services, and education on proper health and hygiene practices. Volunteers work with the Ministry of Health in developing action plans, designing infrastructure, and identifying needy communities. The project also addresses HIV/AIDS through education programs such as a national youth conference on HIV/AIDS awareness.

“The most important part of my work is advising on planning and organization for an agricultural association. I worked with the leader of the association to develop a coffee project business plan after we attended an agribusiness workshop together. My work has definitely made a difference in my community. The changes are often small, but they are steps in the right direction.”

**Panama Volunteer
Business Development Sector**



Paraguay

Capital.....	Asunción
Population	6 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,350
GDP growth	2.7%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 5% Female: 8%
Infant mortality rate.....	26 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 66% Measles: 77%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$79 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 93% Rural: 59%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.11%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official languages	Guaraní, Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	187	205
Program funds (\$000)	2,570	3,215

Country Overview

Program dates	1967–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

Ever since the fall of Alfredo Stroessner's regime 14 years ago, Paraguay has been striving to maintain a democratic government in the face of tremendous political and economic challenges. Throughout this period, levels of poverty, crime, and corruption have increased dramatically. In August 2003, the newly elected government of Nicanor Duarte Frutos took power. There are signs that the new government is starting to receive support both domestically and internationally. Its challenges are to demonstrate its ability to improve economic conditions, ensure the provision of basic services like education and health, reform the judicial system, and reduce crime and corruption.

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 reexport of imported goods to neighboring countries and the activities of thousands of microenterprises and street vendors.

Limited access to land resources and economic opportunities causes significant migration of the predominantly rural population to Paraguay's main urban centers and to neighboring countries. Extensive urban unemployment and underemployment are a pressing challenge for the government.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps opened its program in Paraguay in 1967, and since that time over 2,700 Volunteers have served in this South American nation. To help address Paraguay's critical needs, Volunteers are assigned to projects in cooperatives and small business development, municipal services development, crop and beekeeping extension, early elementary education, environmental education, agroforestry extension, environmental sanitation, rural health extension, and urban 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 extension 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. A major focus of the extension projects is to 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, seeds, and other supplies for farm diversification efforts. They have provided orientation in planting of 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 also help cooperatives diversify their services in the areas of 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. Volunteers' efforts have led to changes such as the implementation by a women's group of daily sales control of their bakery and improved financial controls in four cooperatives.

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 by using information technology.

Education

Volunteers primarily train teachers in new teaching techniques, implement summer community education projects, assist families and schools

in supporting children with special needs, and help schoolteachers and administrators promote gender equity in the classroom.

In 2003, early elementary education Volunteers worked in 90 communities at 120 primary schools and four high schools. Volunteers also worked with a variety of community organizations, including health posts, municipalities, neighborhood commissions, NGOs, youth groups, and women's groups.

Environment

In Paraguay, environmental degradation is increasing at a dramatic rate. Much of the deforestation, contamination, and inappropriate land use is due to ignorance of the environment's importance to humans. Volunteers in the agroforestry project work to increase crop diversity on fragile deforested land while promoting resource sustainability. Volunteers in the environmental education project work to incorporate environmental education into schools' curricula and participate in village-based projects to support the Ministry of Education's reforms.

Health and HIV/AIDS

The Peace Corps uses an integrated project to respond to public health problems in rural areas. Sanitation Volunteers work with Paraguay's National Environmental Sanitation Service through projects focusing on dental health education, parasite prevention, nutrition education, the construction of brick ovens, the protection and decontamination of water sources, the construction of sanitary latrines, and the improvement of existing latrines.

Rural health extension Volunteers work in coordination with the Ministry of Public Health in the most rural areas of the country to promote preventive health care practices among nurses, parents, and community members.

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 also 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.



Peru

Capital.....	Lima
Population	26 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,980
GDP growth	0.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 5% Female: 14%
Infant mortality rate.....	30 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 85% Measles: 97%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.1 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 87% Rural: 62%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.4%
Major religion	Roman Catholicism
Official languages	Quechua, Spanish

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	94	116
Program funds (\$000)	1,717	2,197

Country Overview

Program dates	1962-1975 2002-present
Program sectors	Business Development Health and HIV/AIDS Youth

The government of Peru is in a process of democratization. Led by President Alejandro Toledo, the executive branch is becoming more accountable, and the Congress is emerging as a counterbalance to the once dominant executive branch. Although stable, the Toledo administration has made several changes within the cabinet. Simultaneous with advances in democratization, there has been an increase in activities by the domestic terrorist group Sendero Luminoso.

Peru's main exports are minerals, petroleum, textiles, fish, timber, and agricultural products. 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 (estimated at 43 percent), and a significant portion of economic activity takes place in the informal sector. Large sectors of the population suffer from nutritional deficiencies, high infant mortality rates, and limited access to basic health services.

Program Focus

Peru was one of the first countries to welcome Peace Corps Volunteers, who began working there in 1962. Returning in 2002 after a 27-year hiatus, the Peace Corps is focusing its efforts in the areas of small business development and health. A new youth development program began in March 2004. Since the program's initial opening, over 2,300 Volunteers have served in Peru.

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 their incomes by enhancing their links to urban markets, improving their administrative and organizational operations, and strengthening their management and accounting practices. In an enhanced focus on information and communication technology, Volunteers are linking farmers, artisans, and small business owners to technology.

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. One Volunteer has a weekly radio show in which she discusses family health topics.

Youth

Children continue to be the most vulnerable and unprotected citizens of Peru. Of the 3.8 million people living in extreme poverty, 2.1 million are children. Of the total 10.2 million under-18 population, more than 6.5 million live below the poverty line. Volunteers working in the youth development project will address the multiple needs of youth, particularly groups in rural and periurban 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.



Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo addresses staff members at Peace Corps headquarters.



Philippines

Capital.....	Manila
Population	78 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,030
GDP growth	3.4%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 5%
	Female: 5%
Infant mortality rate.....	29 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 70%
	Measles: 75%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.8 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 91%
	Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Roman Catholicism: 85%
	Protestantism: 9%
	Islam: 5%
	Buddhist and Other: 1%
Official languages	English, Tagalog

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	104	105
Program funds (\$000)	2,598	2,876

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. The 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 the 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 the number of 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 2003, President Arroyo committed her government to reversing this trend and to building a "strong republic" by investing in its people and implementing reforms that will promote stability and sustainable development. Volunteers address these challenges by working in education, youth, business development, and the environment.

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 42 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 support 38 organizations and work with several thousand youth ages 10 to 25. They enhance youth's capacity to develop businesses by organizing workshops 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.

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 work as mentors for abused children and youth offenders. In addition, Volunteers have trained thousands of Filipino educators through workshops, seminars, and consultations. Because of a Volunteer's efforts in coordinating a locally sponsored fundraising event, a college community was connected to the Internet.

Environment

A small island development and community-based conservation project promotes environmental education and protection of both coastal and upland natural resources. The project engages 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 work in a variety of settings: They introduce environmental education activities in schools, encourage livelihood development and environmental education for youth and adults in communities, and help develop natural resource management and environmental protection plans in government agencies. Thousands of high school students and adults have an increased awareness of environmental issues as a result of Volunteer projects. For instance, 100 out-of-school youth participated in a five-day marine ecology training led by a Volunteer at a marine sanctuary in the summer. Other Volunteers, working on alternative-livelihood projects, have introduced activities such as raising free-range chickens and quilting.

**“Volunteers, through the years,
continue to open doors for the
marginalized communities to
improve communication and
socialization skills, gain skills in
environmental restoration, and
increase their cash income through
livelihood initiatives. Their innovative
ideas and eagerness to make an
impact are inspiring as they also
embrace the Filipino culture with
open arms.”**

**Sheila Chan
Executive Director
Palawan Conservation Corps**



Romania

Capital.....	Bucharest
Population	22 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,720
GDP growth	5.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 1%
	Female: 3%
Infant mortality rate.....	19 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 99%
	Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.2 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 91%
	Rural: 16%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Romanian Orthodoxy: 86.8%
	Roman Catholicism: 5%
	Protestantism: 5%
Official language	Romanian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	154	150
Program funds (\$000)	2,826	3,534

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 and NATO. NATO formally invited Romania to become a member at the Prague summit in November 2002, and Romania expects to join the European Union in 2007. The country has recently taken significant measures to tackle needed reforms and is expected to continue on this path as it prepares for EU accession.

Over the past 14 years, 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. Foreign investment and development aid are increasing, and Romania enjoyed an impressive GDP growth of nearly 5 percent in 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 are involved in addressing the country's educational needs. As Romania looks to Europe for assistance, NGO and institutional development remains an important area of emphasis. All efforts consistently aim toward local sustainability and capacity building.

