PEACE CORPS

Programming and Training Guidance

Version: October 2011

Part 1: *Introduction and Overview*

Part 2: *Project Design and Evaluation*

Part 3: *Training Design and Evaluation*

Part 4: *Management and Implementation*

Information Collection and Exchange

The Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) is a unit of the Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support (OPATS). It makes the strategies and technologies developed by Peace Corps Volunteers, their co-workers, and their counterparts available to development organizations and workers who might find them useful. ICE works with Peace Corps technical and training specialists to identify and develop information of all kinds to support Volunteers and overseas staff. ICE also collects and disseminates training guides, curricula, lesson plans, project reports, manuals, and other Peace Corps-generated materials developed in the field. Some materials are reprinted "as is"; others provide a source of field-based information for the production of manuals or for research in particular program areas. Materials that you submit to ICE become part of the Peace Corps' larger contribution to development.

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Development of this Guidance

The Peace Corps first developed programming and training guidelines through the production of the programming and training system (PATS), developed in 1990. These were revised, updated, and published as six programming and training booklets between 2000 and 2003. A draft *Training Design and Evaluation* booklet was developed between 2005 and 2008. All seven of these were revised and updated as the current four programming and training guidance documents in 2009 and were published in 2011, with input from numerous field and PC/Washington staff members.

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- **Introduction and Overview**
  Project Design and Evaluation
  Training Design and Evaluation
  Management and Implementation

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance

Part 1: Introduction and Overview

Table of Contents

A. About Programming and Training Guidance

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance (P&T Guidance) is intended to assist field programming and training staff to optimally support trainees and Volunteers in their roles as development facilitators and service learners, contributing to improved lives of men and women in their country of service.

P&T Guidance consists of the following four documents, which provide guidelines for programming and training:

Introduction and Overview
Project Design and Evaluation
Training Design and Evaluation
Management and Implementation

- **Part 1:** *Introduction and Overview (this guide):* an introduction to Peace Corps programming and training principles, and an overview of Peace Corps programming and training systems (intended for all Peace Corps staff).

- **Part 2:** *Project Design and Evaluation:* guidelines, strategies, and techniques for revising existing or developing new Peace Corps projects, including information analysis and the development of the project plan and the monitoring and evaluation plan (primarily for programming staff).

- **Part 3:** *Training Design and Evaluation:* guidelines for analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of Volunteer training, so Volunteers gain required knowledge, skills, and attitudes for service (for all staff involved in training).

- **Part 4:** *Management and Implementation:* guidelines on programming and training planning, budgeting, staff development, teamwork, communication, site identification and preparation, supporting trainees and Volunteers, and managing training (for all programming and training staff).

The four guides may be read in hard copy or in electronic copy. They are accompanied by an electronic set of highly recommended programming and training management and reference documents (document bank), hyperlinked to related guidance sections so they can be referenced as staff focuses on particular issues or processes. These are available on each post's server and an Excel index of these reference documents, linked to the right, can also be separately searched.

Ctrl + click to link to: *Excel P&T Document Bank Index*

Ctrl + click for: *How to Search in the Document Bank Index (Excel)*

The document bank complements the following additional sources of programming and training policy and reference documents:

- *The Peace Corps Manual*: authoritative policies and procedures governing the operations of the Peace Corps in the United States and overseas. Hyperlinks to the relevant sections of the *Peace Corps Manual* are linked throughout the guidance.

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Glossary*

- *Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) Materials*: a collection of Peace Corps-written publications that are disseminated to posts. The most frequently used ICE documents are included in the document bank, but the full ICE collection includes additional resources.

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Abbreviations and Acronyms*

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Site Map and Index*

- *The Peace Corps Intranet*: Peace Corps' electronic information management site, which includes information from each Peace Corps office and access to ICE resources and the *Peace Corps Manual*.

B. The Peace Corps' Approach to Development

B.1 The Peace Corps' Three Goals

The Peace Corps is an independent U.S. government agency that provides Volunteers to serve in countries around the world that request assistance. The agency traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then-Sen. John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries.

While times have changed, the agency's mission—to promote world peace and friendship—has not. The three core goals of the Peace Corps are as relevant today as they were nearly 50 years ago. These three core goals are embodied in the Peace Corps Act (Public Law 87-293, the full amended text of which can be found in the *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 101), which begins:

"The Congress of the United States declares that it is the policy of the United States and the purpose of this Act to promote world peace and friendship through a Peace Corps, which shall make available to interested countries and areas men and women of the United States qualified for service abroad and willing to serve, under conditions of hardship if necessary, to help the peoples of such countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained manpower, particularly in meeting the basic needs of those living in the poorest areas of such countries, and to help promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the peoples served and a better understanding of other peoples on the part of the American people."

This section of the Peace Corps Act is re-phrased as the following three Peace Corps core goals:

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

The focus of the programming and training guidance is Peace Corps Goal One: supporting work led by host country leaders to meet the needs of low income communities with trained Volunteers, not financial support. Although the wording of the goal may lead some to believe that Volunteers are highly trained technicians, the Peace Corps is not designed to fill voids in host country expertise. Rather, Volunteers and their host country partners are motivators and trainers, working to facilitate and build local capacity to manage development.

The Peace Corps philosophy and experience are that achievement of Peace Corps Goal One requires integration of Goals Two and Three; for Volunteers to help meet host country needs for technically trained individuals, they must also understand the host country's culture and share their own culture with host country nationals. Volunteers and their communities learn from each other, share the learning with others, and as a result, promote greater opportunities for development and peace around the world. For some Volunteers, cultural learning and sharing is as important as their technical contribution. Volunteers continue to engage in Peace Corps Goal Three activities in-country and after they return to the United States, sharing their broader understanding, experiences, skills, and commitment to human development and world peace.

The three core goals of the Peace Corps are also the foundation for its strategic plan and logic model (linked to the right).

Ctrl + click for: *Kennedy's Promise*

Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for: *MS 101: The Peace Corps Act*

Ctrl + click to link to Internet site for current: *Peace Corps Fact Sheet*

Ctrl + click to link to: *PC Press Kit*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Peace Corps Agency Strategic Plan 2009-2014*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Peace Corps Logic Model*

B.2 The Peace Corps Is Distinguished by …

The Peace Corps is a development agency that differs from bilateral donors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and other development organizations in that it is

- *Independent.* The Peace Corps is not involved with the day-to-day conduct of U.S. foreign policy, is not involved with intelligence activities, and has programs that do not depend on outside funding that may be politically driven. Refer to the Peace Corps-State Department relations cable, linked on the right.

- *People-to-people and community-based.* The majority of Volunteers live and work with the low-income rural or urban communities that the Peace Corps serves.

- *Capacity building.* The Peace Corps builds the capacity of host country people and organizations, at the grassroots level, to shape their own development. The Peace Corps does not fund infrastructure projects with appropriated funds. The Peace Corps also plays a valuable role in building the capacity of future development workers.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Peace Corps-State Department Relations Cable*

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for: *Peace Corps Organization Chart (link to Attachment A of* **Peace Corps Manual***, Section 122: Peace Corps Organization)*

B.3 The Peace Corps' Capacity-Building Framework

Development in its broadest sense is any process that promotes the dignity of a people and their capacity to improve their own lives.

The Peace Corps uses the word "development" in human, people-to-people terms: helping people develop the capacity to improve their own lives. The focus of the work is on the *development of the capacity of people*, not things. Peace Corps Volunteers help people learn to identify and prioritize what they would like to change, and to use their own strengths and learn new skills to achieve that change. With this approach, development is not just creating a garden, but organizing and working with people to establish and maintain their own gardens.

To be effective and for their work to be sustained after they leave, Volunteers gear their capacity-building efforts to several different but integrated levels, which constitute the Peace Corps' capacity-building framework.
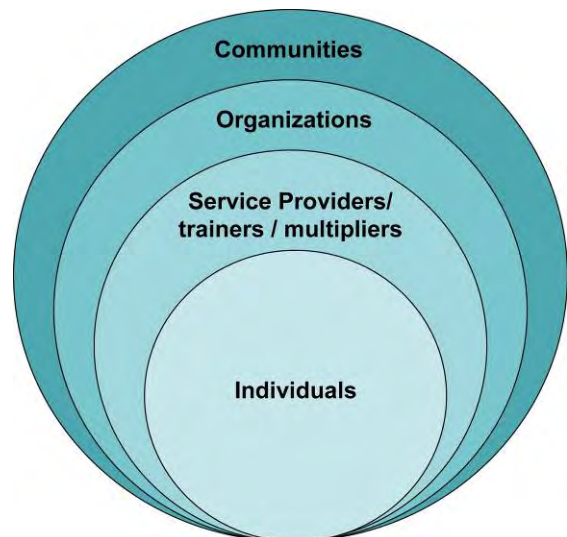
- **Individual members of the community**: The main focus of the Peace Corps, whether directly through the work of Volunteers and their work partners or through those trained by Volunteers, is to build capacities at the individual level so community members are empowered to improve their quality of life, be they individual students, farmers, clients served by a nongovernmental organization (NGO), or others.

- **Service providers, trainers, or multipliers**: Strengthening capacities of service providers, trainers, or other multipliers, be they teachers, leaders of an NGO, peer educators, or managers of a farmers cooperative, helps ensure local leadership for continuing activities into the future.

- **Organizations**: Strengthening organizational capacities, such as management skills within an NGO, helps support other activities in an ongoing, functioning, and supportive environment.

- **Communities**: The work of Volunteers and host country partners also builds capacity at the community level, facilitating the development of communities' human, social, cultural, natural, built, political, and financial assets.

B.4 Sustainability

Volunteers use gender-sensitive participatory approaches to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate projects to ensure that they have considered different contextual factors to ensure sustainability of the changes they promote.

Volunteers promote sustainability (human, financial, cultural, natural, political, social, and built) by facilitating systems improvements and organizational change. For example, Volunteers may work with regional or national organizations to improve teacher-training curricula.

All Peace Corps projects consider how they can maximize their promotion of the sustainability of Volunteer efforts, often by working with partner organizations to strengthen organizational systems. Organizational changes not only improve sustainability, but also often improve the amount or quality of service provided, or the volume of business conducted.

B.5 Promoting Behavior Change

Peace Corps Volunteers and staff understand that the effectiveness of their contributions depends on the *application* of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes by individuals and service providers, changing their behaviors to improve their own and other people's quality of life. Recognizing the advances made by the public health sector in developing behavior change principles and tools, the Peace Corps strives to incorporate these in all Volunteer work areas as appropriate. We help Volunteers and their partners understand and develop strategies that recognize that

- Barriers to behavior, and the reasons people adopt new behavior patterns, are not always intuitive to the outsider. Therefore, decisions regarding activities designed to bring about behavior change should be based upon rigorous research, not intuition.
- Behaviors that are steps toward a final goal often need to be reinforced.
- New patterns of behavior must often replace or compete with former patterns of behavior that are often satisfying, habitual, or cued by the environment.

B.6 Volunteerism, Women in Development, and People With Disabilities

The Peace Corps Act makes specific reference to three issues of relevance to programming and training: Volunteerism, Women in Development, and People With Disabilities. The text of the act regarding these three issues is as follows:

Voluntary service programs

"The Congress declares that it is the policy of the United States and a further purpose of this Act (1) to encourage countries and areas to establish programs under which their citizens and nationals would volunteer to serve in order to help meet the needs of less developed countries or areas for trained manpower; (2) to encourage less developed countries or areas to establish programs under which their citizens and nationals would

Ctrl + click to link to: *Volunteerism Action Guide, V2*

volunteer to serve in order to meet their needs for trained manpower; and (3) to encourage the development of, and participation in, international voluntary service programs and activities."

Integration of women into national economics (Congressionally mandated by the Percy Amendment of 1972)

"In recognition of the fact that women in developing countries play a significant role in economic production, family support, and the overall development process, the Peace Corps shall be administered so as to give particular attention to those programs, projects, and activities which tend to integrate women into the national economics of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort."

Integration of disabled people

"In recognition of the fact that there are over 400,000,000 disabled people in the world, 95 percent of whom are among the poorest of the poor, the Peace Corps shall be administered so as to give particular attention to programs, projects, and activities which tend to integrate disabled people into the national economies of developing countries, thus improving their status and assisting the total development effort."

As Peace Corps programs are developed and implemented, these three issues are given particular attention and integrated into programming as appropriate.

B.7 Performance and Accountability Report

Each year, the Peace Corps prepares a *Performance and Accountability Report* so the president, Congress, and the American people can assess the agency's operations for the year. The agency reports against the performance goals and indicators in the agency strategic plan.

> Ctrl + click to link to: ***Performance and Accountability Report (PAR)***

B.8 Comprehensive Agency Assessment

In June of 2010, the Peace Corps completed a comprehensive agency assessment that articulated the following strategic vision: *The Peace Corps will be a leader, in partnership with others, in the global effort to further human progress and foster understanding and respect among people*. The assessment also articulated six key strategies:

> Ctrl + click to link to: ***Comprehensive Agency Assessment***

> Ctrl + click to link to: ***Comprehensive Agency Assessment Six Strategies***

1. Target our resources
2. Focus on key sectors and train for excellence
3. Recruit talented Volunteers committed to service
4. Leverage the impact of Volunteers with special skills
5. Elevate our Third Goal
6. Strengthen management and operations

C. How the Peace Corps Implements Its Development Approach

Strategy two of the Comprehensive Agency Assessment calls on the agency to: maximize the impact of what Volunteers do best; provide world-class training; and monitor and evaluate its impact.

In May of 2011, the agency, based on analysis of information and input from the field, reaffirmed Peace Corps' six sectors, identified project focus areas, and technical interventions that maximize impact and can be mastered by the Peace Corps' generalist Volunteers. The criteria used to select those interventions included:

- Excellence: What do Peace Corps Volunteers do best?
- Demand: What do the communities and partners served want?

- Synergy: What are the strategic priorities of the host country and of the United States?
- Training: What can the Peace Corps effectively train Volunteers in to achieve a high level of success in their work?
- Impact: What are the technical areas where the agency will have the greatest impact?

The selected sectors, project focus areas, and technical interventions are areas where Peace Corps/Washington focuses its support efforts, including technical support, partnership support, and development of standardized training packages. While the overwhelming majority of Peace Corps projects globally will fall within the Focus In/Train Up strategy, there will be a small number of exceptional projects that support host country priorities which Volunteers can do well. However, Peace Corps/Washington support for these projects will be limited.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: *Focus In/Train Up*

C.1 Programmatic Sectors

To provide Volunteers thorough training, orient them to the most promising activities, and work toward a coherent set of outcomes, posts develop projects that target a limited set of activities for Volunteers to engage in. Peace Corps work is categorized as falling under the following sectors:

Sector	*Typical Volunteer Activities*	*Typical Outcomes Are Improved …*
Agriculture	Volunteers assist in securing the storage and marketing of produce and help communities and farmers implement agroforestry techniques that conserve soil and improve food security. They work with men and women on their field crops, vegetable gardens, small-animal husbandry, fisheries, beekeeping, and honey production.	— Food production rates — Crop diversification — Improved crop storage, transformation, and sales
Education	Volunteers work with local teachers to teach math, science, English as a foreign language (EFL), and information and communications technologies (ICT); and they work in special education and primary literacy. Volunteers work with teachers to improve participatory teaching methodologies, classroom management, authentic assessments, parental involvement, and gender equity in the classroom. Equally important is the work Volunteers provide to prepare students and educators to think critically and to use technology to meet academic and employment needs in the global community.	— Teaching methodologies and practices — Critical thinking incorporated in classrooms — Greater linkages between parents, schools, classrooms, and the community
Environment	Volunteers collaborate to promote environmental education through clubs, camps, and awareness campaigns. Volunteers help develop income-generation activities, such as ecotourism and crafts, that create incentives for conservation of natural resources.	— Tree cover — Soil erosion rates — National capacity to teach children about the environment.
Health	Volunteers collaborate to support public health education, provide maternal and child health services, support people suffering with HIV/AIDS, support increased access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure, and strengthen the capacity of local health workers and committees to manage health, water, and sanitation systems.	— Health behavior — Health indicators, such as diarrheal disease rates — Access to clean water and sanitation — HIV/AIDS-related behaviors

Sector	Typical Volunteer Activities	Typical Outcomes Are Improved …
Community economic development	Volunteers facilitate community mobilization and planning, and help engage residents in local administrative processes. They also assist businesses, cooperatives, credit programs, women's and youth groups, and educational institutions. They train and advise entrepreneurs and managers in business, planning, marketing, financial management, product design, and distribution. They help target groups to enter the work force by learning to write resumes and hone interviewing skills.	— Business processes — Individuals enter the work force — Communities address issues at a local level with their own resources — Citizen engagement in local development
Youth	Volunteers work with youth and those who support youth in challenging circumstances, including those orphaned and vulnerable due to HIV/AIDS, out-of-school, or living in orphanages or institutions. Volunteers use a positive youth-development approach to engage youth through schools, camps, and clubs in activities that address life skills, healthy lifestyles, work preparation, and civic engagement.	— Youth life skills — Youth personal and professional opportunities — Systems that support youth and include them in decision making

C.2 New Country Programs

In keeping with its founding principles, the Peace Corps works only in those countries where it is invited by the host government to serve. Such invitations and serious expressions of interest from high-ranking host government officials are sent to the Peace Corps Director. Refer to the Comprehensive Agency Assessment for criteria and priorities considered by the agency in setting its strategy and portfolio of countries in which Volunteers are placed.

New Country (or Country Re-entry) Assessment:

Before deciding to enter or re-enter a country, the Peace Corps conducts an assessment of the social, political, and security conditions in the country in order to determine the feasibility of establishing or re-establishing a Peace Corps program. For more information on assessments, refer to the *New Country Assessment Guide*, linked in *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 340: Opening a Post.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for:
> **Peace Corps MS 340: Opening a Post.** See 2.0 for links to **New Country Assessment Guide** and **New Country Entry Guide.**

New Country Agreement:

Once a decision is made to enter a new country, the Office of the General Counsel is responsible for the negotiation and conclusion of the country agreement, as outlined in *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 340, with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country. Country agreements have no termination date, but generally can be terminated with a 90-days notice by either party.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> **New Country Entry Guide, 2007**

New Country Entry:

The country director (CD) and director of programming and training (DPT) will coordinate assessments and plans for one or more identified priority projects. For more information on how the Peace Corps begins new programs, refer to the *New Country Entry Guide.*
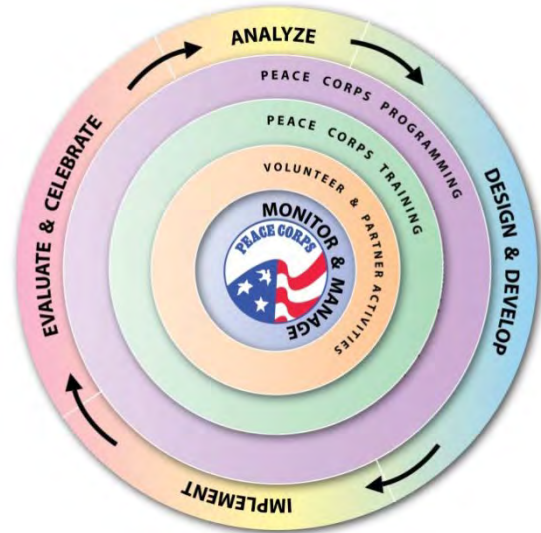
C.3 Peace Corps Country Program Strategies

The overarching program strategy for each country is established in a country program strategy, which describes priority development issues identified by the host country that are appropriate and feasible for the Peace Corps to address, given the resources available. This strategy provides the overall rationale for designing and implementing projects and for training Volunteers. The program strategy is described in each country's Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) document and is updated each year. The country program strategy document may outline areas for potential refocusing of projects or areas for potential growth of the Peace Corps in a country.

C.4 Peace Corps Programming and Training Cycles

Programming is a continually improving process that includes analysis, design and development, implementation, and evaluation of development projects. Similarly, Volunteer training and Volunteer activities involve a cycle of analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation. Monitoring of information and management are central to the process.

The programming and training guidance and systems aim to build field staff capacity to lead implementation of quality programming and training that

- Maximizes the impact of what Volunteers do best.
- Confirms the Peace Corps' relevance and credibility in the 21st century.
- Strengthens our ability to meet evolving host country needs and expectations.
- Anchors the Volunteer experience in effectiveness and success by providing Volunteers with real work and opportunities that they are qualified to perform.
- Facilitates monitoring and evaluation in an environment requiring increased accountability.
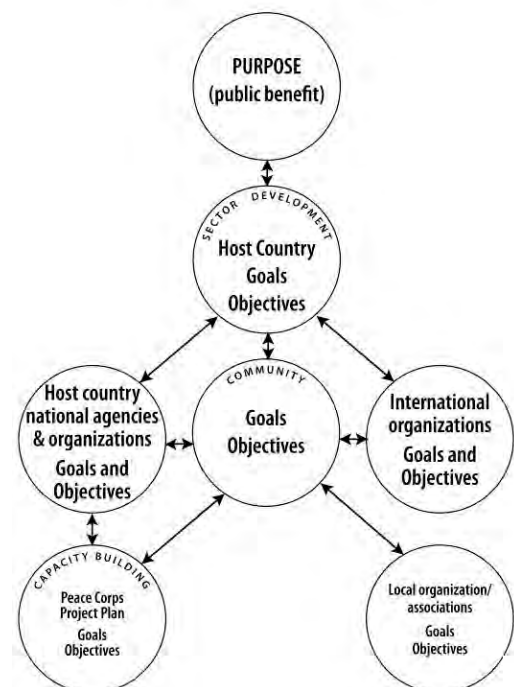
C.5 Peace Corps Projects

To implement a country program strategy, posts arrange Volunteers' efforts around specific sector assistance projects. A Peace Corps project is a set of Volunteer activities in a country, undertaken to meet defined goals and objectives, collaboratively planned with the host country to advance the country's progress toward achieving a public benefit. A project may focus on one sector, such as health, or on an issue across two or more sectors, such as food security. Projects are designed such that Volunteers will focus their efforts on activities for which they have been trained that are expected to have a maximum impact on the defined goals and activities.

Peace Corps sector assistance projects are developed *in partnership* with host country agency partners. The partnership may be with a single agency or several agencies. As partners, all agencies have responsibilities to develop, manage, monitor, and evaluate the project. Without such shared responsibilities, the project does not meet the Peace Corps' development philosophy.

How Peace Corps Projects Support Host Country Priorities

Peace Corps projects are executed in phases of five to six years each. Although a project defines a specific course of action for each phase, it can be adapted as it is implemented, based on experience, new developments, and available resources. Prior to the end of each phase, a decision is made whether to continue Peace Corps activities related to the project purpose, and either a new project phase is designed or preparations are made to close the project.

Peace Corps projects are not intended to continue perpetually. The decision to close a project is made at post, as an integral part of the post's strategic planning processes. Normally, these decisions are made well in advance of project closure and are part of a post's Integrated Planning and Budgeting System (IPBS) process. However, under exceptional circumstances, projects may also be closed more rapidly, for safety, financial or other reasons.

Agreements With Host Country Ministries or Departments:

Each Peace Corps project should ideally operate under an agreement signed at the national level with the host country government. These agreements ensure that the Peace Corps stays engaged with the host country government, and add credibility to the Peace Corps' work in the country. Most often, these agreements are Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with a relevant ministry, or ministries. MOUs that establish a clear understanding of the goals, objectives, and working relationship between the Peace Corps and host ministries help to manage expectations and affirm the host government's support of the Peace Corps' work in the country. National/Ministry level MOUs may be established for a maximum five-year period.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Interim Guidelines on Partnerships*

The 12 Peace Corps Project Criteria:

All Peace Corps projects are designed to meet these criteria.

Peace Corps Project Criteria

A Strong Project ...

1. Increases local capacity in a demonstrable way.
2. Strives to address expressed priorities of those who have limited access to resources and opportunities.
3. Seeks sustainable results that complement other development efforts.
4. Is focused according to the project's sector guidance so that Volunteers are well-trained to implement specific activities with their partners that are targeted to make a recognizable difference.
5. Has local participants as partners in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the project.
6. Addresses Peace Corps initiatives and cross-cutting themes as appropriate, including analyzing gender relationships and promoting women's participation to increase their status and opportunities.
7. Places Volunteers where they engage with those they serve and their skills match locally identified needs.
8. Does not displace qualified and available workers with Volunteers.
9. Uses the types and numbers of Volunteers that are consistent with available applicants.
10. Has local Peace Corps staff and resources to train and support Volunteers.
11. Has host government agencies, civil society organizations, and communities as partners that can support the project and the Volunteers.
12. Is continuously evolving.

Peace Corps initiatives and cross-cutting themes:

As reflected in PC project criterion No. 5, all Peace Corps projects integrate Peace Corps initiatives and cross-cutting themes as appropriate. Peace Corps initiatives reflect either priority cross-cutting issues or rising development challenges that the agency has identified as opportunities for Volunteer work to have a significant impact, and to which the agency has dedicated leadership and resources. The four official agency initiatives, as defined in the *Peace Corps Manual*, Section 125, are:

- Information & communications technology (ICT)
- Women in Development/Gender and Development (WID/GAD)
- HIV/AIDS
- Youth development

In addition to the official agency initiatives, cross-cutting themes that have been highlighted as opportunities for posts to consider supporting are food security, volunteerism, and people with disabilities.

D. Project Design and Evaluation

The design or revision of any project is a process geared to answer four basic questions, which relate to the four basic steps of the programming cycle:

- Where are we now? (analyze)
- Where do we want to go? (design and develop)
- How will we get there? (implement)
- How will we know when we get there? (evaluate and celebrate)

Information monitoring is central to the process; enabling evidence-based decision making, rather than decisions based on emotion or vivid stories.

Project development may take 4–12 months, after which another 2–4 months should be allowed for training design prior to Volunteer arrival.

Peace Corps Programming Cycle

Project Advisory Committees (PACs)

Project advisory committees (PACs), composed of Peace Corps staff, national and local partners, and Volunteers, should be established for each new project, and should remain active throughout the life of a project. This committee shares responsibility for the design, evaluation, and revision of the project. The committee should meet at least once during the design of a new project, and ideally at least annually thereafter. The input of PACs is critical to maximize the sustainability of Volunteer work, to confirm project support from the government, and to define and communicate an optimum role for Volunteers in collaboration with other organizations addressing the issue.

Ctrl + click to link to:
Project Advisory Committees
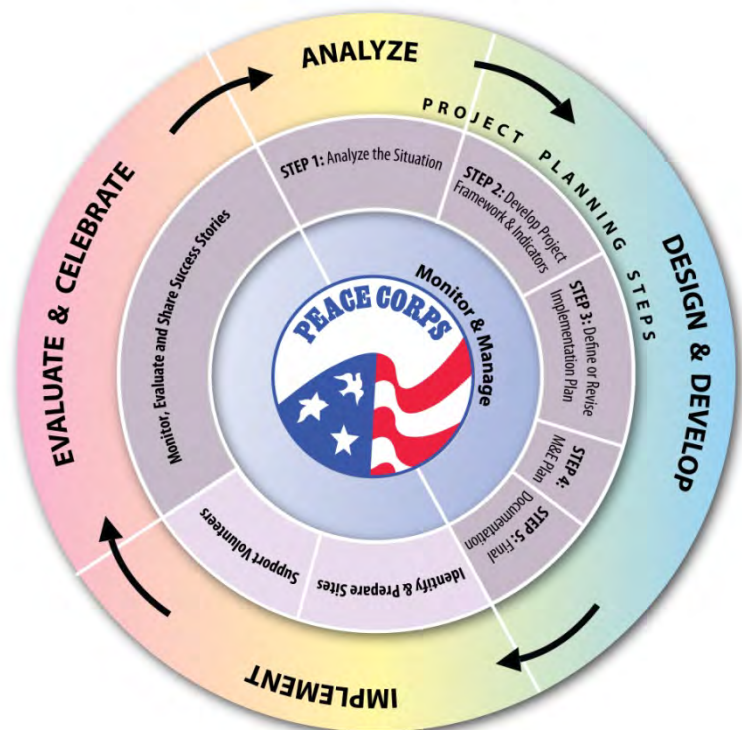
D.1 Step 1: Analyze the Situation

For both revision of existing projects and development of new ones, the host country government, existing and potential partners, communities, staff, and Volunteers are involved in the analysis and design process.

For new projects, staff members determine what country and community priorities are, what the focus area of a project should be, and what others are doing to address the issue; and they define an appropriate role for Volunteers. A concept paper is presented for region approval to ensure the availability of resources prior to development of the project.

As staff members revise existing projects, they

- Determine whether the project is meeting its goals and objectives.
- Consider implementation processes and challenges.
- Analyze what is working best and what could be improved, given changes in the sector context and in host country local and national priorities (including gender and other considerations), as well as the extent to which initial issue(s) being addressed have changed.
- Assess proposed changes in project direction.

D.2 Step 2: Revise or Develop the Project Approach

Staff members then define the appropriate, specific role, or niche, for Volunteers in the sector, specifying how Volunteers will build on what others are doing while filling an identified gap. Sound definition of the Peace Corps niche takes into consideration host country priorities and resources, local needs and assets, and available Peace Corps Volunteers.

The Project Framework

The definition of the Peace Corps role is expressed in the project framework, which is the heart of the project plan. The project framework takes into account the project criteria, Peace Corps initiatives, gender analysis, the Peace Corps capacity-building framework, promotion of behavior change, and sustainability.

The project framework that the Peace Corps uses includes three levels, which are linked: purpose, goals, and objectives. Ultimately, a strong project framework is the foundation for effective training and quality Volunteer work.

The Peace Corps Niche

Here lies the greatest opportunity for designing a strategy with sustainable results

National priorities and resources

Community priorities and assets

Peace Corps Volunteer knowledge, skills, and attitudes

The Project Framework

Purpose: The project purpose statement describes the main target group and the broad public benefit that will result from the project (long-term outcome, or impact). The purpose should reflect the visioning process that has gone on with stakeholders. Purpose statements are long-term.

Goal: Project goal statements articulate intermediate or longer-term outcomes that need to occur to achieve the project's purpose.

Objectives: Project objectives articulate the most significant, attributable outcome or outcomes that will result from Volunteer and partner activities and will contribute to achievement of project goals.

Project Purpose

Project Goal | Project Goal

Project Objective | Project Objective | Project Objective | Project Objective
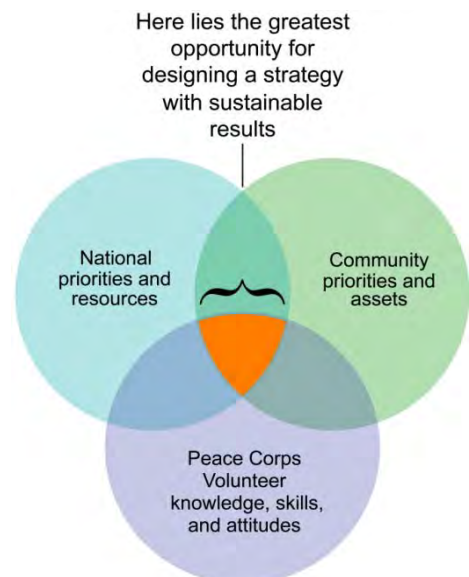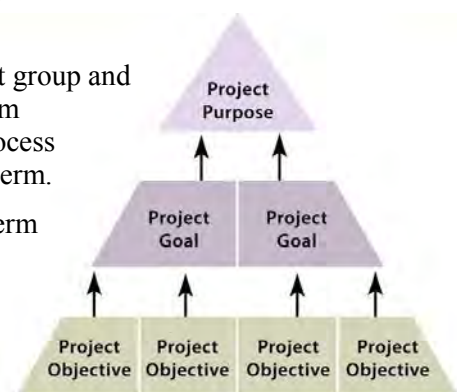
Example:
Purpose: Low-income families living in rural communities will improve their health.

Goal 1: Rural water committees and municipalities will better manage water and sanitation services.

Objective 1.1: Between October 2008 and September 2014, 95 water committees will show an improvement of at least three points on the water and sanitation management monitoring scale.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Example Project Framework: SED, Madagascar***

D.3 Step 3: Define or Revise the Project Implementation Plan

Implementation of each project requires a sound strategy that includes a site strategy, partner types and roles, a Volunteer recruitment strategy, a task analysis, training considerations, and resource considerations.

Site Strategy

Associate Peace Corps directors (APCDs) [the term program manager (PM) is often used for an equivalent position], in consultation with host country governments, partner organizations, and other staff, determine a geographic focus for the project, a clustering strategy, a strategy for use of urban and rural sites, project site selection criteria, and the length of project assistance at each site.

Partner Types and Roles

Partnerships with host country organizations are crucial to the success of projects and Volunteer assignments. APCD/PMs determine who will be the project's key partners on a regional basis, or national government agency or ministry partners, and who will be the Volunteer's partners. For every site, a Volunteer will usually work with one or more sponsoring local agency partners, including NGOs, cooperatives, associations, etc. Key individuals who are typically identified as partners for Volunteers:

- *Work partners (or counterparts)*: The individuals who work with Volunteers and jointly learn through experience how to do something new within the local cultural context with enough competence and confidence to transfer their learning to others. Posts have found that Volunteers are usually more productive and effective when Volunteers are assigned to (or encouraged to seek) more than one work partner, as work partners can be relocated and often can only dedicate a portion of their time to working with Volunteers.

- *Community host:* In cases where Volunteers are given the opportunity to select their own work partner or counterpart, staff select an enthusiastic and well-respected community host, whose role is to support the Volunteer during his or her community entry process.

- *Supervisor:* Most, but not all, Peace Corps projects identify a person within the local agency partner organization who is in charge of a particular department or unit and who is responsible for the Volunteer assigned there. This person typically can authorize organization resources for use by Volunteers, but may not have the time to work with the Volunteer on a daily basis.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Example QTRS: Panama Community Economic Development, 2009***

Volunteers to Recruitment

APCD/PMs, in consultation with training staff and the office of Volunteer Recruitment Services (VRS), define a strategy for the types of Volunteers to recruit. For example: use of generalists and specialists, use of Master's International students, placement of couples, and use of more experienced Volunteers. Peace Corps Response Volunteers are generally requested where skilled Volunteers are needed, as the bulk of Peace Corps applicants are generalists. The two most important documents produced by posts as part of the process of requesting trainees are the

summary of types and numbers of Volunteers needed for VRS—the quarterly trainee request summary (QTRS); and the description of the work assignment given to invitees—the Volunteer assignment description (VAD).

The Task Analysis

An important component of each project's implementation plan is a breakdown of the tasks that Volunteers and work partners will engage in to accomplish the project goals and objectives. The task analysis is the key link between project plans and training, affecting both the quality of Volunteer training throughout Volunteers' entire service and Volunteer work.

The task analysis is valuable

- *For training*. It is the primary source for identification of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) trainees will need to be effective Volunteers.

- *For Volunteers and their work partner or counterparts.* It is a valuable tool to help Volunteers and work partners map out the work they will perform toward project objectives, and to build a common understanding of the role of the Volunteer.
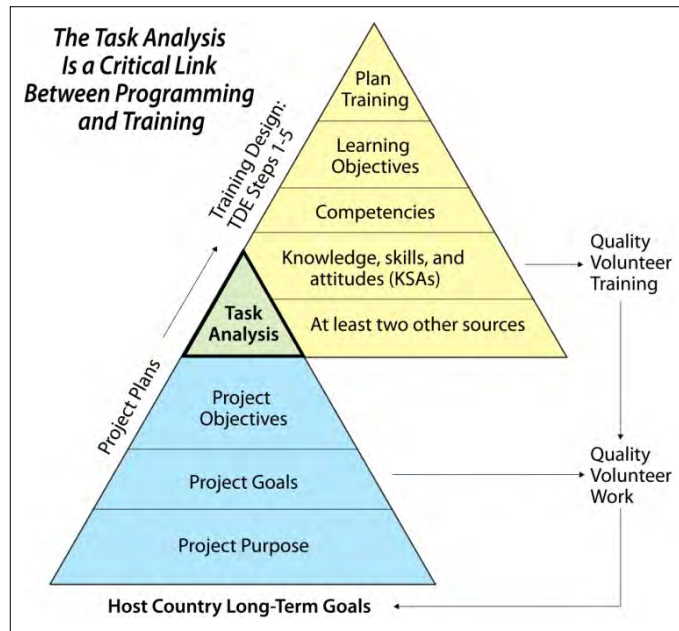
Training Considerations

As part of the project implementation plan, APCD/PMs consult with training staff on overall technical training strategies, such as technical training staffing needs and which languages trainees will need to learn for each site.

D.4 Step 4: Develop or Revise a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Effective monitoring and evaluation allows the Peace Corps to improve Volunteer training, enhance project design and implementation, and increase the quality of results. Sound monitoring and evaluation cannot be accomplished without stakeholder involvement. Because evaluation studies offer causal information about how and why a project is (or is not) performing, they can help staff determine if timely adjustments are needed in program design to improve the rate of success or quality of a project.

Strong monitoring and evaluation plans include involvement of host country partners, staff, and Volunteers. They address what changes are sought in key long-term systems, monitoring and evaluation roles, measurable and specific project performance indicators, a Volunteer community/sector assessment assignment, a Volunteer training and partner engagement plan, and a plan for communication of monitoring and evaluation information.

Ctrl + click to link to:
Example Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, Based on Water and Sanitation, Peru

Volunteers report their activities, challenges, and results once or more per year through the Volunteer report form (VRF). This information feeds into the project status reports, where staff summarize project challenges and results annually. Most posts prepare reports for their partners, based on information in the project status reports.

Ctrl + click to link to:
Tonga Annual Stakeholders Report

D.5 Step 5: Document and Use the Project Plan and Related Documents

Peace Corps project plans document the purpose, goals, and objectives for Volunteer activities, as well as the rationale and strategy for accomplishing those objectives, the tasks and activities Volunteers will undertake, and the indicators to be used to monitor and evaluate progress. A strong project plan is a roadmap for meaningful Volunteer work and quality training.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Example Project Plan, Based on Water and Sanitation, Peru*

Meaningful Volunteer work

- Capitalizes on Volunteer skills and the Volunteer perspective as an outsider to add unique value to local initiatives.
- Is conducted with strong support from the Volunteer's work partner and supervisor, local and regional decision makers, and the people served.
- Strikes an appropriate balance between specific, focused activities in line with Kennedy's promise that the United States will send Volunteers who "have a real job to do—and who are qualified to do that job," and the flexibility inherent in facilitation of community-led development that is responsive to locally identified assets and opportunities.
- Is culturally appropriate and facilitates structural changes so continuation of the work is not dependent on the prolonged presence of Volunteers.

E. Training Design and Evaluation

Volunteer training gives Volunteers the cross-cultural, language, safety, administrative, health, and technical knowledge and skills they need to successfully integrate into their communities and work with work partners to achieve project objectives as defined in their project plans. Volunteer training is designed to meet Volunteer needs throughout their 27 months of service. It is based on the principles of adult experiential learning.

E.1 The Training Design and Evaluation Process

Quality Volunteer training is essential for Volunteers to gain or refine the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to integrate into their communities and to conduct quality work with community members—work that achieves project goals. The Peace Corps training, design, and evaluation (TDE) process is the agency's version of instructional systems design, a cycle that begins with analysis of knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed, continues to design and development, and is followed by implementation, and then evaluation.

The Training Design and Evaluation Process

ANALYZE

STEP 1: Conduct Needs Assessment for KSAs

STEP 2: Analyze KSAs

STEP 3: Create Competencies from KSAs

STEP 4: Create Learning Objectives from KSAs

DESIGN & DEVELOP

STEP 5: Plan Training

STEP 6: Implement Training

IMPLEMENT

STEP 7: Assess and Evaluate

STEP 8: Reflect and Revise

EVALUATE

PEACE CORPS
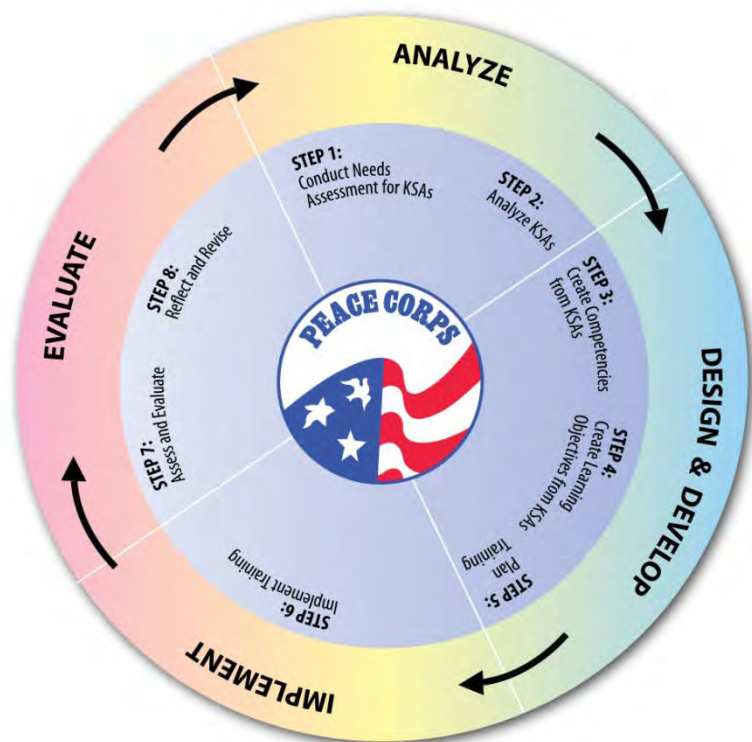
The eight steps of the process, in summary:

Step 1: Conduct a Needs Assessment for Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs). Using the task analysis developed for the project plan, as well as at least two other (usually Volunteer and partner) sources, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that Volunteers need to be successful in their projects and in their communities are defined.

Step 2: Analyze KSAs. KSAs are analyzed, further clarified, and broken down to make them observable and specific. Often, referencing Bloom's Taxonomy can help posts to clarify vague KSAs.

Step 3: Create Competencies From KSAs. KSAs are clustered into core competencies (for all projects) and sector competencies (for one project). The Peace Corps defines a competency as a cluster of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that enable a person to perform inter-related tasks in service of a major work function. An example of a core competency: *empower and mobilize community for participatory development*.

Step 4: Create Learning Objectives From KSAs. Learning objectives are written using the KSAs (and often combining several KSAs into one learning objective). Learning objectives describe what trainees will be able to do as a result of training.

Learning objectives have four required parts:

1. **PERFORMER:** The subject who will be learning the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.

2. **PERFORMANCE (BEHAVIOR):** The measurable or observable knowledge, skill, or attitude to be learned.

3. **CONDITION:** The condition under which the learned knowledge, skill, or attitude is observed.

4. **STANDARD:** The standard of performance, or how well the trainee demonstrates the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.

Example: The parts of the learning objectives are identified here:

> Using <u>local youth-camp guides</u> and the <u>Peace Corps manual *Working With Youth*</u>, <u>trainees in small groups</u> <u>will write and deliver one session for a youth eco-camp</u> <u>using 4-MAT lesson planning</u>.

Step 5: Plan training. Learning objectives are integrated and sequenced throughout the 27 months of Volunteer service, and training calendars are developed. Staff considers how additional learning objectives can be met, for example through self-study or tutoring. Staff chooses appropriate methods to achieve learning objectives.

Step 6: Implement Training. Training is implemented using effective facilitation skills. Timely and constructive feedback is provided to trainees and Volunteers.

Step 7: Assess and Evaluate. Learners demonstrate that they have acquired the required KSAs, as defined in the learning objectives. After-action reviews (meetings to review training events after the events are complete) are key activities that posts undertake as part of their training evaluation process. At these reviews, staff reflects primarily on factors that positively or negatively affected the extent to which trainees or Volunteers acquired the learning objectives defined in the training design.

Step 8: Reflect and Revise. Using input from stakeholders and data from evaluations, training plans are revised. This may involve revising or validating competencies, rewriting learning objectives, and using new methods of instruction. Staff revisits only those steps of TDE that need strengthening.

E.2 Volunteer Learning Continuum

Volunteer training in-country consists of the following core training events, supplemented by additional training opportunities for Volunteers, either in technical or regional sub-groups, or individualized to meet a Volunteer's needs.

Learning prior to trainee arrival at post takes place through

- *Pre-Departure Training.* Pre-departure training may include language materials provided to invitees, online learning, or formal classes that invitees enroll in to improve their skills. Core resources that invitees review in their invitation packet include the *Volunteer Handbook* (all posts) and the Volunteer assignment description (VAD), particular to each post.

- *Staging.* A staging event is a brief orientation to the Peace Corps, its policies, and the general demands of being a healthy, safe, and effective Volunteer, held in the United States. It is also a time to complete the registration process.
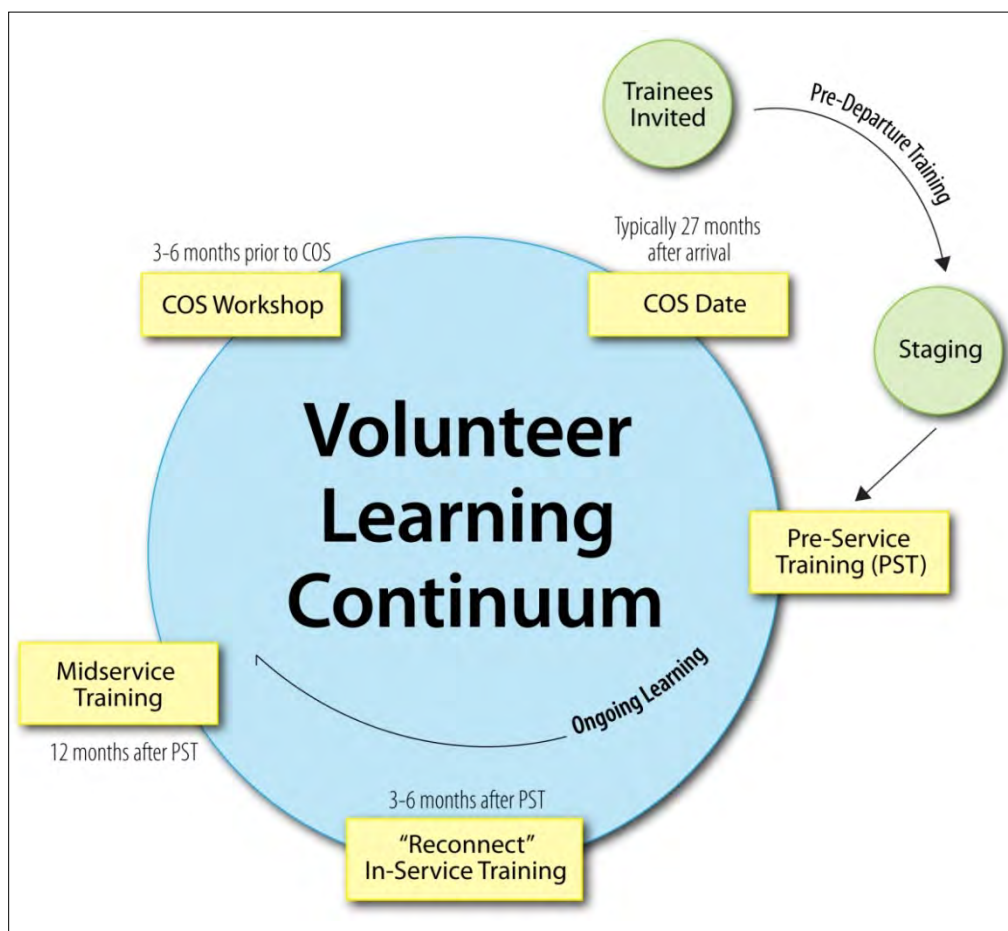
Peace Corps Volunteer training in-country consists of the following standard training events:

- *Pre-Service Training (PST).* Pre-service training is the first in-country training event within the 27-month competency-based training program. Pre-service training prepares Volunteers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to effectively integrate into their communities and begin their assignments. On average, nine of 10 trainees are sworn in as Volunteers. The length of pre-service training varies, usually between 8-12 weeks. Successful training results in competence in various technical, linguistic, cross-cultural, health, and safety and security areas.

- *Ongoing Learning.* Volunteers address identified learning needs through self-study, and sometimes through formal tutoring, mentoring, or other means.

- *"Re-Connect" In-Service Training (IST).* This is an event held after Volunteers have served in their sites for three to six months. Volunteers discuss the result of their Volunteer community/sector assessment, reinforce language learning as needed, and focus on skills applicable to their work assignments.

- *Midservice Conference.* Often timed in conjunction with obligatory midservice medical examinations, the midservice conference is an opportunity for Volunteers to receive feedback and guidance both from staff and from their peers, as well as to share their successes.

- *Close of Service (COS) Conference.* This important event prepares Volunteers for transitioning back to the United States, including contributions they will make to the agency's Third Goal, promoting an understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans when they return.

For a history of different training models the Peace Corps has used in the past, see the link to the right.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *History of Peace Corps Training*

The Peace Corps has a wealth of resources to support posts in training Volunteers during the 27-month continuum. Among these, a few of the most-used Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) resources are:

- *Culture Matters*, ICE No. T0087
- *The Roles of the Volunteer in Development*, ICE No. T0005
- *Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual*, ICE No. M0053
- *Life Skills Manual*, ICE No. M0063
- *The New Project Design and Management Workshop Training Manual*, ICE No. T0107
- *Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning Manual*, ICE No. M0064
- *The Close of Service (COS) Trainer's Handbook*, ICE No. T0007

E.3 Adult Learning and the Experiential Learning Cycle

Peace Corps training, to the extent possible, does not take place in a classroom, but through interactions with people and communities, taking into account adult learning principles, content-based language learning, and the experiential learning cycle. By receiving training that is more experiential, trainees make use of their surroundings in the local culture and learn in ways they must use after formal training is over.

Applying the principles of adult learning helps Volunteers create learning experiences that are rich in content, that are relevant to the life and work of Volunteers, and that respect Volunteers as adults. In accordance with adult learning principles, Peace Corps training integrates:

Experiential Learning Cycle

I. Concrete Experience

II. Reflection and Observation

III. Analysis and Generalization

IV. Planning and Application

- Theory and practical application
- Classroom and community learning
- Group and individualized learning
- What trainees already know and what they need to know
- Trainer-directed and self-directed learning
- Feedback, monitoring, and evaluation
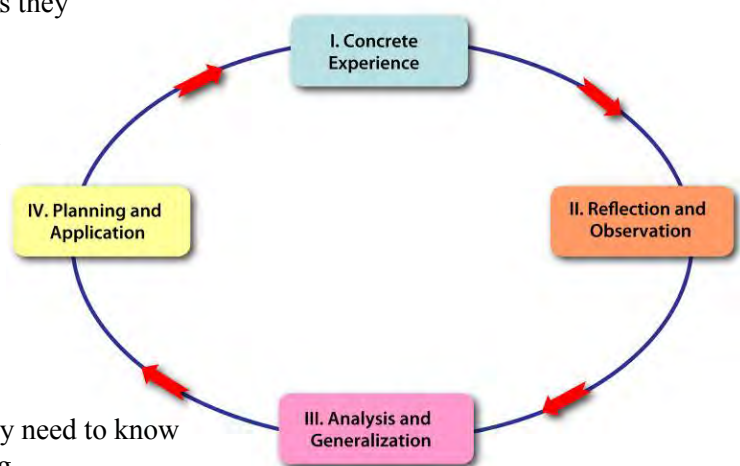
E.4 The Kirkpatrick Evaluation Model

The Peace Corps' assessment of Volunteer learning, as well as evaluation of Volunteer training and the training of community members, uses a framework developed by Donald Kirkpatrick that presents four levels of evaluation. Each level successively requires more time and a greater degree of analysis. The Peace Corps aims to assess learning and inform training evaluation using at least Kirkpatrick's levels two and three, and, where possible, to inform training decisions based on Kirkpatrick evaluation level four, both for Volunteer training and for training of community members by Volunteers.

LEVEL 1: REACTION	Did participants like the training?	Example:
The first level measures how participants react to the training, including their satisfaction with the training, their perception of their own learning, and their perception of the quality of training.		☺ ☹ Chart for comments on how Trainees felt about a session.
LEVEL 2: LEARNING	Did participants learn the KSAs?	Examples:
The second level measures the amount of learning that actually took place as a result of training. It is used to track the acquisition of learning objectives. *Our agencywide goal is to assess Volunteer learning at least at this level.*		Oral language proficiency exam. Observation rubric for technical presentation.
LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOR	Do participants use the skills?	Example:
The third level measures whether learners are using what they learned in training in their lives or work.		Volunteers with project partners conduct hygiene education activities using techniques learned.
LEVEL 4: RESULTS	Do participants make a difference because of what they learned?	Example:
The fourth level asks if the new skills being used have had an impact. This fourth level often coincides with project outcome indicators.		Number of families consuming recommended daily allowances of proteins and vitamins increases.

Adapted from Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994). *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels.* San Francisco, Calif.: Berrett-Koehler.

F. Management and Implementation

Implementation of effective Peace Corps programming and training involves teamwork, communication, quality management systems, and a dedicated team.

F.1 Planning, Budgeting, and Continual Improvement

Agencywide Planning and Budgeting Processes

The Peace Corps staff works as a team to develop plans and budgets that meet post's strategic priorities, in support of the agency strategic plan, within the constraints of the overall Peace Corps budget, and in compliance with policies and regulations.

Programming and training staff develop:

Status Reports (SRs): project status reports (PSRs), the training status reports (TSRs), and initiative reports (IRs), collectively referred to as status reports (SRs), offer opportunities for programming and training staff to reflect on successess, lessons learned, and future plans for post projects and Volunteer training. These feed into a post's action plans and budget projections.

CR = Continuing Resolution
FAR = Field Assistance Request
FY = Fiscal Year
IPBS = Integrated Planning and Budget System
Op Plan = Operating Plan
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 = Quarter 1, 2, 3, 4
QBR = Quarterly Budget Review
QTRS = Quarterly Trainee Request Summary
SRs = Status Reports
VAD = Volunteer Assignment Description

Programming and training staff provide input to

The Integrated Planning and Budgeting System (IPBS): the three–year action plan developed by each Peace Corps post.

The Quarterly Trainee Request System (QTRS) and Volunteer-Year Projections: informs PC/Washington of the number and type of trainees the post needs to meet its programming strategy for the next year.

The Operating Plan: the post's detailed budget, approved by Peace Corps/Washington, and finalized each August for the following fiscal year. The fiscal year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30.

Budget Reviews: updates on the post's financial status and any modifications that may be needed to the budget. They occur three times each year: January, April, and July.

Funding Sources to Support Programming and Training

Peace Corps projects require a standard package of resources for project implementation, including training resources, Volunteer allowances, housing arrangements, medical services and supplies, and general equipment and supplies for staff and Volunteers. While Peace Corps funding is available to fund these basic costs, posts also seek partnerships with host country and other organizations to support additional items that can enhance project success. The Peace Corps has established mechanisms to assist posts and Volunteers to access resources that enhance programming and training, including the Small Project Assistance (SPA) program (funded in many Peace Corps countries by USAID missions), grants accepted through the Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI), funds available through Peace Corps' participation in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), including Volunteer Activities Support and Training (VAST), and funds managed by Peace Corps/Washington offices.
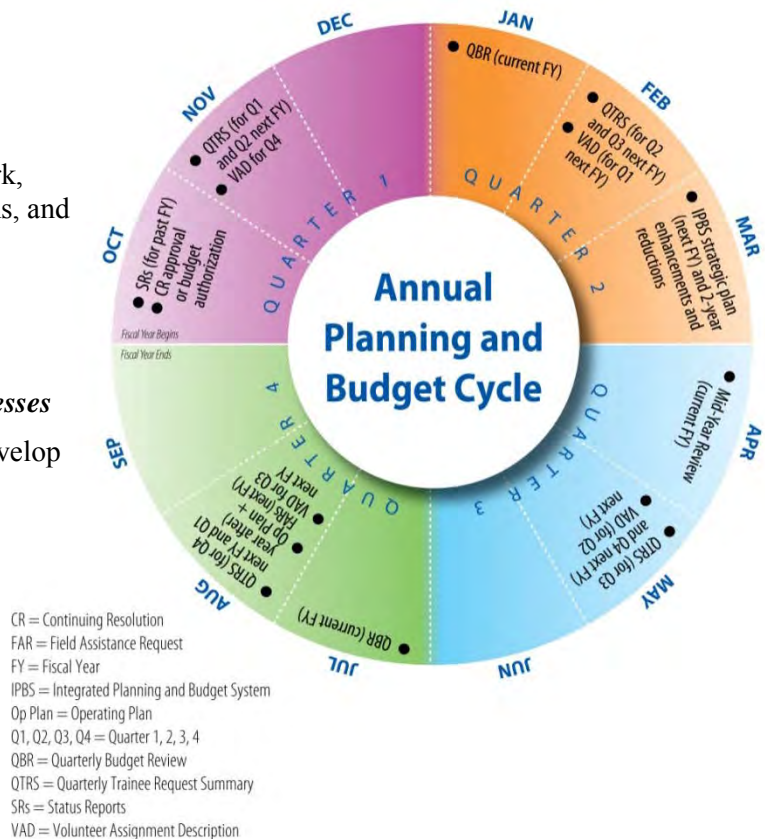
Continual Improvement Tools

Each year, as part of their integrated planning and budgeting process, posts analyze results of self-assessments and Volunteer and host country partner feedback. Programming and training teams use a variety of tools to assess and improve the effectiveness of their systems. They analyze information and feedback provided by Volunteers, host country organizations, the respective post, and other Peace Corps staff. A few of the key continual improvement tools used by posts are:

> Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for *Annual Volunteer Survey* information

> Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for *AMCS*

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Programming and Training Evaluation Criteria*

- The annual Volunteer survey (AVS), managed by Office Of Strategic Information, Research And Planning (OSIRP), which is an anonymous survey of Volunteers.

- The Administrative Management Control System (AMCS), a self-assessment and reporting tool that focuses on administrative, medical, and safety risk factors.

- Programming and Training Evaluation Criteria, a comprehensive training self-evaluation tool for programming and training management systems.

F.2 Programming and Training Staff Development

Peace Corps systems for orientation and ongoing training of both new and more seasoned staff are primarily managed by posts. Activities to meet staff members' training needs may include participation in events organized by the post; national workshops or seminars; overseas staff training (OST); training events facilitated by a specialist invited to the post; or regional conferences. They may also include one-on-one tutoring or mentoring by a fellow staff member; self-directed learning; completion of online courses; enrollment in locally offered courses; and visits with a seasoned staff member from a neighboring post. Peace Corps training resources are available both for self-directed learning and for staff-led workshops for many skill areas typically identified for staff development.

F.3 Programming and Training Teamwork and Communication

Effective staff teams have strong, trusting interpersonal relationships, share information, and communicate effectively across cultures. Because programming and training staff members are often physically separated from each other, they establish systems for communication, feedback, and coordination to ensure that programming and training are integrated, working together to maximize Volunteer effectiveness.

F.4 Site Identification and Preparation

APCD/PMs work in consultation with host country and partner organizations to develop a site selection strategy. Then staff members work as a team to identify and prepare safe sites that meet site criteria defined by each post and each project, and in compliance with *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 270, which states that "*Each [Volunteer/trainee] V/T site should be inspected before the V/T's arrival to ensure placement in appropriate, safe, and secure housing and worksites."* Site identification and preparation are critical to Volunteer effectiveness, yet are one of the most challenging staff functions, as time to visit sites is limited, and site conditions may change prior to, or after, Volunteer arrival.

> Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for *Peace Corps Manual*, Section 270: Volunteer/trainee Safety and Security

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Panama site development handbook*

Each post establishes its own site selection criteria and processes; many have developed site-preparation handbooks, and all have developed forms to use in site development, including site criteria checklists, housing criteria checklists, Volunteer request forms, and site survey forms. Site-history information that is critical for future site-development consideration is kept in site-history files. An effective site-preparation process

begins one year prior to the arrival of trainees, includes systems and criteria to help ensure the selection of quality sites, includes backup systems (such as opportunities for multiple partners), and includes management of expectations both of trainees and of host communities.

F.5 Supporting Trainees and Volunteers

Peace Corps service is a challenging experience, in terms of language limitations, cultural adjustments, and work challenges. In addition, Volunteers may deal with loss or crises, all while separated from their traditional support systems. All staff and Volunteers play a role in listening to trainees and Volunteers, in celebrating their successes, and in providing guidance and encouragement to Volunteers as they work through challenges.

Prior to arrival, and during pre-service training, programming and training staff aim to set realistic expectations and to prepare Volunteers with skills and strategies to integrate and adapt safely in their sites, as well as to manage challenges. During their service, staff support Volunteers with technical resources, through site visits, phone calls, text messaging, and at training events. Programming and training staff also support Volunteer cultural exchange activities and Volunteer-to-Volunteer connection and support. Sometimes, staff may decide that a site change or separation from service is an appropriate measure to take for Volunteer support.

F.6 Managing the Volunteer Learning Continuum

Management and support of the Volunteer learning continuum is a team effort led by the training manager with participation of a broad range of staff, including the country director, director of programming and training, APCD/PMs, the Peace Corps Medical Officer (PCMO), the director of management and operations, the safety and security coordinator, program assistants, the WID/GAD Point of Contact and the entire training staff. PST preparation begins as much as 12 months prior to the event. The Peace Corps has a wealth of resources to support posts with training of trainers and facilitators.

Because some pre-service training staff members are often hired seasonally and are new to Peace Corps, many posts conduct one- to three-week training of trainers workshops. Each post also ensures that its language testers are trained and certified every five years.

After PST, ongoing learning support and in-service and COS workshops often depend on part-time staff, thus contracting and management of these human resources is critical to the success of the learning continuum.

PEACE CORPS

Programming and Training Guidance

Version: October 2011

Introduction and Overview

■ **Project Design and Evaluation**

Training Design and Evaluation

Management and Implementation

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance

Part 2: Project Design and Evaluation

Table of Contents

A. Introduction

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance (P&T Guidance) is intended to assist field programming and training staff to optimally support trainees and Volunteers in their roles as development facilitators and service learners, contributing to improved lives of men and women in their countries of service.

P&T Guidance consists of the following four documents, which provide guidelines for programming and training:

Introduction and Overview
Project Design and Evaluation
Training Design and Evaluation
Management and Implementation

- **Part l:** *Introduction and Overview:* an introduction to Peace Corps programming and training principles, and an overview of Peace Corps programming and training systems (intended for all Peace Corps staff).

- **Part 2:** *Project Design and Evaluation (this guide):* guidelines, strategies, and techniques for revising existing projects or developing new Peace Corps projects, including information analysis and the development of the project plan and the monitoring and evaluation plan (primarily for programming staff).

- **Part 3:** *Training Design and Evaluation:* guidelines for analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of Volunteer training, so Volunteers gain required knowledge, skills, and attitudes for service (for all staff involved in training).

- **Part 4:** *Management and Implementation:* guidelines on programming and training planning, budgeting, staff development, teamwork, communication, site identification and preparation, supporting trainees and Volunteers, and managing training (for all programming and training staff).

This guide includes a number of hyperlinks to reference documents and examples in the document bank that accompanies these four documents, or on the Peace Corps Intranet, including the Excel P&T document bank index, the list of abbreviations and acronyms, and the glossary of programming and training terms, each linked at right.

Ctrl + click for:
P&T Glossary

Ctrl + click for:
Excel P&T Document Bank Index

Ctrl + click for:
P&T List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

Programming and training staff use the project design and evaluation process to help their Volunteers effectively meet the needs of their communities. As they develop and refine projects, staff identify the most promising Volunteer activities, and the types of sites, training, and partners that support those activities. Staff use the *Programming and Training Guidance* to support Volunteers efficiently, and help the Volunteers they support make a visible and lasting impact on the communities of their host countries, fulfilling the three goals of the Peace Corps.

A.1 Overview of This Project Design and Evaluation Guide

This guide describes the process used to revise an existing project or develop a new Peace Corps project, its implementation plan, and its monitoring and evaluation plan, to ensure that Volunteers are continually engaged in meaningful work that effectively contributes to evolving host country priorities and conditions.

Strategy two of the Comprehensive Agency Assessment calls on the agency to: maximize the impact of what Volunteers do best; provide world-class training; and monitor and evaluate its impact.

In May of 2011, the agency, based on analysis of information and input from the field, reaffirmed Peace Corps' six sectors, identified project focus areas, and technical interventions that maximize impact and can be mastered by the Peace Corps' generalist Volunteers. The criteria used to select those interventions included:

- Excellence: What do Peace Corps Volunteers do best?
- Demand: What do the communities and partners served want?
- Synergy: What are the strategic priorities of the host country and of the United States?
- Training: What can the Peace Corps effectively train Volunteers in to achieve a high level of success in their work?
- Impact: What are the technical areas where the agency will have the greatest impact?

Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest:
Focus In/Train Up

The selected sectors, project focus areas, and technical interventions are areas where Peace Corps/Washington focuses its support efforts, including technical support, partnership support, and development of standardized training packages.   While the overwhelming majority of Peace Corps projects globally will fall within the Focus In/Train Up strategy, there will be a small number of exceptional projects that support host country priorities which Volunteers can do well. However, Peace Corps/Washington support for these projects will be limited.

A.2 Peace Corps Projects

How Peace Corps Projects Support Host Country Priorities

Peace Corps projects support host country efforts to address particular development issues in a targeted fashion. While they are managed by associate Peace Corps directors (APCDs) or project managers (PMs), they are developed, implemented, and evaluated through a participatory process. Projects are designed to contribute to a long-term vision and achievable goals and objectives by engaging Volunteers in facilitating local development efforts.

A Peace Corps project is a set of Volunteer activities in a country, undertaken to meet defined goals and objectives, collaboratively planned with the host country to advance the country's progress toward achieving a public benefit. A project may focus on one sector, such as health, or on an issue across two or more sectors, such as food security. Projects are designed such that Volunteers will focus their efforts on activities for which they have been trained that are expected to have a maximum impact on the defined goals and activities.

Well-designed projects draw from both national policy and community participation by taking into account the unique nature of our principle resource, the Peace Corps Volunteer. Any project plan is a sector assistance plan, which is to say it is a plan for the Peace Corps' contribution to host country goals and efforts (see figure and linked Integrated Logic Frameworks for Sector Development, below right).

The Peace Corps supports host country priorities primarily by supporting community goals and objectives with ingenious, creative, and motivated Volunteers, building capacity and facilitating development at the local level.

Ctrl + click to link for:
Integrated Logic Frameworks for Sector Development

Project Duration and Project Phases

Peace Corps projects are executed in phases. A Peace Corps project phase typically averages six years, corresponding to the three Volunteers completing their two-year service at each site (see Section E.1.5, "Length of Project Assistance at Each Site and Roles of Sequential Volunteers"). Prior to the end of each phase, the project is reviewed and a decision is made whether to continue Peace Corps activities related to the project purpose, and either a new project phase is designed or preparations to close the project are made. When a new project phase is designed, the project normally retains the project key partner and purpose, but goals and objectives are re-evaluated and changed as appropriate to reflect the new countrywide situation, project successes, new opportunities, and new host country priorities. Because the project purpose is usually defined very broadly, a project could go on indefinitely, but most often the project will shift in emphasis, and focus, significantly evolving over time.

Project Plans

Peace Corps project plans define the purpose, goals, and objectives for Volunteer and partner activities. Plans describe the tasks and activities Volunteers and partners will undertake, and the monitoring and evaluation indicators that will be used to assess progress toward the project's objectives. A project plan is adapted as it is implemented, based on experience, new developments, and available resources. The quality of a project plan has a direct impact on the quality of Volunteer training and their work, as illustrated in the graphic linked at right.

> Ctrl + click to link to graphic representation: ***How Project Plans Affect Quality of Volunteer Training and Work***

Revisions of Peace Corps Projects

While staff members continually assess and modify projects, posts also need to step back and conduct a thorough review periodically. Preparation for the next phase of a project, unanticipated events, unforeseen obstacles, or significant changes in context, resources, or staff may warrant a thorough review and revision of a project. See "Ask an Expert: Does My Project Require a Significant Revision?" in Section F.6.2 to determine if your project needs a formal review and revision.

A.3 Peace Corps Project Criteria

All Peace Corps Projects Are Designed to Meet These Criteria:

A Strong Project ...

1. Increases local capacity in a demonstrable way.

2. Strives to address expressed priorities of those who have limited access to resources and opportunities.

3. Seeks sustainable results that complement other development efforts.

4. Is focused according to the project's sector guidance so that Volunteers are well-trained to implement specific activities with their partners that are targeted to make a recognizable difference.

5. Has local participants as partners in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the project.

6. Addresses Peace Corps initiatives and cross-cutting themes as appropriate, including analyzing gender relationships, taking into account both women's and men's particular roles, and promoting women's participation to increase their status and opportunities.

7. Places Volunteers where they engage with those they serve and where their skills match locally identified needs.

8. Does not displace qualified and available workers with Volunteers.

9. Uses the types and numbers of Volunteers that are consistent with available applicants.

10. Has local Peace Corps staff and resources to train and support Volunteers to complete their assignments successfully.

11. Has host government agencies, civil society organizations, and communities as partners who can support the project and the Volunteers.

12. Is continuously evolving.

For additional discussion of the Peace Corps project criteria, see the link at right.

> Ctrl + click for: ***Peace Corps Project Criteria Handout***

B. Organize the Process

Programming is an iterative, continual improvement process that includes analysis of information, planning and design, revision of projects, implementation, and evaluation. Monitoring of information is central to the process, enabling evidence-based decision making, rather than decision making based on emotion or vivid stories.

Note that the steps of the Peace Corps programming cycle closely follow those we teach Volunteers and their partners in *The New Project Design and Management (PDM) Workshops Training Manual* (ICE No. T0107) (link to PDM manual below).

> Ctrl + click for: ***The New Project Design and Management (PDM) Workshops Training Manual (ICE No. T0107)*** *(for Volunteer and partner training*

Peace Corps Programming Cycle
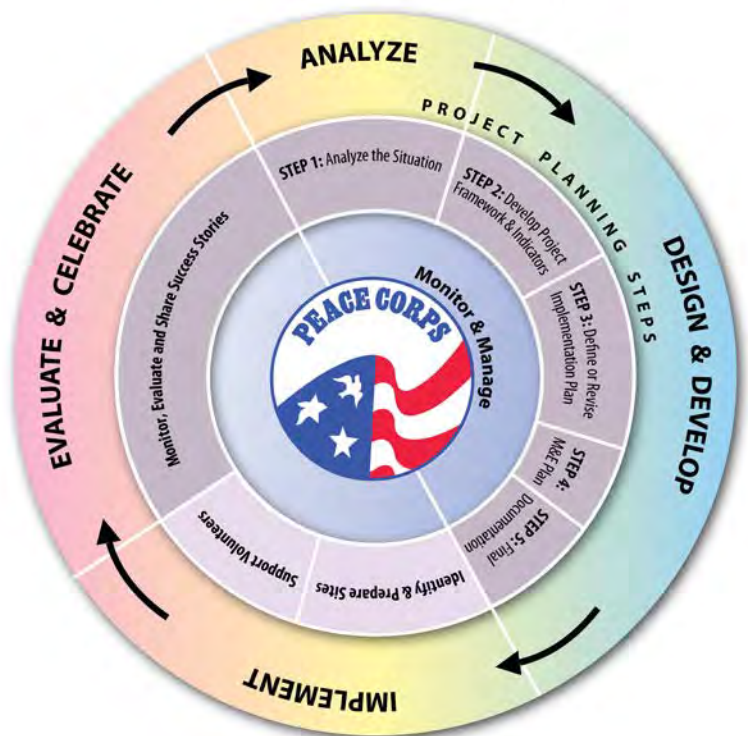
B.1 Who Is Responsible?

For an existing project, the project plan is
revised by an associate Peace Corps director or program manager (APCD or PM), reviewed by their director of programming and training (DPT), country director (CD), and/or regional advisors (RAs), and reviewed by staff in the Peace Corps/Washington (PC/W) office.

For designing new projects, on the other hand, an APCD/PM may not be on board during the conceptualization phase, so the DPT or CD will likely take the lead initially. PC/W must approve the development of a new project, as this usually has significant funding implications.

For both revising existing projects and designing new projects, the director of management and operations (DMO) must be involved in any decisions with funding or administrative implications. PC/W staff, both within the region and within the Office of Programming and Training Support (OPATS), are available to provide technical, operational, and programmatic advice throughout the design/revision process. It is particularly important to communicate with PC/W on the types of Volunteers to recruit, through phone calls, sometimes Training Request Reviews (TRRs), and the Quarterly Trainee Request Summary (QTRS).

Volunteers, host country partners, training staff, the Gender and Development (GAD) point of contact, and others should play a strong role in both initial project definition and revision, both giving input one-on-one and as members of the Project Advisory Committee, discussed further in Section B.2.3, Project Advisory Committees.

> ### KEEP DC IN THE LOOP
>
> *Begin a dialogue with the country desk units (CDUs) and/or programming and training units (PTU) early in the revision process to ensure that resources are available. Contact your CDU/PTU if one of the following changes occurs in the project:*
>
> - *New profiles of Volunteers are required*
> - *A change in the number of Volunteers requested*
> - *Changes in geographic placement of Volunteers*

B.2 Involving Volunteers and Host Country Partners

The Peace Corps stresses a participatory approach to project design or revision, because a participatory approach is at the heart of the Peace Corps' philosophy of development.

B.2.1 Involving Host Country Partners

As mentioned in the previous section, Peace Corps projects support host country priorities at the national and local level. Partners must be involved in the design process and must continue to be involved in the implementation and evaluation process so Peace Corps projects

- Have ownership by partners.
- Continue to address local and national priorities.
- Implement activities that will be effective.
- Achieve results that will be sustainable.

Host country partners are primarily engaged through one-on-one communication and project advisory committees (PACs). Participation in training events also engages partners, and may serve as an opportunity for their input into project design.

B.2.2 Involving Volunteers

Volunteers can provide valuable insights, particularly in relation to projects, secondary or pilot activities they are implementing, and Volunteer training design. Volunteers can be directly engaged through individual discussions, in group meetings at Volunteer events, and through their interaction with project

> Ctrl + click for link to intranet site for ***Annual Volunteer Survey*** information

advisory committees. Staff also gain input from Volunteers through the annual Volunteer survey (link below right), Volunteer report forms (VRFs), and close of service reports and interviews. Volunteer leaders can be valuable assets as members of PACs and by participating in both programming and training evaluation and improvements.

B.2.3 Project Advisory Committees

A project advisory committee (PAC) is the "voice of key project stakeholders" that helps the Peace Corps ensure that it develops credible, realistic, and responsive project plans and training programs. A PAC should be established for each new project and should remain active throughout the life of a project. This committee shares responsibility for the design, evaluation, and revision of the project. The committee should meet at least once during the design of a new project, and ideally at least annually thereafter. For a new project that does not yet have a PAC, a stakeholders group or workshop may fulfill the role of a PAC until the PAC is formed.

Ctrl + click for: *Project Advisory Committees*

Ctrl + click for: *Sample PAC Meeting Agendas*

Ctrl + click for: *Sample Invitation Letter for a PAC Meeting*

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Members

It is recommended that a PAC be composed *at least* of the following:

- APCD/program manager
- One government national/regional program representative
- One international or national partner agency representative
- One supervisor (local partner organization representative) or work partner/counterpart
- One training staff member (could be PTS)
- One community representative (e.g., teacher, religious leader, young person)
- One Volunteer; second- or third-year Volunteers often make strong members (unless there are no Volunteers in country yet)
- One person with a strong understanding of gender and development (often the staff GAD point of contact)

You may also refer to Section F.3.4 PAC Meetings in this guide for more discussion of the role of PACs.

B.3 Project Design/Revision Schedule

The table and figures on the following pages illustrate processes for significantly revising an existing project and for designing a new project. In most cases, your situation will likely not follow either of these paths exactly, so post should develop its own schedule, adapted to local circumstances, noting the important benchmarks included in the table and figures. In particular, note that the deadlines for a new QTRS and the deadline for a Volunteer assignment description (VAD) may define your critical path for determining project direction.

Timeline for developing new projects

A project is considered new if it spins off in a completely new direction or into a new sector. For simplicity, the timeline for developing new projects does not include the use of Peace Corps Response Volunteers, nor a pilot project phase, and it assumes that the new project is in a country where the Peace Corps has a functioning program.

Timeline for formal review and revision of an existing project

The timeline for formal review and revision of existing projects assumes that the revision process includes a formal project review, discussed in Section F.6.2, Project Reviews. The schedule for project revisions will vary.

Timeline for ongoing annual adjustments and revisions of an existing project

The timeline for annual minor adjustments and revisions of existing projects represents ongoing annual revisions.

Timeline and process for other situations

If your project does not fit either of the above scenarios, such as revision of a project without a formal review, or development of a new project that is a subset of an existing project, modify the timeline and process as appropriate, in consultation with PC/Washington.

Tracking Sheet for Revision of Project Design

Because the process for design revision involves a variety of staff and steps over a period of time, it is wise to develop a system for tracking the process. Click on the management tool to the right for a tracking sheet to monitor the process of revising a project design.

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Project Design/Revision Tracking Sheet*

Process for Revising an Existing Project or Developing a New Project

	Revise an Existing Project	*Develop a New Project*	
Organize the Process	• Define roles for staff, Volunteers, and host country partners. • Develop a schedule. • Submit a field assistance request (FAR) for a project review, if appropriate.	a) Host country expresses a desire for PC support in the issue area. Post discusses potential PC role with host country. b) Post discusses its idea informally with region to ensure agreement in principle to explore a new project. c) Post formally indicates its intention to start a new project in its IPBS. The IPBS should include the rationale for the new project, timelines for taking on board a new APCD/PM, number of Volunteers required, and plans for training.	Preparation
Step 1: Analyze the Situation	• Consider programming and training data and feedback, including the annual status reports (SRs). • Assess developments in the sector, host country priorities, and related issues that may affect the relevance or impact of the project.	Collect and analyze information on the current situation of the project sector in the host country, as well as information on successes/lessons learned of any current Volunteer and other organizations' activities related to the proposed project area. Include sex disaggregated data. Collecting this information with a proposed member of the PAC is preferred. Identify the Peace Corps niche.	Analysis

	Revise an Existing Project	*Develop a New Project*	
Step 2: Develop or Revise the Project Framework and Indicators	• Hold a PAC meeting. • Update QTRS. • Participate in project review. • Update the framework and indicators. • Revise implementation strategy or define further details, as appropriate. • Send revised project plan to PC/W. • Revise and strengthen the monitoring and evaluation plan and the training plan.	a) Develop a concept paper. b) Send concept paper to region. c) PC/W reviews and gives approval to move forward. d) Upon approval, submit initial Quarterly Training Request Summary (QTRS) form. Note: VRS should receive the QTRS one year before the trainees arrive at post. e) Hold PAC meeting. f) Send revised framework and indicators to PC/W for review.	Framework and Indicators
Step 3: Define or Revise the Implementation Strategy (Sites, Partners, Volunteers, Tasks, Training, and Resources)		Define criteria for where the project will be implemented, what Volunteer skills are needed, with whom Volunteers will work, what resources are needed, and major tasks Volunteers will perform. Further develop partnerships with host country nationals and other organizations, and begin the site identification process. Begin process for agreement(s) with government national/ministry (MOU). Develop and send draft project plan to PC/W for review.	Preliminary Plan
Step 4: Develop or Revise the M&E Plan		Develop and document the details of the M&E plan. Optionally send to PC/W for review. Plan for collection of data regarding gender impacts. Note: TDE process as described in *Training Design and Evaluation Guide*, occurs in parallel.	
Step 5: Final Documentation	• Make any final revisions to project plan. Be sure that all related documents are updated, including VAD, QTRS, and VRT. • Communicate changes. Renew or update national level MOUs as appropriate.	After receiving feedback from PC/W, revise the project plan. Update QTRS. Create supporting documents and tools, including VAD. Upload framework to VRT.	Final plan

Timeline for Development of New Projects

Months Prior to Arrival of Trainees																				

Step 0: ORGANIZE	Step 1: ANALYZE	Step 2: FRAMEWORK	Step 3: STRATEGY	Step 4: M&E	Step 5: DOCUMENT

M&E Plan Development

MOU Negotiation Process (typically 3-6 months)

TDE Steps 1-5 (duration of 6-12 months, assuming staff conducts periodically)

Site Preparation (begins 6-12 months prior to trainee arrival)

◄ Trainees Arrive
◄ COI
◄ TOT

◄ Technical Trainer on Board (preferably two months before arrival of trainees for new projects

◄ National level MOU signed

🔴◄ VAD to PC/W (9-10 months before trainee arrival)

◄ M&E and training plan to PC/W

◄ New APCD on board (approximately 12 months before trainee arrival)

🔴◄ Final QTRS (11-13 months before arrival)
◄ Draft project plan to PC/W - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | Project plan review & approval |

◄ Draft framework and indicators to PC/W - - - - - - | Framework & indicators review & approval |

◄ PAC meeting
🔴◄ Initial QTRS (14-16 months before arrival of trainees)
◄ Concept Paper to PC/W - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - | Concept paper review & approval |

◄ Include proposed new project in IPBS

◄ Discuss idea with PC/W
Previously: host country priority, and desire to work with PC expressed and discussed

Project Planning Critical Tasks/Events   **PC/W Review**

🔴 = events with critical timing prior to arrival of trainees
COI = close of invitations
IPBS = integrated planning and budgeting
M&E = monitoring & evaluation
MOU = memorandum of understanding
PAC = project advisory committee
QTRS = quarterly trainee request summary
TDE = training design and evaluation
TOT = training of trainers
VAD = Volunteer assignment description

Timeline for <u>Annual</u> Minor Adjustments and Revisions of <u>Existing</u> Projects
(Assumes Trainees Arrive in July)

Months Prior to Arrival of Trainees

July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

- Final QTRS (11–13 months before trainee arrival)
- Update VAD (9–10 months prior to trainee arrival)
- SRs completed
- Annual Report/Newsletter
- Draft framework updates
- PAC meeting
- Revised project plan
- COS conference stakeholder meeting
- Initial QTRS for following year (14–16 months before Volunteer arrival)
- TOT
- COI
- Update framework in VRT

Analyze annual VRT information

Update TDE

Gather Volunteer and Partner Feedback (various methods)

COI = close of invitations
COS = close of service
PAC = project advisory committee
QTRS = quarterly trainee request summary
SR = status report
TDE = training design and evaluation
TOT = training of trainers
VAD = Volunteer assignment description

Timeline for <u>Formal Review</u> and Significant Revision of <u>Existing</u> Projects

Months Prior to Arrival of Trainees

25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7

Funding approved

Review visit

Framework & indicators approved

Project plan approved

Step 0: Organize		Steps 1, 2 & 3: Analyze, Framework, Strategy	Step 4: M&E Plan	Step 5: Document

- Discuss priority and options with PCW
- Include review in IPBS
- Budget for the review (due date may vary; related to fiscal year)
- Finalize reviewer(s) SOW
- SRs completed
- Annual Report
- PAC meeting
- Initial QTRS (14–16 months prior to arrival of trainees)
- Stakeholder workshop to review Task Analysis and training
- Submit revised framework and indicators
- Final QTRS (11–13 months prior to arrival of trainees)
- Draft revised project plan to PCW
- Revised M&E plan to PCW
- Update VAD (9–10 months prior to trainee arrival)
- Update framework in VRT (values, best not to do in the middle of a reporting year)

Gather Volunteer and Partner Feedback (various methods)

External Reviewer and PCW

Project Review

Project Plan Review & Approval

🔺 = events with critical timing prior to arrival of trainees
FAR = field assistance request
IPBS = integrated planning and budgeting
M&E = monitoring & evaluation
MOU = Memorandum of Understanding
PAC = project advisory committee
QTRS = quarterly trainee request summary
SOW = statement of work
SR = status report
TDE = training design and evaluation
VAD = Volunteer assignment description

B.3.1 Pilot Projects

One option to consider when developing a project is to start with a pilot project. This is a way to start small and build on successes. It may involve two or three Volunteers spending a third year contributing to the assessment process for a new project. In other cases a small number of Volunteers with new skills may be recruited and sent to a country with the idea that their work will inform the planning process. If this option is selected, develop a schedule and plans to analyze the pilot phase before automatically expanding the project.

B.3.2 Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) With Ministries or Departments

Each Peace Corps project should ideally operate under an agreement signed at the national level with the host country government. These agreements ensure that the Peace Corps stays engaged with the host country government, and add credibility to the Peace Corps' work in the country. Most often, these agreements are Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with a relevant ministry, or ministries. While Peace Corps projects may operate without ministry oversight or MOUs (in some cases circumstances may not be conducive to establishing a national level MOU), it is highly recommended that every project have a current national/ministry-level MOU. MOUs that establish a clear understanding of the goals, objectives, and working relationship between the Peace Corps and host ministries help to manage expectations and affirm the host government's support of the Peace Corps' work in the country. National/ministry level MOUs may be established for a maximum five-year period.