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 European Union. 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 in conjunction with Romanian partner agencies. The project provides technical assistance in a large variety of fields: public administration, regional and urban development, small and medium-size enterprise development, and agribusiness. 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 2003, Volunteers assisted 3,528 individuals and 331 organizations in 121 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 and focus on developing their communication skills in English. In addition to classroom teaching and training, Volunteers organize and participate in a variety of summer activities, including drama courses and environment-, sports-, and leadership-focused camps. In 2003, Volunteers worked with 11,000 middle and secondary school students and 83 organizations in 63 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 is designed to assist Romanian communities in addressing the challenges posed by the years of disregard for the environment. It also aims to develop an enhanced public awareness of responsible and sustainable en-

vironmental 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 2003, environment Volunteers assisted 1,757 individuals and 254 organizations in 39 communities.

Health and HIV/AIDS

The health, social, and youth development project works to improve 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 focused on HIV-positive children, the mentally ill, people with physical disabilities, orphaned or abandoned children, and the elderly. Some Volunteers also provide computer skills support to the institutions where they work. In 2003, Volunteers assisted 2,600 people and 100 organizations in 180 communities.

"While our efforts to train and share knowledge are an important part of the Peace Corps contribution, and of great value, I believe that the most significant contribution of the Volunteer is the one-on-one contact, the street-level quality of the experience. This has, in the end, the most impact."

**Romania Volunteer
Business Development Sector**



Samoa

Capital.....	Apia
Population	174,000
Annual per capita income	\$1,490
GDP growth	10%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	1%
Infant mortality rate	25 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 93%
	Measles: 92%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$1.2 million
Access to safe water	99%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	4%
Major religion	Christianity
Official languages	Samoaan, English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	49	48
Program funds (\$000)	1,301	1,538

Country Overview

Program dates	1967–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

Samoa is ruled by a Parliament modeled after the British Westminster system; however, traditional culture continues to dominate both social and political structures. The prime minister, Sailele Malielegaoi Tuila'epa, was elected in 1998, and his cabinet consists of 12 members appointed by the chief of state. The traditional post of chief of state has been held by Malietoa Tanumafili II since 1963. The unicameral Legislative Assembly, or Fono, has 49 members, who serve for five years; only chiefs, or matai, may stand for election to the Fono. The Peace Corps is fortunate to enjoy a close working relationship with the government of Samoa, especially the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Samoa's economy is agricultural, based primarily on the cultivation and export of crops such as cocoa, *copra* (dried coconut meat), and bananas. New crops recognized for their medicinal value, such as kava and nonu, have recently gained economic importance. The fishing industry has also become an extremely important 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, remittances from Samoans living overseas play a considerable part in Samoa's economic growth and development.

Program Focus

Historically, 70 percent of Samoa Volunteers have worked in the education sector as classroom teachers. In June 2001, Peace Corps/Samoa initiated two new projects that now form the core of the Peace Corps' development assistance. The business development project addresses the needs of women and youth, especially in areas relating to agriculture and the environment. Capacity-building projects recognize the evolving role of Volunteers from classroom teacher to mentors in technical and professional areas, including information technology, early childhood and special-needs education, and NGO development.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

In 2003, Volunteers worked with communities to develop strategic plans and prioritize project areas to improve their lives. Once projects are identified, they 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.

In 2003, Volunteers also worked with Habitat for Humanity and Women in Business, assisting in all areas related to institutional strengthening. At Women in Business, a Volunteer created a program officer role, enabling the position to be filled locally and helping to ensure the program's sustainability.

Education

Since 1987, Volunteer teachers have helped more than 30,000 Samoan students complete five years of secondary education. The final group of education Volunteers working as classroom teachers ended their service in December 2003. In addition to teaching business, math, and science, these Volunteers were involved in extracurricular activities such as coaching track-and-field events, rugby, and soccer.

Today more than 25 percent of Volunteers serve either formally or informally in information and communication technology 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.

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. One "second chance" school Volunteer works individually with slow learners and those in a classroom setting. Additionally, Volunteers conduct island-wide surveys to identify special-needs students who could benefit from this program.

Environment

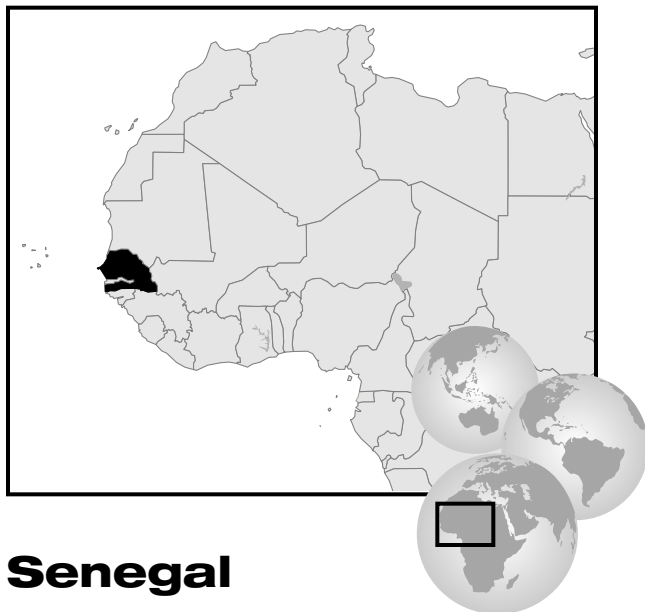
Volunteers teach environmental studies and marine biology and assist in the development of marine protected areas and integrated coastal management awareness curricula. One Volunteer assisted in the creation of an urban development plan that emphasized environmental responsibility.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers have assisted in the development of the "Healthy Policy Register," the "Health Financing Policy," and the "Annual Report for Preventive Health." Fortunately, Samoa has relatively few HIV/AIDS cases. However, serious noncommunicable health problems exist.

"When my students watch movies about American drug dealers who drive fancy cars or dramas about billionaires, they don't think that's America anymore. They think America is a Peace Corps Volunteer who shows up for work every day, who helps them whenever she can, who cares about them and their future."

**Samoa Volunteer
Education Sector**



Senegal

Capital.....	Dakar
Population.....	9.8 million
Annual per capita income	\$490
GDP growth	5.7%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 52%
	Female: 71%
Infant mortality rate.....	79 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 52%
	Measles: 48%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$126 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 92%
	Rural: 65%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.5%
Major religions	Islam: 95%
	Christianity: 4%
	Indigenous beliefs: 1%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	146	134
Program funds (\$000)	3,504	3,602

Country Overview

Program dates	1963–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Business Development Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

On a continent filled with political instability, Senegal historically has been a country with a relatively stable political climate, a free society, and democratic institutions. Senegal is one of the few African states that have never experienced a coup d'état, and the government continues to express commitment to democracy. A flourishing independent media, typically free from official control, and a generally tolerant culture, largely free from ethnic or religious tensions, have provided a resilient base for democratic politics.

Senegal ranks among the least developed countries in the world. Recurrent drought has been a major problem over the past three decades. Agricultural production has declined; rural out-migration to urban areas has increased rapidly; and peanut production, the principal agricultural export and basis of the economy, has greatly diminished. Desertification continues to impact agricultural production, which further threatens the 70 percent of the population that primarily depends on agriculture for its survival. Agriculture contributes less than 20 percent of the gross domestic product, reflecting the continued decay of this once primary sector. The fishing sector accounts for the majority of Senegal's foreign exchange earnings, followed by phosphate production and tourism, a fast-growing sector.

Program Focus

Beginning with English teachers in 1963, the Peace Corps program in Senegal has grown over the years, providing a long legacy of Volunteer contributions. More than 130 Volunteers currently serve in Senegal. Over 70 percent serve in critically underserved rural areas, where they provide important information to the country's poorest people on health education and agricultural and environmental technology. Volunteers primarily work on small-scale projects, helping individuals and communities with their development needs. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and girls education in the communities where they are assigned.

Volunteer Focus

Agriculture

Volunteers provide assistance in the areas of sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, and improved rice production. Activities include helping rural communities and groups improve soil fertility and production, working with female farmers to increase rice production, and training farmers in natural resource management and conservation techniques. Volunteers increasingly work with groups of farmers, including female groups, to expand production of popular varieties of bananas and cashews to generate additional sources of income for rural people.

Business Development

Volunteers provide training and assistance in marketing, finance, and organizational management. They promote business awareness and teach customer service, accounting, and marketing skills to a wide range of entrepreneurs, both groups and individuals. They work in small towns and villages, providing vital information to create business services in these traditionally underserved areas. In larger towns, Volunteers work with business trainers to expand business services to poorer segments of the population. Several Volunteers also have worked with service providers and users to expand the use of information technology in Senegal.

Senegal is a pilot location of the Digital Freedom Initiative, a partnership among the Senegalese government, USAID, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and private sector enterprises that aims to increase business and human capacity at the grass-roots level. More Volunteers will integrate information technology into their activities as the project progresses.

The newest area of Volunteer involvement is an ecotourism project, which is strongly supported by the Ministry of Tourism and the National Park Service. The first ecotourism Volunteers entered service in December 2003.