The development of a national/ministry level MOU takes time (typically 4-8 months) and patience, as negotiations are conducted and worked out, approval at varying levels within each organization is sought, and translation of the agreement is made. MOU language allows for flexibility for changes in project directions, but often project plans/work plans are attached as an addendum or action plan of an MOU, which can be amended if the project framework changes. MOUs with host government entities must be developed in close coordination with the Peace Corps Office of the General Counsel (OGC), and must be reviewed by OGC prior to finalization.

Some countries may choose to have an agreement with a national level government body, such as the Department of Secondary Education, in addition to, or instead of, an MOU with a ministry.

Ctrl + click for:
Example MOU with Ministry, Mexico

Ctrl + click for:
Example MOU with Ministry, Romania

Ctrl + click for:
Guidelines for Partnerships

C Step 1: Analyze the Situation

C.1 Analysis for the Revision of an Existing Project

Exploring the revision of a project, or "situation analysis," is informed by the ongoing process of evaluation and review of the existing project. The table below presents an overview of the process.

The APCD/PM manages the review and analysis process, with input from the DPT, CD, the project advisory committee, and the training manager. Other staff, partners, and Volunteers may also be invited to participate.

Component	*Description*
Look back	Consider project and training implementation successes and challenges (often well summarized in the PSR). Include recommendations from any recent project plan review, formal or informal project review, inspector general (IG) evaluation, or impact study.
	Ask: 1. Is the project meeting the goals and objectives defined in the framework? 2. What is working best?

Component	*Description*
	3. What could be improved? 4. What are suggestions for revised activities and directions for the project? 5. Is the project too broadly defined? Is there a need for a more common, coherent vision for Volunteers and partners to work more intensively on specific activities to promote greater, more sustainable, change? 6. Has the project considered the differential impact (both intended and unintended) on men, women, boys, and girls?
Look around	Assess changes in the context, new host country priorities, and related issues that may affect the relevance or impact of the project. Assess whether, or the extent to which, the initial issue(s) being addressed have changed, both at the national level, and as Volunteer data have shown, at the community level.
Look forward	Assess proposed changes in project direction. If recommendations have been made to move the project in a new direction, determine what others are doing related to that issue, what resources are available, and factors that may influence Peace Corps work related to the issue.

C.2 Analysis for a New Project

The first step in designing a project is to learn about the current development situation, including country development priorities, current development efforts, and the successes of, and challenges to, these efforts. This is also a critical time for developing relationships with a host country agency, civil society, and community partners. Effort invested early in these relationships will strengthen the project in the long run.

C.2.1 Determine the Project Focus Area or Issue

One of the key functions of a project plan is to focus Volunteer and partner work on a limited set of objectives. A well-designed PC project plan focuses on a few specific issues. With a focused project, you can provide more in-depth technical training, and you can give partners a clear idea of what to expect, and determine their roles. Over the life of the project, engagement with partners often deepens from the local level to the institutional level, with associated opportunities for outcomes to combine into a significant impact on sector development. Sector-based programming can have an effect on key institutions in a sector (e.g., how the Ministry of Education approaches teacher assessments).

Peace Corps projects usually focus on one or more of the sectors in which experience has proven that Volunteer engagement can be successful, summarized in the following table. Link to sector guidance and request copies of recent sector summaries for further information about the Peace Corps' role and experience in these areas and guidance on planning sustainable projects in these areas.

Sector	*Typical Volunteer Activities*	*Typical Outcomes Are Improved …*	*Resource Links*
Agriculture	Volunteers assist in securing the storage and marketing of produce and help communities and farmers implement agroforestry techniques that conserve soil and improve food security. They work with men and women on their field crops, vegetable gardens, small-animal husbandry, fisheries, beekeeping, and honey production.	Food production rates Crop diversification Improved crop storage transformation and sales	No sector guidance developed as of August of 2011. See Focus In/Train Up on intranet for updates.

Sector	Typical Volunteer Activities	Typical Outcomes Are Improved …	Resource Links
Education	Volunteers work with local teachers to teach math, science, English as a foreign language (EFL), information and communications technologies (ICT), special education, and primary literacy. Volunteers work with teachers to improve participatory teaching methodologies, classroom management, authentic assessments, parental involvement, and gender equity in the classroom. Equally important is the work Volunteers do to prepare students and educators to think critically and to use technology to meet academic and employment needs in the global community.	Teaching methodologies and practices Critical thinking incorporated in classrooms Greater linkages between parents, schools, classrooms, and the community	*Education Sector Guidance*
Environment	Volunteers collaborate to promote environmental education through clubs, camps, and awareness campaigns. Volunteers help develop income generation activities, such as ecotourism and crafts, that create incentives for conservation of natural resources.	Tree cover Soil erosion rates National capacity to teach children about the environment	*Environment Sector Guidance*
Health	Volunteers collaborate to support public health education, provide maternal and child health services, support people suffering with HIV/AIDS, support increased access to clean water and sanitation infrastructure, and strengthen the capacity of local health workers and committees to manage health, water, and sanitation systems.	Health behavior Health indicators, such as diarrheal disease rates Access to clean water/sanitation HIV/AIDS-related behaviors	*Health Sector Guidance*
Community economic development	Volunteers facilitate community mobilization and planning, and help engage residents in local administrative processes. They also assist businesses, cooperatives, credit programs, women's and youth groups, and educational institutions. They train and advise entrepreneurs and managers in business, planning, marketing, financial management, product design, and distribution. They help target groups to enter the work force by learning to write resumes and hone interviewing skills.	Business processes Individuals enter the work force Communities address issues at a local level with their own resources Citizen engagement in local development	*Community Economic Development Sector Guidance*
Youth	Volunteers work with youth and those who support youth in challenging circumstances, including those orphaned and vulnerable due to HIV/AIDS, out of school, or living in orphanages or institutions. Volunteers use a positive youth development approach to engage youth through schools, camps, and clubs in activities that address life skills, healthy lifestyles, preparing for work, and civic engagement.	Youth life skills Youth personal and professional opportunities Systems that support youth and include them in decision making	*Youth Sector Guidance*

In many cases, the choice about the focus of the project is made at the level of senior decision makers prior to beginning the analysis, based on existing information or previous work, as that choice may have a significant impact on who will be involved in the analysis. In other cases, the choice about the focus area of the project is made as part of the analysis.

After determining the likely focus areas for the project, the next step is to gather data (including data broken down by sex) and information from a diverse range of stakeholders and documents about the issue, what is currently being done, and what could be done, to best define a Peace Corps strategy that maximizes Volunteer effectiveness in supporting host country priorities and activities by others.

C.2.2 Take an Asset-Based Approach

The Peace Corps develops projects that help communities address problems such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, environmental contamination and degradation, and malnutrition. Yet the approach the Peace Corps takes to address these problems focuses on deriving solutions from the opportunities, hopes, strengths, and assets found in communities.

At the community level, Volunteers find that appreciative and asset-based approaches are likely to lead toward locally led and sustainable solutions. Read more about asset-based and problem-based approaches in the *Roles of the Volunteer in Development, Volunteer as Learner* (ICE No. T10005) (link at right). *The New Project Development and Management Workshop Training Manual* (ICE No. T0107) also takes an asset-based approach (see Session 2: Assets and Deficits).

Peace Corps staff use appreciative tools in the design of projects. In project advisory committee meetings and stakeholder workshops, participants describe their vision of successful Volunteers, successful community activities, and a successful project. In the analysis of the project situation, APCD/PMs identify successful community-led efforts on which they can build projects. For additional discussion of the advantages of this approach, specifically as relates to agriculture and environmental extension work, see the link to the right.

> Ctrl + click for: *Roles of the Volunteer in Development ICE T0005. See Volunteer as Learner, Problem-based and Asset-based Approaches to Community Development*

> Ctrl + click for: *New Project Development and Management Workshop Training Manual (ICE No. T0107)*

> Ctrl + click for: *Appreciative Environmental / Agriculture Extension*

> Ctrl + click for: *Appreciative Inquiry (4-D)*

C.2.3 Review Existing Documents

Early in the analysis process, it is important to review material that has already been prepared. These documents can provide information on host country priorities, the current status of issues and plans, factors affecting the issues, as well as information on how particular groups or geographical areas differ with respect to those issues. Examples of documents that will likely be worthwhile to review:

> Ctrl + click for: *Azerbaijan document review summary for Youth Project*

Host-Country Documents
- Five-Year Development Plans
- Specific planning documents from individual ministries with information about issues and priorities
- National statistics and data

Project or annual reports from USAID, United Nations organizations, the World Bank, and other NGOs
- State of the World's Children, UNICEF
- Progress of the Nations, UNICEF

- World Bank Annual Report, the World Bank
- Human Development Report, UNDP
- Intelligence Unit Report, from *The Economist*

Many of these organizations have country-specific plans and reports available on their websites.

Peace Corps Documents

- The Country Program Strategy in the post's Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) document, which includes a description of stated host country needs and priorities, and identifies which development issues or sectors are priority areas for Peace Corps work.
- Post status reports: project status reports, initiative reports and the training status report
- Global Sector and Initiative summary reports, as mentioned and linked in subsection C.2.1, Determine the Project Focus Area or Issue.

C.2.4 Prepare Surveys, Interviews, and Other Information Gathering Materials

There are a variety of methods that can be used to gather information from people, including surveys, field observations, interviews, and focus groups (see *Data collection methods, Comparison of Information Gathering Methods,* and *Focus Groups* links at right for more details). Take some time to plan the format and content for group discussions and interviews. Be sure to employ an asset-based approach and take gender into consideration when designing interview questions. Careful planning will help ensure that the right information is collected in the most efficient way. See Section F.6.2, Project Reviews for guides on preparing interviews for project revisions. See the *New Country Entry Guide* for questions you may consider asking.

> Ctrl + click for: *Data collection methods*

> Ctrl + click for: *Comparison of Information Gathering Methods*

> Ctrl + click for: *Focus Group Tips*

> Ctrl + click for: *New Country Entry Guide*

Gender Analysis

When preparing for interviews, include questions that gather information about gender roles, such as:

- How does the community expect different groups (men, women, boys, girls) to think and act (gender roles)?
- Who does what? (gender division of labor)
- Who has access to resources, benefits, and information? (access)
- Who has the capacity to initiate action and determine outcomes? (power relations)

These questions will inform the gender analysis and considerations of the project to meet Peace Corps project criterion No. 5.

Barrier Analysis

During the project design phase, consider conducting a barrier analysis to determine the rationale behind current practices and barriers to adoption of new practices. See the links at right and Section D.3.3 Promoting Behavior Change for more details.

> Ctrl + click for: *Barrier Analysis Facilitators Guide*

> Ctrl + click for: *One-Day Course on Designing for Behavior Change*

C.2.5 Plan Field Visits and Interviews

Interviews and field observations are excellent methods both for learning about development issues and plans, and for developing partnerships. Your initial contacts can help prepare a list of appropriate people to interview. The list should include people in official positions, such as ministry personnel, as well as community members and representatives of potential stakeholder groups. Every project analysis must include host country voices of both men and women at the community level to verify community perceptions, priorities, and assets available to contribute to the project. It is important to listen to a representative group of stakeholders. You may ask key partners to join you for interviews. Following is a list of potential people to interview.

> Ctrl + click for: *Tips on Creating Survey Questions*

> Ctrl + click for: *Tips for interviewers*

Ministry officials and other host country representatives are critical individuals to begin interviewing. Their impact, sanction, and support are valuable for any project, and every project should support host country development initiatives, often articulated by ministries. If ministry level officials are not familiar with the Peace Corps, be prepared to give a brief presentation about the Peace Corps and the contribution Volunteers can make.

Nongovernmental organization (NGO) staff, both international and local, often have valuable experience that can contribute to Peace Corps work. Representatives from NGOs may know key people to meet with and individuals who would be appropriate for an advisory committee. They can verify information reported in government documents and add information from their own experience. In addition, local NGOs often become key host country agency partners in a project.

Development agencies can provide useful information on the development context of a country, including activities being carried out by other organizations.

Post staff members, from the drivers to the country director, may have a wealth of information and experience either with the Peace Corps or other organizations that can inform your research.

> Ctrl + click for: *PC South Africa involving community members in project planning*

Volunteers can describe what to expect at the local level.

Community members and officials, especially from towns and villages that may become sites for Volunteers, are critical resources, and their inclusion during the analysis and planning steps will contribute to successful Volunteer efforts (see South Africa discussion linked to the right). It is important to include diverse groups of community members. Talking to women and men separately can provide insight into the issue you are exploring.

C.2.6 Analyze the Information

Once information and data have been gathered from stakeholders and reports, the next step is to analyze that information with both the PAC and Volunteers at regularly scheduled conferences. During analysis, different opinions should be welcomed to encourage creative thinking. Organization of the information may help to stimulate discussion or raise the need for additional information to define or understand underlying factors affecting priority issues. Questions to guide the analysis of the information gathered follow:

- What are the host country national and community priorities and future vision?
- What information do we have (or could we get) about the current situation and from where?
- What are the existing strengths and resources (individual, community, regional, national)?

> Ctrl + click for: *Azerbaijan Youth matrix of potential partners*

- What factors have an influence on the existing situation?
- What are the barriers to women's or men's participation in decision making and project activities? Whose labor time will be required?
- Is there an appropriate niche for the Peace Corps that complements the work of other organizations, can be addressed using our philosophy of capacity building for sustainable development, and meets the project criteria?
- What are key relationships between stakeholders to be aware of?

Some tools that can be used to organize information:

- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis

- The problem/solution tree

- An issue-analysis matrix (see template and example linked at right)

Ctrl + click for: *Azerbaijan Youth SWOT analysis 2006*

Ctrl + click for: *Zomba Youth issue analysis matrix*

Ctrl + click for: *issue analysis matrix - template*

C.2.7 The Concept Paper

A concept paper is required for new projects, including a
project that, during redesign, moves into a new sector, or a significantly new direction. The concept paper presents:

- The rationale for the project: how the need was identified and the analysis of information up until that point.
- The proposed role for the Peace Corps.
- Implementation issues, such as organizations identified as partners, numbers and skills of Volunteers, and any special resources that may be required.

Review of the concept paper by PC/W is important to confirm that resources will be available to support the project and that Volunteers of the types and numbers likely to be requested can be recruited.

See the concept paper checklist for an outline of the contents of a concept paper, and the examples below of completed concept papers.

Country	*Project/Year*	*Link to Concept Paper*
Zomba (fictitious)	Education. Note: this example is in the recommended format	Example Education Project Concept Paper_Zomba Ctrl + click for: *Concept Paper Checklist*
The Gambia	Small Enterprise Development (2003)	Gambia SED Concept Paper
Armenia	Environmental Ed (2003)	Concept Paper Armenia Env Ed
Bolivia	Youth (2007)	Youth Bolivia Concept Paper
Swaziland	Education (2009)	Education Project Concept Paper_Swaziland

D. Step 2: Revise or Develop the Project Approach

After analyzing the existing situation, the next step is to define the appropriate, specific role for the Peace Corps in supporting host country priorities and communities in the chosen focus area. The appropriate role for the Peace Corps is expressed in the project purpose, goal, and objectives, or the project framework, which is the heart of the project plan. The project framework takes into account the project criteria, Peace Corps initiatives, gender analysis, the Peace Corps capacity-building framework, promotion of behavior change, and sustainability.

Normally, a draft project framework is revised multiple times prior to finalization. The PAC, PC/W staff, and others are invited to review and provide input to the framework.

D.1 Revising a Framework for an Existing Project

If a significant change in the project direction is anticipated, the APCD/PM may decide to lead the team in a process similar to designing a framework for a new project. If only minor changes are expected, particularly in the middle of a project implementation phase, then it is advisable to keep as much of the existing project framework intact as possible, to avoid confusion among Volunteers and partners, and to simplify the articulation of the accomplishments and results of the project over the project implementation period. For example, rather than adding a new objective, a new indicator may be added to track new developments in the project.

Projects that are too broadly defined require more training to adequately prepare Volunteers than resources allow, resulting in ill-prepared Volunteers, misled expectations of Volunteers and staff, and lower project impact. Projects that are defined too narrowly do not provide enough activities for Volunteers to maintain a high level of productivity.

The following questions may be helpful for discussion of framework revisions for an existing project:

- To what extent does the project meet the expectations of Focus In/Train Up, which is to say that it is sufficiently broad to keep Volunteers productive yet sufficiently narrow that typical Volunteer applicants can be trained to be successful with the resources available for Peace Corps training? For example:
  - Should any project objectives be eliminated because Volunteers have had little success achieving those objectives, because those objectives are no longer a priority for the host country, because post resources are insufficient to provide adequate training for the activity or because the successes of Volunteers and others have been so great that Volunteer efforts are no longer needed in that area?
  - Should project goals and objectives be modified to encompass additional Volunteer activities that contribute to the project purpose? Sometimes Volunteers find that the activities for which they were trained are insufficient to maintain a high level of productivity and instead they experience success with activities related to the project goals and objectives but for which they received no training.
- Should goals and objectives be modified to reflect activities aimed at promoting sustainability and gender integration? As projects mature, opportunities for engagement at the institutional level increase, as does the need to strengthen the sustainability of Volunteer work.

It is best to make all framework changes prior to beginning a new reporting year to avoid complicating input and analysis of the Volunteer Reporting Tool (VRT) information.

D.2 Developing a Framework for a New Project

The development of a framework for a new project is an iterative process that begins with the development of the concept paper and often continues through the first year or two of project implementation. Incorporating input

from the PAC, PC/W specialists, and others will strengthen the framework. The APCD/PM manages the input process so that a project is defined sufficiently clearly and appropriately focused.

Throughout the process of developing the project framework, the APCD/PM should keep training requirements in mind, and modify the framework as needed to be sure that staff and resources will be sufficient to train and support Volunteers to complete their assignments. The APCD/PM can design a project framework with training in mind by: a) working closely with the training manager, b) seeking input from other Peace Corps posts with experience implementing and training in proposed activity areas and c) referring to the minimal training requirements for all Volunteers and for all Volunteers within a sector. These minimal training requirements will be developed as the Focus In/Train Up packages are developed and used at posts; refer to the Focus In/Train Up Intranet site for guidance.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: *Focus In/Train Up*

D.3 The Peace Corps Niche

The appropriate role for Volunteers in a sector (Peace Corps niche) is to build on what others are doing while filling an identified gap. Sound definition of the Peace Corps niche takes into consideration host country national priorities, local needs, the coordination of local and other resources that are being applied to meet those needs, and available Peace Corps Volunteers and Peace Corps resources. As programmers define the appropriate role for Volunteers, expectations for the types of Volunteers who can be recruited and the level of technical training they will need should be discussed with recruitment staff in PC/W and training staff at post.

National Priorities and Resources:

Peace Corps projects contribute to priority efforts supported by the national government, other international donors, and NGOs.

Here lies the greatest opportunity for designing a strategy with sustainable results

National priorities and resources

Community priorities and assets

Peace Corps Volunteer knowledge, skills, and attitudes
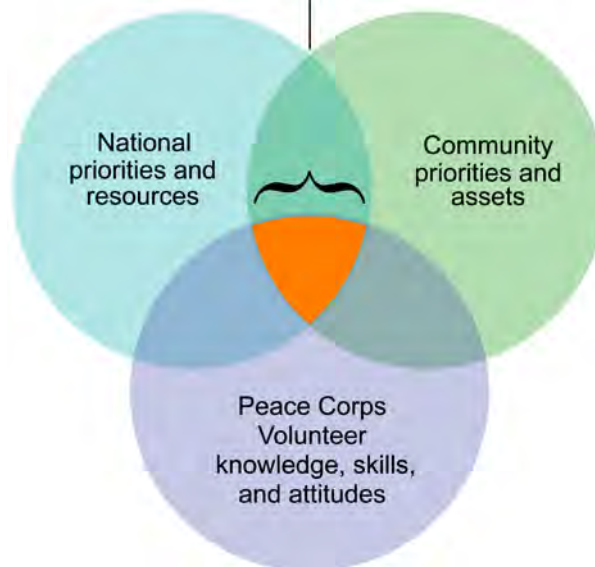
Community Priorities and Assets:

Peace Corps projects support community priorities, leveraging community assets available to contribute to the project.

> Ctrl + click for graphic: *Peace Corps Niche*

> Ctrl + click for: *Zomba Youth Annotated Peace Corps Niche*

Volunteer knowledge skills and attitudes:

The added value of Volunteers takes into consideration their role as outsiders, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they bring to Peace Corps, and the core and sector competencies gained through Volunteer training. These often include capacity-building and facilitation skills, including cross-cultural and gender awareness. Project design must take into account the number of Volunteers with a particular skill set that can be typically recruited.

D.3.1 Peace Corps Initiatives

Peace Corps initiatives are on-going, cross-sectoral areas of development in which the agency seeks to maximize quality, quantity and impact of Volunteer activities.

Official agency level "initiatives" are developed as part of a two- to five-year strategy, at which point they are reviewed or renewed. They are characterized

- By dedicated agency-level leadership and human-resource commitment to support posts with networking, training, and programming.
- By post- and agency-level monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of progress toward achievement of the strategy.

The four official agency initiatives are:

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
- Women in Development / Gender and Development (WID/GAD)
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)
- Youth Development

Ctrl + click for: *PC Global HIV/AIDS strategy*

Ctrl + click for: *Checklist for Building Gender Equity Into Project Design and Implementation*

Ctrl + click for: *Youth Development in the Peace Corps*

Ctrl + click for: *Thailand Global Initiatives Groups*

| Initiative	Peace Corps Assets	Peace Corps Mission	Example Outcomes
Official Agency Initiatives			
ICT Information and communications technologies	Volunteers with ICT experience and creativity	Bolstering countries and communities' ability to compete in the global economy, as well as leveraging technology for greater development impact.	Improved job performance or organizational efficiencies as a result of applied ICT skills
Youth development	Volunteers often relate well with youth	Foster the notion and practice of young people as key development partners.	Increase percentage of young people who transition from school to work, training, or higher education
HIV/AIDS	Volunteers work at the community level	Support PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief)	Increase in percentage of never-married youth who used a condom every time they had sex in the past 12 months
WID/GAD Women in development/ gender and development	Role modeling of women at the community, regional, and national levels	Promote women's participation to increase their status and opportunities	Improved access to resources and increased participation in decision-making and leadership positions for women

The Focus In/Train Up initiatives working group is developing recommendations related to agency initiatives including: revised terminology, additional areas of focus , and the role of the agency and posts with respect to these initiatives. Please refer to the Focus In/Train Up Internet site for the most recent updates on agency initiatives.

D.3.2 Peace Corps' Capacity-Building Framework

The Peace Corps promotes "development" in human, people-to-people terms: helping people develop the capacity to improve their own lives. The focus of the work is on the *development of the capacity of people*, not things. Peace Corps Volunteers help people learn to identify and prioritize what they would like to change, and to use their own strengths and learn new skills to achieve that change. With this approach, development is not just creating a garden, but organizing and working with people to establish and maintain their own garden.

To be effective and for their efforts to be sustained after they leave, Volunteer roles are defined to gear their efforts to several different but integrated levels, which make up the Peace Corps Capacity-Building Framework.
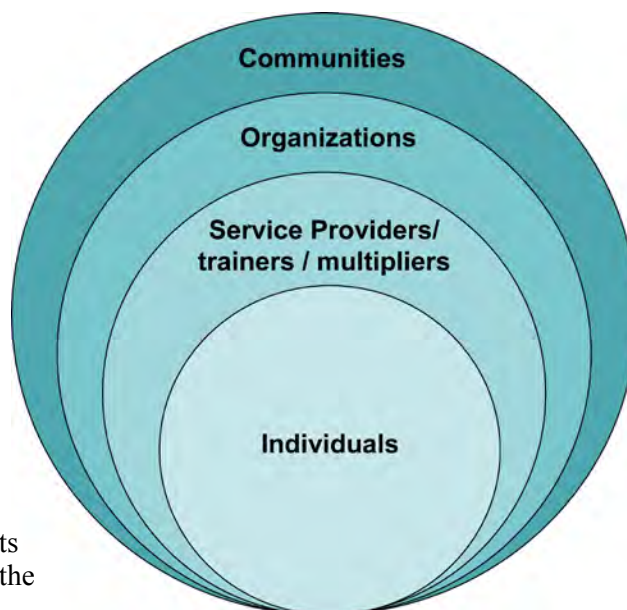
- **Individual members of the community**: The main focus of the Peace Corps, whether directly through the work of Volunteers and their work partners or counterparts, or through those trained by Volunteers, is to build capacities at the individual level so those who have limited access to resources and opportunities are empowered to improve their quality of life, whether they are students, farmers, clients served by a nongovernmental organization (NGO), or others.

- **Service providers/trainers/multipliers**: Strengthening capacities of professionals or service providers, be they teachers, leaders of an NGO, or managers of a farmers' cooperative, helps ensure equitable opportunities for local leadership for continuing activities into the future.

- **Organizations**: Strengthening organizational capacities, such as management skills within an NGO, helps support other activities in an ongoing, functioning, and supportive environment.

- **Communities**: The work of Volunteers and host country partners also influences attitudes and builds capacity at the community level, facilitating change and the development of community human, social, cultural, natural, built, political, and financial assets.

D.3.3 Promoting Behavior Change

The Peace Corps' aim is that individuals and service providers apply the new knowledge, skills, and attitudes they gain, resulting in improvements in people's quality of life. In other words, behavior change is often the foundation of Volunteer efforts, regardless of their sector or level of capacity building. Behavior change is the process by which individuals and communities modify their actions.

Ctrl + click for: *Designing for Behavior Change Guide*

Ctrl + click for: *One-Day Course on DBC*

Recognizing the advances made by the public health sector in developing behavior change principles and tools, the Peace Corps strives to incorporate these to varying extent in every Volunteer's training and work. We aim to

design and implement comprehensive and strategic behavior change approaches to target specific audiences (see references linked at right for more information). We help Volunteers and their partners understand and develop strategies that recognize that

- *Barriers to behavior are not always intuitive*, particularly not to an outsider from a different culture. Therefore, decisions regarding program activities designed to bring about changes in behavior should be based upon research, not based simply on intuition, or on activities to raise awareness and knowledge alone.

- *Behavior change does not result from improved knowledge or desires alone.* If people know what they should do, it does not always mean they will do it. If people want to behave a certain way, it does not always mean they will do so.

- *Behavior change is a process.* Before individuals and communities can change their behaviors, they must first understand the basic information about their situation, then modify their attitudes, learn new skills, and sometimes gain access to appropriate products and services. Behaviors that are steps toward a final goal often need to be reinforced. New patterns of behavior must often replace or compete with former patterns of behavior that are often satisfying, habitual, or cued by the environment. The process must develop or evolve over time.

- *Volunteers must consider the context in which behaviors occur.* Volunteers need to take into account the context of existing behaviors, including external determinants that the Volunteer may not have control over prior to promoting a behavior change. For example, Volunteers need to be careful not to promote demand for services or products that are hard for community members to access.

D.3.4 Organizational Change and Sustainability

Peace Corps Volunteers promote changes that are sustainable, which is to say changes that are appropriate and that continue after the Volunteer leaves.

Volunteers use gender-sensitive participatory approaches to analyze, design, implement, and evaluate projects to be sure to include and consider all contextual factors related to the sustainability of the changes they promote.

Volunteers work to promote sustainability: human, financial, cultural, natural, political, social, and built, by facilitating systems improvements and organizational change (reflecting the seven community capitals, see link at right). For example, Volunteers may work with regional or national organizations to improve teacher-training curricula.

SUCCESS STORY

Now THAT's Sustainability!

In the Dominican Republic, an educational sector analysis conducted by Peace Corps staff with partners determined that the appropriate PC niche was to help schools to develop and reproduce teaching materials. The project set up 15 strategically placed pilot centers that developed educational materials from recycled materials provided by the business community. Volunteers worked alongside work partners to teach local schools to replicate the work of the pilot centers. After five years, the Ministry of Education was so impressed by the project success that it took ownership of the project and replicated it nationwide. Peace Corps support of the project was no longer needed.

Ctrl + click for: *Spiraling Up – Emily and Flora*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Theorizing Community Development 2004*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Ideas for Development – Thinking Forward, Chambers*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Understanding the Community Capitals Framework*

All Peace Corps projects should be designed to maximize the sustainability of Volunteer efforts, often by working with partner organizations to strengthen organizational systems. For more reading on development theories, see the links at right. Organizational changes not only improve sustainability, but also often improve the amount or quality of service provided, or the volume of business conducted.

D.4 Project Framework

A project framework is the heart of a project plan. It consists of a series of statements that describe the desired outcomes of Volunteer and work partner or counterpart activities. These statements flow from one to the other logically, with a causal linkage between each level. Objectives of a specific goal, taken together, should strongly contribute toward achievement of that goal. Goals, taken together, should contribute to the project purpose.

Ctrl + click for: *Inter-relationships between the project plan, M&E, training, and Volunteer work*

Ultimately, a strong project framework is the foundation for effective training and quality Volunteer work, as reflected in the graphic linked at right.
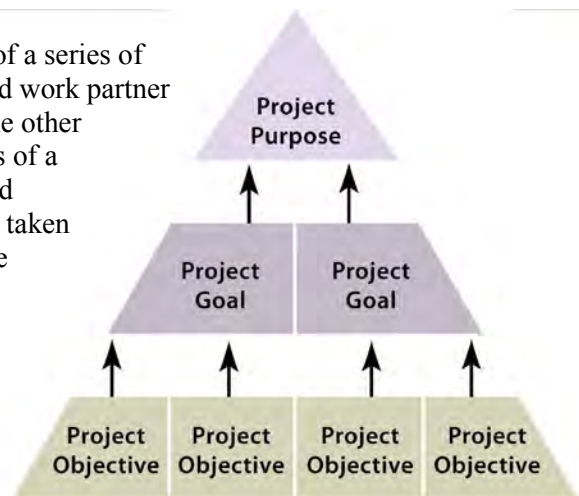
D.4.1 Project Purpose

The statement of project purpose describes the main target group, and the broad public benefit that will result from the project (long-term outcome, or impact). Purpose statements are long-term. See the example below and for further discussion link to the document on the right.

Example purpose: Low-income families living in rural communities will improve their health.

D.4.2 Project Goals

Project goal statements articulate intermediate or longer-term outcomes that need to occur to achieve the project's purpose.

Ctrl + click for: *Developing a Strong Project Purpose and a Logical Framework*

Example goal: Rural water committees and municipalities will better manage water and sanitation services.

Project goals can be expected to be reasonably achieved within the project phase's implementation period. There should usually be two to four project goals to support the project purpose.

D.4.3 Project Objectives

Project objectives articulate the most significant, attributable outcome or outcomes that will result from Volunteer and partner activities, and will contribute to achievement of project goals. Project objectives quantify the short-term outcomes expected from the activity. Objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound). However, the time-bound aspect of objectives need not be stated if it matches the implementation period of the project phase.

Objective statements answer the question "What outcomes are expected to occur that are directly attributable to Volunteer/partner activities?" It is helpful to accompany each objective with an activity statement that helps to clarify the activities that Volunteers and partners will conduct and the major outputs of those activities.

> *Example objective: Between October 2008 and September 2014, 95 water committees will show an improvement of at least three points on the water and sanitation management monitoring scale.*

> *Example activity statement: Each year, an average of 15 Volunteers and their community partners will each train two water committee members and municipal workers of one or two water committees on operation and management of local water and sanitation systems.*

Each project goal should have at least one, but not more than five, objectives. Note that the matrix for estimating outcomes can help to calculate outcome targets for objective statements.

Ctrl + click for: *Matrix for Estimating Outcomes*

This format for simplifying the objective language while adding a separate activity statement sentence was developed and disseminated as the new Peace Corps standard in March of 2009, but posts were not required to convert to this new format. To better visualize the conversion of objective statements to the new format, see the link to the right *"Example old to new format for project framework"*.

Ctrl + click for: *Example old to new format for project framework*

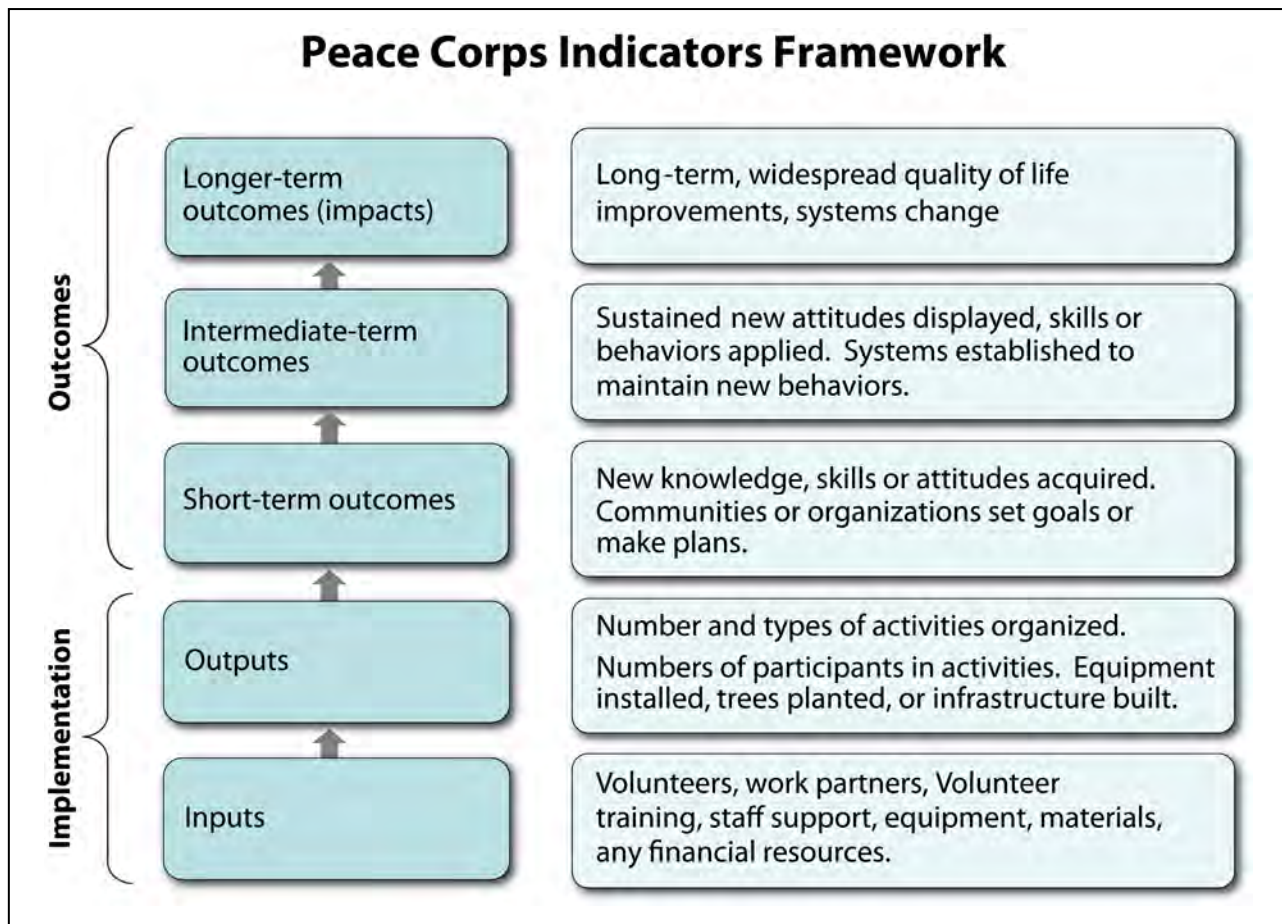## D.4.4 Performance Measures (or Indicators)

Performance measures are indicators, statistics, or metrics used to gauge project performance (input, output, or outcome). For example, to determine the extent to which knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, systems, and conditions have changed, it is important to have a record of their status before the project began (i.e., *baseline information*), to be compared with their status after implementation. The use of the same measures, sources, and methods increases the comparability of the data and the ability to document change over time. Therefore, the establishment of strong, realistic measures prior to the start or early in the implementation of a project is important.

Before, during, and after the initial project framework is developed, you will be considering which indicators or performance measures will be used to identify baseline conditions, determine whether the project is being implemented as planned, determine whether the project is meeting its goals and objectives, and assess whether there have been any changes in the quality of life of project participants or beneficiaries.

The Peace Corps Indicators Framework

The Peace Corps uses the following framework to define monitoring indicators at different levels, including project implementation and outcomes. Note that this is an adaptation of a World Bank model (see link at right).

Ctrl + click for: *Ten steps to a results-based monitoring and evaluation system, Kusek, World Bank*

Peace Corps Indicators Framework

Outcomes

- Longer-term outcomes (impacts) — Long-term, widespread quality of life improvements, systems change
- Intermediate-term outcomes — Sustained new attitudes displayed, skills or behaviors applied. Systems established to maintain new behaviors.
- Short-term outcomes — New knowledge, skills or attitudes acquired. Communities or organizations set goals or make plans.

Implementation

- Outputs — Number and types of activities organized. Numbers of participants in activities. Equipment installed, trees planted, or infrastructure built.
- Inputs — Volunteers, work partners, Volunteer training, staff support, equipment, materials, any financial resources.

Key definitions in this framework:

- *Inputs*—The resources (human, materials, financial, etc.) devoted to carrying out activities, produce outputs, and/or accomplish results.

- *Outputs*—Indicators of activities conducted by Volunteers and partners. Outputs refer to the internal activities of a project (i.e., information, products, or services). For example, outputs are number of people trained or educational materials developed.

- *Outcomes*—Changes or benefits resulting from activities and outputs. Projects typically have multiple, sequential outcomes: "short term outcomes," those changes or benefits that are most closely associated with or "caused" by the project's outputs; "intermediate outcomes," those changes that result from an application of the short-term outcomes; and "longer term outcomes," or impacts, build upon the benefits accrued though the intermediate outcomes. Note that these sequential levels of outcomes for capacity-building activities often match Kirkpatrick training evaluation levels. Change parameters may represent the duration, depth, or breadth of changes.

As of May 2011, the Peace Corps committed to establishing and rolling-out key global indicators for each of its six sectors. These indicators are (or will be) primarily outcome indicators, established to align with development industry standard indicators, and selected in consultation with the field. Projects will be required to report on any relevant indicators. Projects are also expected to establish additional indicators, useful for monitoring and evaluating the project.

Below is a tool that may be helpful when considering what the desired outputs and outcomes of a project are for different levels of the capacity-building framework. Note that it is not necessary for every project (or every project goal) to monitor every level of the matrix. Consideration of these desired outcomes will contribute to the formulation of the final project framework. A few cells have been completed as examples in the matrix below for the water/sanitation example, but the links to the right are more complete examples.

	Individual	Service providers / trainers / multipliers	Organization	Community
Long-term outcome (impact)	Decrease in acute diarrheal infection rates of children			
Intermediate-term outcome	Individuals improve hygiene behaviors		Water committee management systems improve	Solid waste management improves
Short-term outcome	Individuals demonstrate new hygiene KSAs	Outreach workers demonstrate new KSAs	Waters system operators demonstrate improved KSAs	Solid waste management plans completed
Output	Latrines constructed	Outreach materials produced		

KSA = knowledge, skills, and attitudes

> Ctrl + click to link to: *results conceptualization matrix: template*

> Ctrl + click for: *Sample results conceptualization matrix — Ag/Env*

> Ctrl + click for: S*ample results conceptualization matrix — Youth*

> Ctrl + click for graphic of: *Kirkpatrick model*

Another tool that may help stakeholders to consider the four training evaluation levels defined by Kirkpatrick as they relate to the Volunteers, service providers/trainers/multipliers, and individuals involved in a Peace Corps project is the graphic *Outcomes of Peace Corps Training of Volunteer, Service Providers, Community Members* linked at right. For more information on the Kirkpatrick model, see Part 3: Training Design and Evaluation, Section H.1: Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model.

Both the results conceptualization matrix and graphic *Outcomes of Peace Corps Training of Volunteer, Service Providers, Community Members* could be valuable tools for brainstorming desired project outcomes with a PAC.

As you formulate your framework, and especially as you draft your project goals and objectives, think about measures or indicators that partners, Volunteers, or post staff can use to monitor project implementation (input, output, and other process indicators) and

> Ctrl + click for graphic: *Outcomes of Peace Corps Training of Volunteers, Service Providers, Community Members*

> Ctrl + click for: *theory of change models for four projects: water and sanitation, health, TEFL, Small enterprise development*

> Ctrl + click for: *framework development worksheet*

project performance results (short, intermediate, and long-term outcome indicators). Identify a manageable number of key indicators that can be regularly collected and compared over the life of the project and across multiple project sites.

At the objective level, aim for Kirkpatrick Level Two or higher outcome indicators for capacity building, in other words, *demonstrated* knowledge, skills, or attitudes and/or *applied* behavior changes. Define specific indicators that can be applied consistently. For the latrines example, the applied behavior change indicator could be:

> *Example 1. Indicator of behavior: number of community members who <u>use their latrines</u>, meeting four criteria: latrine functionality, latrine signs of use, hygiene, and reported user.*

> *Example 2. Indicator of behavior: number of parents who <u>support their children (boys and girls) going to school</u> by attending Parent/Teacher Association meetings.*

Estimating Achievable Outcome Targets

Once key outcomes are chosen to be included in project objective (and sometimes project goal) statements, you will need to determine outcome targets for the project phase. Targets help Volunteers and partners know what they hope to achieve. Targets should be both realistic and challenging. Realism is achieved through examining baseline data or data from other similar projects. For example, if most programs show a 5 percent increase in savings rates among small businesses, setting a 40-percent target is most likely not realistic. As the project is implemented, after a year or two, numbers can be adjusted up or down depending on what is learned from the Volunteers and partners.

In the case of capacity-building outcomes, do not anticipate that everyone who participates in training or other activities will gain new knowledge and skills and adopt the suggested new attitude or behavior. In fact, according to applied behavioral science research, only a small percentage of participants will try a new behavior, and an even smaller percentage of people will adopt and maintain the new behavior. The percentage of people that you estimate will achieve the outcome will vary according to the intensity of the engagement and the type of change that is desired. The following table may help you to choose the percentage of participants who may achieve a range of outcomes desired.

	Expected percentage of participants to achieve outcome, depending on the nature of the activity	
Outcome	*Single or short-term training activity (large group)*	*Engagement and follow-up over two-year Volunteer service (small group)*
Gain knowledge	80 %	100 %
Develop new skills	50 %	90 %
Change attitude	50 %	75 %
Adopt a new behavior	5–20 %	30–75%
	Adapted from research in the health promotion field	Estimated based on Peace Corps experience

The following table can be used to calculate outcome targets. An Excel version of the table is linked at right.

Ctrl + click for: ***Matrix for estimating outcome targets***

Outcome	Average number of Volunteers to work on this objective per year	Total to be trained (or to benefit) per Volunteer per year [note 1]	Total to be trained (or to benefit) per year	Years (project phase or years of work on this objective)	Total to be trained (or to benefit) over project phase	Percent of those trained (or to benefit) to achieve outcome	Outcomes for this phase
	(a)	(b)	(c) = a x b	(d)	(e) = c x d	(f)	(g) = e x f
Examples:							
Entrepreneurs learn new accounting and financial management skills	10	10	100	6	600	80%	480
Entrepreneurs adopt new skills in monthly business practices	10	10	100	6	600	60%	360

Note 1: If outcomes are not normally achieved each year, but rather over the two years of a Volunteer's service, divide the number of people or other units that the average Volunteer works with, or benefits, over his or her two years of service (column b) by two.

Selecting indicators (performance measures)

A project's performance indicators (measures) should be defined within the context of the project's goals and objectives. Specifically, they should be valid (true measures of the concept) and reliable (measures over time or across sites will capture the same concept consistently). As there are many potential ways to measure a particular project goal or objective, determining appropriate indicators can be difficult. When identifying indicators, it may be useful to refer to lists of possible indicators compiled by others doing similar work. Such lists can help stimulate thinking and help stakeholders identify different types of indicators. However, stakeholders should always first identify and clearly articulate the changes or outcomes expected to occur as a result of the project.

After creating a list, you and your team should select a few key indicators. The more indicators you have, the more data you will need to collect. As a rule of thumb, count those things that matter most, rather than counting everything. Final selection should be based on:

- The indicator's relevance to the project purpose, goals, and objectives; each project purpose, goal and objective should have at least one indicator of change.
- Whether the indicator is the most valid and most feasible indicator of the result to monitor.
- Whether the indicator is reliable and likely to be measured consistently (for example, "youth who demonstrate an improved sense of self" is not likely to be measured consistently).
- Its relevance to assessing project implementation or performance (for example, often information about a milestone, such as proposals completed or trees planted) is important both for celebrating progress and for evaluating how activities relate to results.
- Ease or feasibility of information collection (for example, infant mortality rates are normally not available or accurate at the community level).
- Whether the indicator disaggregates information by sex (quantitative) and takes into account gender relations embedded into the culture (qualitative).

All projects should have a measurable demonstration of skills transfer

Don't forget that one of the indicators the agency has established for the Peace Corps, Performance Goal 1.3.1 "Increase the effectiveness of skills transfer to host country individuals, organizations, and communities," is "Percentage of projects that document increases in host country national capacity." Each project should establish at least one outcome indicator that exhibits an increase in the host country individuals' capacity (for example, through pre and post tests or documented observations).

Be sure that each indicator is well defined. For example, if you ask Volunteers to report on an indicator such as academic performance, you will need to define what constitutes an improvement in academic performance; will this be test scores, grades, graduation rates (disaggregated by sex), or something else? Stakeholders and more experienced Volunteers can help clarify the types of observable or measurable changes that are likely to result from a project. You also may find that you will need to work with Volunteers and partners to develop assessment tools (often baseline/impact assessment tools), as outlined in Section F.2.1, subsection Project Assessment Tools.

In practice, progress toward goals and objectives of development projects can be difficult to measure. Volunteers and community members should be involved in identifying relevant, meaningful, practical indicators. Sometimes indirect indicators or measures will need to be developed, rather than direct indicators or measures.

- *Direct indicators:* These directly measure the item in question. A direct indicator of the number of individuals certified in first aid would be the number of certificates awarded.

- *Indirect indicators:* When it is not possible to measure a direct indicator easily, an indirect measure may be necessary. For example, presence of soap at a hand washing station is an indirect indicator of washing hands with soap.

Note that not all project indicators need to be monitored all the time by all Volunteers. In fact, many intermediate and long-term outcomes are most appropriately monitored on a biannual or annual basis.

As you establish longer-term outcome (impact) indicators, you will note that Volunteer and partner activities will be only one of various variables contributing to them. Remember that Peace Corps projects are sector assistance plans. However, monitoring changes in the longer-term outcome indicators will provide important information for the project. For example, if HIV/AIDS infection rates are increasing in a community despite the efforts of the Peace Corps and others, the project may need to refocus its target group and/or revise its approach.

In summary, indicators should be specific, measurable, or observable; relevant to project goals, objectives, and activities; and feasible to measure or observe, given relevant circumstances and resources.

D.4.5 Sample Project Frameworks and Indicators

Link below for sample project frameworks for the sector(s) of interest to you. All of these frameworks are in the format recommended in this guidance. Some include indicators and some do not. See the Focus In/Train Up intranet site for current guidance on developing project indicators.

Sector	*Example Project Frameworks*	*Sample Indicators Only*
Agriculture/Environment	Framework AG based on Ecuador.xls	Agriculture Sample Indicators.doc Feed the Future Indicators
Education	TEFL Project Framework Moldova 09.doc	Sample Indicators for Education Projects.doc
Health (includes HIV/AIDS)	Peru Wat San framework Jan 2010.xls	Recommended PC Health Indicators Proposed Water and Sanitation Indicators FY10VRT HIV output Indicators
Community economic development	Example SED Project Framework MG.doc	Go to the Focus In/Train Up intranet site for sample CED indicators
Youth	Example Youth project framework Zomba.doc	Youth Sector_Global Indicators_DRAFT.docx
ICT	---	Example ICT indicators
Peace Corps Goals Two and Three	---	Mexico example Goal 2 and 3 indicators

D.5 Reviewing and Refining the Project Framework

If you are developing a new project, in the process of defining indicators/performance measures and assessment tools or incorporating Volunteer input, you may find that your project goals and objectives need to be revised. Review your project plan and indicators once a year. Revision or addition of indicators is expected during the life of a project, but keep in mind that if you change indicators too frequently, you will lack a basis for comparing data over time. Also keep in mind that it is best to use only one version of the Volunteer report form (VRF) for each reporting year. It may be necessary to pilot new indicators, and it may be appropriate to add new indicators, rather than replacing existing indicators to avoid confusion and retain the ability to compare data over time. Whenever you revise the project framework, check that objectives are still necessary and sufficient to meet project goals and that meeting objectives will realistically lead to achievement of project goals and positively impact the project purpose.

E. Step 3: Define or Revise the Project Implementation Plan (Sites, Partners, Volunteers, Tasks, Training, and Resources)

A project implementation plan answers these questions:

- *Where* will the project be implemented?

- Who will serve as supervisors and work partner*s* for the Volunteers?

- How many *Volunteers* are needed and what characteristics, experience, skills, and interests should they have?

- What major *tasks* will Volunteers and partners undertake to meet project objectives?

- What are the significant *training* considerations that have staffing and resource implications?

- What special *resources* might the project need to achieve project goals?

The PAC members and host country agency partners are critical participants in making key project decisions. Peace Corps/Washington must be involved in discussions where recruitment or post budgets will be affected.

E.1 Site Selection Strategy

A site strategy defines the geographic focus for a project, clustering strategy, use of rural versus urban sites, site selection criteria, and length of project assistance at each site. As you develop your strategy, consider project goals and objectives, the skills of Volunteers, safety and security, partner agency capacity for appropriate Volunteer support, participation of other development agencies, sustainability and replicability of efforts, and availability and interest of partner agencies to work with Volunteers.

E.1.1 Geographic Focus for a Project

The following factors influence the region focus for a project:

- **The size of the country**. If the country is small and has relatively easy access to all regions, it might be possible for the project to be implemented throughout the country. If the country is large with widely dispersed populations, it may make more sense to select one or a few regions in which to focus the project. Then, if the project is successful, it could be replicated in other regions later.

- **The geographical area(s) for the project to have the greatest impact**. Considerations that may impact the strategy may be

  o Areas with the greatest need/greatest risk factors for project priority activities.
  o Areas whose priorities are not being met through other support.
  o Demonstrated local enthusiasm for, and commitment to, project issues.
  o Commitment from regional organizations or other conditions or opportunities that will likely contribute to project success.

- **Safety concerns and restrictions in the country**. Some countries have regions or districts that post has determined are unsafe to place Volunteers.

- **Volunteer support**. It is easier to monitor and support new projects in a smaller area rather than a larger area. Being able to visit more Volunteers in a smaller area enables the Peace Corps staff to spend less time traveling and more time in site development activities. On the other hand, placement of too many Volunteers too close together could negatively impact Volunteer integration and limit the impact of a project.

E.1.2 Clustering Strategy

APCD/PMs may choose to place Volunteers from the same project or different projects intentionally in clusters so

- Volunteers can collaborate with each other.

- More highly-skilled Volunteers are placed near generalist Volunteers to provide technical support.

- The project can facilitate communication between partners from different communities, enabling them to learn from each other and to see their issues and efforts in a broader context.

- An APCD/PM from one sector can visit more Volunteers in the project with less travel. This approach also facilitates the site identification process.

- Volunteers may support each other's safety and security.

However, APCD/PMs may choose not to place Volunteers too close to each other or may caution Volunteers against too much collaboration with each other, recognizing that clustering may be a detriment to strong relationships between Volunteers and work partners or counterparts, and even to the sustainability of projects.

HELPFUL HINTS   **Some words of caution related to clustering**

The downside of clustering too many Volunteers in one site or area can be that they may spend too much time with each other. This could negatively impact their integration into, and involvement with, the community. Too many Volunteers could also hinder local capacity building and project sustainability. For this reason, some Volunteers prefer to be the only Volunteer in a site.

If clustering Volunteers is a part of the placement strategy, include this information in early communications to invitees. During PST and ISTs, work with trainees and Volunteers on ways to integrate activities successfully, and ways to ensure project sustainability.

E.1.3 Rural Versus Urban Sites

The majority of Peace Corps Volunteers are typically placed in rural sites, because often

- Rural areas offer strong opportunities for Volunteer integration and development opportunities benefiting the lowest income groups.

- Other development organizations, even when their mission includes rural areas, do not have the resources to place staff in rural sites.

- Rural placements provide jobs that are appropriate for generalists, who make up the greatest pool of Peace Corps Volunteers.

- Rural areas often have lower crime rates than urban areas, decreasing Volunteer exposure to risk.

- These areas have the largest number of people needing assistance.

However, each project normally has a strategy for placement of a smaller number of Volunteers in urban sites:

- Placing a few more highly-skilled Volunteers in urban centers to work with the staff of an organization (such as Junior Achievement or the Ministry of Education's curriculum department) can improve the organization's support for outreach work with low-income rural and urban populations and organizations. Such higher level assignments are usually most appropriate for more experienced Volunteers, third-year Volunteers, and Volunteers age 50 and older ("50+ers").

- Urban sites usually have better infrastructure. Often Volunteers in these sites are engaged in outreach activities, with their work partner or counterparts in more rural sites that may not meet post housing, communications, or safety criteria for Volunteer assignment. Some medically accommodated Volunteers must live in sites with amenities that can be found only in more urban sites.

- Many smaller, remote sites have limited absorption capacity for external assistance, do not house agency partners, or lack the social capital or institutional presence to appropriately support Volunteers.

For example, a single project may have 20 health generalist Volunteers and five health specialists (with a master's degree in public health). Volunteers may be placed so that four generalists are within a certain distance of a health specialist. Each specialist may be placed at a regional health office. The generalists may be placed at a village health post that is supported by that regional health office. This type of strategy permits sharing of expertise as needed, and uses the different skills of the two types of Volunteers in an appropriate way. In addition, this type of strategy can strengthen links between district and regional offices.

E.1.4 Site Selection Criteria

Each post and APCD/PM should establish and document criteria for selecting communities, partner agencies, and housing for Volunteers. Below are ideas that can help. In addition to Peace Corps post health and safety criteria, project criteria should be established for determining which sites to explore and select for Volunteer placement. Such criteria should take into account:

- **Organization with strong interest in hosting a Volunteer.** APCD/PMs should look for groups or organizations whose leaders and members are interested in change and will benefit from a Volunteer.

- **Demonstrated needs that are consistent with project goals and objectives,** and can be met with the skills that the Peace Corps can recruit and train. The better an organization understands the role of the Peace Corps Volunteer and can articulate that they seek a Volunteer to play an appropriate role, consistent with project goals and objectives, the more likely a Volunteer will be effective in his or her work.

- **Volunteer is building capacity, not filling a job vacancy.** In their search for assistance, many host country agencies and organizations may focus on job identification or placement to fulfill their human resource needs as opposed to appropriate work assignments to build capacity and promote systems change. Your aim as APCD/PM will be to negotiate for the latter, so Volunteers are not filling job placement slots, but are given work assignments designed for sustainable systems change.

- **Potential of partner organization to enhance the sector.** Peace Corps projects ideally facilitate the development of institutional/sector knowledge and constructive change. The organizations that Volunteers work with should ideally be selected for their potential to enhance the development of the entire institution/sector. This does not mean only the best or already most well organized, but refers to those with the potential to make a difference and to be a peer role model of change for other organizations and communities grappling with the same institutional/sector issues.

- **Identification of supervisor and at least one enthusiastic work partner or counterpart, or community contact who can support the Volunteer.** Enthusiastic and dedicated work partners are often the most important factor in determining both Volunteer satisfaction and success. Supervisors, when appropriate for the project, can play an important role in guiding Volunteer work and ensuring that adequate organizational resources and support are available. Supervisors may be located in the site where the Volunteers live or in a remote site. See Section E.2, Host Country Partners for further descriptions of these roles.

- **Community dynamics.** Communities with poor leadership or that have suffered so much from emigration that they have virtually no dynamic people with whom Volunteers can work are not ideal sites for Volunteers.

- **Health and Safety Criteria.** Safety and security are a high priority for the Peace Corps. *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 270 governs site development, including the establishment of safety and security criteria for prospective Volunteer and trainee sites. Site and housing health and safety criteria are established by each post and may include parameters such as absence of frequent civil unrest, absence of serious environmental hazards, frequency of public transport, access to emergency transport, access to services (clinics, markets, police), access to reliable communications, availability of potable water, security of housing, and proximity of neighbors.

> Ctrl + click for: *MS 270: Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security*

- **Housing availability.** Host communities must be able to identify or provide housing that meets criteria established at post. See *Programming and Training Guidance: Management and Implementation* Section E.2 Step 0: Organize the Process for examples of site and housing criteria.

E.1.5 Length of Project Assistance at Each Site and Roles of Sequential Volunteers

A site strategy should define the number of sequential Volunteers to be placed in each site (usually two or three), and the roles that sequential Volunteers will play. Consider these factors:

- The second and third Volunteers at a partner agency or in a community can help a community deepen and broaden skills and knowledge. The length of time should be sufficient to achieve the project goals and the corresponding needs of the community. Leaving a site too soon may negatively impact opportunities for sustainability. Staying too long may create dependency. For example, some projects routinely place three generations of Volunteers in a site and then move on to different sites (in the next phase of implementation). The first Volunteer concentrates on participatory planning and stakeholder buy-in, the second Volunteer concentrates on implementation, and the third Volunteer concentrates on phasing out Peace Corps involvement to support sustainability and capacity building. Note that training staff should be aware of the strategy determined.

- Assigning Volunteers with different skill sets supports a partner agency's development in different areas. For example, a business Volunteer skilled in accounting might help a partner agency that works with handicapped youth set up their books. A second business Volunteer might help them develop income-generating projects, and a health Volunteer might work with the staff to develop activities to improve their clients' motor skills and self-esteem.

There are other factors that influence the length of time that the Peace Corps remains at a site and the number of Volunteers placed sequentially. These include

- The amount of support provided by the partner agency or community.

- The amount and kind of interest and involvement of the supervisor and counterpart or work partner.

- The involvement of other development organizations.

- Safety and security.

- Volunteer early terminations.

E.2 Host Country Partners

Partnerships with host country organizations are critical to the success of projects and Volunteer assignments. They help Volunteers integrate, contribute to the sustainability of Volunteer work, and mobilize community participation in activities Volunteers engage in with partners. The Peace Corps capacity-building approach to development requires that Volunteers work closely with work partners or counterparts to share skills, knowledge, and experience.

In the planning process, it is important to determine who will be the project's key regional or national government agency or ministry partners, and who will be the Volunteer's partners. In addition, projects sometimes develop partnership relationships with other development agencies or NGOs, such as Japan International Cooperation Association (JICA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which are sometimes developed in alignment with interagency agreements negotiated by PC/W.

Ctrl + click for: *MOU with NGO, CARE, Peru*

Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for information on *Country Partnerships* compiled from PSRs submitted by posts.

For every site, a Volunteer will usually work with one or more sponsoring local agency partners. The local agency partners could be a government agency, farmers association, parent teacher association, school, cooperative, chamber of commerce, or local or regional NGO.

Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for information on *Current Agency-Level Partnerships and Collaborations*

The following describes the critical roles and relationships of key individuals who are typically identified for each Volunteer:

- **Work partners (or counterparts)**: The individuals who work with Volunteers and jointly learn through experience how to do something new within the local cultural context with enough competence and confidence to transfer their learning to others. Given that a) many work partners are probably engaged in a variety of activities, some of which may not be directly related to the Volunteer's assignment; b) turnover of personnel in organizations is a reality; and c) immigration of community leaders and members seeking personal opportunities and fulfilling family obligations is also reality, posts have found that *Volunteers are usually more productive and effective when Volunteers are assigned to (or encouraged to seek) more than one work partner.* This may be true for a youth project where both an adult work partner and youth partner may be identified. It may also be true if one or more partners are engaged on a voluntary basis on project activities during their discretionary time. This approach ensures full-time work for the Volunteer and can build social capital among coordinating partners.

Ctrl + click for: *Worldwide disability programs organizations and contacts*

- **Community hosts**: In some cases, for example when training teachers in a school, Volunteers are given the opportunity to select their own work partner or counterpart, rather than having one pre-selected. This approach empowers the Volunteer to establish work partner relationships. In this case, the selection of an enthusiastic and well-respected community host or a person whose role is simply to accompany the Volunteer during his or her community entry process, introducing Volunteers to key community members and assisting with their community integration is particularly important.

- **Supervisor:** Most, but not all, Peace Corps projects identify a person within the local agency partner organization in charge of a particular department or unit who is responsible for the Volunteer assigned there. This person typically can authorize organization resources for use by Volunteers, but may not have the time to work with the Volunteer on a daily basis. Indeed, in some cases supervisors are not located in the same community as a Volunteer. On the other hand, sometimes the supervisor can also have a work partner relationship with a Volunteer.

The term "partners" is used in the guidance to signify all partners, including work partners, supervisors, and representatives of organizations with which the project has a partner relationship.

During site development, it is important to identify a Volunteer's partners, and to set expectations on all sides for the role of partners and for flexibility in Volunteer–partner relationships. Where no local agency, work partner, community host, or supervisor can be identified, a project site is not ideal for a Volunteer.

E.3 Volunteers to Recruit

The Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) office is responsible for recruiting Volunteers who best match the needs of the project. Your region—particularly your programming and training unit (PTU)—and VRS can help you to formulate your strategy for requesting an appropriate balance of Volunteer technical skills and attributes that meet the needs of your project and that can be recruited from the Volunteer applicant pool.

The PTU and VRS welcome dialogue from posts regarding the types of trainees to request, the feasibility of getting trainees with particular skills, strengths and weaknesses of Volunteers from the last training class, and the best options for timing of the start of pre-service training (PST), as availability of certain skill sets and competition with other posts vary throughout the year.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Trainee Request Handbook*

VRS publishes the *Trainee Request Handbook* (*TRH*) (link at right) annually to assist Peace Corps posts in determining the types of trainees to request for their programs. There should be copies of the *TRH* at post.

Ctrl + click to link to intranet site for latest: *Trainee Request Handbook*

The two most important documents produced by posts as part of the process of requesting trainees are the Quarterly Trainee Request Summary (QTRS) and the Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD).

The QTRS is submitted by posts to request and describe the types of trainees needed to fulfill project plans. Submission of the QTRS by the established deadlines gives post the maximum advantage in receiving a full training class.

The region is also involved in the process of expressing a post's needs for particular trainees. APCD/PMs are encouraged to confer with their region's PTU regarding any questions about information appropriate to either a QTRS or a VAD. VRS/Placement also welcomes dialogue early in the planning process regarding invitee assignment area (AA) selections and the most appropriate and available skills to meet programming needs. Training Request Review calls (see E.3.4 Trainee Request Reviews) are also valuable to clarify your needs and Volunteer availability, and to adapt requests so that they better match candidates that can be recruited.

E.3.1 Generalists and Specialists

Historically, 85 percent of the agency's Volunteers have been recent college graduates with little or no professional experience. These are the types of applicants who consistently apply to be Peace Corps Volunteers. These recent college graduates are well-educated, highly motivated, and capable of becoming effective agents of change with the right training and support. With few exceptions, posts must plan projects and Volunteer training with this type of candidate in mind.

Some Peace Corps applicants have specialized training or experience in a particular professional or technical area. The project plan and QTRS will identify the strategy for recruitment and placement of any required specialists, including the use of Peace Corps Response Volunteers, and how their sites and assignments will differ from those of other applicants.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Specialists and Generalists*

Most generalists are graduates of liberal arts academic programs. However, our working definition of liberal arts is broad—including not only disciplines such as history, political science, and sociology, but also many others that are not specifically requested by posts very often, but provide excellent preparation for Peace Corps service. A few examples include language, geography, communications, and interdisciplinary studies.

Generalist Volunteers often bring strong leadership and community involvement experience to the Peace Corps that can complement the more technically specific backgrounds of other Volunteers. Examples of generalist Assignment areas (AAs) that are relatively flexible in terms of technical requirements but often more demanding of prior community involvement experience include 117 (agriculture and forestry extension), 155 (health extension), and 162 (community development).

Link to the document on the right for more information on generalists and specialists. Peace Corps programmers can be creative by finding ways to use Volunteers from a variety of backgrounds. In reviewing ways to use different Volunteer skills, be sure to consider the implications for training and discuss them with the training manager.

E.3.2 Couples, Master's International, Peace Corps Response, and More Experienced Volunteers

As you develop your site placement strategy, consider which placements might be particularly appropriate for couples, Master's International Volunteers, Peace Corps Response Volunteers, and other more experienced Volunteers.

Couples
VRS/Recruitment and Placement divisions frequently have an ample supply of couples interested in service and encourage posts to identify in the QTRS submission the number of couples able to be considered in a training class, along with a description of their ideal skill combinations. In addition to skills and experience, couples bring added stability, gender balance, and maturity to a training class.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: ***Couples Waiting to Be Placed***

Couples Review Board
The Couples Review Board (CRB) is an Intranet resource that was established to facilitate the placement process of couples who are already qualified by the Office of Medical Services (OMS) and Placement but have not been able to be placed in a specific program. Posts are encouraged to periodically review the couples available on the Intranet while your training class is being recruited (see the link at right) and contact VRS/Placement if you identify a couple who appear to be a good fit for your program. It is important to note that the couple(s) a post requests from the CRB may be *in addition to* the number of couples already requested in the QTRS for the training class.

The CRB information will be updated every month or so throughout the year. Please note that the assignment areas listed may not be the only ones for which the couple(s) could qualify. It is important to consider the soft skills, life experiences, and motivation to serve, as these and other factors are sometimes as important as hard technical skills. Please ask for assistance from the Placement Office, the country desks, and your region, if needed.

Please pay special attention to the couple's "Availability Date."

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Master's International Overseas Staff Flyer***

Master's International (MI)
Master's International Volunteers are enrolled in participating master's degree programs, usually spending a year on campus taking classes before going abroad to serve as Peace Corps Volunteers (click at right to learn more about the program and its

advantages). While Master's International Volunteers are Volunteers first and can serve in any assignment for which they are qualified, placements for these Volunteers may be a particularly good match when they involve surveys, assessments, or evaluations related to a particular sector.

Peace Corps Response

In addition to two-year Volunteer assignments, projects may develop assignments for Peace Corps Response Volunteers (PCRVs). PCRVs are those who have completed at least two years of Peace Corps service and who are available for three-month to one-year assignments. Peace Corps Response, as of June 2011 expects to soon pilot a program which will allow other Americans -- who have at least 10 years professional experience and the requisite skills (including language) and cross cultural sensitivity required --to apply for assignments. PCRVs can support PC projects in two ways:

1. Supporting current programming by working on projects alongside Volunteers for short-term assignments averaging about six months.

2. Working in project areas in which current Volunteers are not working and, therefore, are completely supplemental to current programming. An example of this may include a post's first exploration of a potentially new project area, partner organization, or geographic region where a more experienced Volunteer is required.

In both cases, PC Response Volunteer assignments can be crafted by post to the precise qualifications that are necessary to meet the needs of the partner organization. Requests for advanced degrees, years of experience in a particular field, and language requirements can be determined by the partnering organization or the post and submitted in the request for PCRVs.

The Peace Corps Response Summary document to the right provides an overview of the program and deadlines, and the Peace Corps Response Position Description Template details the information required from post. The program requires three months' lead time between the submission of the final position description and the desired arrival date of the PC Response Volunteer. However, if post is requesting that a group of five or more Volunteers arrive at the same time, a lead time of six months is recommended.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Peace Corps Response Summary*

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Peace Corps Response Position Description Template*

E.3.3 Types and Numbers of Volunteers (and the QTRS)

Total Number of Volunteers

Historically, Peace Corps projects each addressed one sector with 30 to 35 Volunteers per APCD/PM (see staffing ratios link at right), 15–20 new trainees arriving per year. However, new models have emerged which support the agency's strategy to focus on key sectors and train for excellence. Many posts have targeted projects with more than 30-35 Volunteers, and staffing patterns to match those increased numbers. For example, in Ukraine more than 100 TEFL Volunteers have been managed by regional staff members.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *IAP staffing ratios*

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Example VAD, Mongolia Environment and Community Development*

Area Assignments (AAs)

Currently, the skills and sector interests of Peace Corps applicants are categorized by assignment areas (AAs), described in the *Trainee Request Handbook*. Although AA titles suggest programming areas (for example, business advising and urban youth development), they are best considered as a description of

skills and characteristics that can be expected from prospective Volunteers. It is best to consider AAs as a skill menu rather than as a programming guide.

For example, a program that is designed to assist in the development of environmental NGOs might need Volunteers who are talented organizers. Even though the objective of the program is environmental, AA 104 (environmental education) might not be the only or best suited AA to meet the program's needs. AA 145 (NGO development) might also provide some appropriate Volunteers.

There is a three-page section for each AA in the *Trainee Request Handbook* that includes not only educational and professional requirements, but also background information such as gender and ethnic composition. These sections also include observations by placement officers regarding the personal interests and expectations typically found in prospective Volunteers in each AA.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: ***Trainee Request Handbook***

Numbers of Volunteers With Different Skill Sets

Although VRS makes every effort possible to recruit and place trainees as requested by posts, trainees with some skills are requested in greater numbers than VRS can reliably meet. In such cases, VRS/Placement and posts discuss options to best meet programming needs while ensuring full training classes.

Timing can also be a major factor in receiving the number of trainees requested, especially if a post is competing with others requesting the same types of trainees. While many generalist applicants graduate in May and June, this is also a time that many posts recruit applicants, and the most challenging time of year for meeting post trainee needs. Please refer to the *TRH*, Section One, for a general discussion of this issue and a more detailed analysis for each AA in Section Three.

In addition to competition for skills and the timing of a request, several other factors influence the number of trainees a post is likely to receive, also covered in the *TRH*. These include

- Clarity of information in the Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD).
- Post's ability to accept alternative skills and qualifications.
- Late changes in trainee requests or staging date.
- Post's medical restrictions and ability to make reasonable accommodations.
- Language requirements.
- Applicants' perceptions of a country or region.

The QTRS

The Quarterly Trainee Request Summary (QTRS) is a form that informs Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) as to the number and skills of trainees to recruit. See the *VAD and QTRS Submission Timetable* or the *Trainee Request Handbook* for QTRS submission due dates. Usually an initial QTRS for discussion is due 14–16 months prior to arrival of a training class and a final QTRS is due three months later. The QTRS is reviewed and approved by the regional chief of programming and training (CHiPT) prior to submission to VRS. Placement staff may seek clarification from post if additional dialogue is needed to ensure that VRS can recruit and place trainees as requested.

> Ctrl + click for: ***Volunteer Delivery System Timeline***

> Ctrl + click for: ***VAD and QTRS Submission Timetable***

> Ctrl + click for: ***Example QTRS: Panama Community Economic Development, 2009***

VRS encourages posts to include in the QTRS information not only about the requirements of the trainees being requested, but also briefly about the

main focus of the project and any other details that might pertain to applicants' expectations. For example, some people in the business field might like to teach, while others have no interest in teaching. A brief note such as "project focuses on teaching in business education centers" can help recruiters and placement officers make the most appropriate match of an applicant to a request. Trainees are recruited and placed based on QTRS information.

Aim to specify skills in terms such as "experience with forestry preferred" as opposed to "six months classroom teaching required," so as not to over-restrict the applicant pool. Note that in APCD/PM surveys over many years, APCDs have consistently ranked the following attributes, all of which are integral components of the VRS application process, as more important than technical skills for determining Volunteer success:

- Cultural adaptability (open-mindedness, flexibility, awareness of the needs of others)

- Emotional preparedness (independence, professionalism, interpersonal communication abilities, ability to develop support systems)

- Motivation, commitment, and enthusiasm for a project

Key elements of the QTRS:

- Assignment areas

- Language requirements—It is possible to recruit Spanish, French, and Romance language skills. In regard to identifying the language level desired in the QTRS, Spanish language skills are denoted as S1 = basic, S2= intermediate; French as F1; and Romance language as RL. Applicants cannot be recruited for other skill levels.

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: *Trainee Request Handbook*

- Descriptions of the types of work Volunteers will do

- Additional considerations and preferences on background and experience

- Physical or technical requirements of the Volunteers during their service

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Trainee Request Handbook, 2009*

- Whether the project specifically requests, welcomes, or is not appropriate for Master's International applicants

- Placement options and skill combination considerations for married couples

Note that posts cannot discriminate based on age or sex, but may specify work conditions, or safety considerations that may affect the appropriateness of applicant placement.

Please work with VRS/Placement to identify accurate AAs to meet programming needs. There is a limited supply of certain AAs. Please take this into account when making requests.

E.3.4 Trainee Request Reviews (TRRs)

Trainee request reviews (TRRs) are conference calls periodically coordinated between post, the Placement Office, and the region and are typically conducted right after the initial QTRS is submitted (14–16 months prior to the arrival of PCTs at post). From post, usually the DPT, APCD/PMs with inputs in the relevant quarter, and often the training manager participate, in addition to anyone else post deems appropriate. From the region, a representative from the desk, as well as the PTU, will join in. The region will also invite the relevant sector specialists from OPATS to sit in on the calls. If the region does not coordinate a TRR, you are encouraged to contact VRS directly or coordinate a call.

TRRs are an opportunity for post to highlight elements of the QTRS, such as types of assignments a particular type of Volunteer recruited (as defined by AA) might encounter, length of host family stay, or terrain found in a typical site. They are also an opportunity for the Placement Office to ask questions about assignments that can help target recruiting, as well as provide comments on the probable supply of specific AAs.

By having the TRR after the initial QTRS and prior to the final submission, post has an opportunity to review information shared in the discussion and reflect any changes in the final QTRS. In a number of cases TRRs are not necessary, especially if no changes have occurred.

HELPFUL TIPS

Feedback to VRS on how a training class went is welcome!

The VRS/Placement staff warmly welcomes your feedback as to the outcome of a training class and encourages you to contact the placement officers and supervisory placement officers involved in your training class(es) to provide your comments.

E.4 The Task Analysis

An important component of the project implementation plan is the task analysis. The task analysis is a breakdown of discrete activities that Volunteers must conduct with their work partners to accomplish project objectives. The task analysis includes resources and tools needed to accomplish the activities. The task analysis is a major link between programming and training and is necessary for determining Volunteer learning needs and designing training. It is the result of a detailed examination of the observable tasks associated with the execution or completion of the project goals and objectives, with input from Volunteer experience, when available. The task analysis is valuable

The Task Analysis Is a Critical Link Between Programming and Training

- *For training*. The task analysis is the primary source for identification of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs), which make up the core and sector competencies and learning objectives that result in training for the project. The better the quality and detail of the task analysis, the more relevant and helpful Volunteer training will be for the work that Volunteers must perform to meet project objectives.

- *For Volunteers and their work partner or counterparts.* The task analysis can be a valuable tool to help Volunteers and work partners map out the work they will perform toward project objectives, to build a common understanding of the role of the Volunteer, and to set expectations and boundaries on the types of support that the Volunteer can provide.

Ctrl + click for: *Key Considerations for Developing Tasks*

Ctrl + click for: *Characteristics of a Quality Task Analysis*

- *For the APCD/PM.* The process of producing the task analysis can help the APCD/PM to identify tools and resources that Volunteers and work partners can use or will need to more effectively carry out their work. The portions of the task analysis that refer to assessment steps provide an excellent basis for development of the Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment assignment.

Task analysis development is an iterative process that is led by the APCD, but should include both training staff and Volunteers. As the monitoring and evaluation plan, the training design and the Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment assignment are developed and revised, they will inform the task analysis. APCD/PMs should revisit and update the task analysis when these are complete. See links at right for characteristics of a quality task analysis and for sample task analyses, in different formats. The following framework may be useful for structuring the task analysis, either by objective or for the project (objectives as subsets within the task analysis):

Ctrl + click for: *Peru Youth Development Task Analysis Development Process*

Ctrl + click for: *Tonga Education Task Analysis, Word*

1. Community/organizational entry tasks
2. Participatory assessment/baseline data collection tasks
3. Activities development tasks
4. Monitoring/record-keeping tasks
5. Assessment of process and outcomes indicators and reporting tasks

Ctrl + click for: *Peru Water/Sanitation Task Analysis, Excel*

To verify that the task analysis is clear, achievable, and complete, review your task analysis against the criteria in the document *A Quality Task Analysis* (link at right), as well as the questions below:

1. Is Volunteer work *with* work partner/counterparts, as opposed to alone, appropriately emphasized?

2. Will accomplishment of the tasks lead to achievement of project goals and objectives?

3. Are the tasks specific enough to inform training by determining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a Volunteer to succeed?

4. Are tasks realistic given available and requested AAs and training resources?

5. Are any tasks missing or unclear?

E.5 Training Considerations

As mentioned in Section D.3: The Peace Corps Niche, as programmers define the appropriate role for Volunteers, expectations for the types of Volunteers who can be recruited and the level of technical training they will need should be discussed with recruitment staff in PC/W and training staff at post. This dialogue should continue as revisions are made in the project framework and in the requests for Volunteers. The APCD/PM can discuss with the TM key issues related to training design and resources, including

- Language requirements for Volunteers.

- Major technical knowledge/skills Volunteers will need.

- How the task analysis, KSAs, competencies, and learning objectives drive COTE development, training site selection, or the continuum of learning (PSTs & ISTs).

- Training staffing considerations necessary for designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating learning.

In addition, the APCD/PM should coordinate work with the training manager to complete the TDE process, defining core and sector competencies, learning objectives, the calendar of training, session designs, and training evaluation. Refer to *P&T Guidance Part 3: Training Design and Evaluation*.

E.6 Resources to Consider for Project Implementation

Peace Corps projects require a standard package of resources for project implementation, including training resources, Volunteer allowances, housing arrangements, medical services and supplies, and general equipment and supplies for staff and Volunteers. While Peace Corps funding is available to fund these basic costs, partners can demonstrate commitment, help reduce post costs, and support additional items that can enhance project success.

The following table summarizes resources your project may use or need that 1) could be provided through partner relationships, 2) cannot be funded with Peace Corps annual operating funds, and/or 3) can be paid with Peace Corps annual operating funds, but with restrictions. Planning ahead for these resources will ensure the maximum effectiveness of your project. For example, work with host country agency and community partners to identify financial, material, or human resources that they or other organizations can provide. For information about funding options, refer to the *P&T Guidance Part 4: Management and Implementation*, Section B.1: Agency-wide Planning and Budgeting Processes and Section B.2: Funding Sources to Support Programming and Training.

Resources to Consider for Project Implementation	*Local or other partners can often contribute*	*PC operating funds cannot be used to pay*	*There are restrictions or there may be financial limits to use of PC operating funds*	*Importance of Partnering and/or Planning Ahead*
Volunteer transportation to field sites, special tools, materials	√		√	Volunteer work may be severely limited without these. Local contribution to these costs is very appropriate.
Training for supervisors and work partners	√		√	Restrictions apply to Peace Corps funding of these costs. See the *Management and Implementation* guide, Section B.2.
Tools, materials for PST or IST	√		√	Training effectiveness may be compromised without these.
Technical training materials (guides)	√		√	Whether these are materials offered by ICE, purchased, or produced at your post, the availability of these will affect the quality of training.
Project advisory committee meetings	√		√	Often, lack of funding is a factor in preventing annual project advisory committee meetings. However, an active PAC is critical to the Peace Corps approach to development.
Project review			√	Both PC/W and post funds contribute to the cost of these periodic events.
Specialized technical training for Volunteers' ongoing learning objectives			√	Sometimes a subset of Volunteers need additional training to meet their learning objectives. Examples: fish farming workshop, ICT workshop, native language. Note that regions send norms for training/days per year with IPBS and/or OpPlan guidance. Link to: IAP training days and staffing ratios guidance.

| Resources to Consider for Project Implementation	Local or other partners can often contribute	PC operating funds cannot be used to pay	There are restrictions or there may be financial limits to use of PC operating funds	Importance of Partnering and/or Planning Ahead
Very small project funds ($200 or less) for Volunteer work			√: both financial limits and restricted use will likely apply. Consult with your DMO.	Could be valuable for Volunteer effectiveness (e.g., seeds for a demonstration gardening project)
Small project funds ($500-$6,000) for Volunteer-supported projects		√		Sometimes partnerships with organizations can complement and enhance Volunteer work. Volunteers may also apply for OPSI or SPA funds.

F. Step 4: Develop or Revise a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Effective monitoring and evaluation allows us to improve Volunteer training, enhance project design and implementation, and increase the quality of results. Sound monitoring and evaluation cannot be accomplished without stakeholder involvement.

Monitoring is the ongoing review of project activities and performance. It measures the extent to which implementation is occurring and the extent to which outcomes are being realized. Monitoring begins prior to project implementation, as feasible expectations and appropriate and efficient data collection and reporting systems are established. Data gathered prior to project implementation provides baseline information, against which later data are compared. The difference between the numbers represents the change that is potentially attributable to the project. Monitoring continues throughout the implementation of the project, and is important to assess the extent to which the project is being implemented as intended, and the extent to which project goals and objectives are being met.

Evaluation, on the other hand, is a systematic, objective study conducted periodically or on an ad hoc basis to assess how well a program is working. Because evaluation studies offer causal information about how and why a project is (or is not) performing, they can help staff determine if timely adjustments are needed in program design to improve the rate or quality of achievement relative to the committed resources. Monitoring data should inform an evaluation, but, by itself, data do not constitute an evaluation.

A strong monitoring and evaluation plan is a valuable roadmap to ensure that relevant information is gathered to assess project implementation and to make changes to the project framework and implementation plan to improve its effectiveness. While a summary of the monitoring and evaluation plan is included within the overall project plan, the details of the monitoring and evaluation plan, including assessment tools, should be separately documented, as outlined in Section F.8, The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan later in this document.

Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation Cycle
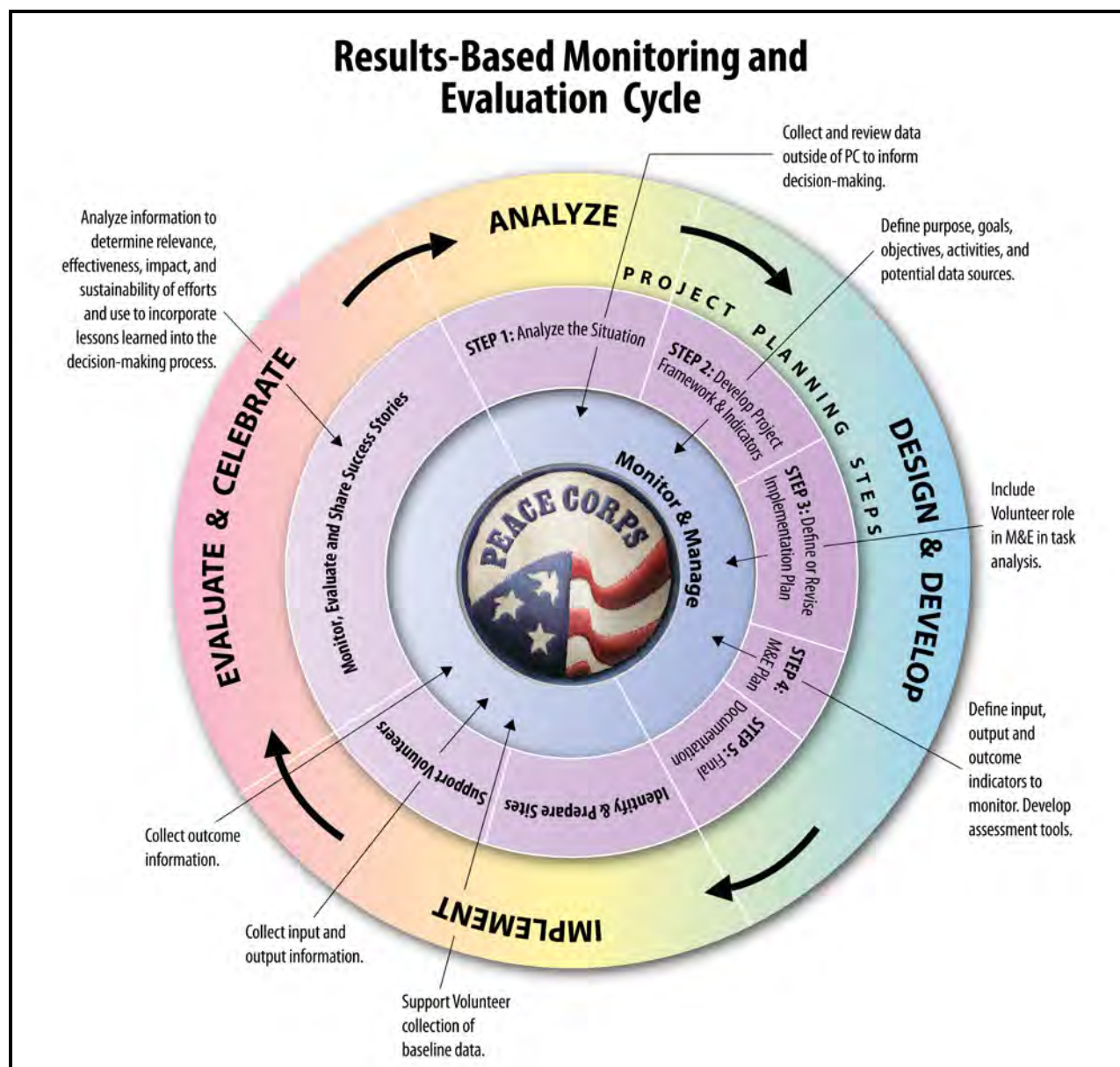
F.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Roles

The following table outlines typical roles played by Volunteers, work partner/counterparts, supervisors, the APCD/PM, the project advisory committee, and PC/W staff in project monitoring and evaluation. Posts may adapt and use this table for their projects, but the basic components will remain the same.