Environment

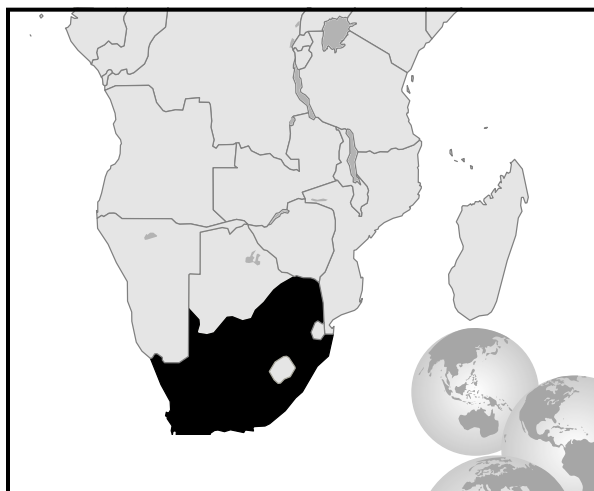
Volunteers work with leaders in communities that have schools to increase awareness of the environmental impact of human activity. They work with teachers to develop integrated curricula to teach environmental lessons and work with students and other community members to teach practical methods linked to the classroom activities. Current Volunteer activities include trash collection and disposal projects, tree-planting projects for live fencing, and community beautification and hygiene and sanitation projects. Volunteers also promote youth clubs to organize members of the community to conduct environmental activities that are beneficial to their communities.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers focus their efforts on educating people in basic health practices to enable them to avoid illnesses such as malnutrition, diarrhea, malaria, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Volunteers train community partners to train other members of the community, providing a sustainable base for their efforts. Volunteers also train Senegalese in HIV/AIDS awareness using informal education techniques, including art, music, and theater.

“After spending several months working with the rural council to obtain written title to plant trees on two hectares of land, a community group and the Volunteer assisting them fenced the land, then obtained 3,000 seedlings.... Hundreds of villagers participated in the planting. Soon after, the minister of youth visited the project and congratulated the village for their good work.”

**Senegal Volunteer
Environment Sector**



South Africa

Capital.....	Pretoria
Population	43 million
Annual per capita income	\$2,820
GDP growth	2.2%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 14%
	Female: 15%
Infant mortality rate	56 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 76%
	Measles: 82%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$7.2 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 99%
	Rural: 73%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	20.1%
Major religions	Christianity
	Hinduism
	Indigenous beliefs
	Islam
	Judaism
Official languages	Afrikaans, English,
	Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho,
	Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana,
	Venda, Xhosa, Zulu

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	120	124
Program funds (\$000)	2,978	3,463

Country Overview

Program dates	1997–present
Program sectors	Education Health and HIV/AIDS

South Africa has emerged as a regional leader on the African continent and is developing political, economic, and cultural ties around the world. The country's first democratically elected government, which assumed power in 1994, achieved significant progress. The current government, headed by President Thabo Mbeki, has augmented this progress. It is committed in its Constitution to the establishment and maintenance of a society that protects the human and civil rights of all its citizens. While South Africa's present governance objectives are laudable, the country continues to struggle with the legacy of apartheid and the challenge of achieving its full social and economic development potential. One of its most basic challenges is the development of human resources and tackling the specter of HIV/AIDS, which casts a shadow over all aspects of life.

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.

The transition to a democratic government that began in the early 1990s stimulated a debate on economic policies to achieve sustained economic growth while simultaneously redressing the socioeconomic disparities created by apartheid. The initial blueprint to address this problem was the Reconstruction and Development Program, which was designed to improve the standard of living for the majority of the population by providing housing, basic services, education, and health care. Despite the nation's abundant wealth, 50 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line and 30 percent of the population is unemployed.

Program Focus

The government continues to demonstrate significant commitment 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 in schools and rural communities. The education project operates in predominantly black, rural primary schools.

The NGO capacity-building project started in 2001 in response to the growing challenges that HIV/AIDS poses for the South African government and people. The magnitude of the challenge has resulted in a commitment from all societal role players, civil society organizations in particular, to support sustainable community responses to the pandemic. The project offers Volunteers the opportunity to play a significant role in developing the human and organizational capacity of nongovernmental and community-based organizations to make meaningful contributions to this pressing development issue.

Volunteer Focus

Education

Volunteers are working with teachers and principals in nearly 340 rural primary schools and in over 80 communities in the Limpopo, North West, and Mpumalanga provinces. Each Volunteer serves as a school and community resource for a cluster of three or four schools serving 40 to 50 teachers. Volunteers are placed at the primary school level, where they facilitate workshops and assist educators in fully understanding the demands of 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 contribute toward the positive development of schools as organizations that support learning. Further, Volunteers 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. Volunteers recently introduced a "Math Marathon" to spark student interest in learning mathematics. The idea has taken off, and many local teachers now plan to organize such marathons as an annual event. Similar initiatives in English and science are underway.

Health and HIV/AIDS

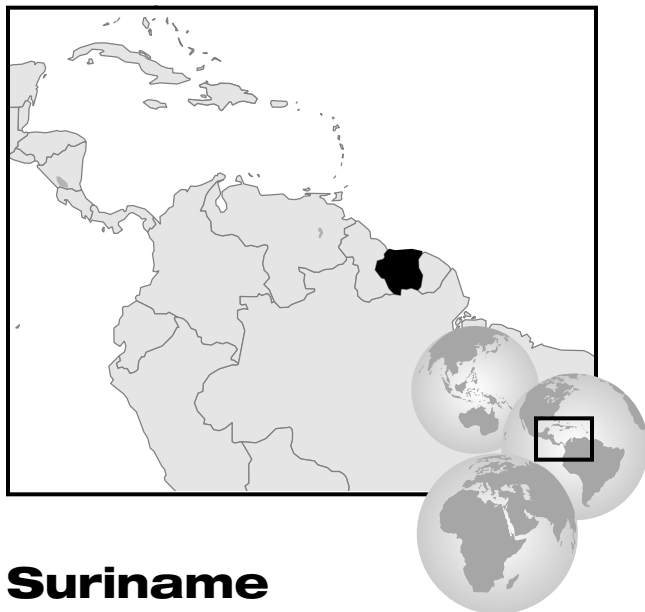
The South African government called on all organizations—local, national, and international—to join its Partnership Against AIDS at the end of 1998. The Peace Corps viewed this as an opportunity to expand its efforts to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and initiated an NGO capacity-building and HIV/AIDS integration project. In this project, Volunteers are placed with NGOs and community-based organizations to help them be more effective and sustainable while providing appropriate HIV/AIDS-related services to communities. Volunteers are working with 28 NGOs and community-based organizations, directly assisting the organizations' directors and other key staff members in improving the quality and effectiveness of programs and services by developing creative strategies for mobilizing financial and human resources and mentoring staff in a variety of technical fields.

Partner organizations work in a wide range of HIV/AIDS-related fields, such as care of orphans and vulnerable children, home-based care, awareness and prevention, mainstreaming HIV/AIDS issues into more traditional development programs, youth development, and creating networks of health and AIDS service organizations.

In working at both organizational and community levels, Volunteers have provided training that has benefited over 12,000 people. Project partners repeatedly remark on the value of long-term support for change processes within their organizations—from technical development and use of more appropriate financial and reporting systems to rethinking strategy, relationships, and programming.

"I was able to support the development of a network of AIDS service organizations and help the network members to speak to each other and get a sense of who's out there and how they can support each other. This is building a more collaborative ethos in a competitive environment and will provide organizations and communities with more information and resources about HIV/AIDS."

**South Africa Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Suriname

Capital.....	Paramaribo
Population	420,000
Annual per capita income	\$1,810
GDP growth	5.9%
Adult illiteracy rate	6%
Infant mortality rate	26 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 79% Measles: 71%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$73.6 million
Access to safe water	86%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.2%
Major religions	Hinduism Indigenous beliefs Islam Protestantism Roman Catholicism
Official language	Dutch

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	46	52
Program funds (\$000)	1,102	1,373

Country Overview

Program dates	1995–present
Program sector	Education

After over a decade of predominantly military rule, Suriname installed a freely elected Parliament and inaugurated a democratically chosen president in 1991. The National Assembly elected Ronald Venetiaan as president in August 2000. Suriname is interested in increasing 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 semiurban 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. Over 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, over 200 Volunteers have served in Suriname. The Peace Corps provides assistance in the Amerindian and Maroon communities as well as 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 NGOs. In collaboration with both governmental and nongovernmental organizations, the Peace Corps began a nonformal rural community education project in 2001, as the rural community development project ended. Working in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Volunteers now focus on nonformal education in rural areas.

Volunteer Focus

Education

The purpose of the nonformal rural community education project is to improve 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.