WHO	ACTIONS	WHEN
Volunteers	1. Collect and review all necessary baseline information in regard to each objective, using PACA tools, gender surveys, and **instructions for Volunteer community/sector assessment**. 2. Train work partners to use project assessment tools. 3. Observe behavior change and use of new skills; keep written documentation of observations in **activity tracking booklet.** 4. Meet with work partner/counterparts. 5. With work partner/counterpart, share M&E with community. 6. Report M&E information to APCD/PM with **VRF.**	1. During first 3–6 months of service. 2. First 3–6 months 3. Ongoing 4. Monthly 5. Tri-annually 6. Tri-annually

WHO	ACTIONS	WHEN
Work partner/ counterparts and supervisors	1. Work with Volunteer on the community/sector assessment. 2. Learn how to use evaluation tools. 3. Review attendance records, evaluation tools, and observations with Volunteer to plan future activities. 4. Meet with Volunteer and discuss inputs, outputs, outcomes, gender impact on project, successes, and lessons learned. 5. With Volunteer, share M&E information with community.	1. First 3–6 months 2. First 3–6 months 3. Ongoing 4. Monthly 5. Tri-annually
APCD/PM and Training Staff	1. Develop project plan and initial monitoring and evaluation plan. Determine baseline data at regional/other levels as appropriate. 2. **Train Volunteers** in data collection methods, including the Volunteer community/sector assessment, PACA tools, gender surveys, the VRF, and project assessment tools. 3. **Train work partners** to complete their role in M&E (both at orientation day and follow-up at PDM or other opportunities). 4. Give feedback to Volunteers on their community/sector assessments and VRF. 5. Share VRF successes/challenges in **Volunteer newsletters** (i.e., sector or GAD newsletters). 6. Share the results with partner agencies, staff and Volunteers, in annual report and at **PAC meetings.** 7. Use results to make modification to PST and ISTs as needed. 8. Report results to PC/W in **SRs** and **IRs.** 9. Lead **informal project reviews and evaluations.** 10. Revise M&E plan and components as needed. 11. Develop SOW, and participate in **formal project review.** 12. **Make decisions on future of project based on data and review recommendations.**	1. Prior to arrival of Volunteers 2. PST, ISTs, and ongoing basis 3. At orientation, reinforced during site visits 4. Tri-annually 5. Tri-annually 6. Bi-annually or annually 7. Annually 8. At least once a year 9. Annually 10. Annually 11. and 12. One year prior to end of project phase or as needed
PAC	Review and discuss project outputs, outcomes, effectiveness, relevance, and sustainability. Also discuss Volunteer impact on Peace Corps Goals Two and Three. Discuss future project direction.	Annually Bi-annually or annually
PC/W	Use PSR information to provide technical assistance and resources to PC/host country, and to share information and resources with other posts and organizations. Participate in formal project review.	Annually and ongoing One year prior to end of project phase or as needed

F.2 The Role of Volunteers in M&E

F.2.1 The Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment

The first three to four months that a Volunteer is at site should be spent actively getting to know people, organizations, issues, local assets, and the local perspectives. During this time, the Volunteer should 1) build trust; 2) gain an understanding of attitudes, skills, behaviors, organizations, roles, relationships, local assets and resources, and obstacles that will likely affect his or her well-being and work; and 3) gather baseline data related to impacts that Volunteer work may have on the community. When the Peace Corps provides Volunteers with knowledge, tools, and skills that assist the Volunteers to use their first three to four months effectively, it can make a significant difference in the quality and value of the Volunteers' service. The APCD/PM is responsible for identifying, developing, or facilitating the

Ctrl + click for: *Bolivia Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment Assignment*

Ctrl + click for: *Agroforestry community assessment assignment, Guinea*

Ctrl + click for: *Village situation analysis tool, Samoa*

development of project-specific assessment tools directly related to the project's purpose, goals, and objectives to supplement PC and post general community assessment tools used in pre-service training.

The Volunteer community/sector assessment, developed and tailored to match the needs of each project at post, provides Volunteers with tools and strategies for their first three months at site, to help them carry out effective

- **Community entry**. Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) tools, including community mapping, seasonal calendars, daily activity schedules, and gender analysis, help Volunteers build trust, understand community dynamics, and gather information about the groups that are active in the community, what they are currently doing, and what they have tried in the past that has succeeded or failed. The use of these tools with community members can also help community members assume ownership of new information or insights into how they would like to improve their communities.

  > Ctrl + click for: *Business and Organizational Development (BOCA) rubric*

- **Project baseline assessment**. Project assessment tools are used by Volunteers and work partners to gather information related to the project purpose, goals, and objectives, which establish baseline data against which data are later compared to determine the extent to which outcomes have been realized. Sometimes these tools or information (such as community health data) will not be reported by Volunteers on a monthly basis, but rather at the beginning of their service, perhaps at the middle, and at the end of their service (or the beginning of the service of the next Volunteer). Often, the information itself, like use of organizational diagnostic tools such as the Business and Organizational Development Assessment, or "BOCA" rubric, helps the Volunteer determine an appropriate focus for his or her work.

- **Participatory discussion of perceptions, data, and priorities**. Participatory processes outlined in the PACA manual help groups discuss and identify community strengths and priorities for change, and guide Volunteers in first steps of a process for appreciative inquiry (Discover, Dream, Design). The analysis will likely reflect the results of the baseline data collection (including the collection of sex disaggregated data). The general focus of the change expected as a result of Volunteer activities will be defined by the project plan; however, the activities and outputs can be flexible to ensure that they reflect local priorities. Not all Volunteers will necessarily contribute to all project goals and objectives.

- **Activity design and planning**. Planning tools, checklists, and timelines help Volunteers and work partners design and plan prioritized activities.

Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment tasks should be integrated into the task analysis and training learning objectives, and thus integrated into both pre-service training (PST) and in-service training (IST). Many posts require a written report and presentation at a Volunteer four-month (reconnect) IST, and also require detailed action plans by the end of the IST.

PACA Tools and Broad Community Assessment

The Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) manual and idea book introduces Volunteers to the concept of participatory assessment. The core PACA tools are:

- Community mapping
- Seasonal calendars
- Daily activity schedules
- Needs assessment

Adaptation of the PACA tools use may be particularly important for urban Volunteers and follow-on Volunteers. Note that an urban community is defined as a group or community within a larger urban area, definable by geographical area, unit, or affinity, such as sub-neighborhood, students, teachers, market workers, shoppers, wholesalers, NGOs, peer educators, apartment tenants, or municipal employees.

Core PACA tools include gender analysis. Comparisons of information gathered from 1) men, women, boys, and girls, 2) different neighborhoods/classes, and 3) more than one school or business will help Volunteers and work partners to build understanding of community diversity, plan more sustainable activities, and build bridges between groups.

Another aspect of broad community assessment that may be incorporated into Volunteer Community/Sector Assessment assignments as appropriate may be identification of key roles in community behavior change. Volunteers may identify the people in the community who are viewed as playing the following key roles identified in "the Tipping Point," further defined in the link at right:

- Connectors: people who have a natural and instinctive gift for making social connections

- Salespeople: people who have the skills to persuade us when we are unconvinced of what we are seeing or hearing

- Early adopters: people who tend to be the first to try new things

In addition, the broad community assessment should provide the Volunteer with an understanding of the resources available in the community and how to access those resources, including materials, tools, transportation, and spaces to hold workshops. Volunteers should understand how to work with partner/counterparts using an appreciative inquiry, or 4D (discover, dream, design, deliver) approach (see link at right).

Ctrl + click for: *Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual (ICE No. M0053)*

Ctrl + click for: *Idea Book Series: PACA: Using Participatory Analysis for Community Action (ICE No. M0086)*

Ctrl + click for: *Community-Based Planning and Action, Belize*

Ctrl + click for: *8 steps to behavior change*

Ctrl + click to link: *Appreciative Inquiry (or 4D) Approach*

Ctrl + click for: *One-day course on Designing for Behavior Change*

ASK AN EXPERT

How Can We Tailor Assessment Tasks for Volunteers Who Are Not the First In a Site?

Repeated community mapping can wear a community down. Ideally, a replacement Volunteer should review the community/sector assessment from the previous Volunteer, as well as his or her last output and outcome reports, and build on them. The new Volunteer would confirm the assessment data from the prior Volunteer and identify "next step" objectives. Alternatively, the activity could serve to fill gaps as appropriate if certain information is missing or has changed due to migration, natural disaster, or other events. The information over time can also be useful when graduating a community from Peace Corps support.

Project Assessment Tools

Every APCD/PM will select or develop, with input from Volunteers and partners, project assessment tools for use by Volunteers and work partners to 1) gather baseline information related to the project purpose, goals, and objectives, and 2) monitor outputs and outcomes. Some tools are most appropriate for baseline and impact monitoring, others for regular reporting, and some for both.

To develop project assessment tools:

1. **Review the project purpose, goals, and objectives**, as well as output and outcome indicators you have selected and make an initial list of information that should be gathered by Volunteers and partners at baseline or to monitor the progress of project efforts. Often a review of the task analysis can be helpful as a reminder of important baseline information to gather. For example, the task analysis may include "gather information about existing irrigation practices. Do not forget to include detailed information that Volunteers with work partners should be assessing to determine baseline knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, systems, and conditions.

    > Ctrl + click to link to:
    > *Data collection methods (1 page)*

2. **Determine types of data sources that the project will use.** Consider the following table (and the *Data Collection Methods*, *Comparison of Information Gathering Methods* and *Focus Group Tips* documents linked at right) to determine which methods will be used by Volunteers and partners. Where it makes sense, projects should use existing data collection systems that are in place (such as health data, school exams, etc.), or information that can be collected simply (such as whether a community receives piped water or not), rather than developing a project specific assessment tool/method. Note that informal methods to collect data are appropriate for Volunteers, particularly during their first months at site.

    > Ctrl + click to link:
    > *Comparison of Information Gathering Methods*

    > Ctrl + click to link:
    > *Focus Group Tips*

Types of Information	Direct Method	Less Direct Method
Do you want to understand changes in **issue awareness**?	Self-report	Others' report Change in a related behavior
Do you want to understand changes in **knowledge**?	Knowledge tests Grades Conversations/games	Self-report of knowledge Others' report of knowledge (questionnaire, interview, focus group)
Do you want to understand changes in **skills**?	Observation of use of a skill (could be during a training event), sometimes using a rubric	Self-report of competence
Do you want to understand changes in **attitudes**?	Self-report of changed attitude (questionnaire, interview, focus group) Demonstration of new attitude through changed behavior	Others' report of changed attitude (questionnaire, interview, focus group) Observation records (checklist)
Do you want to understand changes in sustained individual **behavior**?	Observations of behavior	Self-report of changed behavior Others' report of changed behavior Use/purchase of related resources for the behavior (e.g., condoms for safe sex)
Are you aiming to change **organizational/community management practices** (e.g., water committee, school, municipality, cooperative)	Observation	Observation of changes expected from the practices Review of organizational policies Staff or other reports of use of practices (may be through questionnaire or rubric)
Do you want to understand the **impact**, such as health status (at baseline and as a result of project-supported changes) of certain parameters?	Direct measurement (for example of child weight) Observation	Health post data Self-reported information

HELPFUL HINTS

Caution: Assessment Versus Intelligence Gathering

Information-gathering tools and instructions should recognize the potential sensitivity of community members to outside observation. Some recommendations to respect this sensitivity: 1) Have Volunteers work *with* partners in the assessment process to the extent possible, making it clear that the information is for the community; 2) Maximize information that can be gathered informally, particularly as Volunteers new to a site build trust with their communities; and 3) Have Volunteers begin their community/sector assessment assignments with silent observation, followed by individual interviews, group discovery, and finally, group planning, progressing to gathering more detailed information from people only after they have first established trusting relationships and have strengthened their language skills.

3. **With Volunteers and partners, review and evaluate assessment tools recommended by the Peace Corps or used by other posts or organizations** that your post may use or adapt. You may want to consider holding a workshop to involve partners and Volunteers in determining or revising project indicators and tools, using the *Measuring Results Handbook for Volunteers and Counterparts* as an instructional tool for the workshop.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Measuring Results Handbook for Volunteers and Counterparts*

A few examples of assessment tools used by Peace Corps posts are listed below. All of these tools were developed in collaboration with partners. Many of these tools are Peace Corps adaptation of tools that have been developed and adopted as standards by a set of development actors in the sector. See sector guidance for a more complete list of recommended and example assessment tools for each sector:

Information collected	*Tool type*	*Example tool (linked)*
Education & Youth		
To what extent are English teachers (service providers) applying active participation techniques, classroom management, and student assessment in the classroom?	Observation rubric	TEFL classroom co-teaching observation guide [Nicaragua, English]
Have teachers been trained, are students clean, do facilities exist for hand washing, and what is the condition of school latrines and water?	Rubric for school director	Form on status of healthy school, Guatemala [in Spanish]
Community economic development		
What is the strength of this nongovernmental organization, including organization, leadership, performance, funding, financial management, accounting, and cooperation?	Rubric	Business and Organizational Capacity Assessment (BOCA) Belize.xls
Health		
Current levels of knowledge and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, including what it is, how it is transmitted, how it can be prevented, the differential impacts on men, women, boys, and girls, and whether respondents hold stigmatized views of people living with HIV/AIDS?	Pre-post interview survey for knowledge and attitudes	HIV AIDS Pre-post survey, Burkina Faso, English HIV AIDS (SIDA) Pre-post survey, Burkina Faso, French

Information collected	*Tool type*	*Example tool (linked)*
Agriculture and Food Security		
The first two tools are adaptations of USAID instruments that can be used by Volunteers. These tools are designed to measure food security, one for food diversity and another for food quantity. For reference see: Measuring Household Food Consumption.pdf	Survey	FS I2 Food Diversity.docx
	Survey	Household Hunger Index.docx
Environment		
A survey tool used to gather communitywide information on community leaders, crops, animal production, water use, soils, natural resources, wildlife, environmental health, environmental education, and cultural values.	Communitywide survey	Environmental Assessment, Senegal (English)
WID/GAD		
The Mali Gender and Development Manual and Gender Analysis checklist both include questions that can be used for baseline surveys by Volunteers either as a stand-alone instrument or incorporated within other community assessment tools.	Interview questions	Mali GAD_Manual.pdf Gender_Analysis_Checklist.doc

4. **Adopt or adapt existing tools or design new tools** with Volunteers and partners for them to use to gather information. Consider the tips on creating survey questions, and tips for interviewers (links at right) as you develop survey questions and instructions. Decide who will use the tool and how frequently. If it will be used by work partners and supervisors, develop it in (or translate it to) your local language.

   Ctrl + click to link to document: *Tips on Creating Survey Questions*

   A note about sampling and sample sizes: In most cases, Peace Corps Volunteer project work focuses on a limited number of 30 or fewer individuals or groups, so Volunteers can gather baseline information one-on-one with every individual or group with whom they work, and do not need information from population samples. However, for cases where Volunteers with their partners are aiming to understand baseline attitudes or knowledge from a large target group, they should be sure that they to talk to at least 25–50 people representing an appropriate diversity of people (e.g., women, men, elders, youth, teachers, service providers, and others) to be sure that the people they speak to fairly represent the views of the entire target group.

   Ctrl + click to link to document: *Tips for interviewers*

5. **Pilot the use of the new tools in at least one community, and modify the tools based on the results of the pilot.** Do not forget to modify the project framework, task analysis, and training learning objectives to incorporate use of the new tools.

F.2.2 Volunteer Training in M&E

It is important that Volunteers be properly trained in how to fulfill their monitoring and evaluation roles, and that they understand how the information they provide will be used. Volunteers will likely be training work partners and others in the use of M&E tools, so they will need to be trained as trainers. Volunteers should understand the purpose of each tool, its correct use, and how to deal with potential problems. Volunteers should also understand how to build trust and avoid misperceptions that assessment tools are used to gather intelligence information. If Volunteers practice using the tools during PST, it is much more likely that they will use them in their first three to four months at their sites.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *CAT Mali PowerPoint*

F.2.3 Activity and Outcome Tracking Booklets

Posts have found that Volunteers appreciate when they are provided with a tracking booklet in which to record key pieces of information about their work during their service. Posts may choose to create one booklet per project or one booklet for the post. OPATS has created guidance and templates posts can adapt for their use. These are linked here, at right.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Activity and Outcome Tracking Booklet letter size Template*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Activity and Outcome Tracking Booklet A4 Template*

F.2.4 Volunteer Periodic Reports (the Volunteer Report Form, or VRF)

The Volunteer Report Form (VRF) is an Excel spreadsheet that Volunteers use for periodic reporting. Information from this form is imported into the Volunteer Reporting Tool (VRT). It includes sections on community integration, challenges, successes, plans for upcoming work, and reports on activities that include information on participants, outputs, and outcomes. It also includes information pertaining to Peace Corps initiatives and Volunteer activities related to Peace Corps Goals Two and Three.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Guidance on Activity and Outcome Tracking Booklets*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *VRT User Guide*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Staff VRT Quick Start Guide*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Volunteer VRF Quick Start Guide*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Tags Worksheet for Staff*

F.3 The Role of Partners in M&E

Partners play a key role in project monitoring and evaluation, beginning with participation in definition of the project purpose, goals, objectives, and activities. For further reading on participatory program evaluation, see the *Participatory Program Evaluation* resource, originally developed by Catholic Relief Services, at right. Opportunities to train or reinforce training of partners include orientation day (counterpart day), project design and management workshop (PDM), or workshops in which work partners participate.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Participatory Program Evaluation (ICE No. R0094)*

F.3.1 Partner Training in M&E

To the extent that APCD/PMs expect partners to play a role in project monitoring and evaluation, they need to consider how those partners will be trained to fulfill their roles. Partners need to understand which information

is gathered and how it will be used. They should understand the purpose of each assessment method or tool and its correct use. Both APCD/PMs and Volunteers play a role in training partners in their role in M&E.

F.3.2 Partner Use of M&E Tools

Ideally, partners will be engaged in project monitoring and evaluation, using M&E tools with, or supported by, Volunteers and using the information they provide to inform their efforts. The best monitoring and evaluation tools are developed for the language and education level of those who will use them. An example of such a tool is linked at right.

Ctrl + click to link to: *Guatemala Healthy Schools Questionnaire for School Director*

F.3.3 Partner Review and Discussion of M&E Information With Volunteers

Posts and APCD/PMs have developed various systems for Volunteers to share information with partners without creating an undue burden for Volunteers. Some strategies include

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Ukraine Project Monitoring Card for Partners*

1. Using the post-defined section of the VRT to include questions specifically in the country's language(s) designed for Volunteers to write in that language and share with their partners.

2. Instructing Volunteers to write certain VRT sections in a language that their partners understand.

3. Creating a one-page monthly report form for Volunteers to discuss with partners.

The concept is for Volunteers to share and discuss with their partners information about how they are spending their time, past successes and lessons learned, progress toward goals and objectives, and planning for upcoming events.

Ctrl + click for: *Partner Survey Moldova (end of service)*

F.3.4 Agency Partner Feedback

All projects should also engage partners in providing feedback to the Peace Corps about how the project is going. The ideal form for communicating and documenting partner observations will vary from project to project, and may even vary depending on the partners. Note that parts of the VRF can be written in the national language, if posts use that tool to incorporate partner input. Posts may also request regular M&E reports from partners. The PC/Ukraine TEFL project uses a six-month monitoring card (link at right).

Ctrl + click for: *Peace Corps Agency Strategic Plan*

Ctrl + click for: *Partner Survey Questions Mexico 2009*

In addition, posts must report about Agency indicator d under the Agency's Performance Goal 1.3.1: Increase the effectiveness of skills transfer to host country individuals and communities, which is: "percentage of partner organizations at post that report their assigned Volunteer fulfilled their requested need for technical assistance."

Options for gathering the information could be

1. Informal discussions during site visits. It may be prudent to discuss specific questions to be asked of host agencies to solicit honest, constructive feedback.

2. Scheduled phone calls, again with specific questions.

3. A hard copy or online survey. In Mexico, an anonymous survey using the Internet is used, and Moldova uses a hard copy survey (links to example at right).

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Partner Survey Results 2008 Mexico*

HELPFUL HINTS

Good Idea: Use Documented Expectations as a Basis for Soliciting Feedback From Partner Organizations

To minimize subjectivity in a local agency partner's responses to the question "Did the Volunteer meet your requested need for technical assistance?" posts could document agreed-upon expectations for each Volunteer, consistent with the Volunteer's action plan developed after conducting the Volunteer community/sector assessment, and update the document if agreed-upon changes to those expectations are made. The question for local agency partners would then be: "Did your Volunteer fulfill the expectations as laid out in the [document name] agreed upon on [date]?"

F.3.5 PAC Meetings

A project advisory committee (PAC) serves as an advisory body to the APCD/PM. It provides valuable input to continually strengthen the project focus, and it collaborates with other organizations to maximize project effectiveness in meeting its goals and objectives and the evolving priorities of the host country at the local, regional, and national levels. It also contributes to the legitimacy and recognition of the project.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Sample Invitation Letter for a PAC Meeting*

An active PAC

*   Is engaged in reviewing and evaluating project results each year and interpreting the data, preferably at PAC meetings, but if not, then feedback is gathered through one-on-one meetings, regional meetings, conference calls, emails, or phone calls.

*   Is meeting at least once a year to review project monitoring and evaluation information, celebrate successes, and recommend any revisions to the project framework or strategy.

*   Is engaged in project redesign, as appropriate; during this stage, PACs should help identify existing (national, regional, and local) data related to the target issue(s), and any tools that are being used to gather data and that may be used by Volunteers at the community level.

F.3.6 M&E Information Analysis

Data interpretation provides an excellent opportunity to bring together groups of key stakeholders to discuss monitoring and evaluation information and make judgments about project goals, objectives, outcomes, and activities. The stakeholders are likely to bring different perspectives to data interpretation and will usually have greater confidence in the results if they have helped with the analysis. Involving stakeholders (both women and men) in data analysis also provides them with immediate feedback so they can adjust projects as necessary.

> Ctrl + click for: *Bolivia thermometer fact sheet*

M&E information analysis can be conducted as part of PAC meetings, ISTs, other workshops, and facilitated by Volunteers and their community partners in community meetings. After presenting summaries of the data, ask stakeholders to address the following questions:

- Do these summaries seem valid and accurate? If not, what is missing?

- If yes, what do they mean to you and to this community, project, NGO?

- If the results show change over time, what brought about the change?

- Is the change enough or is more needed?

- If more change is needed, what do we want to do about it?

- Is the change aligned with the national development goals?

F.4 Project Status Reports (PSRs) and Initiative Reports (IRs)

The annual PSR and IR process requires that an APCD/PM summarize information collected throughout the year as part of the monitoring and evaluation process. The PSR is the standardized agency document that provides annual information on the work of Volunteers and the progress of each project. Information summarized in the PSR provides an opportunity for project stakeholders, posts, and PC/W to identify, reflect, and report on project activities, capacity-building efforts, project outcomes, strengths, challenges, lessons learned and promising practices, follow-up actions, and specific Volunteer successes. The IR provides an opportunity for posts to consider how agency initiatives are being addressed by each project and post-wide.

The PSR and IR should also demonstrate results of APCD/PM reflection, in consultation with Volunteers and partners, on how the project may be continually improved, perhaps to close out certain objectives, deepen other objectives, or begin work in new areas.

F.5 Peace Corps Goals Two and Three Assessments

Volunteers, through their VRT and in other formats, provide information on how their work impacts agency initiatives, and Peace Corps Goals Two and Three.

Host country nationals also can provide information on the impact of Volunteers on their understanding of Americans (Peace Corps Goal Two). One example of how to obtain information about host family members' understanding of Americans as a result of their experiences living with Volunteers is a survey form used by Peace Corps/Armenia (link above right).

Ctrl + click for: *Niger Community and Youth Ed use of PSR info*

Ctrl + click for document discussing the value and uses of: *Project Status Reports*

Ctrl + click for: *Honduras simple SR report for partners: Spanish*

Ctrl + click for: *Honduras simple SR report for partners: English*

Ctrl + click for: *Scaling Up – From Vision to Large-scale Change for a good discussion on: innovation / promising practice / model / good practice/ best practice*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Host Family understanding of Americans pre-post test feedback form, Armenia*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Mexico Goal 2/3 indicators*

F.6 Scheduled Project Reviews and Evaluations

In addition to the information gathered by Volunteers, partners and staff, on an ongoing basis for every project, should plan for periodic project reviews or evaluations to gather quantitative and qualitative data to identify the strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation, to determine the effectiveness of projects and activities, and to inform changes in project directions. Depending on the specific approach, this data may also provide information about project impacts and sustainability over time.

F.6.1 Evaluation and Evaluation Types

In general, the purpose of an evaluation is to systematically assess your program. Program evaluation provides data about project effectiveness and efficiency that can be used to improve project activities and outcomes. The use of a systematic, evidence-based approach is what sets evaluation apart from other forms of project assessment that staff conduct as they manage projects.

A good evaluation

- Can verify what aspects of your project "work" and how, and which do not and why.
- Can showcase the effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, and timeliness of a program to the stakeholders (community members, partners, PC/W).
- Can increase a program's capacity to conduct a critical participatory self-assessment and plan for the future.
- Can build knowledge for the development field.

Posts may evaluate different aspects of one or more projects at any time. The following table and link outline different types of evaluations.

Evaluation Type	*Purpose*
Performance Logic Chain Assessment addresses the plausibility of achieving the desired change, based on similar prior efforts and on the research literature.	To avoid failure from a weak project design that would have little or no chance of success in achieving the intended outcomes.
Process Evaluation identifies the procedures undertaken and the decisions made in developing the project.	To determine whether the program is being implemented and is providing services as intended.
Outcome Evaluation measures the extent to which a program achieves its outcome-oriented objectives.	To judge program effectiveness, but may also assess program process to understand how outcomes are produced.
Impact Evaluation is employed to isolate the program's contribution to achievement of its long-term outcomes.	To determine attribution of project outcomes and to guide decisions about replication.
Program Effectiveness evaluation is similar to impact evaluation in that it estimates how much observed results, intended or not, are caused by program activities.	To compare observed results with estimates of what might have been observed in the absence of the program.
Rapid Appraisal is a quick assessment using various data collection methods, usually (a) key informant interviews; (b) focus group interviews; (c) community interviews; (d) structured direct observation; and (e) surveys.	To obtain quick turnaround information to see whether projects are basically on track, as well as to provide information for decisions made about changes in project design or implementation.
Case Studies (including Most Significant Change Methodology) employ the use of information from a number of in-depth studies of particular activities as implemented, usually focusing on situations where particularly successful or particularly weak outcomes were achieved.	To gain a more in-depth understanding of the various factors that influence how a project achieves or does not achieve desired results so that lessons learned can inform project design and implementation.

Read more about types of evaluations by opening the *Evaluation Types* and *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System* links at right, and available in hard copy in the Information Resource Center (IRC) at post.

Ctrl + click for:
Evaluation Types

F.6.2 Project Reviews

The Peace Corps has established a system of project reviews, based on rapid appraisal methodologies. The purpose of a project review is to undertake a participatory process to identify project strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities to create a stronger project design, beginning with a strong project framework. A project review can also be

Ctrl + click for: *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System*

an opportunity to explore questions related to project impacts and effectiveness and to resolve issues, including IST design, project advisory committee (PAC) formation, partner/counterpart identification training and roles, coordination with other PC projects in country, Volunteer sequencing, and site selection and graduation strategies.

Every project should schedule at least one project review, either formal or informal, approximately 14 months prior to the end of the project phase, so a decision can be made to close the project, to develop a new project phase, or to develop a new project with a similar purpose (see timeline for formal review and revision of existing projects in Section B.3). In addition, project reviews should be scheduled if staff believes that a project may require a significant revision prior to completion of one phase (see discussion below).

Ctrl + click for: *Planning and Implementing Project Reviews*

All project reviews include participation by post staff, agency partners, work partners, supervisors, beneficiaries, and Volunteers. Traditionally, Peace Corps project reviews have involved an external reviewer(s), who might be an APCD from a neighboring country, regional advisors (RAs), a locally-hired consultant, and/or an OPATS specialist. External reviewers add value to the process by bringing an outsider's perspective, experiences from other country programs, experience with the review process itself, and added manpower to accomplish the review. When an external reviewer is from PC/W, the review can also be an opportunity for staff in PC/W to better understand and support a project and to share promising practices with other posts.

The following files are attachments to the project review guidance:

Agenda for a Basic Big Stakeholder Workshop.doc

Tools and methods for project reviews.doc

Example education survey questions

Example interview guides

Example survey questions — Fran

Framework Alignment Session Agenda

Framework Review Session Agenda.doc

Project Review SOW Template and Guidance.doc

Data collection methods (one page)

Comparison of Information Gathering Methods

Methodology for writing up a finding

However, a post may conduct a project review with only in-country staff, for example in cases where changes in a project are anticipated to be minimal and resources for an external reviewer are not available.

Link to the right on *Planning and Implementing Project Reviews* for a description of formal project reviews. Note that formal project reviews must be requested in advance, through the Field Assistance Request (FAR) process, outlined in *Management and Implementation Guide,* Section B.1.9.

The scope of work for a project review is developed by the APCD/PM with the DPT or CD. Resources for a project review are provided both by OPATS, as approved through the Field Assistance Request process, and by post's annual operating plan, so the dates, reviewer(s), and major activities should be planned well in advance of the review.

Ctrl + click for:
Example: SED Uganda Project Review Documents

Ask an Expert: Does This Project Require a Significant Revision?

If you are unsure whether or not a project needs a significant revision you may consider the following:

- Are Volunteers spending significant time in nonproductive activities? (COS interviews and the Volunteer annual survey may be the most consistent source for answers to this and the following questions.)

- Do Volunteers feel they are involved in meaningful work that

  o Adds unique value to local initiatives by capitalizing on their skills and their perspective as an outsider?

  o Is conducted with support from the Volunteer's work partner, local and regional decision makers, and the community as a whole?

  o Strikes a balance between Volunteers having a real job they are trained and qualified to do, and the flexibility necessary for participatory community development?

  o Is culturally appropriate and facilitates structural changes, so that continuation of the work is not dependent on the prolonged presence of Volunteers?

- Are Volunteers successful in all project goal areas? Do the activities in the project framework generally describe most of the work of most of the Volunteers for this project?

- Do you intend to significantly change project location or direction, or are you planning to fold two projects together, or create a new project from an old one?

- Are you a new APCD/PM, who, after a few months familiarizing yourself with the project and visiting Volunteers, can't make sense of the project—how input, training, site identification criteria, or work partner or counterpart selection supports project objectives?

These questions may lead you to conclude that your project requires a review.

F.6.3 Other Evaluations

Posts may choose to conduct, request support to conduct, or contract external evaluations or evaluation activities of any of the types listed in the table in Section F.6.1 at any time, but major activities should be planned well in advance so funding can be secured. The phrase "evaluation activities" is used to capture a broad range of evaluation work on various levels that a post might choose to pursue, depending on their information needs and the intended use of the findings. For example:

1) An evaluation of the implementation and short-term outcomes of a common Volunteer activity, such as promoting fuel-efficient stoves or holding summer camps.

2) An evaluation of sustainability and impact of Volunteer activities two to three years after completion. For example, see the box and link below to the Bolivian study of library projects.

3) An evaluation of Kirkpatrick levels three and four of PSTs, including interviews and observation of Volunteers and partners/counterparts in different stages of service for their demonstration of application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained during PST and the impact of those applied.

4) A study of the influence of Peace Corps Volunteers' and partners' work on changes in a particular project sector beyond individual Volunteer efforts, conducted with participation of the PAC.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Volunteers can help evaluate past work

In Bolivia, a third-year Volunteer spent 50 percent of his time in his site and 50 percent of his time traveling to a series of sites where library projects had been completed one to three years previously to evaluate the sustainability of Volunteer efforts. He wrote up a report evaluating the extent to which library projects supported by Volunteers were sustainable and the factors that contributed to the sustainable projects.

One post chose to give trainees some experience in evaluation while gathering information on project effectiveness by having trainees visit projects where Volunteers in their projects served two to four years before (link at right).

Ctrl + click for: *Libraries Evaluation Bolivia*

Most post-led evaluations are conducted with participation of post staff, Volunteers, and often community members, who help design, carry out, and use aspects of the evaluation. The results are intended to be immediately useable by a post in-country. Since time and resources to conduct evaluations are often an issue at post, there are several ways posts can receive funding and assistance for evaluation activities.

Ctrl + click for: *Reviewing Past Volunteer Efforts as a Tool for Training and Project Review*

Note that SPA funds may be used to support a country-level evaluation of SPA projects executed in the past, including travel costs for Volunteers and staff, and funding for consultants. These activities are planned through the Operating Plan/Field Assistance Request process. Posts may also request support for evaluations from OPATS staff through the FAR process. A consultant could help design the study, design the survey instrument or structured observation rubric, train Volunteer researchers, and help interpret and share the results.

OSIRP Impact Evaluations

In 2009 and 2010, the agency, through the Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning (OSIRP), conducted studies to obtain feedback from host country nationals about their understanding of Americans (Peace Corps core goal two) and the outcomes achieved. These evaluations collected data about project processes and outcomes of Volunteers' Peace Corps core goal one activities, as well as goal two impacts: the extent to which Volunteers provide a better understanding of Americans on the part of the host country individuals.

These field evaluations

- Provide important information about host country national views of Peace Corps achievements related to Peace Corps' Goals One and Two.

- Provide tools that posts have found valuable to continue to use independently to gather data about project success from the HCN perspective.

The studies are funded by PC/W and conducted largely by researchers with whom the post contracts in-country.

F.7 Plan for Communication of M&E Information

Effective monitoring and evaluation allows us to improve Volunteer training, enhance project design and implementation, and improve project results. It also allows us to celebrate project successes. Therefore, the monitoring and evaluation plan should include periodic communication of the results (including progress toward project goals and objectives, challenges, successes, lessons learned, and recommendations) to Volunteers, community members, and partners.

Ctrl + click for: *Honduras simple SR report for partners: English*

Some tips on communicating results and findings of your monitoring and evaluation efforts:

Ctrl + click for: *Honduras simple SR report for partners, Spanish*

- **Involve Volunteers and Work partners** in presenting and discussing the results. Sharing information will both motivate them to provide good information and enable them to use results to make modifications to their activities. Sharing results with all stakeholders helps create a demand for such information, which increases the likelihood that results will be used.

- **Consider the Content**: Information should be meaningful to stakeholders—information that is obvious or redundant is generally not helpful. Information should be in the appropriate language and avoid jargon. Users should be able to do something with the information, whether learning, sharing the information, or using the information to change approaches.

- **Present Information in the Right Form:** Different people will want to receive information in different forms. Few people have the time or motivation to read lengthy reports, so most people prefer the information to be short and simple, with a summary of key findings, an analysis of what the findings mean, and recommendations and suggestions. Two different examples of methods posts have used to communicate monitoring and evaluation information to partners are linked at right.

- **Explore different types of presentations,** including flip charts, PowerPoint, graphs, drawings, videos, music, role-play, and even dance, to highlight essential ideas when presenting results to a group, staff, or community. Have stakeholders tell stories or create case studies from unique and notable examples of those who benefited from the program, and those who did not.

Ctrl + click for: *Annual Report Mexico, Spanish*

Ctrl + click for: *Tonga stakeholders report*

- **Consider the timing of information shared:** Stakeholders must receive information at the best time for them to do something with it. If too much time passes between gathering and sharing information, the results may be outdated. In an agricultural project, for example, information on planting practices should be presented and discussed well before planting season so there is time to make changes.

F.8 The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

A monitoring and evaluation plan should document the following:

A. *Key long-term systems changes sought;* some of these may be captured as purpose (impact) indicators, but others may not.

B. *Monitoring and evaluation roles;* you may adapt the monitoring and evaluation roles table in Section F.1 to fit your post and project.

C. *Project framework and indicators;* this can be an output report from the VRT, if the new framework and indicators have been entered in the VRT.

D. *Volunteer community/sector assessment assignment*, including data collection methods and tools, including the collection of gender disaggregated data.

E. *Volunteer training and partner engagement plan,* including how partners will be trained, how the PAC will be engaged, and how feedback from partners will be obtained.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Example Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Based on Peru Water and Sanitation Oct 2009*

F. *Plan for communication of M&E information;* strategies for communicating lessons learned, success stories, and progress toward project objectives and goals.

G. Step 5: Documentation and Project Close-out

A sound development process for a project plan will result in a strong project. Good documentation of the project plan and associated materials is important for communicating with programming and training staff (particularly new staff), Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS), invitees, trainees, Volunteers, and PC/W support staff.

G.1 The Project Plan

Strong documentation of your project plan helps to build an understanding on the part of host agencies, staff, and Volunteers on the project goals and objectives and the strategies for achieving those goals and objectives. A suggested outline for the project plan is given below. Ideally, the core text of the project plan covering each of these components is concise, such that it does not exceed 10 pages in length, can easily be translated and distributed to local partners, and can easily be updated as changes are made to the project plan.

Project Plan Outline
Executive Summary
Part 1: Project Background
1.1 Project development
1.2 Situation analysis
Part 2: Project Role
2.1 The Peace Corps' niche
2.2 Summary of what Volunteers will do
2.3 Project framework and indicators
Part 3: Implementation Plan
3.1 Principal partners
3.2 Strategy for site selection and assignment
3.3 Numbers and skills of Volunteers
Part 4: Overview of Training
Part 5: Overview of Monitoring and Evaluation
Task Analysis (either Part 6 or one of the Appendices)
Appendices
Required: Volunteers to recruit, primary collaborative
    relationships, sector learning objectives
Optional: History of project development

> Ctrl + click for: *Project Plan Checklist*

> Ctrl + click for: *Lists of Peace Corps Projects, from PSRs*

> Ctrl + click for: *Project Plan Sections Instructions*

More detailed guidance for each section of the project plan may be found in the linked *Project Plan Sections Instructions* and *Project Plan Completion Checklist*. Strong examples of complete project plans for each sector may be found by linking within the sector guidance. Note that some of these are not in the project plan format outlined above, yet they have been chosen as strong examples because of the overall strength of the plan.

Link to a sample project plan in the new, simplified project plan format recommended as of 2010 here:

Ctrl + click for: *Example Project Plan, Water Sanitation, Peru*

G.2 The Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD)

The VAD is included in invitation packets and is due to PC/W nine to 10 months prior to trainee arrival. It influences not only an applicant's decision to accept an assignment, but is likely to be the first significant document that shapes the expectations of prospective Volunteers about the project work.

Ctrl + click for: *Volunteer Delivery System Timeline*

Perhaps the most important point to keep in mind is that the VAD is the post's way of introducing itself to its next prospective Volunteers. As such, information needs to be presented in a way that is accurate and well balanced, and that leaves a prospective Volunteer wanting to be a part of the Peace Corps mission.

Ctrl + click for: *VAD and QTRS Submission Time Table*

Since most recruitment for your training class is completed by the time the VADs are received in VRS, they are not used by the Office of Volunteer Recruitment for recruiting for your assignments. They are, however, used by the Office of Placement to set realistic expectations for applicants.

Ctrl + click for: *Example VAD, Mongolia Environment and Community Development*

G.3 The Project Plan Review Process

It is always possible to send a draft concept paper, project framework, or M&E plan to PC/W for feedback as it is developed or for a full project plan review.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *About Project Plan Reviews*

What is a Project Plan Review?
A project plan review is a PC/W-based review of the documentation of a project plan. Project plan reviews
- Provide posts with specific targeted feedback on a particular project plan. See the *Core Guiding Questions for Project Plan Reviews* for the issues that reviewers consider when reviewing a project plan.
- Provide PC/W staff an opportunity to learn more about the project, and how to best support it.
- Are a formal process established to confirm that Peace Corps project plans meet minimum expectations, as established in the *Project Plan Completion Checklist.*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Guiding Questions for Project Plan Reviews*

Ctrl + click for: *Project Plan Completion Checklist*

The project plan review process is further described in *About Project Plan Reviews* (link above right).

When are Project Plans Reviewed?
Usually, project plans are reviewed

- When the project has been significantly revised.

- When the project is new (preliminary project plan).

- When post, region, or OPATS requests a project plan review.

Who participates in a Project Plan Review?
An OPATS sector specialist will lead the project plan review process with input from the training development team, country desk officers, Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (i.e., placement officers), regional programming and training advisor(s), a peer reviewer, and others as appropriate. Reviewers give their comments to the sector specialist using the *Project Plan Feedback Template.* The sector specialist evaluates and compiles the feedback and communicates with the post. In the past, the sector specialist would rank the quality of project plans according to a scale of "green" (high quality), "orange" (incomplete), or "red" (poor quality). However, this ranking system was phased out beginning in March of 2010 to better reflect the fact that project plans are continually evolving. The specialist provides input for post consideration for further strengthening the project plan and confirms whether the project meets minimum expectations or not.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Project Plan Feedback Template*

G.4 Maintaining a Living Project Plan

The project plan should be a "living document," which means:

1. **It is kept up-to-date**, is modified as conditions change or the project matures.

2. **It is regularly used**. Volunteers and community partners should be able to explain project goals and objectives.

> Ctrl + click for: *Project Design/Revision Tracking Sheet*

For a new plan, expect to make changes at least to the task analysis and assessment tools after the first year of implementation.

Always send PC/W an updated version of the project plan when it is revised, and keep an electronic and hard copy record of the original plan and each revision. Also, the PSR should highlight (or summarize in an annex) any changes made in the year reported to the project framework. *Do not forget to update the QTRS, VAD, and VRT/VRF when you update the project plan.* You may use the *Project Design/Revision Tracking Sheet* to keep track of the dates of the last update of the project framework/plan and related documents.