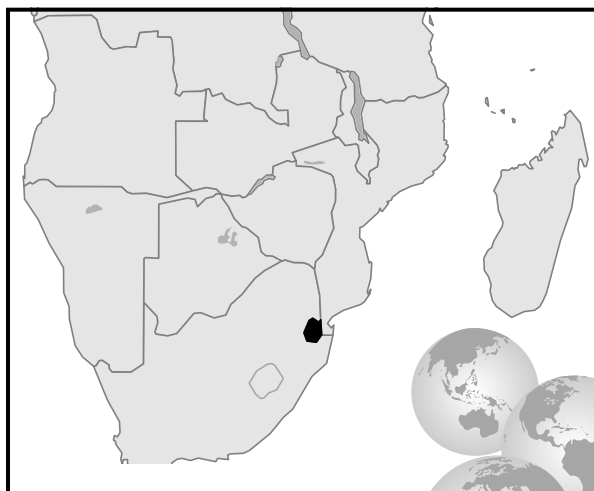
In 2003, Volunteers helped set up libraries, developed computer training, and were integral in project planning and organization at the community level. Four projects brought potable tap water to 4,000 people in six communities. A Volunteer assisted a village in setting up a water catchment system at the local school. Children were taught the importance of clean drinking water and how to keep the water clean. Another Volunteer helped in the building of a bridge to provide a safe passage for children on their way to school. In addition, Volunteers organized a contest that challenged children to do something to benefit their village. The children's projects ranged from assisting in the renovation of their school and building a playground to starting a school garden.

“Although our largest ongoing project is the chicken farm, with education on basic business tactics and planning, our primary job is to connect people with the resources available to them outside their community. Through the sharing of ideas that we have brought from the United States, Surinamers’ perspectives, as well as our own, are broadened.”

Suriname Volunteer Education Sector



This Volunteer's secondary project focus is business development. He is teaching the art of furniture building to his community with the intent of providing a sustainable source of revenue.



Swaziland

Capital.....	Mbabane
Population	1 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,300
GDP growth	1.6%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 19%
	Female: 21%
Infant mortality rate.....	106 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 77%
	Measles: 72%
Foreign direct investment.....	Not available
Access to safe water	Not available
HIV/AIDS prevalence	33.4%
Major 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 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	57	61
Program funds (\$000)	1,317	1,593

Country Overview

Program dates	1969–1996 2003–present
Program sector	Health and HIV/AIDS

The first post-independence elections were held in May 1972; however, in 1973, King Sobhuza II repealed the Constitution and dissolved Parliament, 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 accountability in government, the king and the prime minister initiated a national debate, which is ongoing, 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 a number of agro-processing factories. Mining has declined in importance 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. Remit-

tances from the Southern African Customs Union and Swazi workers in South African mines substantially supplement domestically earned income.

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. Playing a prominent role in Swaziland's development, Volunteers taught English, agriculture, mathematics, science, and vocational education in secondary schools and promoted agricultural cooperatives in rural areas.

A programming review in 1994 recommended that Peace Corps/Swaziland begin phasing out the education project because of the Ministry of Education's lack of long-term priorities and objectives for the education sector. In addition, the ministry did not have a strategy for overcoming the increasing deficit of qualified secondary school teachers. These factors made the sustainability of the education project difficult. In 1996, the Peace Corps decided to close its Swaziland program primarily as a result of budget constraints.

The greatest single problem confronting the people of Swaziland is the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Swazi youth ages 15 to 29 are the most vulnerable, and in 2002, the rate among pregnant women was 38.6 percent. In addition, approximately 35,000 children have been orphaned as a result of AIDS.

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 impact of 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

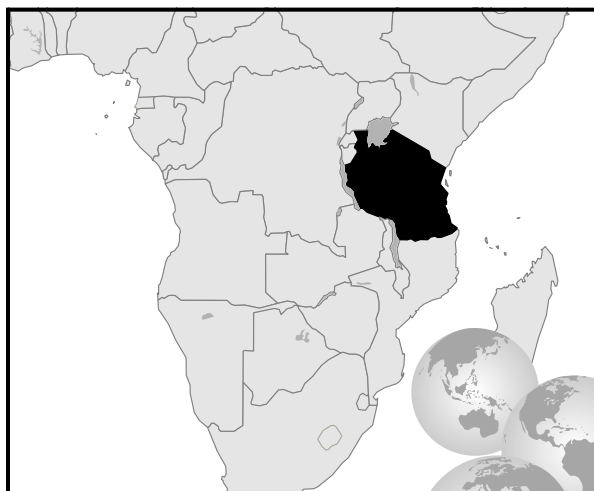
Health and HIV/AIDS

In April 2002, a Peace Corps assessment team visited Swaziland to determine how Volunteers could assist the Swazi people. The team found that the overwhelming effects of AIDS on the country's human resources indicated a need for immediate assistance.

Thirty-six 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 currently are working to encourage in-school and out-of-school youth to develop appropriate behaviors that will reduce the spread of HIV; to support mitigation efforts regarding the impact of HIV/AIDS on orphans and vulnerable children; and to build the capacity of nongovernmental organizations and community-based organizations that provide HIV/AIDS services to youth.

"On behalf of His Majesty the King, the Indlovukazi (queen mother), and the entire Swazi nation, let me say how grateful the Swazi nation is to the government and the people of the United States of America for having commissioned you [Volunteers] to come and assist us in our development efforts."

**Queen LaMatsebula
of Swaziland**



Tanzania

Capital.....	Dar es Salaam
Population	34 million
Annual per capita income	\$270
GDP growth	5.7%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 15%
	Female: 32%
Infant mortality rate.....	104 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 85%
	Measles: 83%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$224 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 90%
	Rural: 57%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	7.8%
Major religions	Islam: 45%
	Christianity: 45%
	Indigenous beliefs: 10%
Official language	Kiswahili

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	190	212
Program funds (\$000)	2,424	3,387

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–1969
	1979–1991
	1991–present
Program sectors	Education
	Environment
	Health and HIV/AIDS

Although Tanzania has made some progress in restoring macroeconomic stability over the past two years, widespread and persistent poverty is still a challenge. Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 160 out of 175 on the 2003 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 over 36 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The manufacturing sector is small and growing, and agricultural products account for approximately 85 percent of exports. Inefficient land and labor markets, deteriorating environmental conditions, slow progress in the infrastructure sector, 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, approximately 2,000 Volunteers have served in the country, working in education, health, the environment, and agriculture. Volunteers' work continues to be highly regarded by the government as an important contribution to Tanzania's efforts to achieve community and national development. In response to Tanzania's poverty reduction agenda, Peace Corps/Tanzania is currently exploring opportunities to expand into the agribusiness sector, focusing on the marketing of agricultural products, rural financial services, and food-processing technologies. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention.

Volunteer Focus

Education

Volunteers in this sector work in 70 secondary schools, teaching science and mathematics to over 10,000 students and collaborating closely with teachers in the development of subject resource materials. In addition to serving in the classroom, education Volunteers organize math and science clubs, facilitate HIV/AIDS seminars, and promote environmental awareness on school farms. Some Volunteers are also involved in teaching information technology classes and working with computer labs at their schools. 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.

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), energy-efficient stoves, improved livestock practices, and environmental education in schools. Particular emphasis is given to working with women and youth. Additionally, Volunteers have been proactive in disseminating messages on HIV/AIDS and girls' self-esteem to students and out-of-school youth. They have also improved sanitation at primary schools by constructing latrines and creating rain harvest jars for hand washing.

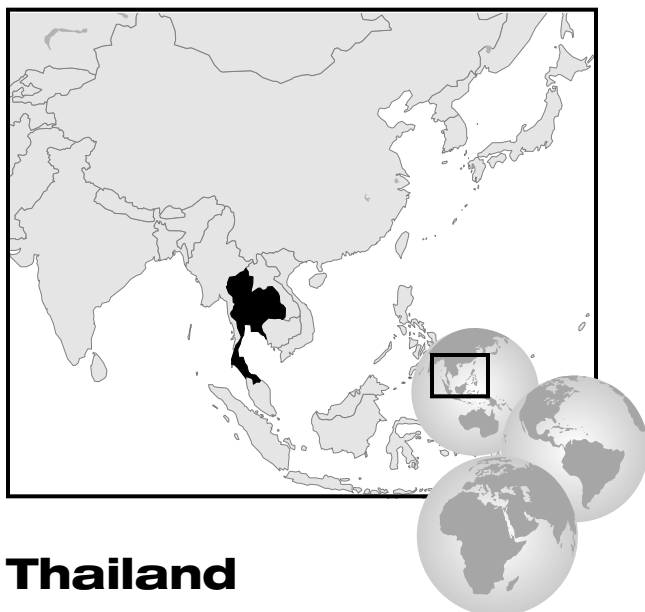
Health and HIV/AIDS

The school health education project is a joint project between the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Peace Corps that was initiated after Volunteers saw a great opportunity to empower youth in the knowledge and skills needed for making sound decisions about their health. Volunteers work with schools and communities on a variety of health issues, with special focus on HIV/AIDS. Volunteers train peer educators who then work with other youth to foster increased awareness about HIV/AIDS. Volunteers have also been active in disseminating HIV/AIDS information in their communities. Twenty Volunteers posted health-related questions and answers on bulletin boards at their schools. Almost 5,000 students participated in the quizzes and learned about HIV/AIDS, malaria, cholera, and other infectious diseases. Tanzanian teachers have used the quizzes as reference materials when developing classroom resources. Some of the peer educators trained by Volunteers are working with after-school clubs, teaching their peers about health issues through drama, talks, and organized debates.

Volunteers also work closely with counterparts to increase their skills and knowledge as health educators. Thirty-eight Tanzanians attended a workshop in which they learned more about nutritional care for people living with AIDS.

“Putting a smile on a face, encouraging a student to do better, helping those in need—this is why I joined Peace Corps and this has been the larger part of my experience in Tanzania.”

**Tanzania Volunteer
Education Sector**



Thailand

Capital.....	Bangkok
Population	61 million
Annual per capita income	\$1,940
GDP growth	1.8%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 3%
	Female: 6%
Infant mortality rate	24 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 96%
	Measles: 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$3.8 billion
Access to safe water	Urban: 95%
	Rural: 81%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	1.8%
Major religions	Buddhism: 95%
	Islam: 4%
	Christianity
	Hinduism
Official language	Thai

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	85	115
Program funds (\$000)	2,073	2,550

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.

Program Focus

The Peace Corps has been collaborating 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.

Peace Corps/Thailand entered a growth phase with the addition of a new business development project in late 2003.

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 developed a community-based project to assist small businesses with organizational

development. The first group of Volunteers for this project arrived in Thailand to begin their training in August 2003. Volunteers in this project will share experiences, strategies, and resources to assist administrative officials and communities at the grass-roots level. They will focus on capacity building of subdistrict 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 will work to develop and enhance professional capacities in organizational development, project planning and management, project monitoring and evaluation, and basic business English.

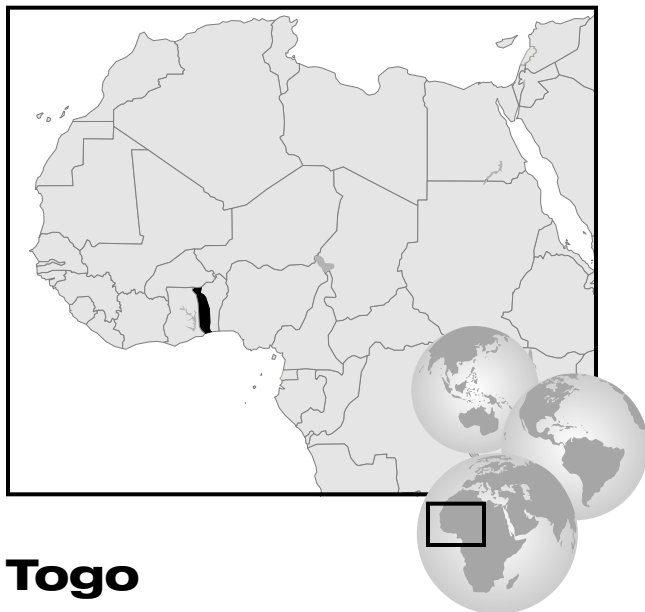
Education

To address Thailand's expressed needs in this sector, Peace Corps/Thailand initiated a teacher collaboration and community outreach project in 2003, a sequel to the integrated education and community outreach project that concludes in 2004. These projects focus 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.

Relationship building, friendship, and cultural understanding and exchange are at the heart of the project. The project plan is sufficiently flexible to allow 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 environmental issues and recycling. He worked with his community in northeastern Thailand to recycle the hard wood from an abandoned building on school grounds in constructing a new dining hall for the students.

"Two of the three goals of the Peace Corps are in regard to cultural exchange, and after the events of September 11, 2001, those goals are clearly quite important. Working and living with the wonderful people of Nong Pong village have broadened my imagination and lengthened my perspective, and I intend to apply this education toward doing my part to create a better American society."

**Thailand Volunteer
Education Sector**



Togo

Capital.....	Lomé
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$270
GDP growth	2.3%
Adult illiteracy rate	Male: 27%
	Female: 56%
Infant mortality rate.....	79 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 41%
	Measles: 42%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$67 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 64%
	Rural: 58%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	6%
Major religions	Animism: 50%
	Christianity: 30%
	Islam: 20%
Official language	French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	125	127
Program funds (\$000)	2,433	2,587

Country Overview

Program dates	1962–present
Program sectors	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 in 1967, when General Gnassingbé Eyadéma became president. He 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, and 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. Most bilateral and multilateral aid to Togo remains frozen.

Though Togo is one of the world's poorest nations, its coastal location, good harbor, and better-than-average infrastructure have helped make Lomé a regional trading center. Agriculture is the foundation of Togo's economy, contributing 30 percent of its GDP and employing 70 percent of its workers. Corn, sorghum, millet, cassavas, yams, cowpeas, and rice are the major food crops. Cash crops include coffee, cocoa, and cotton. Togo is the world's fifth largest producer of phosphates, an activity that contributes much to the country's revenues. Industry and manufacturing account for about a quarter of Togo's GDP. Half of the total domestic output is accounted for by the service sector.

Program Focus

Since the Peace Corps began its work in Togo, it has provided over 1,700 Volunteers. Volunteers' work with the Togolese people emphasizes low-cost solutions that make maximum use of local resources. Partnering with local and international organizations is an important component of Volunteers' project activities. Volunteers work to provide assistance in the areas of business development, education, the environment, and health and HIV/AIDS. All Volunteers, regardless of sector, are trained in how to promote HIV/AIDS awareness.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

The goal of this project is to improve basic business and entrepreneurial skills as well as to foster opportunities for growth and job creation in Togo's large microenterprise sector. Volunteers are assigned to local credit unions and offer business training and consulting to members who wish to improve their business skills. Workshops covering accounting, finance, marketing, and feasibility studies are offered to tailors, retailers, and other small business people. One Volunteer hosts a weekly radio show that showcases local businessmen and women and reaches about 5,000 people. Volunteers have also organized "Take Our Daughters to Work" activities and a seminar on girls' education.

Education

Volunteers work closely with village development committees, schools, and parent organizations to devise and implement solutions to problems related to girls' education, such as nonformal educational activities for illiterate or under educated girls. Among other activities, Volunteers and their colleagues have set up girls' clubs, peer educator groups, life-skills clubs, theater clubs, and girls' sports teams. Volunteers have also collaborated with field staff of the Ministry of Social Welfare to organize literacy programs in local languages for uneducated women.

Environment

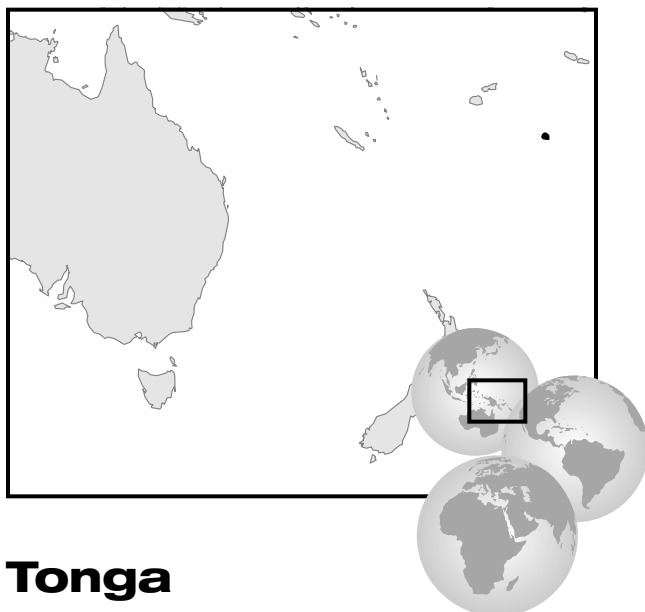
Traditional farming practices cannot meet the needs of Togo's growing population. Volunteers work with farmers to introduce sustainable farming practices that will lead to improved farm yields and reduced environmental degradation. In addition, some Volunteers are developing environmental education projects 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

To improve community health, Volunteers train and supervise community health workers, focusing on preventive health. They assist local health personnel by promoting activities that address HIV/AIDS, malaria, Guinea worm prevention, nutrition, management of rural health clinics, and community management of dispensaries and pharmacies. One Volunteer helped build and furnish a rural health center that serves over 2,000 people. Volunteers have also worked on a variety of HIV/AIDS awareness activities that have reached over 20,000 Togo-les. Programs range from peer education activities with youth to encouraging the testimony of people living with AIDS on local radio and video.

"I must have inherited much of my 'volunteer spirit' from my father ... a general practice physician. ... When I told my dad about my intention to do a project to [train] traditional midwives in my area, he was intrigued. ... We held the [training] outside, under the shade of mango trees. ... The school director supplied us with desks and a chalkboard. The one-day [event] was extremely successful. To this day I have community health workers and traditional midwives come up to me and tell me how much they learned."