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Users of the Project Plan: blank*

> Ctrl + click to link to: *Users of the Project Plan: completed example*

Consider how you will communicate and use your project plan. Review or use of the worksheet *Users of the Project Plan* as a discussion piece may help. Although PC/W requires a version of the project plan in English, you can translate all or part of the document into a local language to facilitate communication with partners and other stakeholders. The simpler and more succinct your plan is, the more easily it can be translated, used, and adapted.

Project History Documentation

A good management practice of many APCD/PMs is to keep a *project history* notebook that contains

- The concept paper.
- All versions of the project plan.
- All memoranda of understanding (MOUs)at the national and regional levels.
- All versions of the QTRS.
- All training reports.
- All PSRs.
- The current Volunteer Assignment Description.
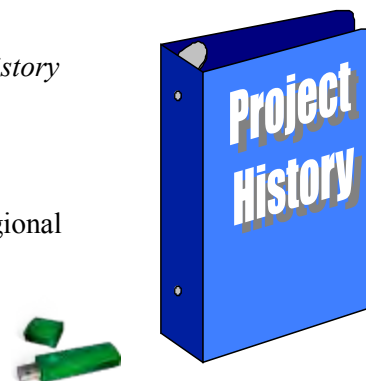
These documents are kept in chronological order so a living history of the project plan and related documents is maintained and accessible to anyone reading the notebook. Posts also keep organized electronic files of all of the above files. These notebooks and electronic files are particularly valuable for new staff and for reference during project reviews and evaluations.

Site History Documentation

These documents complement *site history documentation*, usually filed by site, where records of information that may affect site selection are kept. See *Management and Implementation,* Section E.2: Identify Potential Sites for more information on site history documentation.

G.5 Closing a Project

Peace Corps projects are not intended to continue perpetually, nor should they be closed arbitrarily. They are intended to be dynamic, proactive responses to host country needs which maximize Peace Corps' resources and impact in country. This section outlines considerations and procedures for closing a project. In all cases, posts should review and comply with all aspects of *MS 341: Non-emergency Post Closing*, that apply (see sections on responsibilities, personnel, and records), and should consult both with the region and the embassy prior to making final decisions, as outlined on the next page and in the Peace Corps-State Department relations cable, linked on the right.

> Ctrl + click to link to intranet site for: *MS 341: Non-emergency Post Closing*

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Peace Corps-State Department Relations Cable*

Why Close a Project

Peace Corps staff may recommend project closure if any or several of the following criteria are met:

- **The host country no longer needs Peace Corps support in this area,** because one or more of the following apply:
  - The host country, with the support of the Peace Corps and others, has achieved its goals related to the project.
  - Skills and capacity to carry out the goals of the project have successfully been established within host country organizations.

- **Priorities of the host country and/or the Peace Corps have changed.** The project focus is no longer a high priority for the host country or region, or the strategic priorities of the Peace Corps have changed.

- **Reduced Volunteer numbers or projects in-country.** The Peace Corps, for strategic, safety and/or budgetary reasons, is either reducing the total number of projects in a country, or the total number of Volunteers in a country.

- **The project is not working and cannot be fixed**. If a project is clearly not meeting its goals and objectives, and not adding value to a sector (See Section F.6.2 Project Reviews, sub-heading "Ask an Expert: Does This Project Require a Significant Revision?"), post should carefully consider the options of :

  o Re-designing the existing project. This option may be appropriate if leadership staff at post and the Project Advisory Committee believe that the project could be a priority, effective project if re-designed. This option has been carried out successfully in many cases.

  o Closing the project. It may be the best option to re-direct resources toward higher priorities, where Volunteers can have a greater impact.

In most cases where a project is not working, a project review is recommended to add value to the process.

- **Agency resources could be best used in supporting or establishing other project areas.** If data and post analysis, along with work partners' opinions, indicate that Peace Corps can maximize impact and our contributions to local beneficiaries by focusing resources on other, higher performing project areas, the project may need to be closed.

- **New safety issues have arisen** in the areas where the project is most effectively focused.

- **Serious issues with key partner support of the project** have arisen that do not show the potential for improvement.

- **Viable sites for Volunteer placement are challenging to identify** and/or the demand for Volunteers in the project has decreased.

- **The level of technical expertise required is increasingly beyond what Volunteers can provide**. The Peace Corps is not able to recruit and/or train Volunteers consistently to the level of technical expertise work partners desire, in numbers that justify the existence of the project.

Ideally, project closure decisions and decisions to move projects in significantly new directions are made well in advance of the implementation of changes, so that invitees have appropriate expectations, recently arrived trainees do not arrive in-country to find that their project does not exist or their project has been significantly changed, and all Volunteers in-country may complete the assignment for which they have been trained.

The Decision to Close a Project
The decision to close a project is made at post, as an integral part of the post's strategic planning processes. Normally, these decisions are made well in advance of actual project closure and are part of a post's Integrated Planning and Budgeting System (IPBS) process. However, under exceptional circumstances, such as safety or financial issues, projects may also be closed more rapidly. The country director makes the final decision to close a project, based on a recommendation from the director of programming and training, with concurrence from the region.

Procedures for Closing Projects
While the following outlines the procedures for closing a project, note that some of the items may also apply to a project that is being significantly revised. Also note that these procedures are normally included in a post's Integrated Planning and Budgeting System (IPBS) processes. For example, a region may require a project closure action plan as an annex to an IPBS strategic plan.

- The DPT takes the lead in post's analysis of alternatives to optimize use of Peace Corps resources and maximize impact in the host country, with input from the CD, APCD/project manager, the Project Advisory Committee, an OPATS specialist, the CHIPT, Volunteers, and partners.
- The DPT summarizes the analysis and makes a project closure recommendation to the country director.
- The CD sends the region a project closure recommendation memorandum that includes the rationale for the decision, participants in the decision, anticipated staffing and budgetary impacts, and an anticipated timeline. See example content memo linked on the right.

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Sample content for project closure decision memo*

- The CD also consults with the embassy prior to finalizing the decision, as required by the Peace Corps-State Department relations cable, linked on the right.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Peace Corps-State Department Relations Cable*

- Region concurs with project closure recommendation, or sends instructions otherwise (e.g., requesting that a project review be conducted prior to a final recommendation).
- With programming staff, develop a project closure action plan, including the following elements: roles and responsibilities, communications, programming, records, administrative and personnel, and timeline. Link to a checklist of project closure action plan elements on the right. Note that unless post faces security or financial restrictions that would not allow for an evaluation to be conducted, an evaluation of the project should be conducted, ideally by an independent host country consultant or organization, to maximize its objectivity. See **Section F.6 Scheduled Project Reviews and Evaluations.**

> Ctrl + click to link to:
> *Checklist of project closure action plan elements*

- Region reviews and provides input to the project closure action plan.
- Implement the project closure action plan.

Documentation of Project at Closure

When projects are closed, DPTs and APCD/PMs should create a detailed closure report and organize electronic files. These documents are important for:

> Ctrl + click to link to intranet site for: *MS 341: Non-emergency Post Closing, see Program Records*

- Partner organizations to understand and build upon the work done by the Peace Corps in the country.
- Programming staff that may, in the future, re-initiate activities that build upon project successes.
- The Peace Corps for impact evaluations.
- Programming staff in other countries to incorporate any lessons learned related to future project plans and activities.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Project Closure Report Outline*

For contents of the *Project Closure Report*, see MS 341: Section 6.1 and the *outline*, both linked on the right. You may also want to refer to the *Baltic Project Closeout Report*.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Baltic Project Closeout Report*

PEACE CORPS

Programming and Training Guidance

Version: October 2011

Introduction and Overview

Project Design and Evaluation

■ **Training Design and Evaluation**

Management and Implementation

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance:
Part 3: Training Design and Evaluation

Table of Contents

A. Introduction

Training and supporting a successful group of Volunteers can be a tremendously rewarding experience. Post programming and training staff, working as a team with all post staff, support trainees and Volunteers in their roles as development facilitators and service learners, contributing to improved lives of men and women in their country of service.

Volunteers are most successful when project plans, training designs, and monitoring and evaluation plans are well developed. *Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance* is intended to assist field programming and training staff to optimally fulfill their roles.

Introduction and Overview
Project Design and Evaluation
Training Design and Evaluation
Management and Implementation

The *Peace Corps P&T Guidance* consists of the following four documents, which provide guidelines for programming and training:

- **Part 1:** *Introduction and Overview:* introduction to Peace Corps programming and training principles, and overview of Peace Corps programming and training systems (intended for all Peace Corps staff).

- **Part 2:** *Project Design and Evaluation:* guidelines, strategies, and techniques for revising existing or developing new Peace Corps projects, including information analysis and the development of the project plan and the monitoring and evaluation plan (primarily for programming staff).

- **Part 3:** *Training Design and Evaluation (this guide):* guidelines for analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of Volunteer training, so Volunteers gain required knowledge, skills, and attitudes for service (for all staff involved in training).

- **Part 4:** *Management and Implementation:* guidelines on programming and training planning, budgeting, staff development, teamwork, communication, site identification and preparation, supporting trainees and Volunteers, and managing the 27-month training continuum (for all programming and training staff).

Ctrl + click for: *P&T List of Abbreviations and Acronyms*

The guidance may be read in hard copy or in electronic copy. This guide includes a number of hyperlinks to reference documents and examples in the same folder as this guidance or on the Peace Corps Intranet.

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Document Bank Index (Excel)*

The guide you are viewing, and the accompanying reference documents, contain promising practices from Peace Corps posts all over the world. It reflects current state-of-the-art thinking in the professional training and development field.

Ctrl + click for: *How to Search in the Document Bank Index (Excel)*

For purposes of consistency and clarity, terms are defined in a uniform way. Using uniform definitions allows the staff at various posts and PC/Washington to be confident that we are all talking about the same things. Terms will be introduced in each chapter. For reference of the terms used, see the glossary (linked above right).

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Glossary*

A.1 Overview of the Training, Design, and Evaluation (TDE) System

Training, design, and evaluation (TDE) is a participatory system for analyzing, designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating training. TDE is the Peace Corps' version of instructional systems design (ISD). ISD is the foundation for professional and vocational training worldwide. The TDE system adapts the ISD model to meet the Peace Corps' needs by emphasizing collaboration with stakeholders and following TDE's values and principles. TDE ensures that trainees and Volunteers have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are essential for success in their development work and for integration into their communities.

We use TDE to design new training programs and to revise existing ones. It is an ongoing process to inform and design not just pre-service training (PST), but all trainee and Volunteer learning over their 27 months in-country. In the agency's effort to "Focus In/Train Up," specific training packages are being developed based on needs identified in the TDE process at Peace Corps posts. These training packages are meant to complement each post's TDE process, providing standards for core and sector training.

TDE consists of eight steps, as summarized in Section A.2.

By using the TDE process, posts can identify and train for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required of Volunteers to do their jobs effectively. These requirements are stated in the standards for swearing in, as reflected in these excerpts from *Peace Corps Manual,* Section 201: Eligibility and Standards for Peace Corps Service (link to the right for the entire manual section), Subsections 305.4 d and e:

> Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for full text of: *MS 201: Eligibility and Standards for Peace Corps Volunteer Service*

> *"(d) Skills:[…] a trainee must demonstrate competence in the following areas:*
>
> *1. Language. The ability to communicate in the language of the country of service with the fluency required to meet the needs of the overseas assignment.*
>
> *2. Technical competence. Proficiency in the technical skills needed to carry out the assignment.*
>
> *3. Knowledge. Adequate knowledge of the culture and history of the country of assignment to ensure a successful adjustment to, and acceptance by, the host country society. The trainee must also have an awareness of the history and government of the United States which qualifies the individual to represent the United States abroad.*
>
> *(e) Failure to Meet Standards: Failure to meet any of the selection standards by the completion of training may be grounds for deselection and disqualification from Peace Corps service."*

The TDE process guides posts in developing systems to ensure that "learning results will be measured as each trainee or Volunteer demonstrates the achievement of learning objectives … ."

A.2 Steps in the TDE Process
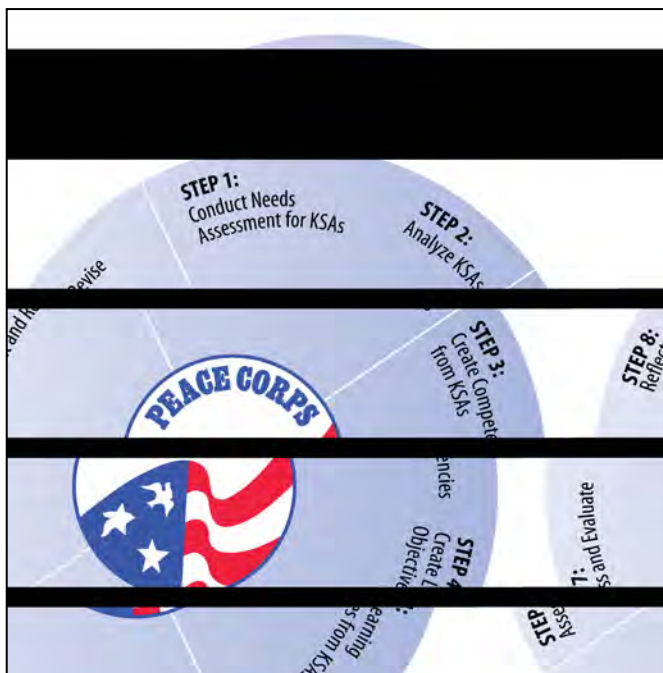
Ctrl + click to link to document:
TDE steps poster

Click here for a more detailed graphic of the TDE process: a helpful visual aid describing the eight steps of TDE.

Step 1: Conduct needs assessment for Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs)

This step answers the question, "What KSAs do Volunteers need to be successful in their projects and in their communities?"

KSAs are

- Knowledge (K): concepts, facts, terms
- Skills (S): actions or a sequence of actions
- Attitudes (A): interests, values, feelings, choices

Posts derive or elicit KSAs

- From the tasks in their project plans that are required to accomplish the project goals and objectives. For each task, stakeholders together identify the KSAs needed.
- From at least two other sources—such as the Volunteers themselves, partners/counterparts, host families, and RPCVs. (For example, what KSAs do Volunteers say they need to be effective at post? What KSAs do partners/counterparts say Volunteers need to be effective at post?)

These complementary sources ensure that we have identified the KSAs needed for Volunteers to do effective grassroots development.

Step 2: Analyze KSAs that Volunteers need to be successful

Posts analyze the KSAs from the needs assessment to make sure they are observable and specific. If they are topics (or concepts), staff members think about what specific knowledge, skill, or attitude a Volunteer needs related to that topic. For example, the KSAs needed by a Volunteer to cope with culture shock could include these actions: describe the adaptation process, identify your own coping skills, use appropriate coping skills in difficult situations, etc.

Step 3: Create competencies from KSAs

The Peace Corps defines a competency as *a cluster of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that enable a person to perform interrelated tasks in service of a major job function.* Competencies help the learner and the trainer know how the training content fits together and how the learner will apply the learning.

Staff facilitates a process in which stakeholders form competencies by arranging the KSAs from Steps One and Two. These competencies are for all 27 months of learning and are integrated across training components and topics.

> A *training component* refers to a specific content area of training, falling under the responsibility of specific post staff members. The training components are language, cross-cultural, technical, safety, medical, and administrative.

The Peace Corps classifies competencies into two categories:

- *Core competencies* are those that apply to all Volunteers and trainees regardless of sector or project. Some examples of core competencies: explore ways to include gender sensitivity in math and English lessons, empower and mobilize community for participatory development, balance cultural integration with personal well-being, facilitate service learning projects, and foster productive multilevel partnerships and networks.

- *Sector competencies* are those that apply only to Volunteers in a specific project. Some examples of sector competencies: strengthen business planning and administration skills, support the development of programs for youth with special needs, and engage communities in health communication and promotion.

Step 4: Create learning objectives from KSAs

Learning objectives are written using the KSAs (and often combining several KSAs into one learning objective). Learning objectives describe what trainees will be able to do as a result of training.

> Learning objectives have four required parts:
> 1. **PERFORMER:** The subject who will be learning the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.
> 2. **PERFORMANCE (BEHAVIOR):** The measurable or observable knowledge, skill, or attitude to be learned.
> 3. **CONDITION:** The condition under which the learned knowledge, skill, or attitude is observed.
> 4. **STANDARD:** The standard of performance, or how well the trainee demonstrates the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.

Example: In this example, the parts of the learning objective are identified.

> Using local youth-camp guides and the Peace Corps manual *Working With Youth*, trainees in small groups will write and deliver one session for a youth eco-camp using 4-MAT lesson planning.

The accomplishment of the learning objective indicates the learner's progress toward reaching the competency. A well-written learning objective will specify the expected behavior and also inform the learning assessment method via the standard.

Step 5: Plan training

Staff determines how to integrate learning objectives and sequence them to develop a calendar of training events (COTE) for PST and throughout the Volunteers' service. Staff makes decisions about the training

design and model, and considers which learning objectives will be met during PST and which will be met through self-study, tutoring, in-service training (IST) or other training events. Posts choose appropriate methods to achieve learning objectives, using the experiential learning cycle and the principles of adult learning to make learning realistic and meaningful. Posts draw upon a vast array of Peace Corps resources to support their lesson planning. For example, posts will use the training packages being developed in the agency's Focus In/Train Up process in addition to their own resources. They also develop ongoing learning strategies for Volunteers to use throughout their service. Note that training budgets, staffing, and logistics are not covered in this guide but in *P&T Guidance Part 4: Management and Implementation*.

Step 6: Implement training

The implementation of training is the point where all the planning comes to fruition. Staff members use effective facilitation skills and debriefing of learning activities to encourage learners to reflect upon and apply new knowledge and skills. Learning is assessed as training is implemented, and timely and constructive feedback is provided to trainees and Volunteers.

Step 7: Assess and evaluate

The Peace Corps uses the following processes to assess learning and evaluate training:

> **Learning Assessment:** Intermittent checks to monitor learner progress toward accomplishment of learning objectives.
>
> **Training Evaluation:** A process to determine whether the training design and delivery were effective in enabling learners to acquire necessary KSAs.

Learning is measured using the standards and assessment methods indicated in the learning objectives. Donald Kirkpatrick identifies four levels of evaluation, shown in the table below. In his framework, each level builds on information from the previous level. For example, trainee and Volunteer learning objectives are assessed at Kirkpatrick Level Two, "Did the participants learn the KSAs?" Whether Volunteers use the KSAs during service is measured at Level Three. Finally, Level Four measures if the KSAs Volunteers learned and used make a difference in the behaviors or actions of community partners at service sites.

After-action reviews (meetings to review training events after the events are complete) are key activities that posts undertake as part of their training evaluation process. At these reviews, staff members reflect primarily on factors that positively or negatively affected the extent to which trainees or Volunteers acquired the learning objectives defined in the training design.

LEVEL 1: REACTION	Did participants like the training?
LEVEL 2: LEARNING	Did participants learn the KSAs?
LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOR	Do participants use the skills?
LEVEL 4: RESULTS	Do participants make a difference because of what they learned?

Step 8: Reflect and revise

Input from stakeholders and data from evaluations are used to develop, update, and revise training. Training is revised based first and foremost on data about performance, not opinions. This may involve

revising or validating competencies, rewriting learning objectives, and using new methods of instruction. Posts revisit only those steps of TDE that need strengthening based on all of the above.

A.3 Guiding Principles of TDE

The following points summarize key guiding principles of TDE:

- *Training content is best when it is localized.*
  Each post knows best what knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) its trainees and Volunteers need in order to be successful. Therefore, rather than establishing a standard content of training across posts, the TDE process aims to standardize a *system* for designing training.

- *Collaboration is essential to training design and evaluation.*
  Active input from, and collaboration with, stakeholders ensures that
  - The right content is included in training.
  - All trainers and learners know why the content is important and how it fits together.
  - The criteria for success are clear.
  - The proper methods are used for training to meet each learning objective.
  - Assessments and evaluations are conducted in a fair and participatory manner.

- *TDE is an iterative process.*
  Competencies, learning objectives, session plans, and assessment techniques evolve over time. The TDE process aims to assist staff members as they design quality instruction for Volunteers and continually improve training over time, as described in Step 8: Reflect and Revise.

- *Training content is sequenced along a 27-month continuum.*
  Formal and informal training sessions and events build on one another to ensure that Volunteers develop the KSAs needed to accomplish the competencies, and to ensure that these KSAs are learned at the right time throughout the Volunteer's 27 months of learning.

A.4 Benefits of the TDE System

Benefits for Volunteers
- Clarify expectations: Competencies and measurable learning objectives help clarify what is expected of Volunteers in terms of both learning and performance.
- Explain rationale: Competencies explain *why* Volunteers need to learn certain KSAs as they relate specifically to their project tasks, integration into their communities, and their personal well-being and safety.
- Measure progress: Competencies and measurable learning objectives let Volunteers know how well they are learning and performing, and how to take responsibility for their learning.

Benefits for programmers and trainers
- Integrate programming and training: The TDE process strengthens technical training by using project plans and tasks as the cornerstone for developing core and sector competencies and strong learning objectives.
- Sequence training: Trainers and programmers together create a rationale for making decisions about *which* training content to cover *when* along the training continuum. This increases coordination and reduces redundancy.
- Share knowledge: Learning objectives, session plans, and evaluation tools are more easily shared and adapted from one post to another (or from one staff member to another, when there is staff turnover).
- Demonstrate results: Post staff members are able to better demonstrate results achieved with money spent on PST, IST, and other learning methods and events.

Benefits for the agency

- Account for training quality: The TDE process provides the agency with concrete data about the quality of Volunteer training, reflecting industry and government (such as Office of Personnel Management, Government Accountability Office) standards for training.
- Prioritize use of resources: TDE also allows the Peace Corps to prioritize and maximize use of training funds based on the results achieved through PST, IST, and other learning methods and events.
- Aggregate results worldwide: With TDE, posts use a common design and evaluation methodology that allows the Peace Corps to aggregate results of training from all posts.

A.5 Tools and Resources

Summary Checklist for TDE Steps

The summary checklist for TDE steps is a management tool to use at your post both to work through the TDE process for the first time and to review steps to strengthen as your post continually improves training systems.

> Ctrl + click to link to linked, printable version of: *Summary Checklist for TDE Steps*

Training design and evaluation is an ongoing, iterative process; most posts, including start-up posts, have some form of pre-existing content already identified. Hence, posts are always involved in one step of TDE at any given time during the year. For example, five months prior to a pre-service training (PST), staff may be finalizing or updating one or more project plans (Step One) and scheduling time for staff to analyze KSAs (Step Two); additionally, post may be finalizing session plans and planning an in-service training (IST) (Step Five) while evaluating an earlier close of service (COS) conference from another group (Step Seven). Staff members can determine where they are in the TDE process by asking the following questions of one another:

STEP 1: Conduct needs assessment for Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs) — start with task analysis from project plan(s)

- Does the task analysis from the project plan(s) (including agency initiatives) form the foundation of our needs assessment?
- Did we include at least two other sources and methods to determine KSAs?

STEP 2: Analyze KSAs that PCVs need to be successful

- Are the KSAs clearly actionable, not expressed as topics or areas of study?
- Are the KSAs broken down into their smallest, teachable unit?

STEP 3: Cluster KSAs into core and sector competencies

- Are the core and sector competencies created through a collaborative process with representative stakeholders?
- Are the core competencies related to the major functions that all Volunteers perform?
- Are the sector competencies related to only one sector or project?
- Are the competencies something a PCV does (not topic or component)?
- Does the competency answer, "Why do PCVs need to be able to do this?" or "The PCV needs that K, S, or A in order to…what?"

STEP 4: Analyze KSAs under all competencies and write learning objectives

- Did we identify KSAs that "lead up to" other KSAs and sequence and write learning objectives for these?
- Do all of our learning objectives that relate to core and sector competencies contain all four required elements: 1) performer, 2) performance/learned capability, 3) standard, 4) condition?

- Are the learning objectives focused on the most important things students need to know and be able to do?
- Did we communicate our competencies and learning objectives as Peace Corps expectations?

STEP 5: Develop and plan training

- Did we develop our training budget for all training events using competencies and learning objectives (derived our needs assessment) to justify the number of instructional days needed throughout the 27 months of learning?
- Did we develop and propose a transparent training budget, allocating equitable learning opportunities across various sectors/inputs throughout the 27 months?
- Did we determine post's calendar of training events (COTE) by assigning which learning objectives need to be covered in what order, rather than by training component time slots?
- Did we select our training model by determining where, when, and under what circumstances each of the learning objectives is best achieved, such that it furthers adult, experiential learning?
- Did we consider factors such as staffing needs and schedules?
- Did we question "how we have always done it" and "what we really want to achieve"?
- Did we develop session plans in accordance with 4MAT for all training events throughout the 27-month continuum?
- In the session plan(s), did we choose instructional method(s) that match the learning objective(s)?
- In the session plan(s), did we design learning activities in ways that are consistent with experiential learning and adult learning principles?
- In the session plan(s), did we maximize the integration of training topics and components? For instance, did we cover several learning objectives in one training session and/or did we cover objectives from various components in the same session?
- Did we develop a plan, based on competencies and learning objectives, to assist Volunteers with their ongoing learning?
- In the session plan, did we choose assessment item(s) best suited to achieve the learning objective(s)?

STEP 6: Implement training

- Did we use the competencies, learning objectives, session plans, and assessment tools that we created or did we modify them in some way?
- Did we conduct learning activities and do a follow-up debriefing in ways that are consistent with the experiential learning cycle and with the principles of adult learning?
- Did we involve learners in assessing, tracking, and setting goals for their growth and learning based on the competencies and learning objectives as a motivator and teaching tool?
- Did we allow enough time for learners to apply, reflect, and communicate about what they are learning?
- Did we record assessment information accurately, keep it confidential, and appropriately combine and summarize it for reporting?

STEP 7: Assess and evaluate

- Did we have a comprehensive plan over time for assessing the achievement of competencies and learning objectives?
- Did we assess learner achievement accurately on all occasions by knowing how to select and develop assessments that fit each unique context, involving trainees/Volunteers in self-assessment when appropriate?
- Did we manage and communicate assessment results, involving learners when appropriate, in ways that promote learning?
- Did we communicate assessment results to learners?

- Did we evaluate the learners at (Kirkpatrick) Level Two for the learning objectives that are indicators of the KSAs in core and sector competencies?
- Did we evaluate the outcome and impact of Volunteer learning at Kirkpatrick's Levels Three or Four?
- Did we effectively communicate evaluation results to a variety of audiences and stakeholders?

STEP 8: Reflect and revise
- Did we involve stakeholders when reflecting on the learning events and processes?
- Did we build upon our strengths and revise our training using various steps in the TDE process?
- Are we using the data from assessment and evaluations to determine
    - Which KSAs are most important?
    - How learning objectives are written?
    - What learning methods are most effective?
    - How we are measuring, tracking, communicating, and reporting the achievement of those learning objectives?

Action Planning

The following attachments are training, design, and evaluation (TDE) action plan forms that posts have found useful as a tracking tool. You may modify any of these for your use. Their purpose is to provide a structured framework to help stakeholders monitor progress toward identified implementation objectives for the post training design and evaluation process.

TDE_ActionPlan_.doc	TDE_SummaryActionPlan_.doc
TDE_BriefActionPlan_.doc	TrainingManagerActionPlan Guatemala 08.doc

ICE Resources for Trainers

Highly varied ICE resources are available to trainers and are referenced and linked in this guide. Most relate to training on specific topics. The following are links to the ICE resources most related to the entire TDE process:

Nonformal Education (NFE) Manual (ICE No. M0042)

Roles of the Volunteer in Development: Toolkits for Building Capacity (ICE No. T0005)

Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual (ICE No. M0053)

Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning Manual (ICE No. M0064)

Gender and Development Training and Girls Education Manual, Booklet 3: Basic Knowledge About WID, GAD, and PACA Manual (ICE No. M0054)

Also referenced in this guide but available in hard copy in your IRC only:

Preparing Instructional Objectives, Robert F. Mager, 1997

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Online resources for TDE*

Other Resources

Find links to website resources from the professional education community on instructional design in the link at right.

A training session to give new staff members an orientation to the TDE process is also available in this link, at right.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *TDE Overview Session Plan*

B. Step 1: Conduct Needs Assessment for KSAs

Both effective programming and quality training design begin with an accurate and collaborative analysis of what you want to accomplish. To design good training, identify what Volunteers currently do well and what Volunteers need to be able to do. In other words, identify the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that Volunteers need to be successful.

B.1 What are KSAs?

An expert panel of educators and psychologists, led by Benjamin Bloom, identified three domains of educational activities.

> *If this is not the first time your post is doing this …* If your post has already developed a set of KSAs, follow the portions of this step that apply to your situation. See Step 8: Reflect and Revise for additional discussion.

K stands for knowledge; it has to do with your head and with thinking.
S stands for skills; it has to do with your hands and with something you do.
A stands for attitudes; it has to do with your heart and with feelings.

- **Knowledge**: the *Cognitive Domain*
    - concepts, rules, procedures, terms, and vocabulary (e.g., greeting in the local language, developing a lesson plan)
    - facts; or meaningful connected prose (e.g., names of month, metric measures)
- **Skills: the** *Psychomotor Domain*
    - an action*, physical movements, coordination of manual processes* (e.g., making a presentation to a civic group)
- **Attitudes: the** *Affective Domain*
    - interests, values, feelings, choices, acceptance, adjustments, *appreciation, and beliefs* (e.g., being willing to try new foods)

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Bloom's Taxonomy: One Page*

For more details on KSAs, see the chart of Bloom's Taxonomy linked at right.

B.2 How to conduct a needs assessment for KSAs

"Step 1: Conduct a needs assessment for KSAs" consists of deriving KSAs from at least three sources, using at least three methods. This step involves
   a) Identifying which sources of information you will use (the primary source will be the task analysis of each project plan)
   b) Ensuring the quality of the task analyses
   c) Determining which methods you will use
   d) Identifying KSAs using the sources/methods

This step is important because it…
- Defines and creates a common vision of the *performance* needed by Volunteers to be effective throughout their continuum of learning.
- Gathers valid and reliable data.
- Helps stakeholders feel a sense of ownership.
- Ensures that the right content is trained. Otherwise, you could have competencies and learning objectives that are formatted perfectly but do not relate to the most important content.

Who should be involved?
Programming and training staff, safety and security coordinator, Peace Corps medical officers, the director of management and operations, partners/counterparts or supervisors, associate Peace Corps directors, host families, and high-performing Volunteers. You may want to include representatives from the Volunteer

Advisory Council (VAC), WID/GAD Committee, and/or the Project Advisory Committees (PACs). You may also consider forming the TDE working group in preparation for an upcoming training class.

>*Tip – Use an appreciative inquiry approach*
>Needs assessment can focus on what works, as well as what needs improvement. Designing learning experiences that focus on fostering excellence, rather than on fixing problems, can contribute profoundly to creating a positive and challenging learning environment. This is why, throughout this step, we emphasize the use of appreciative approaches to performance needs assessments.

>*Tip – Outside issues that affect attitudes and performance*
>Sometimes during the process of identifying KSAs, issues affecting attitudes and performance arise that cannot be addressed by training. These issues might include, for example, mixed messages, unclear expectations, unrealistic workloads, or lack of the proper tools or support to implement new knowledge or skills. Make a note of these issues and be sure to either work as a team to address them or communicate them to the person who is responsible for addressing them, as appropriate. Ideally, these issues should be addressed and managed before training is developed.

B.2.1 Sources

Always start the performance needs assessment process by identifying the KSAs needed to accomplish the tasks in your project plan(s). KSAs needed by Volunteers in several projects or KSAs unique to one project will be revealed when you examine all project plans simultaneously, with the APCDs, Volunteers, and the training manager present.

KSAs are drawn from at least two sources, in addition to the project plan. Typically, these sources are the Volunteers, local partners, and community members.

Examples of sources:
- Project plan (task analysis section)
- Work partners
- Host families
- Local experts
- Agency guidance
- Learning assessment data from previous trainings
- Peace Corps trainees
- Peace Corps Volunteers
- Peace Corps Volunteer leaders (PCVLs)
- PC staff and trainers

Using at least three different sources to identify needed KSAs ensures that the design of the instructional system is collaborative and reflects the goals and needs of the various stakeholders. It also ensures that the KSAs reflect all the various components of training (language, cross-cultural, safety, medical, technical, diversity, and so on).

>*Tip*
>When getting input from stakeholders, focus the data collection on which KSAs contribute most to a Volunteer's effectiveness throughout the continuum of learning.

B.2.2 Ensuring the Quality of the Task Analyses

Each project has a plan with a framework that details the project's purpose, goals, and objectives. Activities usually require numerous tasks, detailed in the task analysis. The task analysis is a major link between programming and training and is necessary for determining Volunteer learning needs and designing training.

Ctrl + click to link to:
Peru Water and Sanitation Project Plan Task Analysis

The task analysis is a breakdown of discrete activities that a Volunteer must conduct with his or her work partners to accomplish project objectives. It is the result of a detailed examination of the observable tasks associated with the execution or completion of the project goals and objectives, with input from Volunteer experience, when available. The task analysis includes resources and tools needed to accomplish the activities. See the example task analyses linked at right.

Ctrl + click to link to:
Tonga Education Task Analysis, Word

Ctrl + click to link to:
Peru Youth Development Project Plan Task Analysis

Read more about project plans and task analyses in the *Project Design and Evaluation Guide, Section E.4.*

Characteristics of a Quality Task Analysis

- **Breaks the project objectives down into discrete, sequential activities reflecting activities that take place over the life of the project**
  - All major tasks required to accomplish each project objective are included, understanding that not all Volunteers necessarily undertake all project objectives (some Volunteers may undertake some project objectives while other Volunteers do other project objectives).
  - Includes tasks that focus on participatory assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation.
  - Covers the full two years of each Volunteer's service.
  - Where appropriate, indicates the point in service by which certain tasks must be accomplished or quantifies accomplishments.

- **Reflects activities that are performed together by the Volunteer with work partners to contribute to host-country sector objectives**
  - Is collaborative and involves work partners in tasks.
  - Includes multiple levels of stakeholders in the community.
  - Is succinct enough to serve as a working tool for Volunteers, particularly for their first four months of service
  - Guides Volunteer and partner expectations, sets boundaries, and allows for accountability of both Volunteers and work partners.

- **Is specific enough to inform training by determining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a Volunteer to succeed**
  - o Each task specifies resource materials, references, methods, or approaches the Volunteer needs to accomplish the task and use on the job.
  - o Details and emphasizes knowledge and skills; highlights relevant attitudes, where appropriate.

- **Is updated as the project or training changes**
  - o Is an iterative process.
  - o Is informed by training and the competency development process.
  - o Is updated to include appropriate references to new M&E tools.
  - o Is updated to reflect tasks elicited from the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and other stakeholders.

The task analysis from the project plan is always the primary source for defining KSAs for effective Volunteers. A well-written task analysis is the foundation of competency development and training design.

If the task analysis is incomplete or not detailed enough, post will need to undertake an activity to further develop the task analysis prior to reviewing it for KSAs.

Activity to Improve the Quality of a Task Analysis
This activity should be conducted with programming staff and one training staff member participating. Volunteers, work partners/counterparts, and other staff members can add value to the process and will gain a greater understanding of Volunteer work, if available. It can be conducted at a small meeting or as part of a larger staff workshop.

- Photocopy the task analysis section from the project plan or plans to review.
- Photocopy the "characteristics of a quality task analysis."
- Involve all programming and training staff members; break them into pairs or triads so each program staff person is working with a training staff person.
- Together, programming and training staff review the "characteristics of a quality task analysis" and identify missing tasks or those that need to be made more explicit. The tasks should be clear enough for others to follow—people who may be viewing this project plan or task analysis for the first time.
- Participants make modifications to tasks so the task analysis better meets the "characteristics of a quality task analysis."

Here is an example of the result of an exercise to add specificity to a task, clarifying required KSAs:

Example task that lacks specificity	*Example task rewritten for greater specificity*
Conduct a participatory assessment of community hygiene attitudes and practices.	Volunteers with partners use the case study in the *Project Community Diagnostic Survey Manual* (Page 12) as a guide to interview 20–30 families in the local language on existing hygiene attitudes and practices related to hand-washing, household water storage, household water treatment, and feces disposal.

B.2.3 Methods

There are many methods to find out what KSAs are needed by effective Volunteers. Some of these methods:

- Deriving KSAs from the task analysis of project plans
- Review of other documentation (e.g., agency guidance, ICE publications)
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Direct observations
- Questionnaires, surveys, checklists
- Community meetings

Since each method of data collection has its own advantages and disadvantages, it is also advisable to use several different methods when identifying KSAs. Along with using multiple sources, using at least three different methods also ensures the reliability and validity of the data collected. For assistance with choosing complementary methods of data collection, please consult the chart in Section B.2.4: Choosing Data Collection Methods.

When you are finished with the step involving needs assessment for KSAs, you should have 300–400 KSAs. If you have fewer, the process of clustering will be difficult, because the connections among the KSAs will not be evident. If you have many KSAs that are general, see Step Two for guidance on how to make them more specific. This will also result in more KSAs of the right type.

Combining Sources and Methods

This section describes typical source (from where) / methods (how) used to establish the KSAs needed for successful Volunteer service.

> Ctrl + click to link to graphic representation of:
> ***Interrelationships Between the Project Plan, M&E, Training, and Volunteer Work***

Source/Method 1: Deriving KSAs from the task analysis

As mentioned in Section B.2.2, the task analysis is a major link between programming and training and is necessary for determining Volunteer learning needs and designing training. When deriving KSAs from the task analysis, try to think of all the things the Volunteer must be able to do to complete a task. Use actions that are observable (identify, choose, locate) and avoid terms that are nonspecific or general (appreciate, know, be familiar with…).

The process of reviewing the task analysis, eliciting KSAs, and writing learning objectives should include input from programming staff, all training staff, Volunteers, the SSC, and the PCMO. If some staff members are left out of this process, they may not see the connection between the project plan and the training competencies and learning objectives. In addition, some important KSAs may be overlooked if not all stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide their insights. However, this does not imply that all of these staff members must be in the room at the same time.

> #### *Activity to Derive KSAs From the Task Analysis*
> *This activity should be conducted with at least one programming staff member and one training staff member participating. Volunteers, work partners/counterparts, and other staff members can add value to the process and will gain a greater understanding of Volunteer work, if available. It can be conducted during a small meeting or as part of a larger staff workshop. It may be conducted at the same time as the activity to improve the quality of the task analysis, or at a separate time.*

- Photocopy the task analysis section from the project plan or plans to review.
- Break the group into pairs or triads so each sector person is working with his or her respective project plan task analysis.
- Instruct the pairs to circle either the knowledge (K), skills (S), or attitudes (A) listed in the task analysis. Generally the knowledge and skills will emerge from the task analysis, but one may find there are not many attitudes (A) stated or obvious. This reinforces the fact that other sources (in addition to the project plan task analysis) are necessary for eliciting KSAs.

For instance:

The task…	May result in sticky notes that read…
Volunteers with partners use the case study in the Project *Community Diagnostic Survey Manual* (Page 12) as a guide to interview 20–30 families in the local language on existing hygiene attitudes and practices related to hand-washing, household water storage, household water treatment, and feces disposal.	*Project Community Diagnostic Survey Manual* case study (K). - How to work with partners to use the case study to determine basic knowledge and attitudes of caregivers related to hand-washing, household water storage, household water treatment, and feces disposal. (S) - In the local language, interview 20–30 families on existing hygiene attitudes and practices related to hand-washing, household water storage, household water treatment, and feces disposal. (K/S)

- Groups often discuss issues such as "why the task is important" and "whether it is unique to that project goal or project objective." After the discussion, the group specifies what knowledge, skills, and attitudes are needed to achieve that project objective.
- Participants then write each K, S, and A piece on a separate sticky note labeled (K), (S), or (A) and place all on a wall or flip chart to be used later in clustering KSAs to develop competencies.
- Participants review the resulting KSAs, and ask:
  - Are the resulting KSAs specific enough that a trainer could design a session based on them?
  - Are the KSAs specific enough that a trainee could be objectively evaluated as to whether he or she can achieve them?
- Participants consider if there is anything they would like to update, change, or improve upon. For example, they review if they can see *alignment* from the KSA up through the project objective and project goals. They may find a need to again review the quality of the task analysis.

Source/Method 2: Learners (Volunteers) are interviewed

There are several methods for eliciting KSAs from Volunteers. In the examples section of this chapter you will see that Paraguay uses interviews with currently serving Volunteers to help determine the KSAs that will be needed by the next group of Volunteers. Other posts have conducted interviews during conferences or used email and the Web to distribute surveys.

At right, you can link to an example of how Volunteer interviews were conducted at a training event. The session takes about 45 minutes.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Volunteer Interviews to Elicit Characteristics of a Successful Volunteer*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Example counterpart survey to elicit Volunteer KSAs, PC/Ecuador*

Source/Method 3: Community Members, Partners, and Host Families contribute through surveys

There are varieties of methods that can be used for eliciting KSAs from partners/counterparts, community members, and host families. For example, Paraguay has used focus groups with partners/counterparts to help determine the KSAs needed by effective Volunteers. Other posts have conducted interviews of partners/counterparts or host families during conferences, and still others have used email and the Web to distribute surveys.

Above, you can link to an email survey that Ecuador used to get partner/counterpart input.

Source/Method 4: Community Members, Partners, and Host Families contribute fishbowl exercises

Another method to acquire information that informs the KSAs is the fishbowl method. Homestay families, partners/counterparts or ministry officials can be asked to discuss among themselves what characteristics, knowledge, or skills Volunteers (in general) should possess to work effectively. The fishbowl method enables an outsider to offer questions to the group, stand back and watch them discuss the answers among themselves, and capture what each individual is saying. Many researchers prefer this method because it doesn't entail one-on-one interviews that often are perceived by the interviewee as being led by the interviewer rather than the interviewee.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Fishbowl activity to solicit counterpart feedback on effective Volunteer KSAs*

Source/Method 5: Review KSAs During an After Action

In Step Seven, staff members conduct an "After Action Review" (AAR), during which the evaluation of a training program can reveal if KSAs are appropriate. Staff may review perceptions from partners/counterparts or ministry officials who attended or facilitated specific training sessions. These resources can relate not only the efficacy of a training session, but also whether or not additional KSAs are needed for an effective Volunteer. Staff may want to consider inviting key stakeholders to an AAR specifically to confirm KSAs and their learning objectives.