**Togo Volunteer
Health and HIV/AIDS Sector**



Tonga

Capital.....	Nuku'alofa
Population	101,000
Annual per capita income	\$1,530
GDP growth	3.1%
Adult illiteracy rate	1%
Infant mortality rate	17 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 94% Measles: 93%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$2 million
Access to safe water	100%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Major religions	Protestantism Roman Catholicism
Official languages	Tongan, English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	57	63
Program funds (\$000)	1,051	1,296

Country Overview

Program dates	1967–present
Program sector	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 with regard to its international status. In 1975, Tonga developed economic and political ties with the European Economic Community, and in 2000, Tonga became a full member of the United Nations. The most obvious benefit of this widening association with other countries has been the inflow of foreign aid from developed nations and international agencies. This aid has enabled Tonga to bring about improvement in social services and construction of 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, rain forests, 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

The Peace Corps, at the request of the Ministry of Education, elected in both the school-based community education project and the youth development project to focus on preparing young people to become productive members of their communities. The 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 employment 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 classes, bridging the technical gap between these community members and the small sector of the population that has access to formal training.

The Peace Corps recently initiated two new projects within the youth program that address emerging and pressing needs in Tonga. In response to the threat that HIV/AIDS poses to Pacific island nations, the project incorporates health, wellness, and HIV/AIDS awareness as crucial in making informed life choices. To address the pressures on the fragile coastal environment in which all Tongans live, an environment project was introduced in 2003 to promote conservation and management of coastal resources.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

Volunteers helped start a Future Farmers program, which promotes farming as a career for Tongan youth and provides training in agricultural business ventures. Volunteers assist youth groups on various islands in forming networks and coordinating marketing and distribution. With the assistance of a Volunteer, the Future Farmers network was able to secure a \$250,000 grant for pilot projects, training workshops, and a national agricultural fair in which governmental and nongovernmental organizations and young farmers participated.

Education

Volunteers in this project introduce innovative teaching techniques and enhance teacher skills through modeling, team teaching, and workshops. A second component of the project reaches beyond the classroom to provide 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 class-

room settings, focusing on English literacy, business education, basic computer skills, and industrial arts. Volunteers designed a training intended to upgrade the teaching skills of computer lab staff and teachers, which was conducted in computer labs in six island groups of Tonga.

Environment

In 2003, the Peace Corps introduced a program that assists communities on issues related to coastal management. Volunteers work in environmental education, conservation, solid-waste management, and village beautification.

Youth

Volunteers focus on building the capacity of individuals, service providers, organizations, and communities. The 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 also 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 was instrumental in the creation of the Tonga National Volunteer Service, which is a vehicle for Tongan youth, including those living abroad, to serve as volunteers in Tonga. The project focuses on building the capacity of young leaders and community organizations, fostering volunteerism to contribute to the national development of Tonga, developing active citizenship in young people, and providing a venue for young Tongans abroad to learn about their heritage and serve the people of Tonga. Many Tongan Volunteers work alongside Peace Corps Volunteers in this project.

“Working with Peace Corps Volunteers has opened doors for me in my work that I never knew existed. By drawing [on] the two cultures, the Volunteers and I are highly effective.”

**Tongan Youth Worker Tasi Leger
Education Sector**



Turkmenistan

Capital.....	Ashgabat
Population	5 million
Annual per capita income	\$950
GDP growth	20.5%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 1% Female: 2%
Infant mortality rate.....	69 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 95% Measles: 98%
Foreign direct investment	\$150 million
Access to safe water	58%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.01%
Major religions	Islam: 89% Russian Orthodoxy: 9% Other: 2%
Official Language.....	Turkmen

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	114	117
Program funds (\$000)	1,742	2,125

Country Overview

Program dates	1993–2001 2002–present
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Program sectors	Education Health and HIV/AIDS
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The country 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 and has strong relations with most of its neighbors. However, its relations with Uzbekistan and Russia have been somewhat strained recently. Turkmenistan has had diplomatic relations with the United States since 1992.

Turkmenistan 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. Further, poor cotton harvests over the past few years have weakened economic reforms. Privatization is limited.

Program Focus

Since gaining independence in 1991, Turkmenistan has experienced broad political, economic, and social changes, including the need for international assistance in training its professionals. The government recognizes the importance of communicating in English as it opens to the outside world. More than 300 Volunteers have served throughout much of the country since 1993. The program is designed to increase the availability and improve the quality of the country's English language programs by developing the reading, writing, and critical-thinking skills of students and teachers while enhancing existing government-sponsored English programs.

A lack of supplies, training, and technology has contributed to a decline in basic health and health care services in recent years. In support of recent reforms and initiatives of the government and the Ministry of Health of Turkmenistan, Peace Corps activities focus on a variety of maternal and child health care issues in rural communities, with an emphasis on community health education, extension, and disease prevention.

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 and assist in rebuilding the program. In September 2002, 50 trainees arrived in Turkmenistan to complete pre-service training and began their service in November 2002.

Volunteer Focus

Education

Volunteers teach English in primary and secondary schools, institutes of higher education, business centers, and health care facilities. They also organize and conduct teacher-training workshops in interactive teaching methods and materials development. In 2003, Volunteers and their counterparts organized, obtained resources for, and opened resource centers in several communities. These centers offer community members access to English language books, tapes, and videos as well as regular club meetings where they can practice speaking English. For example, one Volunteer and his counterpart opened an English resource center and expanded the scope of the center to meet the broader needs of the local community. Now designated as a youth center, it provides a home for several English clubs, a soccer club, an ecology club, and a dance club, all of which meet every week. Local teachers, community members, and Volunteers teach in all of the clubs. The Volunteer also introduced the concept of self-government, and an elected student government and a board of directors now manage the English clubs.

In 2003, Volunteers conducted several 10-day English immersion camps for 160 teachers and more than 660 students. These Volunteer-led summer camps allowed both teachers and students the op-

portunity to work as counselors and junior counselors. Camps are held in partnership with the Ministry of Education and regional educational departments. Most camps include healthy-lifestyles education in addition to sessions on topics such as English, American history, civics, art, and exercise.

Local English teachers continue to be rewarded by the Teacher Excellence Program organized by the American Council for International Education. In 2003, six teachers were selected to represent Turkmenistan at a seven-week seminar in the United States. All of them were Volunteer counterparts.

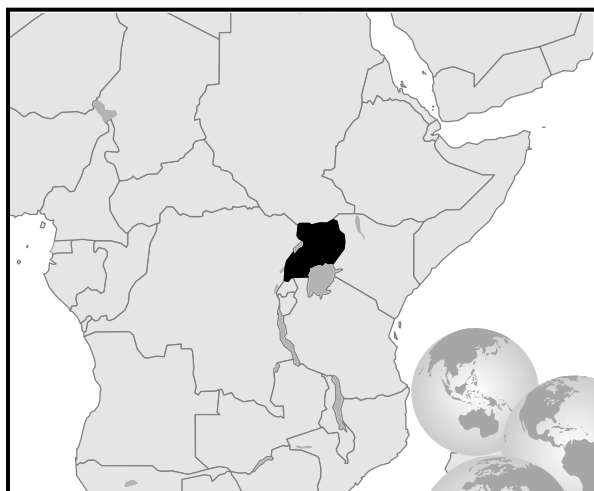
Health and HIV/AIDS

Peace Corps/Turkmenistan's health project focuses on community health education, extension, and disease prevention in rural areas of Turkmenistan. Volunteers work closely with local caregivers to develop educational outreach projects that emphasize maternal and child health and promote preventive health care practices. Key areas targeted for intervention include anemia, diarrheal diseases, drug and alcohol abuse, smoking, dental health, acute respiratory disease among children, women's reproductive health, neonatal care, promotion of breast-feeding, and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases. In 2003, Volunteers conducted lectures and seminars about HIV/AIDS, environmental health, anatomy and physiology, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, healthy cooking, first aid, dental hygiene, potable water, and the importance of exercise that reached approximately 1,200 women and 3,400 children.

One Volunteer developed a growth chart and trained doctors and mothers to use it to track child development. More than 700 copies of the chart were printed. Another Volunteer developed a pamphlet in Turkmen on breast-feeding for expectant and new mothers. Printing was funded locally, and over 2,000 copies have been distributed.

"Living in Turkmenistan is one of the most challenging but fulfilling experiences of my life. I have learned so much from the people here about hospitality, sharing, family ties, and support. The Turkmen people are truly wonderful, opening their homes and their lives to us, and opening their minds to learn about our culture and how other people live. Their generosity and excitement about my presence here have made this a rewarding experience for all of us."

**Turkmenistan Volunteer
Education Sector**



Uganda

Capital.....	Kampala
Population	23 million
Annual per capita income	\$260
GDP growth	4.6%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 22%
	Female: 42%
Infant mortality rate.....	79 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 60%
	Measles: 61%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$145 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 80%
	Rural: 47%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	5%
Major religions	Christianity: 66%
	Islam: 16%
	Indigenous beliefs: 18%
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	47	56
Program funds (\$000)	1,411	1,655

Country Overview

Program dates	1964–1973
	1991–1999
	2000–present
Program sectors	Education
	Health and HIV/AIDS

In Uganda, economic change has been accompanied by 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 continue to encourage international investment and involvement from international development agencies.

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 over 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 especially aimed at reducing inflation and boosting production and export earnings. A high level of donor assistance (about 13 to 14 percent of GDP) has played a vital role in supporting policies leading to this growth. Recent years have seen a slight moderation in growth. The slowdown is the result of external factors (drought, adverse trade policies) and has been well managed by the government.

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 Volunteers, and by 1967, the program had more than doubled in size. 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 of 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 the time of suspension there were 75 Volunteers in the 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, both developed on the basis of 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 effort to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS through a behavior modification model. While the resulting reduction of the HIV infection rate among pregnant women from about 21 percent to 6 percent from 1991 to 2000 is promising, serious challenges remain. Uganda has over 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 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 hand-in-hand with a Ugandan counterpart to train both teachers and principals 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. A key component of the education project is the mobilization of communities to connect with and support their primary schools. Volunteers help develop the links between a school and its community through a variety of projects. For example, the Kjingi Community Fishers Group developed a fishpond with the primary goal of increasing income generation and nutrition in the area. The fishpond also provides a site where parents teach children about raising fish and where teachers mesh classroom curriculum with community content to teach mathematics and biology.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers working in the community well-being and positive-living project are assigned to small, community-based organizations to provide information and support to people and families affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In 2003, Volunteers worked with 54 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.

"When I look into the faces of the women in my village, I see the courage that I see in my mother, the strength of my great-grandmother, the nurturing qualities of my aunts, and the wisdom of my teachers. I have come to understand that though there exists among us differences in the languages that we speak, our culture, and geographic location, we all share one common desire: happy and healthy lives for ourselves and our families."

**Uganda Volunteer
Education Sector**



Ukraine

Capital.....	Kiev
Population.....	48.4 million
Annual per capita income	\$720
GDP growth	9.1%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: <0.5%
	Female: <0.5%
Infant mortality rate.....	17 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 99%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment	\$792 million
Access to safe water	98%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	0.96%
Major religions	Ukrainian Orthodoxy
	Ukrainian Greek Catholicism
	Roman Catholicism
	Judaism
	Islam
Official language	Ukrainian

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	364	368
Program funds (\$000)	4,275	5,408

Country Overview

Program dates	1992–present
Program sectors	Business Development Education Environment

Ukraine, a country of about 48 million people, has a well-educated, highly skilled labor force. An estimated 68 percent of the population lives in urban areas. In the first decade after achieving independence in 1991, the government made limited progress in implementation of structural economic reforms. Since January 2000, however, the country has embraced a strong economic reform program and focused its attention on the areas with the most critical economic and social impact.

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 after elimination of the collective farm system. Economic growth is now fueled primarily by greater industrial and agricultural output—exported both eastward to Russia and westward to Europe. 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.

Accordingly, Ukraine has undertaken efforts to synchronize its trade policies with those of its neighbors and trade partners in both directions. The country has had a partnership agreement with the European Union since 1998, and the two sides are currently considering an action plan that Ukraine hopes will pave the way for its eventual integration with the EU. Meanwhile, in September 2003, Ukraine joined Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan in creating a “single economic area” designed to coordinate the countries’ trade regulations and reduce tariffs.

Ukraine also hopes 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 the Odessa-Brody pipeline, which was completed in 2001 and 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 goals of entry into the global economic community and accession to the European Union. Volunteers teach business skills, English, and environmental protection, positively affecting Ukrainians' capabilities to develop their country as a modern democracy, to operate in a global economy, to communicate globally, and to interact successfully with the West.

In addition to their primary job responsibilities as English and management teachers, business advisors, and environmental activists, Volunteers 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. They work with nongovernmental organizations to provide aid to the poor, promote environmental cleanups, discourage young women from accepting risky offers of employment abroad, encourage networking among youth leaders, upgrade schools, organize summer camps, and tackle many other community needs.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

The business development project transfers free-market business skills and expertise at multiple levels through assistance to current and future individual entrepreneurs and nongovernmental organizations; to institutions, including universities, management institutes, and schools; and to government structures at the national, regional, and local levels. Among the key issues they address are private ownership, access to capital, entrepreneurship, and Western business practices. 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. Volunteers have conducted seminars to train Ukrainians regarding customer service techniques. These individuals then become trainers for colleagues in their community.

Education

Volunteers work as English teachers and English teacher trainers, bringing new knowledge and methodologies to the Ukrainian educational system and fostering teacher-to-teacher links to promote the exchange of information on effective practices. They are placed at secondary schools, colleges, universities, and in-service teacher-training institutes. Education Volunteers provide quality learning opportunities to students and foster teacher-to-teacher links to promote skills transfer and exchange of effective practices. The teacher-trainer component is growing. The 12 Volunteers working in the pilot phase of this project have developed methods of attracting the interest and participation of Ukrainian teachers, reviewed and critiqued materials, devised a two-year timetable for working with their teacher counterparts, and started compiling a syllabus for a practical course in English language teaching. The National Education and Science Ministry and the Education Ministry of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea have approved a proposal presented by Peace Corps/Ukraine and are now formulating a policy that will exempt the Ukrainian teachers who complete the Peace Corps course successfully from part of their regular license recertification requirements.

Environment

Environment Volunteers help build links between local and international programs, such as GLOBE and Green Schools, UNDP, UNEP, EPA, and the British Council, to facilitate information exchanges and program support. Through community-based projects, Volunteers promote the development of interest in environmental learning and activism in schools, Environment

Environment Volunteers help build links between local and international programs to facilitate information exchanges and program support. Through community-based projects, they promote interest in environmental learning and activism in schools, extracurricular educational institutions, and community clubs. They also promote participation in environmental camps, nature conservation, Earth Day celebrations, community cleanups, and the creation of environmental resource centers. Volunteers have worked with children on theater performances that help them better understand how to protect nature and solve ecological problems.



Uzbekistan

Capital.....	Tashkent
Population	25 million
Annual per capita income	\$550
GDP growth	4.5%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: <0.5%
	Female: 1.0%
Infant mortality rate.....	52 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate	DPT: 97%
	Measles: 99%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$71 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 94%
	Rural: 79%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	<0.1%
Major religions	Islam: 88%
	Eastern Orthodoxy: 9%
	Other: 3%
Official language	Northern Uzbek

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	206	213
Program funds (\$000)	2,154	2,817

Country Overview

Program dates	1992–2001 2002–present
Program sectors	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 held in 1995 and 2002 that extended Karimov's rule were not considered free or fair by international observers. The judicial and legislative branches of government are weak.

Agriculture accounts for 40 percent of GDP, with cotton being a 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 five years of positive economic growth, nearly 30 percent of the population still lives in poverty.

Program Focus

The first Volunteers arrived in Uzbekistan in 1992. Since then over 500 Volunteers have served in this country rich in history from the days of the ancient Silk Road linking Europe with China. After a temporary suspension of the Peace Corps program following the events of September 11, 2001, the program was reopened in April 2002 with the return of six of the Volunteers evacuated the previous September. A new group of 48 Volunteers began service in November 2002.

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 nation 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 are unable to 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 as important facilitators in a democratic society. Today there are over 6,000 local NGOs, with 3,500 of them officially registered with the government. In January 2004, Peace Corps/Uzbekistan will initiate a business development program in recognition of this important development.

Volunteer Focus

Business Development

The Peace Corps and the government of Uzbekistan have signed a memorandum of understanding for the initiation of a business development program focused on strengthening the initiatives of local nongovernmental organizations. The program will begin in January 2004.

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 at which they learn about contemporary teaching methodologies and materials development and improve their English skills. Volunteers played an integral role in the development of a new national curriculum for English instruction introduced in primary schools in September 2001, which continues today. Volunteers also have initiated a variety of community outreach activities, including English camps, HIV/AIDS peer education workshops, Earth Day activities, dance classes, and debate, ecology, and English clubs.

One Volunteer organized and helped run the first-ever boys' camp for a school in which all of the staff, English teachers, and administrators played important roles. Other Volunteers have run seminars on topics such as "Using the Internet for Academic Research" for both students and teachers.

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. Another goal is to 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 breast-feeding.