Source / Method 6: Review KSAs Developed by PC/W

Posts find that they can save time and be sure not to omit important KSAs when they review KSAs developed by Peace Corps/Washington or other posts. Linked below, and in Section D.2: Examples of Competencies, are examples of KSAs developed by other posts or Peace Corps/Washington.

- KSAs from *Roles of the Volunteer in Development,* ICE No. T0005

- Example KSAs supporting Peace Corps Initiatives (Youth, HIV/AIDS, ICT, WID/GAD)

B.2.4 Choosing Data Collection Methods

This chart can assist you in choosing complementary methods for data collection. In addition to analyzing the task analysis in your project plan, choose at least two other methods that have different advantages and challenges. Also consider what upcoming opportunities there are to collect data in connection with existing events (such as ISTs, site visits, and so on).

Method	Overall Purpose	Advantages	Challenges
Deriving KSAs from the task analysis	To fully understand the training requirements for projects and to ensure alignment of programming and training	• Required in all project plans • Based on input from multiple stakeholders • Efficient way to get depth of information in short time • Conveys key information about programs • Gives reality check to what Volunteers are doing • Encourages staff collaboration and creates shared ownership	• Requires complete and good quality project framework • "Green" projects may not have a quality task analysis • Information may be incomplete, too broad, or lacking detail • Needs leadership and staff commitment • May need a good facilitator • Can be hard to analyze without full staff participation • Can reveal power issues among staff
Review of other documentation	To gather impressions of how programs operate; uses reports, results of training evaluations, applications, memos, minutes	• Get comprehensive and historical information • Doesn't interrupt activities • Information already exists	• Information can be incomplete or biased to author's perspective • Need to be clear about what is being examined • Not a flexible means of data collection, restricted to what exists • Often does not reflect the contexts of learning and of the job
Interviews— structured and unstructured	To fully understand someone's feelings, impressions, or experiences, or to learn more about answers from questionnaires	• Develops relationship with participant • Can be flexible with participant • Get full range and depth of information	• Can take significant time • Can be hard to analyze and compare • Interviewer can bias participant's responses
Focus groups	To explore a topic in depth with a small group, through discussion	• Quickly get common impressions • Can be efficient way to get a range and depth of information in short time • Can convey key information about programs • Is perceived as client focused	• Can be hard to analyze responses • Need good facilitator • May be hard to schedule • Cannot be generalized to broader population
Observation	To gather accurate information about how a program actually operates, particularly processes in the program	• View operations of a program as they are actually occurring • Can adapt to events as they occur	• Can be difficult to interpret • Can be complex to categorize observations • Can influence behavior of participants • Takes time

Method	Overall Purpose	Advantages	Challenges
Questionnaires, surveys, checklists	To get a large quantity of information quickly or to get information from people in a nonthreatening way	• Can be completed anonymously • Can be administered to many people • Can get large quantity of data • Can generalize to larger population • Sample questionnaires exist	• Might not get careful feedback • Wording can bias participants' responses • Impersonal • May need sampling expert • Doesn't get full story
Community meetings	Explore a topic with a large group to get a general sense of an issue	• Inclusion of a large number of people • Opportunity to hear from individuals who may not have been involved otherwise (for instance, women and youth) • Can alert nonparticipants to what the project is doing • Is perceived as client focused	• Relatively superficial level of information • Can be dominated by one person • Participants may not be comfortable speaking in a group

Adapted in 2008 from http://www.managementhelp.org/research/overview.htm.

B.3 Considerations for Successful Completion of Step 1: Conduct Needs Assessment

You have successfully completed the needs assessment for KSAs, the first time you do this step, when you have

- Reviewed the task analysis section from all project plans, for KSAs.
- Solicited KSAs from at least two other complementary sources or methods.
- Enough KSAs for patterns among them to emerge (approximately 300 to 500 KSAs the first time this step is done at post).

After you have implemented several trainings based on this first assessment of KSAs, you may find during Step 8: Reflect and Revise that a reassessment is due. This gives you an opportunity to follow Step 1 again.

B.4 Example: Conducting a Needs Assessment for KSAs

Link to the attachment at right for an example of use of a variety of sources and methods by Peace Corps/Paraguay.

C. Step 2: Analyze KSAs

In this step of the TDE process, we analyze the KSAs from needs assessment to make sure they are specific and do, in fact, represent knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and can be taught in a single lesson or exercise, or in a short series of lessons or exercises. The resulting KSAs are recorded on sticky notes for use in Step 3: Create Competencies from KSAs and Step 4: Create Learning Objectives from KSAs.

One KSA might be rewritten into two (or more) that are more specific. This process of analyzing KSAs will help if you completed Step One with too few KSAs (fewer than 300) or with many KSAs that are too general.

> *If this is not the first time your post is doing this …*
> If your post has previously analyzed the majority of KSAs, follow the portions of this step that apply to your situation. See Step 8: Reflect and Revise for additional discussion.

This step is important because…

KSAs are the raw material for designing training and evaluating learning. When KSAs are clear and specific, they are easier to cluster into competencies (Step Three) and they facilitate the writing of strong learning objectives (Step Four). Without clear objectives, it will be difficult to choose an appropriate instructional method (Step Five) and to assess the learning (Step Seven).

Who should be involved?

Training managers, along with other programming and training staff, should be involved. Include other staff or Volunteers, if needed, to make KSAs clearer and more specific. Consider including Volunteers who are representatives on the Volunteer advisory council (VAC), on a project advisory committee (PAC), or in a TDE working group.

C.1 How do we analyze KSAs?

a. Document all the KSAs derived from each assessment technique and collect them in one place.

Often they are put on sticky notes (one K, S, or A per sticky note).

Before starting to analyze the KSAs that came from Step 1, review what KSAs are—head, hands, and heart—using the description below and the chart of Bloom's Taxonomy in the tools section of this chapter. See Section C.4: Bloom's Taxonomy.

    K stands for knowledge; it has to do with your head and with thinking.
    S stands for skills; it has to do with your hands and with something you do.
    A stands for attitudes; it has to do with your heart and with feelings.

b. Sort KSAs into those that are clear and specific, or too broad/vague.

At this point:
1. Confirm that there is only one K, S, or A per sticky note (or two that are closely related, such as "be aware of your personal and cultural values (K, A)").
2. Divide the sticky notes into those that are clear and specific and those that are too vague or broad.

Example:

Clear and specific	*Too vague or too broad*
• *Defines and sequences the stages of culture shock* • *Alters old eating habits to include new foods* • *Identifies places where malarial mosquitoes are likely to breed* • *Convenes community meetings in such a way that people will actually attend*	*"adaptation"* *"malaria"* *"know how to get things done here"*

c. Break down vague or broad KSAs into more specific KSAs.

Look at the KSAs and determine if any K, S, or A is too broad. Is it really a topic rather than a KSA? Examples might include a sticky note that reads "adaptation" or one that reads "malaria." Both of these are topics, not a K, an S, or an A. Each could be broken down into specific K's, S's, or A's.

Example: "adaptation" could be broken down this way:
1. *Defines and sequences the stages of culture shock*
2. *Alters old eating habits to include new foods*
3. *Greets local people in respectful and appropriate manner*
4. *Develops new, locally appropriate techniques of stress reduction*

Example: "malaria" could be broken down this way:
1. *Identifies places where malarial mosquitoes are likely to breed*
2. *Displays three ways people can protect themselves from being bitten by a malarial mosquito*
3. *Explains the consequences of failing to regularly use malaria prophylaxis*

Look at data collected and determine if the K, S, or A is too vague. In some cases, more details or context will be needed.

Guiding questions that can help participants with this step:
1. How can a Volunteer demonstrate that he or she has developed this K, S, or A?
2. What observable behaviors indicate that the Volunteer has applied this K, S, or A?
3. What simpler K, S, or A contributes to this more complex K, S or A?

Example: "know how to get things done here" could be made more specific by stating it as follows:
1. *Convene community meetings in such a way that people will actually attend.*
2. *Report a (nonviolent) crime to the local police.*

If rewriting is necessary, use Bloom's Taxonomy (Section C.4: Bloom's Taxonomy) for examples of verbs that are specific to the different types and levels of learning.

d. Breaking Down and Scaffolding KSAs
After you cluster your KSAs into core and sector competencies, it is important to break down or scaffold larger and more complex KSAs under each core and sector competency before proceeding to write learning objectives.

Breaking Down: Some KSAs serve as "the umbrella" for others. Breaking these down into their "umbrella spokes" or component KSAs helps training designers and learners move from simple to complex learning objectives, one "spoke at a time." If the K, S, or A is large (complex), it might not be able to be covered in a single session or a learning unit. Simply stated, KSAs that are easier to comprehend and perform should be sequenced first; the more difficult to comprehend or perform should follow in the series.

Scaffolding: Some K's, S's, and A's serve as prerequisites to acquire more complex Ks, Ss or As. Scaffolding KSAs enables training designers to start with the foundation set of KSAs upon which are built more complex and difficult KSAs. Trainers need to determine what smaller (simpler) K's, S's, or A's lead to achieving the large (complex) K, S, or A.

In Step 4, larger KSAs will be turned into terminal learning objectives, whereas smaller KSAs will be written into enabling learning objectives.

Example from the Dominican Republic

The graphic on the following page shows how a hypothetical skill of politely negotiating at a local market to purchase food in Dominican Republic was broken down and scaffolded to develop appropriate learning objectives.

As the broader skill of negotiating was broken down into smaller KSAs (language and cultural), smaller and more specific KSAs are scaffolded: first (at the bottom—with names of foods and numbers) to follow with larger more complex KSAs (at the top—polite negotiation). Some KSAs may be learned in any order, such as food names and cultural context. These are called parallel. Others can be taught only in a specific order, i.e., one skill or knowledge helping to build another skill, such as food names and questioning. These are called hierarchical.

As you break down the K, S or A, it is important to keep track of the sequence in which each needs to be learned, because this will inform the development of your learning objectives into a training plan in Step 5 and the calendar of training events (COTE) in Step 6.

Skill Sequencing Analysis Graph
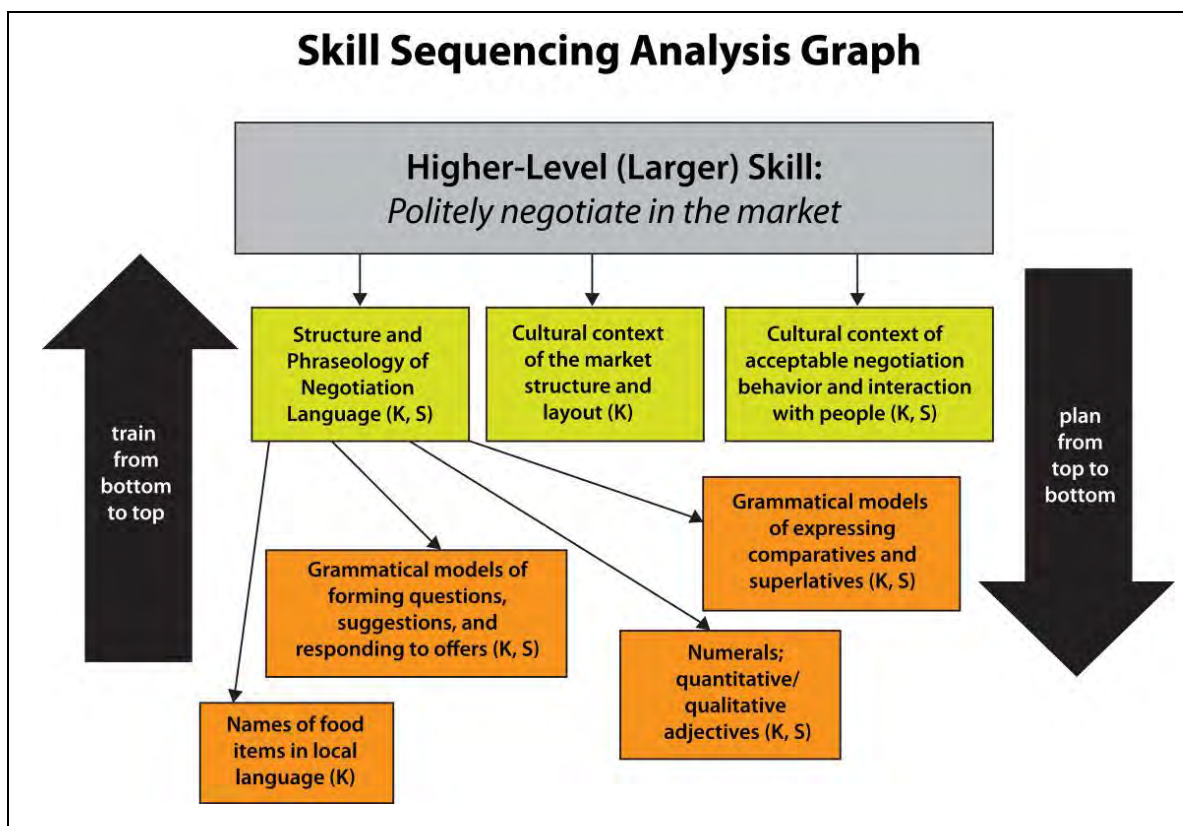
C.2 Considerations for Successful Completion of Step 2: Analyze KSAs

This step is complete under the following conditions:

- When there is only one KSA per sticky note or index card, or only two closely related KSAs, such as "be aware of your personal and cultural values" (K,A).
- When KSAs are clearly defined; a small group of stakeholders can agree on what the K, S, or A means.
- When the K, S, or A on the sticky note can be taught in a single lesson or exercise, or in a short series of lessons or exercises.
- If a KSA implies or suggests prerequisite KSAs that should be taught during training, these have been specified.

Typically, after several trainings, you will review and revise KSAs based on feedback, as outlined in Step 8: Reflect and Revise.

C.3 Examples of Step 2: Analyze KSAs

Here are short examples of how stakeholders broke down KSAs that were too broad or too vague into KSAs that were clearly defined and could be taught in a single or short series of lessons or exercises.

Example 1, from Thailand—Cross-cultural

From the partner/counterpart survey conducted as a part of Step One, the following K (knowledge) was identified: cross-cultural. When this K was examined, stakeholders agreed it was clearly a topic or training component and was too broad. Stakeholders asked themselves, "What specific knowledge, skill, or attitude does a Volunteer need related to 'cross-cultural'?" Some of these new KSAs were already written on other sticky notes; others were generated as a part of the discussion.

The resulting KSAs included the following:

- Express yourself in a culturally appropriate way (K, S)
- Be aware of your personal and cultural values (K, A)
- Contrast typical Thai and American values (K)
- Be willing to adjust behaviors (A)
- Define and sequence the stages of culture shock (K)
- Develop culturally appropriate coping strategies (S)
- Describe the importance of food in Thai culture (K)
- Illustrate the impact of Thai social norms on communication (S)
- Detail the Thai social structure (K)
- Contrast Thai gender roles and the impact they have on development (K)

Each of these KSAs was written on a sticky note and saved to be used in the next step—creating competencies from KSAs.

Example 2, from Costa Rica—Open-minded

From the interviews with Volunteers conducted as a part of Step One, the following A (attitude) was identified: open-minded. When this A was examined, stakeholders agreed it was clearly a topic that was too vague. Stakeholders asked the Volunteer who had mentioned this KSA in his interview, "What *specific* knowledge, skill, or attitude does a PCV need related to being open-minded?" Some of these new KSAs were already written on other sticky notes; others were generated as a part of the discussion with the Volunteer and other stakeholders.

The resulting KSAs included the following observable behaviors:
- Clarify your expectations as a future Peace Corps Volunteer (K, A)
- Recognize realistic and unrealistic expectations (K, A)
- Describe the characteristics of asset-based approaches to development (K)
- Model strategies to find out what works in the local culture (S)
- Be able to explain local customs and norms from the viewpoint of the local people (K, A)
- Rephrase negative comments about the local culture to be either neutral or appreciative (S)

Each of these KSAs was written on a sticky note and saved to be used in the next step—creating competencies from KSAs.

Example 3, from Malawi—PACA (Participatory Analysis for Community Action)

From the task analysis of project plans, the following S (skill) was identified as a theme that crosses all projects: As part of your Community/Sector Assessment practicum, use PACA tools, including appreciative inquiry and gender analysis. When this S was examined, stakeholders agreed it clearly referred to a topic and was too broad. Stakeholders looked back at the task analyses of their project plans and to the existing PST and IST curricula to find what *specific* knowledge, skill, or attitude a Volunteer needs related to PACA. Some new KSAs came directly from these existing documents and others came from the discussion that followed among the stakeholders (APCD, training staff, and Volunteers).

The resulting KSAs included the following:

- Define the Peace Corps' approach to development (K)

- Describe and use appreciative inquiry and gender analysis (K, S)

- Explain and use at least two additional PACA tools appropriate for your project (K,S)

- Analyze the results of the use of PACA tools and present them in Spanish to an individual or group of host country nationals (S)

Each of these KSAs was written on a sticky note and saved for use in the next step—creating competencies from KSAs.

C.4 Resources: *Bloom's Taxonomy*

The following chart displays a variety of levels, action verbs, products, and assignments within Bloom's knowledge (K) domain. Use the examples of measurable action verbs in place of vague verbs, such as "understand," to guide your S (Skill) and A (Attitude) assessments and analyses. Also, use this chart to help people sequence learning by identifying verbs that reflect the different levels of sophistication for each KSA.

For more verbs on different levels of skills from cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains, follow the link:

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Bloom's Taxonomy (more detailed breakdown)***

Bloom's Taxonomy — Cognitive Learning Domain

Levels of knowledge and development of intellectual skills	*Action verbs to support the level*	*Product/Output*	*Assignment Choices*
Knowledge *Knowing* Requires memory and repeating information	Tell, list, define, label, name, identify, match	Test, list, pictures, newspaper article, map, content-area dictionary	Tell the story; Name types of food that/which…; List leisure activities in the community; Label the parts/objects; Define the terms; List the facts; List family members and name a hobby for each member
Comprehension *Understanding* Requires rephrasing or explaining information	Describe, explain, retell, discuss, summarize, interpret, paraphrase	Oral report, show and tell, chart, visual, summary	Explain the procedure, event, or a concept; Give the main idea; Explain what the text/story is about; Paraphrase what you heard; Restate the definition in your own words
Application *Using* Requires the application of knowledge to determine the answer or solution	Use, illustrate, locate information, research, show, demonstrate, perform, apply, solve, construct, compute	Set of newspaper headlines, report, illustration, journal entries, news story, pamphlet, timeline, simulation, teach a lesson, give a demonstration	Give an example; Write a meaningful sentence with each new word (*context provided or not*); Solve…(a case study is provided); Use the rule, formula, or principle learned; Construct a model to show how these new concepts work

Levels of knowledge and development of intellectual skills	Action verbs to support the level	Product/Output	Assignment Choices
Analysis *Breaking apart* Requires the identification of motives or causes or the drawing of conclusions	Sort, group, classify, sequence, order, compare, contrast, note (causes, effects, advantages, disadvantages), categorize, separate	Collection, survey, questionnaire, graph, letter to the editor, a PowerPoint, chart, checklist, Artifact Box, photo journal	Sequence events to make a logical series; Organize words into a bubble-gram/spider-gram; Organize information into a graphic organizer (good for grammar); Group, sort, and categorize information; Compare; Differentiate
Evaluation *Judging* Requires making judgments or giving supported opinions	Choose, support, justify, recommend, estimate, predict, assess, decide, prioritize, evaluate, rate, judge, critique	Top-10 list, "List of best/worst…," book review, survey, debate, speech, awareness campaign, list of trends	Judge the importance; Evaluate which is the most important; Prioritize/rate in order; Recommend…; Give a reason…; Agree or disagree
Synthesis *Putting together in a new way* Requires making predictions, considering situations with more than one correct solution or response	Create, invent, design, compose, rewrite, formulate, develop, hypothesize	Action plan, invention, classified ad, campaign, game, poem, song, experiment, slogan, advertisement	Design/invent/compose/create [something new]; Propose an alternative solution to…; Write a different ending to the story…; Suggest what would happen if…

D. Step 3: Create Competencies From KSAs

Over the years, the term competency has been used in different ways in Peace Corps publications and practices. Each separate training component (safety, cross-cultural, language, technical) has been at various stages of developing its own competencies. This led to problems with the integration and evaluation of training components. The definition below represents current best practices both at Peace Corps posts and in the field of training design and learning theory.

> **A competency is a *cluster* of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) that enable a person to perform interrelated tasks in service of a *major job function*—**in other words, an observable job performance that requires a combination of KSAs in order to do it well.

A competency should meet the following criteria:

1. Starts with an action verb
2. Is a short phrase (approximately 3–10 words)
3. Answers the question, "An effective PCV needs this combination of KSAs in order to do what?"
4. Competency and the KSAs integrate multiple training components (such as language and technical).
5. Competency and the KSAs are not all related to one training topic (a subject area, such as culture shock or PACA).

- *Core competencies* are those that apply to all Volunteers and trainees regardless of sector or project. Some examples of core competencies:

  o Integrate into the community.

  o Empower and mobilize community for participatory development.

  o Balance cultural integration with personal well-being.

  o Foster productive multilevel partnerships and networks.

- *Sector competencies* are those that apply only to Volunteers in a specific project. Some examples of sector competencies:
  o Build capacity of primary and/or secondary school teachers.
  o Build managerial skills and practices within micro and small businesses.
  o Support the development of programs for youth with special needs.
  o Engage communities in health communication and promotion.

<div style="float:right">

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Diagram of Core and Sector Competencies: Costa Rica*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Blank Competency Diagram*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Sample Competencies from 2009-2010 TSRs*

</div>

See the links above for a diagram that may be useful for your post to represent how training components relate to competencies.

In this step of the TDE system, representative stakeholders arrange the KSAs from Steps One and Two to form core and sector competencies. These competencies should describe the desired behaviors, apply to all 27 months of learning, and be integrated across training components and topics.

If your post's competencies are in need of further refinement, use the exercise "Competency or Not Competency" linked at right as a first step. This will allow you to assess whether your competencies meet the criteria. For example, "Technical skills" is not a competency, because it does not meet first, second, fourth, and fifth criteria for a competency.

<div style="float:right">

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Competency or Not Competency*

</div>

Why is this step important?
- **Training integration.** Forming competencies makes training content integrated and coherent and it gives "threads" to weave and sequence.
- **Reduce redundancy.** Forming competencies helps trainers understand how their sessions fit with other sessions to facilitate Volunteer learning.
- **Guides learners.** Forming competencies helps Volunteers understand how individual sessions relate to helping them succeed at post and enables them to reflect on their personal growth and learning.

For trainees and Volunteers, competencies…
- Establish and inform trainees and Volunteers of expectations and standards.
- Communicate what Volunteers are expected to accomplish as a result of learning throughout their service.
- Ensure fair and thorough trainee and Volunteer training, support, and evaluation.

For the post, competencies…
- Are the building blocks of training design and delivery.

- Ensure direct alignment (i.e., a bridge) between project objectives and tasks and learning objectives.
- Create a foundation for strong training, monitoring, and evaluation systems.
- Help integrate training components.

Competencies establish and prioritize the focus on learning and should be the basis of training design as illustrated by the story of the rocks linked at right.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Rocks Story*

Who should be involved?

Training manager, technical and language trainers, director of programming and training (DPT), APCD/PMs or program managers, SSC, PCMO, partners/counterparts or supervisors, and successful Volunteers.

D.1 How to Cluster KSAs to Create Competencies

The following is a description of the recommended participatory process that posts go through to cluster KSAs to form competencies for the first time or to redefine competencies that are weak.

Before Clustering

- Be sure you have finished Step 2: Analyze KSAs. However, you may find that groups will need to go back to that step as they work, so have instructions for Step Two available.
- It is best to have 300-500 KSAs to begin clustering. Do not begin clustering until your set of KSAs represents all the data you will collect. Too little data or data from just one source will make it difficult to see the patterns in the KSAs.
- Make sure you have the right people in the room, representing a diversity of staff and Volunteers, to include the DPT, training manager, APCDs/PMs, technical and language trainers, Volunteers, PCMO, and SSC. If possible, also include partners/counterparts. Be sure to include high-performing Volunteers, and if you have a training working group, include representatives from the working group in the clustering process.
- Allow enough time. It takes two to three hours to form core and sector competencies.
- Before you start, briefly brainstorm ideas about how creating core and sector competencies will benefit the group. After brainstorming, share some examples of how KSAs are clustered into competencies (from Section D.2: Examples of Competencies).

The Clustering Process

1. Put all the KSAs on a table or wall in no particular order.
2. Post flip charts on the wall around the room: approximately five for core competencies plus one flip chart for each project. You may need additional flip charts for sector competencies as the process continues.
3. Draw a circle eight inches across on each flip chart. The name of the competency will go inside the circle, and the related KSA sticky notes will be placed around the circle. Be aware that the name of the competency may change several times as the group comes to consensus about what is and is not included in it.
4. From the large group, assemble a subgroup of eight to 10 people to do the first steps of clustering. This subgroup represents a variety of stakeholders. Have the subgroup pull any sticky note off the wall that applies to Volunteers in only one project. Put these sticky notes on a flip chart with the name of that project. These sticky notes will later be clustered into sector competencies.
5. Invite the entire group to do a gallery walk and make small adjustments to the placement of sticky notes as needed.

6. The subgroup will begin moving sticky notes from the wall onto the flip charts for ***core competencies***. They will cluster KSAs around the major functions of an effective Volunteer. Instruct them to look for KSAs on sticky notes that seem to go together or have a theme, and place these on the flip chart.
    - If you find a K, S, or A that applies to multiple themes, create multiple sticky notes with the same K, S, or A, and place them on the relevant flip charts. The same K, S, or A might appear in several different clusters.
    - You will most likely have three to five themes.
7. Once the entire group understands the clustering process, the first subgroup continues to work on core competencies, while the remainder split up to work on defining sector competencies.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Ask Guru: What about KSAs that relate to several or all competencies, like "motivation"?***

Naming Competencies

8. At some point you will need to name or label the competency. Put a draft competency statement on a sticky note in the inner circle. If the idea evolves, change the sticky note. The titles for these clusters can be given or created by the group in their own words. Do *not* use the components of training as cluster headings (language, technical, cross-cultural, and health and safety), as this will lead to a lack of integration in the competencies.
9. As people discuss how to name the competency, keep asking, "An effective Volunteer needs these KSAs in order to do what?" Here is an example:
    - Q: A person would need to be able to greet community members in the local language, show respect to elders, and help with host family chores in order to do what?
      A: In order to integrate into the community.
    - So, the competency would be, "Integrate into the community."
10. Split or merge, re-form KSAs and rename the competencies as your thinking evolves.
    - Clusters may contain items that seem to be contradictory or awkward together. That is OK. Do not let this stop you from incorporating new items. As you keep working, it will become clear whether you might need to merge, split, or redefine the cluster. Do not try to do this after each new item. Keep going for a while and then stop to reassess periodically.
    - Remember—sometimes clusters may need to be merged: two into one. Sometimes clusters may need to be split: one into two. Sometimes a cluster label may need to be refined or revised as more KSAs start fitting into it.
11. Assign a recorder or recorders to type up competencies and their corresponding KSAs for future reference and revision.

This technique of clustering KSAs is adapted with permission from Sink, Darryl. "ISD: Faster, Better and Easier." ISPI, Performance Improvement, Vol. 41, Np. 4.

D.2 Examples of Competencies

Sample Core Competencies and related KSAs

The following sample core competencies and related KSAs reflect some emerging themes from posts that have completed Step Three of the TDE process.

TIP: Some of the following sample KSAs begin with action verbs, some don't. It is not required that action verbs accompany each KSA at this point in creating competencies. However, by doing so, it may be easier to determine which competency lends itself to more knowledge objectives than skill objectives. For example, given the competency "integrate into your community," there are different (but interfacing) learning objectives. Some focus on knowledge—what does the Volunteer "explain" about his or her community's culture; some focus on skills—how does a Volunteer respectfully "communicate" with community members; and others focus on attitudes—how does the Volunteer "feel" about and treat his or her community. Using action verbs at this point may facilitate your development of different learning objectives later for each of these levels.

Competency: Integrate into your community (core)

Related KSAs with sample action verbs:

Knowledge (K)	Skills (S)	Attitudes (A)
• Describe how personal actions can compound unwanted attention. • Label the geography of the area. • Defend importance of personal appearance. • Describe local social concepts. • List transportation modes and risks involved with them. • Explain role of religion in local culture. • Compare how cultural values differ between local and American society. • Interpret how local gender roles and norms affect safety and security. • Demonstrate how the person, place, or time determines appropriate dress. • Summarize the importance of food in local culture. • Defend the importance of relationships in local culture. • List minimum housing security standards. • Differentiate the reasons behind local mannerisms. • Identify assault risk factors in local area. • Detail the basic nutrition requirements in your area. • Use self-directed learning.	• Use appropriate mannerisms that balance personal values. • Adapt to basic social conventions, such as gender sensitive greetings. • Negotiate with landlord on housing issues. • Conduct community mapping. • Cope with unwanted attention. • Demonstrate ability to be an independent traveler. • Act out how to reduce assault risk factors. • Demonstrate self-sufficiency. • Buy nutritious food using language skills. • Express oneself in a culturally appropriate way. • Handle emotional stress. • Wear appropriate dress for various situations. • Demonstrate how and when to say no. • Participate in self-assessment.	• Practice self-awareness. • Be willing to adjust some personal values. • Commit to ongoing learning. • Demonstrate a willingness to improve. • Adapt physical appearance to local standards. • Follow health and safety recommendations. Practice self-control. • Practice self-reflection. • Seek to be appropriately understood. • Display a willingness to adjust certain personal mannerisms to local standards of appropriateness.

Competency: Commit to professional service as a Peace Corps Volunteer (core)
Related KSAs with sample action verbs:

Knowledge (K)	*Skills (S)*	*Attitudes (A)*
• Describe Peace Corps' role in the country. • Indicate where the Peace Corps facility is and who staff members are. • Explain the roles of PC staff members. • Explain the cultural adjustment cycle. • Relate how your actions can affect those in your community. • Describe the various gender roles in your community. • List common diseases and their symptoms. • Label contents of medical kit. • Summarize how to be healthy in country of service. • Describe health risks in country of service. • Explain the importance of reporting illnesses to the PC. • State the contact person for medical or safety concerns. • Detail how to follow PC policies. • Explain PC policies and consequences for PCVs who violate the policies. • List EAP responsibilities. • Outline the importance of reporting security incidents to the PC (so it can fulfill its role of helping you; better assist other PCVs; improve training for future Volunteers). • List important laws that are different from U.S. laws. • Identify support resources in emergency situations (especially assault or medical emergency). • List location of PC resources.	• Communicate important information in local language. • Demonstrate how to prepare food and water. • Act out how to report illnesses. • Demonstrate resiliency. • Show how to use the medical kit properly. • Perform ways of communicating with PC staff. • Use the tools of the monitoring and reporting system. • Explain why to call the PC first in emergency situations. • Identify dangers in the environment. • Display effective habits of working with others. • Design and conduct a gender survey. • Use PACA tools.	• Embrace the PC mission. • Express empathy for other trainees. • Give examples of respecting the greater good. • Observe and describe local cultural differences. • Discuss why you are here. • Display respect for policies. • Verify why one should respect the greater good of the Peace Corps. • Show appreciation of others. • Exhibit awareness of well-being. • Display respect for cultural differences. • Initiate responsibility and be pro-active. • Show responsibility toward local community. • Obey standards of conduct. • Demonstrate self-awareness. • Display sensitivity to the gender norms of your community.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives from the Dominican Republic, 2009*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives from Belize*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives Thailand*

Sample Sector Competencies
Example, from Strengthening Human Resources through Education (SHREP) Project in Vanuatu
Competency: Develop capacity of primary and secondary school teachers (sector)
Sample KSAs with and without action verbs:

Knowledge (K)	Skills (S)	Attitudes (A)
- Pedagogy in Vanuatu - Curricula in Vanuatu primary and secondary schools - Primary teaching methods and pedagogy - Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports in Vanuatu - Mission schools in Vanuatu - Nongovernmental educational organizations - Student-centered learning methodology - Student assessment methods and procedures - Classroom management - Alternatives to corporal punishment, and positive discipline - Principles and practices of team teaching; co-planning lessons - Community content-based instruction - Subject-area content including - literacy education - math, - science - English language ICT - carpentry - electricity - masonry - School management - stakeholders - structure - methodology - School policies - Discipline in Vanuatu schools - Principles of team-teaching - Principles of peer-to-peer exchanges - PTAs (Parents and Teachers Associations) and protocols of working with them	- Developing student-centered lesson plans - Communicating effectively with students and teachers - Designing and selecting instructional materials and resources - Assessing students' progress - Giving feedback to co-teachers - Managing students in the classroom - Designing and conducting after-school educational activities - Working with community resources (human and material) - Incorporating community development themes and issues into classroom lessons - Working with PTAs (Parents and Teachers Associations) and school committees	- Professionalism - Inclusiveness - Tolerance for opposing views - Initiative - Diplomacy and tact - Realistic expectations - Flexibility - Patience - Serving as a role model - Self-discipline - Cooperative work attitude - Willingness to learn from peers - Responsiveness to needs

Ctrl + click to link to document:
Example Water and Sanitation Competency KSAs

D.3 Considerations for Successful Completion of Step 3: Create Competencies

- Core and sector competencies were created through a collaborative process with representative stakeholders.

- Core competencies are related to major functions that all Volunteers perform, regardless of sector or project.

- Sector competencies are related to major job functions and are unique to the Volunteers in that project.

- Core and sector competencies are something a Volunteer does, not a topic area such as language or cross-cultural.

- Core and sector competencies answer the question, "The Volunteer needs that K, S, or A in order to do what?"

- After several trainings, site visits by program staff, and PAC or VAC surveys, core and sector competencies may change as described in Steps 7 and 8.

E. Step 4: Create Learning Objectives From KSAs

Step Four involves developing learning objectives for the KSAs related to your core and sector competencies.

Why is this step important?

Learning objectives serve several purposes.

Ctrl + click to link to handout: *Learning Objectives Provide …*

For trainers:
- They are the building blocks of training.
- They help determine the most appropriate training strategies and teaching methods.
- They provide a basis for Volunteer assessment and evaluation.

For trainees:
- They direct attention to the important content and guide learners' efforts.
- They communicate what learners are expected to be able to do after training.
- They serve as a self-check for progress.

Who should be involved?

Training manager, other trainers, programmers, and other stakeholders, such as Volunteers and partners/counterparts. Consider including Volunteers who are representatives on the VAC, on a PAC, or in a TDE working group.

E.1 Writing Learning Objectives

The term "objective" is used by the Peace Corps for 1) project objectives, within the framework of each project plan, and 2) learning objectives, which indicate what a learner will be able to do, to what extent, and under what circumstances.

Learning objectives have four required parts:

1. **PERFORMER:** Who will be learning the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.

2. **PERFORMANCE (BEHAVIOR):** The measurable or observable knowledge, skill, or attitude to be learned .

3. **CONDITION:** The condition under which the learned knowledge, skill, or attitude is observed.

4. **STANDARD:** The standard of performance, or how well the trainee demonstrates the new knowledge, skill, or attitude.

Sometimes, other organizations refer to learning objectives as performance, behavioral, instructional, training, or knowledge objectives.

Example: In this example, the parts of the learning objectives are identified.

Using local youth-camp guides and the Peace Corps manual Working With Youth, trainees in small groups will write and deliver one session for a youth eco-camp using 4-MAT lesson planning.

- *youth-camp guides and the Peace Corps manual Working With Youth (condition)*
- *trainees in small groups (performer)*
- *will write and deliver one session for a youth eco-camp (performance)*
- *using 4-MAT lesson planning (standard)*

The Four Components of Learning Objectives

PERFORMER
An objective should be learner centered. We state what the learner will be able to do as a result of instruction, not what the instructor will do to help learners acquire skills and knowledge. If the learning objective applies to every trainee or Volunteer individually, then use phrases such as "each trainee" or "every Volunteer." If the learning objective applies to groups of trainees or Volunteers, then use phrases such as "small groups of trainees" or "Volunteers together."

PERFORMANCE (BEHAVIOR)
This part of the learning objective states what the learner will do to demonstrate that he or she has learned a specific knowledge, skill, or attitude. The behavior must be written in measurable, observable terms so the trainee learning can be objectively assessed. The performance must also be written so that what is taught is clearly stated so everyone—trainees, Volunteers, trainers, programmers, and developers— knows exactly what must be learned. *When stating the behavior in a learning objective, use action verbs to reduce ambiguity. Action verbs are observable and measurable—to write, to describe, to identify, to sort, to construct, to build, to compare, to contrast, to define, to develop, and so on. Avoid using nonspecific verbs like to know and to understand.* See the chart below for examples of specific and nonspecific verbs.

SPECIFIC VERBS name measurable and observable behavior	**NONSPECIFIC VERBS AND PHRASES** are open to many interpretations and are hard to measure
list develop define	know understand appreciate

SPECIFIC VERBS name measurable and observable behavior	NONSPECIFIC VERBS AND PHRASES are open to many interpretations and are hard to measure
identify build compare contrast interview translate write	believe comprehend internalize study think demonstrate an understanding of… demonstrate an ability to…

Here in **boldface font and underlined** are examples of the performance part of learning objectives.

*Given the five guidelines for writing questions used to conduct a participatory needs assessment, each trainee **will write questions that illustrate** all five of **the guidelines**.*

*Without assistance, each trainee **will use** at least 10 **new health-related vocabulary words** correctly in complete sentences or questions.*

*Without reference to notes, each Volunteer **will mix** the correct proportions of **ingredients to produce one liter of oral rehydration therapy (ORT) solution** in less than 10 minutes.*

When writing learning objectives, think about moving from the simple to the more complex. Refer to the verbs in Bloom's Taxonomy in Step Two for help with this task. Note that each level of the taxonomy builds on the previous level of competency or skill. For example, before Volunteers or trainees can describe, discuss, or explain, they must be able to label, list, or repeat. By building on the achievements of lower levels, Volunteers or trainees will eventually develop higher level skills, like assessing the outcome of a project or predicting the rate of growth of seedlings.

STANDARD
An important part of a well-crafted learning objective is a clearly stated standard of performance. A standard defines the criteria for acceptable performance by the trainee or Volunteer. It can be either quantitative (how many) or qualitative (how well). It is stated in such terms as the degree of completeness or accuracy, time constraints, performance rates, etc.

A standard may answer one of the following questions that describe the level of acceptable performance:

a. How much?
b. How many?
c. Which ones?
d. To what extent?
e. At what level?

f. How accurately?
g. How well?
h. To what degree?
i. At what speed?
j. In how much time?

Without a standard, it is difficult to determine when trainees or Volunteers have achieved the learning objective.

When creating a standard for a learning objective, there are a few important things to keep in mind:

- Use a standard that most closely matches the actual job performance requirements. In other words, state a standard that reflects what the Volunteer does at site.
- Use a standard that is clear and understood by everyone.
- Use a standard that accurately measures learner achievement of the learning objectives.

Type of Standard	*Example (in bold and double underline)*
Standard operating procedure	*". . . will __comply with critical incident reporting requirements__."*
"No error"	*" write questions that illustrate __all five__ of the guidelines"*
Minimum acceptable level of performance	*"... will use __at least 10__ new health-related vocabulary words ..."*
Rate	*". . . safely use public transportation __at least once a week during PST ...__"*
Qualitative requirements	*". . . give a __culturally appropriate__ reason for not drinking alcohol..."* **
Qualitative + time requirement (this has two standards)	*"... mix the __correct proportions__ of ingredients to produce one liter of oral rehydration therapy (ORT) solution __in less than 10 minutes__."*

*Note: ** As with all qualitative standards, there must be an explicitly agreed upon criterion for what is meant by "culturally appropriate" that is specific to this learning objective.*

CONDITION

A complete learning objective describes the important conditions under which the performer will demonstrate what he or she has learned by defining the limits, resources, and tools, or context affecting the learner's performance. A condition is strongest when it most closely approximates the circumstances in which the Volunteer will perform the task **on the job**.

A condition may specify:

> If the trainees can use notes or reference material, a checklist, or other job aid. Example: __Without reference to notes__, mix ...

> The tools the trainee can use. Example: __Given the five guidelines for writing questions used to conduct a participatory needs assessment,__ write …

> Events, sessions, or information that are required to perform the learning objective. Example: __Given a specific risk factor associated with assaults__, identify ...

> The objects, events, human behavior, language, or symbols related to the learning objective. Example: __Using the technical vocabulary learned during their practicum__ ...

> Select conditions that match the job conditions as closely as possible. Example: __Without assistance__, use ...

Adapted with permission from Mager, Robert F. Preparing Instructional Objectives. Atlanta, Georgia: CEP Press Inc. 1997.

When specifying a condition in a learning objective, ask the following questions as a guide:

- Will the learners perform in an authentic environment or a simulated one?
- What are the real world circumstances under which the performance is expected to occur?
- Will the learners perform individually, in pairs, or in groups?
- Will reference materials be available during expected performance? (If so, specify them.)
- Will peer/instructor assistance be available to the performer?
- How much time will the learners have to perform?

As you write learning objectives, you may find that you need to go back to Step Two to clarify KSAs that are too broad or just topics. This is important because if the KSAs are too broad, it can be difficult to clearly state the performance and the standard.

> *Tip – When writing learning objectives for skills invitees may already partially have prior to arrival in-country*
>
> Consider that while a trainee may already possess a particular K, S, or A, he or she may need to apply it in a new cultural context or build upon skills in terms of adjustment and development work. In these cases, the learning objective could focus on applying the K, S, or A to the new context, rather than learning the foundational KSA itself.

E.2 Terminal and Enabling Learning Objectives

As described below, the simpler K's, S's, or A's are developed into enabling learning objectives and the more complex K's, S's, or A's become terminal learning objectives.

Terminal learning objective describes a larger (more complex) K, S, or A the learner will possess or be able to perform as a result of a series of training sessions. A terminal learning objective encompasses all related enabling objectives.

Enabling learning objective describes a smaller (narrower) K, S, or A that the learner must complete to accomplish a terminal learning objective and perform a larger (more complex skill). All enabling learning objectives must be accomplished before the terminal objective can be met.

Graphically, the concept of terminal and enabling learning objectives may be represented like this:

Terminal learning objective: High performance – a highest complexity skill for each learner to master in a given instructional unit.

Enabling learning objective 3: [Skill of even higher level complexity: apply,…]

Enabling learning objective 2: [Skill of slightly higher level complexity: describe,…]

Enabling learning objective 1: [Knowledge skill of low level complexity: list,…]

Distinguishing between **terminal learning objectives** and **enabling learning objectives** may assist with a more effective and less time-consuming learning assessment.