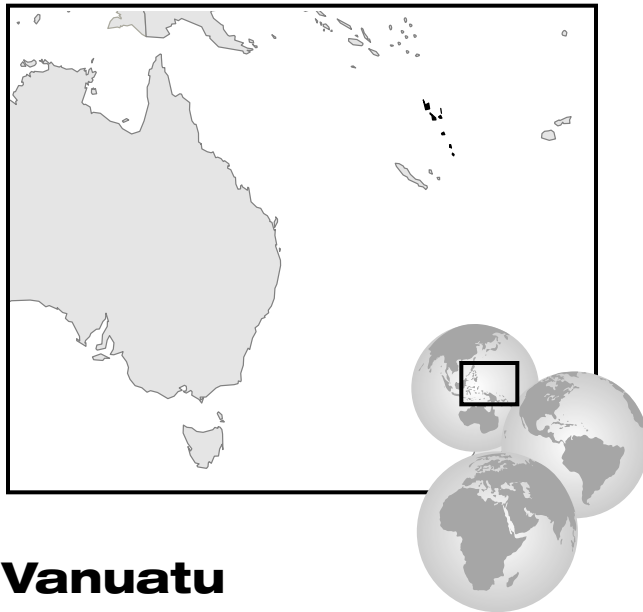
One Volunteer continues the work of a former Volunteer who worked with a local NGO in developing a nationwide HIV/AIDS peer education program. The program is expanding to address HIV/AIDS in Uzbekistan and worldwide.

"Let me present my appreciation for the active work of our Volunteer.

We very much appreciate him for his great job in teaching English in our school.

His lessons are very interesting and full of games; he uses many [examples of] children's literature in his lessons. Also, he works with English teachers and exchanges teaching methods and materials....We are very happy that we have good relations with an organization like the Peace Corps."

Education Official in Uzbekistan



Vanuatu

Capital.....	Port-Vila
Population	201,000
Annual per capita income	\$1,050
GDP growth	-4.0%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	66%
Infant mortality rate	34 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 93%
	Measles: 94%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$20.3 million
Access to safe water	88%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	Not available
Major Religion	Christianity
Official languages	Bislama, English, French

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	68	70
Program funds (\$000)	1,568	1,867

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 the majority 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 and the low prices paid for these, vulnerability to natural disasters, long distances between main markets, and poor transportation and communication infrastructure. The majority of Vanuatu's population still lives in isolated rural areas, but urbanization is increasing. While traditional values and customs continue to influence society, the challenge to the people of Vanuatu is to create a balance between the traditional community systems and the rising need for jobs, education, health care, and public services without damaging the fragile island environment.

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 designed to increase 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, sustainable agriculture, environmental conservation, and youth development.

Vanuatu is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, with natural hazards that include volcanoes, earthquakes, cyclones, tsunamis, floods, and drought. Volunteers 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 encourage youth to pursue agriculture as a livelihood and act as mentors for peers. 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. Volunteers have been instrumental in starting a Future Farmers initiative, a joint project involving three government ministries whose cooperation is facilitated by Volunteers and whose aim is to increase the interest of youth in agriculture.

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.

Education

Volunteers serve either in primary or secondary schools or in community-based rural training centers. More than 11,000 students and 400 teachers have benefited from Volunteer activities. Volunteers

support the teaching of disadvantaged students in secondary schools with inadequate or underqualified teachers, teaching math, science, information technology, and English. They also contribute through curriculum and resource development, strategic planning for schools, and initiatives to strengthen community involvement in education.

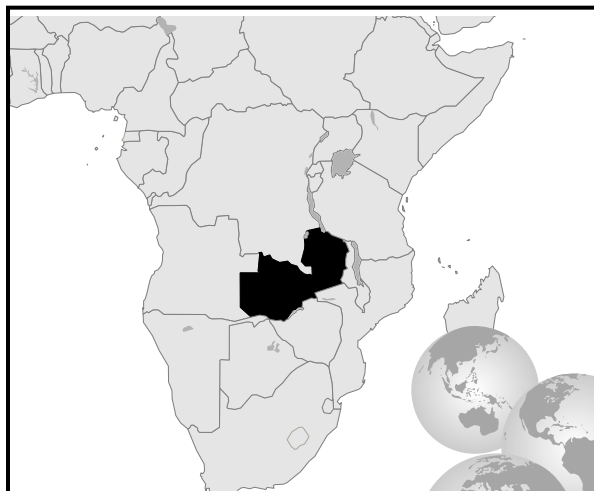
Volunteers help community-managed rural training centers provide vocational and basic life skills to the 65 percent of students who cannot be accommodated in the secondary education system. These centers provide opportunities for youth to contribute to their rural communities and mitigate urban drift. Volunteers also assist counterpart managers in developing the capacity of rural training centers through the development and implementation of strategic plans that stress the institutions' self-sufficiency.

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 nature tourism, and create conservation enterprises. Most activities promote conservation and sustainable use while generating income for community members. Of particular interest is Volunteers' work focusing on management of coral reefs, mangroves, estuaries, and marine biology. The disaster preparedness and mitigation project, designed with the help of Volunteers, has inspired communities to raise awareness about natural disasters, produced risk assessment maps, and assisted community leaders in producing community disaster preparedness plans.

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 youths to organize themselves 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.



Zambia

Capital.....	Lusaka
Population.....	10 million
Annual per capita income	\$320
GDP growth	4.9%
Adult illiteracy rate.....	Male: 14% Female: 27%
Infant mortality rate.....	112 per 1,000 live births
Immunization rate.....	DPT: 78% Measles: 85%
Foreign direct investment.....	\$200 million
Access to safe water	Urban: 88% Rural: 48%
HIV/AIDS prevalence	21.5%
Major religions	Christianity Hinduism Indigenous beliefs Islam
Official language	English

Anticipated Number of Volunteers

Calculated September 30 each year

	FY 2004	FY 2005
Volunteers	126	131
Program funds (\$000)	2,782	3,179

Country Overview

Program dates	1993–present
Program sectors	Agriculture Education Environment Health and HIV/AIDS

The Republic of Zambia, formerly known as Northern Rhodesia, gained its independence from Britain on October 24, 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 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. In 2001, Levy Mwanawasa was elected president under the banner of the MMD.

Historically, copper has provided the majority of the country's foreign exchange earnings and has been the leading source of employment. However, the drastic decline in copper market values, a slow rate of industrialization, and a high dependence on foreign imports drove the economy into an extended period of decline. Through the early 1990s, Zambia experienced one of the worst economic growth rates in the world. In an effort to halt two decades of economic decline, Zambia undertook an ambitious economic recovery program. A cornerstone of this program has been the privatization of parastatal industries (including copper mines). The nation's extremely high rate of HIV/AIDS infection, along with an unstable food supply and drought, continues to hamper development efforts.

Program Focus

The government of Zambia requested the Peace Corps' assistance soon after the election of President Chiluba in 1991. A country agreement was signed on September 14, 1993, and the first 12 water and sanitation trainees arrived in February 1994. Since then, the program has quickly grown to include projects in health, aquaculture, the environment, and education. A distance education project based on a national curriculum began in January 2003 using third-year Volunteers. Fifteen new trainees

and two extension Volunteers arrived in January 2004 to solidify this new program. Zambia is now one of the larger Peace Corps posts in Africa with over 60 new Volunteers each year. 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. After determining rural farmers' needs and resources, 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 provide training in small agribusiness skills to assist farmers in applying a business orientation toward their farming activities. Volunteers also assist in building the organizational development capacity of fish farming associations. In 2003, Volunteers worked with over 500 families to farm more than 1,000 fishponds and harvest 10,000 kilograms of fish.

Education

One of the Peace Corps' new education projects builds on the initial success of a national radio education program called "Learning at Taonga Market" (LTM). This interactive program produced by the Zambian Ministry of Education, which is broadcast over the national radio station, covers the primary school curriculum in a fun and engaging way. 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 in Zambia's rural areas.

The Peace Corps' radio education project was developed in 2003 after two Volunteers had successfully completed secondary projects with the Ministry of Education. In February 2003, four third-year Volunteers began working in two regions of the country to assist in developing the capacity of the Ministry of Education to support the LTM program.

In 2004, the number of Volunteers increased to 17, and they will 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. Twenty-four environment Volunteers, working in six provinces, help strengthen the civil participation of rural communities in natural resource management and economic resource allocation. Volunteers have assisted 72 community groups in developing the decision-making skills necessary for this new responsibility and have educated them about environmental and conservation issues. Volunteers have also worked in 41 schools with 54 teachers (43 males and 11 females) to enhance environmental education curricula and deliver lessons to pupils in schools near national parks. Other significant Volunteer activities address food insecurity and livelihood diversification of these communities, thus reducing pressure on parks' resources.

Health and HIV/AIDS

Volunteers work with counterparts from the Rural Health Center to build and strengthen the capacity of neighborhood health committees to address health problems at the village level. In addition to sharing leadership and organizational skills with the committees, Volunteers strengthen the communication skills of members and facilitate better links among the committees, the Rural Health Center, and district health management boards. They also help communities implement cost-effective and sustainable health interventions. In 2003, 40 Volunteers trained and worked with 238 neighborhood health committees and 45 anti-AIDS clubs and held 10 HIV/AIDS awareness sports camps for youth. The committees have undertaken 480 community-based health interventions in at least one of the six areas of emphasis: malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, maternal and reproductive health, child health and nutrition, and water and sanitation.



Letter from
the Director

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Peace Corps

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