> **Terminal learning objective:** Using a checklist of effective negotiation techniques in Country X, trainees will politely negotiate at a local market to purchase a food item for less than the originally stated price."

> **Enabling learning objective 3**: By the end of the fourth week of PST, trainees will politely decline the first-stated price and suggest a new lower price.

> **Enabling learning objective 2**: By the end of the third week of PST, trainees will ask questions about price of the vegetables in the market.

> **Enabling learning objective 1**: By the end of the first week of PST, trainees will name 10 vegetables that are grown locally and sold in the market.

Enabling learning objectives (LOs) are means to achieve a terminal learning objective. If a learner can perform a skill included in a terminal learning objective, we can safely assume that he or she can perform enabling learning objectives leading to the terminal LO. For example, if a Volunteer can negotiate vegetable prices in the market in language X, it is very likely that the person can name the vegetables in language X (performance in an enabling LO) and ask how much each of the vegetables cost (performance in an enabling LO) and politely decline the first offer (performance in an enabling LO).

Enabling learning objectives should be sequenced and accomplished prior to the terminal one. When the terminal learning objective is met, the trainer can assume that all enabling objectives were also met. This will simplify the process of assessing the multitude of learning objectives.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Example Sequencing of Learning Objectives From Niger*

E.3 Learning Objectives and Assessment Items

Although we will teach from the simplest knowledge and skill—naming the vegetables and asking for a price for vegetable X, we can assess and track Volunteers' ability to perform a more complex skill: negotiate the prices of vegetables in the market.

Language and cross-cultural facilitators (LCFs) will monitor Volunteer progress naming vegetables, asking for a price, and disagreeing with the initially stated prices (enabling LOs) during a language lesson. The LCF does not need to formally assess each enabling LO separately. Instead, the LCF can focus on assessing only the terminal learning objectives. If the learner has mastered the terminal learning objective, then the LCF can safely assume that the learner has met all related enabling LOs. The trainer may choose to use more formal assessments for the terminal learning objectives and track each learner's progress in a tracking sheet. If a learner has difficulty accomplishing the terminal learning objective, the trainer will need to go back and uncover which enabling objective was not mastered sufficiently. This information could be used to develop content reviews and re-teaching.

Example No. 1:

Terminal LO: Using minimum intermediate-low level Spanish functions and culture-specific protocol, trainees will exchange situation-specific greetings, basic personal information, and small talk related to meeting new and familiar people.

Sample Enabling LOs (not exhaustive): [All communicative tasks related to the topic of greet and be greeted will be written into enabling LOs for specific lessons and learning events.]

1. Given a formal situation in the community meeting (simulated), trainee will greet at least two new people, state in three sentences his or her country or state of origin and professional background, and ask the same information from the conversation partner.

2. Using verbal means and culture-specific nonverbal cues, trainee will ask a conversation partner about his or her professional background and interests accurately enough to elicit a short narrative response. (No. 2 is subordinate to No. 1; No. 1 is, in turn, subordinate to the terminal LO).

3. Given an informal situation in the morning, trainee will greet a person and engage him or her in small talk to cover at least two of the following conversation areas: weather, family health and well-being, and a new exciting event in the town or village.

4. During a cross-cultural discussion, trainees will describe the nature and all structural aspects of small talk in Costa Rica and compare it with the structure of small talk in the United States. (No. 4 knowledge is subordinate to No. 3 skill).

Assessment option: Observation of trainee meeting a new person. The situation could be simulated or authentic and could be altered for different levels of formality, gender, age, etc. The observation assessment will be geared toward the composite skill indicated in the terminal learning objective.

Example No. 2:
Terminal learning objective:
Given a list of healthy living strategies and a site-specific cultural context and available resources, trainee will develop a personalized healthy-living plan containing at least seven strategies that would best fit his or her personal lifestyle. — most complex performance; —ultimate goal.

Sample enabling objectives:
1. After reading through healthy-life strategies, **select** at least seven that you like most and **explain** how they fit your work and social schedule. (comprehension, application, analysis) — even more complex performance
2. After scanning the text, **list** and **describe** at least three strategies for each of the three categories that are best for (1) optimum nutrition, (2) losing weight, (3) sleeping well, and (4) managing stress. (knowledge, comprehension)—more complex performance
3. After scanning the text, **highlight all** the strategies that help people eat better. (knowledge, recognition) —simple performance

Assessment option:
Trainees create and submit personalized, healthy-living plans in community X (job site).

Example No. 3 (Albania):
Suggested terminal learning objective:
Given a communicative situation in a host family related to (a) meals, (b) daily duties and activities, and (c) family traditions and celebrations, trainees will engage in and complete an interaction with those in the

situation. The interaction will comply with mainstream Albanian family values and cultural norms and contain polite language exchanges specific and appropriate to the given situation. [This LO could be tracked in a general LO tracking sheet for each trainee.]

Enabling objectives (the list may not be exhaustive): [These LOs will go directly into session/lesson plans and will be monitored by a specific trainer delivering that session/learning event.]

1. By end of Week 1, trainees will identify extended family members and describe their roles and responsibilities within the family hierarchy.
2. After the cross-cultural session on Albanian and American family values and the first week of homestay debriefs with LCFs, trainees will describe gender roles in Albania and list key dos and don'ts of interaction between the genders in Albania.
3. During a group discussion and given a gender-specific case study, trainees will explain how their role as a foreigner differs from Albanian gender roles.
4. Given a gender-sensitive situation in Albania, trainees will engage in a verbal interaction with two members of different gender to accomplish a specific task and meet the Albanian expectations of the gender roles and interactions.
5. Having observed behavior in the family or the public and debriefed these encounters, trainees will employ table manners that are appropriate for a specific meal in the home: regular meal, holiday meal, important family celebration.
6. Given at least three situations on invitations and offers in a host family environment, trainees will either politely accept or politely decline the offer, based on their personal needs and preferences to meet the Albanian cultural expectations and preserve the integrity of the Albanian host (e.g., help them save face in the case of being declined).

Assessment option 1: Interview with host family. The trainer creates a set of interview questions to ask one or several members to elicit trainee performance in a specific situation from the terminal LO, such as a) meals, b) daily duties and activities, and c) family traditions and celebrations.

Assessment option 2: Simulation cards for different situations. Trainees role-play, interacting in different situations, and the trainer observes and takes notes.

E.4 Considerations for Successful Completion of Step 4: Creating Learning Objectives

- KSAs have been sequenced to show how they build on each other.
- Core learning objectives are complete for the entire Volunteer training continuum and contain all four required elements: 1) performer, 2) performance (behavior), 3) standard, and 4) condition.
- Sector learning objectives are complete for the entire Volunteer training continuum and contain all four required elements: 1) performer, 2) performance (behavior), 3) standard, and 4) condition.

E.5 Tools and Resources

Learning objectives for initiative areas (youth, gender, and development, ICT and HIV/AIDS)	*Safety and security learning objectives (revised March 2009)*
Health learning objectives (revised Summer 2008)	*Example core learning objectives: Dominican Republic*
Example core competencies and learning objectives: Thailand	*Example core competencies and learning objectives: Belize*

Be sure to check the latest Focus In/Train Up resources for learning objectives and more.

F. Step 5: Plan Training

Once core and sector competencies are developed and learning objectives are identified, the trainer can use his or her experience and ingenuity to design training. Trainers are free to be creative and flexible as long as the learning objectives are achieved in the time available.

Training design includes development of an overall calendar of training, taking into consideration the sequencing of learning objectives, selection of training methods, and design of training sessions. The conceptual foundations of training design and strategies that Peace Corps trainers consider as they plan Volunteer training, outlined in this chapter, are:

- Community-based training
- 27-month training continuum
- Calendar of training
- Adult learning principles (including experiential learning)
- Choosing methods to achieve learning objectives
- Integrating training calendars
- Developing ongoing learning

TAKE NOTE

Budgeting, staffing, and logistics are not covered in this guide

Note that the budgeting, staffing, and logistics aspects of planning for training are covered in Part 4: *Management and Implementation* Guide, not in this chapter.

When instructors choose a combination of delivery systems, they consider the big picture, including the competencies, learner characteristics, learning objectives, evaluation requirements, and learning and performance contexts. These delivery systems are usually set for an entire course or program or a bigger unit of teaching and are often selected before trainers plan concrete lessons or units.

Why is this step important?

- Without choosing appropriate learning methods, good competencies and learning objectives will not be achieved.
- Designing training calendars based on sequenced learning objectives (rather than available time slots) helps to create a collaborative and constructive learning atmosphere.
- Designing for ongoing learning helps Volunteers gain KSAs not addressed in formal training events.

Who should be involved?

Everyone who helps deliver training sessions or builds the skills of Volunteers.

F.1 Training Design Concepts and Strategies

F.1.1 Community-Based Training (CBT)

A macro-strategy used by most posts is CBT, combined with "hub" training days when all trainees are trained in a central facility. In CBT, training is decentralized, with groups of four to six trainees living with host families and working in multiple communities and neighborhoods. Training content is integrated through learning objectives that are organized within core and sector competencies. Language and cross-cultural facilitators (LCFs) not only teach language classes and facilitate cross-cultural discussions, but also team up with technical trainers to guide trainees through community analysis (PACA) activities and technical content. In CBT, community members are key partners in training. Teams of trainees and facilitators seek out local human and material resources to help learners achieve core and sector competencies.

Community-based training engages trainees in experiential learning that takes place in authentic learning environments. There are four key characteristics of CBT: decentralized, practical, integrated, and reliance on local resources. In training, "community" refers to the site(s) as well as the people who are involved with the trainees and training staff. Although community-based training is a logistically challenging model, by involving communities ...

- It exposes trainees to real-life situations.
- It increases trainees' technical skills through formal sessions, practicums, and small projects.
- It increases trainees' awareness of the impact gender roles have on the community.
- It exposes trainees to cultural norms and behaviors through social contacts.
- It increases trainees' language skills through daily interactions.
- It increases trainees' workplace and community entry skills.
- It develops trainees' awareness of community members as resources.
- It helps trainees maintain better health and personal safety.

Community-based training includes, but is not limited to

- Host family stays.
- Community projects.
- Practicums and internships.
- Visits to Volunteer sites.
- Community mentoring and "shadowing."

For more on community-based training, see the Peace Corps publication *Sourcebook for Community-Based Training Programs* [ICE No. T0088].

Standard and Three-Phase Pre-Service Training Models
Within the framework of the community-based training philosophy, some posts have experimented with a three-phase pre-service training (PST) model.

Technical Training in Communities
In Peace Corps/Dominican Republic, trainees spend half of their PST in community-based training (CBT). Programming staff work with training staff to identify training sites where trainees will be able to participate in appropriate community activities and also be able to learn from current Volunteers.

The *standard PST* model consists of approximately 10 to 12 weeks of training, at the end of which trainees swear in and travel to posts to commence work. Sometimes one to two weeks of that training is spent in Volunteers' future worksites. A sample calendar of training events for a standard PST model (COTE) is linked at right.

Ctrl + click for link to file: *COTE for standard PST, Uganda*

Trainees and their language and cross-cultural facilitator live and learn in small groups in host communities, often called training satellites or satellite villages. For one or several days a week, all convene at a training center or hub for technical and medical sessions, community assessment review, and cross-cultural debriefing. Often the technical trainer travels to satellite villages to help trainees accomplish their technical assignments. Both core and sector competencies are taught.

A core activity during standard PST is to practice community assessment tools, integrated with language learning, and often with the participation of host family members.

Three-phase PST consists of three major training segments:

Phase 1—PST varies from seven to nine weeks at different posts. The major learning focus is on the core competencies, emphasizing community integration, community assessment, cross-cultural adaptation, and local language acquisition. This phase compares to the standard PST model except that usually technical skills are less emphasized, focusing on only the foundations of technical training at this phase.

Phase 2—Volunteers continue learning at their job sites with the help of their partners/counterparts, communities, the APCD, training manager, and the LCF. This phase lasts approximately three months and ends with a "reconnect" (see Page 70) or IST. Volunteers conduct needs assessments in their communities and explore resources at their job sites. Most Volunteers, except those who teach at school, do not start in-depth project work until after Phase 3.

Phase 3—Volunteers gather for a "reconnect" or an IST that lasts from one to three weeks. The main focus of this phase is on the technical areas of the sector.

The concept of the three-phase PST is to provide in-depth technical training, often specialized, based on needs as identified by the community assessment assignment.

F.1.2 Developing the Calendar of Training

As posts develop their training calendars, it is important for them to plan for the progression of learning objectives throughout a Volunteer's 27 months of learning. Post training calendars include PST, ISTs, MSTs, COSs, and independent learning at site, such as ongoing language learning, and learning about site institutional structures and dynamics.
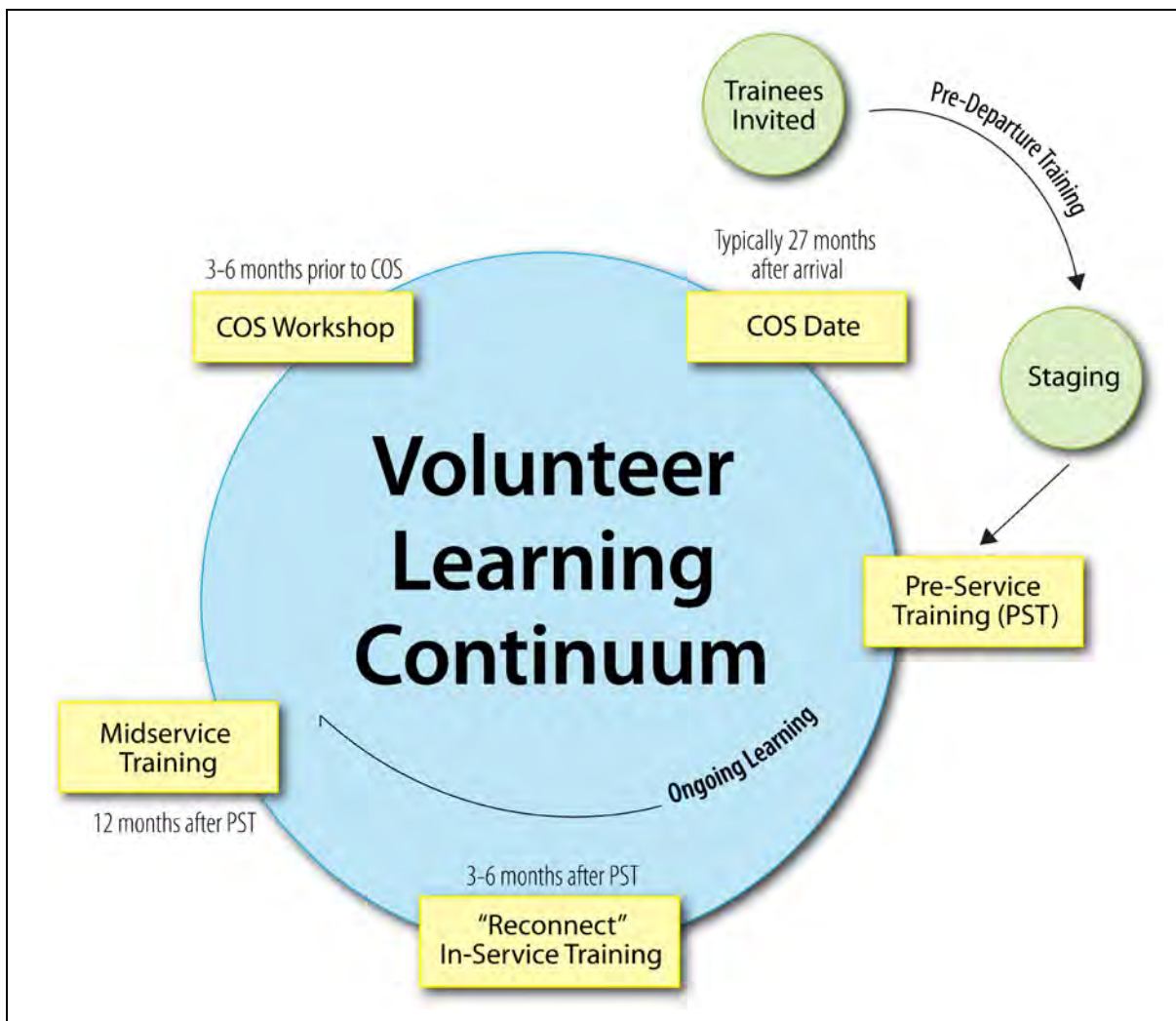
Through the training calendar, the relationship between the sessions, learning objectives, and competencies is clear to staff, learners, and external audiences. The learning objectives, summarized in the training calendar, are sequenced according to immediacy of learner needs at particular points in time, both during pre-service and throughout service.

Criteria used to sequence learning objectives:
- **Importance**: What KSAs are essential to teach early
- **"Generalizability":** KSAs with lasting benefits for a larger group of people
- **Complexity:** Consider the learner's ability to handle the learning task
- **Timing:** How much you can teach in the time you have. Be mindful of the time it takes for learners to process new information.

Ctrl + click to link to document:
Example Sequencing of a Set of Learning Objectives Along the Training Continuum, Niger

Once the learning objectives have been developed and the methods for accomplishing them determined, staff determine together where and when they will be accomplished. The development of the calendar of training events must be done in a collaborative way, including programming and training, safety and security, and medical staff.

Link to the right for a detailed description of one method to develop a training calendar at post: a one-day activity to sequence learning objectives along a blank calendar of training with programming, training, safety, medical, language, and cross-cultural facilitators all present.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *One-day activity to sequence learning objectives and develop a 27-month calendar of training.*

F.1.3 The 27-Month Training Continuum

The Volunteer Training Continuum is a 27-month cycle with a variety of formal and informal learning events spread throughout the cycle that enable Volunteers to perform their roles effectively. Each post develops a training schedule that identifies when major learning objectives are accomplished throughout the entire 27-month continuum of learning. The learning objectives may be accomplished through formal events or independent learning between these events. The calendar helps staff focus on the flow of the entire training. It also enables the staff and learners to understand the overall timing of the numerous training events.

Volunteer training cycle

Competencies and learning objectives drive the content for the training continuum. Programming and training staff determine which learning objectives are addressed in the different training events at post.

Programming and Training Integration checklist, 2-pg version

The following training events are considered standard events by most posts.

Prior to arrival in-country:

- *Pre-departure training:* Pre-departure training may include language materials provided to invitees, online learning or learning software, or formal classes that invitees enroll in to improve their skills. Core resources that invitees review in their invitation packet include the *Volunteer Handbook* (all posts) and the Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD), particular to each post.

- *Staging:* A staging event is a brief orientation to the Peace Corps, its policies, and the general demands of being a healthy, safe, and effective Volunteer, held in the United States. It is also a time to complete the registration and vaccination process.

In-country training consists of the following standard training events:

- *Pre-service training:* An eight- to 12-week training event held in the country of assignment, it is the cornerstone of the Peace Corps' formal training program. PST addresses the core and sector competencies Volunteers need to integrate safely into their communities and to begin their service. During PST, staff assesses each trainee's readiness for service, and each trainee reconfirms that he or she is ready to make the commitment to serve as a Volunteer.

- *Ongoing learning:* Volunteers address identified learning needs through self-study, and sometimes through formal tutoring, mentoring, or other means.

- *"Reconnect" in-service training (IST):* An event held after Volunteers have served in their sites for three to six months. At this point in their service, Volunteers should have completed their assessment and initial community integration and will have confronted culture shock and the realities of their commitment. Volunteers discuss the result of their Volunteer community/sector assessment, reinforce language learning as needed, and focus on skills applicable to their work assignments.

- *Midservice conference:* Often timed in conjunction with obligatory mid-service medical examinations, the midservice conference is an opportunity for Volunteers to receive feedback and guidance both from staff and from their peers, as well as to share their successes.

- *Close of service (COS) conference:* This important event prepares Volunteers for transitioning back to the United States, including contributions they will make to Peace Corps' Third Goal: *"[to help promote] a better understanding of other peoples on the part of American people"* when they return.

Additional Training Events

In addition to the standard training events, many posts offer one or more of the following events:

- *All-Volunteer Conference:* A conference to strengthen collaboration and idea sharing among Volunteers from different groups and projects. An all-Volunteer conference can be an opportunity to get feedback from Volunteers and to discuss critical issues.

- *Sector Meetings:* Programming staff members meet with their Volunteers to discuss project-specific topics. Sector meetings might include a review or evaluation of the project plan or upcoming changes in the project. They are often combined with ISTs and midservice conferences.

- *Training on Sector or Cross-Sector Technical Topics:* Trainings with Volunteers (and partners, as funds are available and allowed) may be on specific topics related to one or more sectors, such as beekeeping or behavior change.

- *Project Design and Management Workshop (PDM):* This workshop brings Volunteers and their partners/counterparts together to learn how to engage communities in identifying, planning, managing, and evaluating projects. Use the ICE resource (link to the right) for this workshop.

> Ctrl + click for link to file *New Project Design and Management Workshop Training Manual (ICE No. T0107)*

- *Peer Support Workshop:* Some posts hold an optional workshop that focuses on listening skills and ways Volunteers can support one another.

- *Conferences on Peace Corps Initiatives:* These events focus on post, regional, or agencywide initiatives. They include topics such as HIV/AIDS, WID/GAD (Women in Development/Gender and Development), diversity, information communication technology (ICT), etc.

- *Safety and Security Workshops:* Although the topic of safety is included in each training event, posts may decide, because of events or incidents in the country, to hold special workshops that focus strictly on safety and security.

- *Teaching Skills Workshops:* Based on need, posts may hold workshops for non-TEFL Volunteers who teach in the classroom (e.g., small business development and environment Volunteers).

- *Cross-Border Workshops:* Some posts find it helpful for Volunteers and staff from different posts to convene to discuss topics that are of mutual interest.

There are various models used for training across the continuum, language challenges, and how in-service trainings are handled. To understand the variety of models for the continuum across posts or to identify a post with a model that your post might adopt, reference the EMA region's "Post at a Glance" (link to 2009 version at right).

> Ctrl + click for link to file: *Post at a Glance EMA April 2009*

F.1.4 Adult learning principles

Peace Corps experience over the past five decades, coupled with external research, demonstrates that adults learn differently from children. Volunteers come to Peace Corps training with extensive knowledge, skills, and attitudes based on their lifelong experiences. They build upon and adapt these to integrate effectively into new work communities. To respect Volunteers as adults, Peace Corps staff members apply the following principles of adult learning to create learning experiences rich in content, relevant to the life and work of Volunteers, and reflective of Volunteers' backgrounds.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Adult Learning Principles Poster*

Principles of Adult Learning

The Peace Corps promotes the use of experiential adult learning in all its training. These methodologies and techniques demonstrate respect for all trainees and trainers as adults who possess valuable individual experiences and skills.

The principles of adult learning include the following:*

1. **Needs assessment**: Before any training program begins, it is essential to identify the various needs, experience, and expectations of the adult learners.
2. **Safety**: Learners require a safe context for learning. This context is reflected in the atmosphere of the training space, design of learning tasks and materials, and trust of the trainer and the process.
3. **Sound relationships**: Adult learning is a dialogue between trainer and Volunteer and among Volunteers. These relationships involve listening and mutual respect.
4. **Sequence and reinforcement**: Content needs to be properly sequenced from easy to difficult, from simple to complex. The trainer also builds reinforcement into the training design.
5. **Praxis**: This means "action with reflection." It is important for learners to reflect on new ideas, skills, and attitudes.
6. **Respect for learners as decision makers**: Adult learners are decision makers and need to decide for themselves what occurs for them in a learning event.
7. **Ideas, feelings, and actions**: Adult learning is designed considering all three aspects of learning: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.
8. **Immediacy**: Adult learners need to see the immediate usefulness or applicability of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they are trying to acquire.
9. **Clear roles**: This involves believing in the human equity between teacher and student.
10. **Teamwork**: Working in teams helps to create a safe environment in which team members share responsibility.
11. **Engagement**: Adult learners need not be passive; rather, they learn more when they participate in their own learning.
12. **Accountability**: The design of the training needs to be accountable to the learners. The learners in teams are accountable to each other and to the trainer.

*Based on Jane Vella's adult learning materials

In accordance with adult learning principles, Peace Corps training integrates
- Theory as well as practical application.
- Classroom and community learning.
- Group and individualized learning.
- What learners already know and what they need to know.
- Trainer-directed and self-directed learning.
- Feedback, assessment, and evaluation.

Designing adult learning opportunities

The following three graphics (Pages 48, 50-51) represent Peace Corps' multipronged approach to designing learning experiences for Volunteers. The first graphic is based upon David Kolb's experiential learning cycle, whereby trainers provide Volunteers with an experience during which information, skills, and attitudes are analyzed, generalized, and then applied to new settings. The second graphic reflects how adults bring their own styles of learning to every training session. The third suggests a format (4MAT) to plan and design an adult lesson plan that reflects the four steps of the experiential learning cycle and various other learning styles. Trainers usually follow this three-pronged method to develop effective adult learning opportunities.

The Experiential Learning Cycle

Reflecting adult learning principles, posts are shifting their training from instruction to learning through experience. Instead of trainees sitting in classrooms day after day where they receive information, they are encouraged to interact with, and learn from, people in local communities and from each other. These experiences are processed using the experiential learning cycle as displayed below:

- Concrete Experience
- Reflection and Observation: What?
- Analysis and Generalization: So what?
- Planning and Application: Now what?

Experiential training allows learners to use their surroundings in the local culture for use after formal training is over. (See *Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning* [ICE No. M0064]). They see the immediate relevance of what they are learning and can use their own experience to influence their current learning—which are both adult learning principles.

Experiential Learning Cycle

I. Concrete Experience

II. Reflection and Observation:
What happened? What did you experience? How do you feel?

III. Analysis and Generalization
So…What is your interpretation? What is the real issue? What did you learn?

IV. Planning and Application
Now…How can you apply what you just learned to a new setting? What would you do differently – or continue to do?
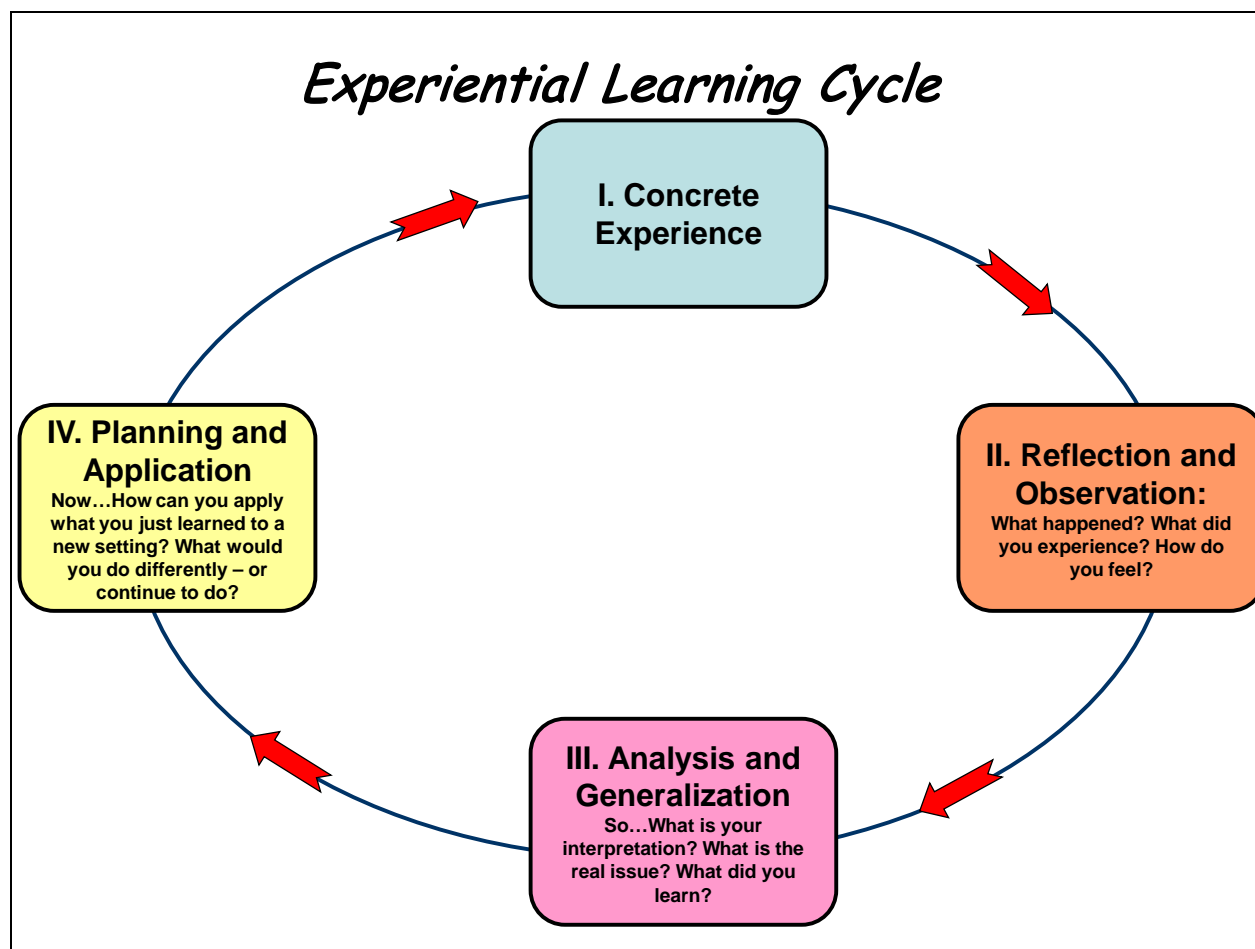
(For more information on the Experiential Learning Cycle, see *The Roles of the Volunteer in Development*. Toolkit One: Volunteer as Learner. [ICE No. T0005] and the *Nonformal Education (NFE) Manual*. [ICE No. M0042]

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Excerpts of a Lesson Plan Using Adult Learning Principles and the Experiential Learning Cycle – Namibia "Walk Around"*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Experiential Learning Cycle Poster*

The experiential leaning cycle also provides a foundation for understanding different learning styles and determining the stages of a lesson plan.

Learning Styles

Some trainees will thrive in the community discovering many things on their own, whereas others will appreciate the structure of planned experiences in the community. Still others will find reflecting after the real experience to be the most helpful to their learning. Those who prefer to learn from others or from books and other media have a chance to do that, too, as they work to make sense of what they experienced and strive to learn more from other sources in preparation of being more effective outside of the classroom.

Learning styles can be divided into four types: imaginative, analytic, common sense, and dynamic. These are summarized below.

Imaginative learners
- Perceive information concretely and process it reflectively.
- Integrate experience with the self; believe in their own experiences.
- Learn by listening and sharing ideas.
- Excel in viewing direct experience from many perspectives.
- Favor the question, "Why?"

Analytic learners
- Perceive information abstractly and process it reflectively.
- Devise theories.
- Often need to know what the experts think.
- Value sequential thinking and need details.
- Enjoy traditional classrooms.
- Favor the question, "What?"

Common sense learners
- Perceive information abstractly and process it actively.
- Integrate theory and practice.
- Learn by testing theories and applying common sense.
- Are problem-solvers; resent being given answers.
- Have a limited tolerance for fuzzy ideas; prefer to get right to the point.
- Favor the question, "How does it work?"

Dynamic learners
- Perceive information concretely and process it actively.
- Learn by trial and error.
- Excel when flexibility is needed; are adaptable and relish change.
- Are risk-takers.
- Enrich reality by taking what exists and adding something of themselves to it.
- Favor the question, "What if?"

Many posts conduct a learning-styles inventory of trainees during the first week of training, similar to the one linked at right.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Learning Styles Inventory*

Using the experiential learning cycle displayed on the next page to guide training design ensures that the needs of all four types of learners are met. Imaginative learners enjoy discussing their reactions to an experience; analytic learners relate a specific experience to other contexts; common sense learners focus on solving problems; and dynamic learners like experimenting and taking action. Volunteers of a particular learning style may prefer learning within one particular step of the experiential learning cycle. Trainers are reminded, however, that all learning styles should be considered during each step.

Experiential Learning Cycle and Learning Styles

I. Concrete Experience

Dynamic Learner

Imaginative Learner

IV. Planning and Application

II. Reflection and Observation

Common Sense Learner

Analytic Learner

III. Analysis and Generalization

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Experiential Learning Cycle Poster With Learning Styles*

Adult training lesson plan

Perhaps the clearest way to see the experiential learning cycle in practice to reflect learning styles is to use it as a guide in lesson planning. The four stages of a lesson plan—motivation, information, practice, and application—correspond with the four learning styles and four stages of the experiential learning cycle. These lesson plan stages have been adapted to Peace Corps from the 4MAT system created by Bernice McCarthy.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *4-MAT session plan outline short*

Ctrl + click for link to file: *Example Session Plan: Classroom Management, Armenia*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Session Plan: Foundations of 4-MAT Session Planning*

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Session Plan: Developing a Session Plan*

Experiential Learning Cycle and 4MAT Lesson Planning

I. Concrete Experience

Application

Motivation

IV. Planning and Application

II. Reflection and Observation

Practice

Information

III. Analysis and Generalization
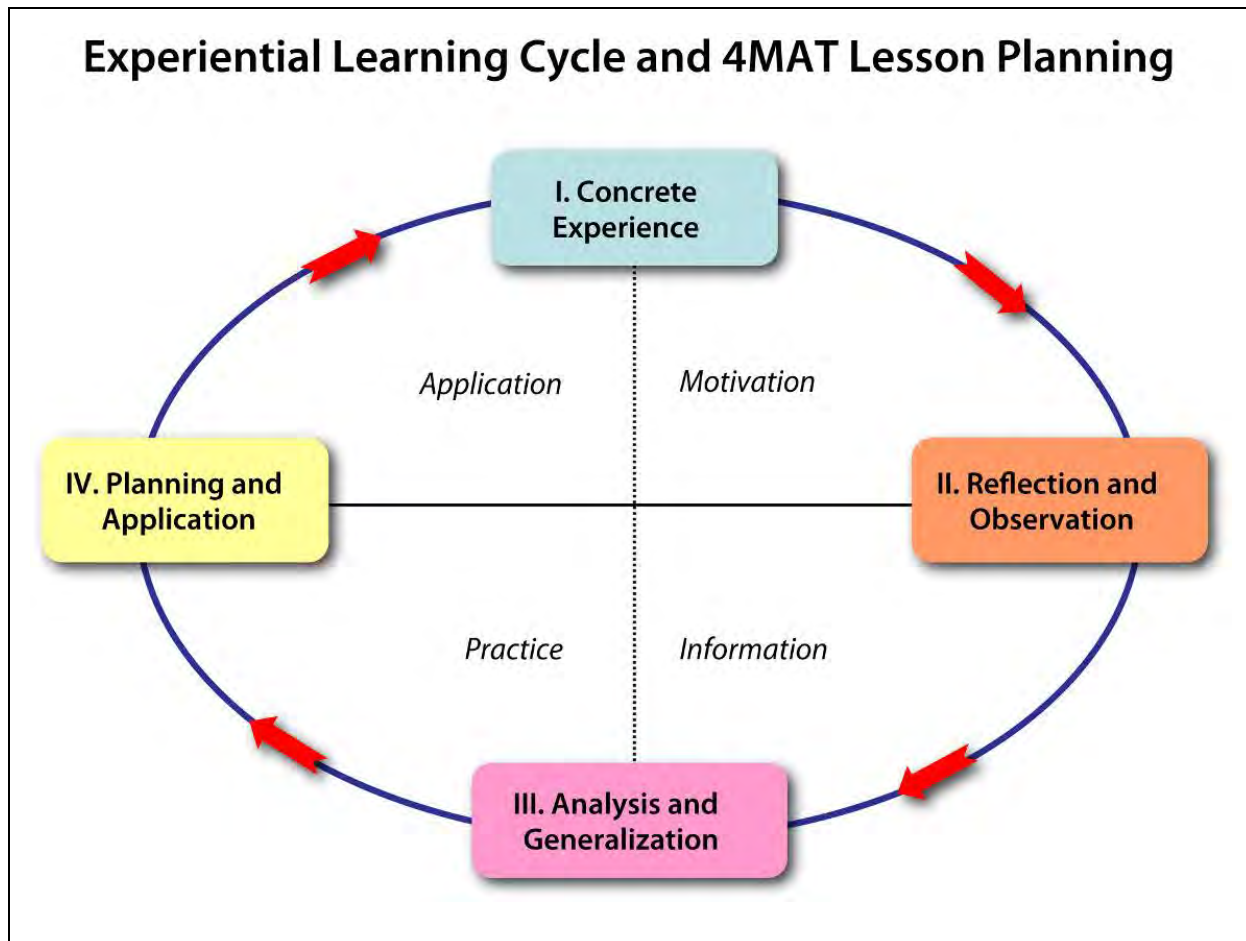
In the **motivation stage** of the lesson, participants are introduced to the lesson content in an engaging way. Imaginative learners often appreciate the reflection that takes place during this stage.

In the **information stage** of the lesson, the actual content is presented. Analytic learners have the opportunity to look at the content critically and interpret it in different contexts.

In the **practice stage**, participants apply what they have learned, often in a controlled environment. Common sense learners enjoy using their problem-solving skills during this stage.

In the **application stage**, participants take action by applying what they have learned to new experiences. Dynamic learners are more comfortable taking risks and appreciate the opportunity to learn by doing.

Thus, the experiential learning cycle provides the foundation for processing real-life experiences and debriefing learners who undergo them, meeting the needs of various types of learners, and designing comprehensive lesson plans. For more information on debriefing, see Step 6: Implement Training, Section G.2 Debriefing.

Materials in this section are adapted with permission from McCarthy, Bernice. About Teaching: 4MAT in the Classroom. *(2000) About Learning: Wauconda, IL. Pages 9–11, 31–45, 195–197.*

F.1.5 Choosing Methods to Achieve Learning Objectives

With the macro-strategy in mind, trainers then develop the micro-strategies, which focus on specific sessions, training events, teaching methods, and materials.

Micro-strategy is a set of concrete and specific teaching methods to include demonstration, case studies, grammar practice exercises, cooperative group projects, guided field trips, worksheets and exercise templates, independent reading, etc. Instructors can exercise their creativity to select and combine methods according to the types of learning objectives in a specific lesson or learning unit.

Some general examples of selecting a method:

For knowledge-type objectives, instructors may choose independent reading, followed by various guided practice activities to reinforce the knowledge.

For skills-type objectives, instructors may choose to demonstrate skills in different contexts, followed by analysis, and a lot of hands-on practice. Skill demonstrations through videos and role-plays, case studies, and guided practical exercises are favored.

For attitude-type objectives, instructors may choose methods such as simulations, role-plays and skits, reflective discussions, journaling, and panel discussions.

Example:

From Costa Rica, combining knowledge and skills that come from language, cross-cultural, and medical components:

Competency: Commit to professionalism and a spirit of service.
Learning objective: Before going on his or her site visit in PST, each of the trainees will demonstrate at least three culturally appropriate ways to decline a serving of alcohol.

Learning methods:
- Vocabulary drills
- Medical session on cultural issues about alcohol use or abuse
- Observation of local people's behavior
- Trainee practices and demonstration of declining alcohol as part of cultural simulation "stations"

Choosing Training Methods

Following, and linked, are two charts of micro-strategies (teaching methods) used to address different learning domains (KSAs). Some of the methods are used in the classroom while others are good choices for application activities outside of the classroom. A complete set with detailed descriptions can be found in the *Nonformal Education (NFE) Manual* (ICE No. M0042).

Chart A: Classification of methods by teaching knowledge, skill, or attitude

KSAs	Training methods	Evaluation activities
Knowledge (K) – facts, concepts, rules, procedures, terms, and vocabulary	Brainstorming; card sorting; case studies; discovery; jigsaw learning; learning contracts; lecturette; open space; panel discussions; participatory appraisal; small-group discussion; stories	Presentation; report; test; question-and-answer session; group project...
Skills (S) – psychomotor systems, actions, physical movements, coordination of motoric and manual processes	Community contact assignment; demonstration; field trip; games; internship/practicum; job shadowing; observations; project learning; role-play	Demonstration; group project; practicum; session/lesson plan, session delivery...
Attitudes (A) – feelings, values, appreciation, and beliefs	Appreciative inquiry; case studies; community contact assignment; discovery; drama/skit; field trip; fish bowl; games; journal writing; motivational speeches; role-play; visualization	Journal entry; presentation; story...

Chart B: Training methods with advantages, challenges, and KSA focus

Click to the right for a chart listing training methods, their advantages, challenges, and KSA focus. An example of information given for each method is shown below, and a list of the training methods included is given in the following table.

Case Studies. A case study is a written scenario that usually involves an important community situation. Since it is written beforehand, it can be specifically created to address relevant local issues.		*Knowledge*	*Skills*	*Attitudes*
	Objective Focus	●	●	●
Advantages	• Can match the necessary content well, as it is created for the learning activity • Allows participants to reflect first and then discuss and react, thus encompassing more than one learning style • Interactive and engaging				
Potential Challenges	• Requires a great deal of preparation to create an appropriate case study • Participants might feel limited to only those topics raised in the case study				

List of training methods included in Chart B

Learning method	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Learning method	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
Appreciative Inquiry	●		●	Journal Writing	●		●
Brainstorming	●		●	Learning Contracts	●	●	●
Card Sorting	●		●	Lecturette	●		●
Case Studies	●	●	●	Mentoring	●	●	●
Community Contact Assignment	●	●	●	Open Space	●		●

Learning method	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes	Learning method	Knowledge	Skills	Attitudes
Demonstration	●	●		Panel Discussions	●		●
Discovery	●	●	●	Participatory Appraisal Tools	●	●	●
Drama/Skit	●		●	Project Design and Management	●	●	●
Field Trip	●	●	●	Project Learning	●	●	●
Fish Bowl	●		●	Role-Play	●	●	●
Games	●	●	●	Shadowing	●	●	●
Internship/Practicum	●	●	●	Small Group Discussion	●	●	●
Interviews and observations	●	●	●	Stories	●		●
Jigsaw Learning	●	●	●	Visualization			●

F.1.6 Integrating Training Components

Once you have your general training calendar in place, you plan for specific training events. For example, staff develops a more detailed daily or weekly schedule of lessons and activities for PST, IST, and so on. As you plan training events, integrate training components, both within competencies and within individual sessions.

While developing the calendar of training and designing sessions, look for opportunities to reinforce or cover learning objectives from various components (as appropriate). For example, a language class—when learning honorific terms—could reinforce the importance of status and class in the society and link this to cross-cultural content from *Culture Matters* (such as high power distance). Another example is using the tasks from a project plan as a starting place from which to bring in KSAs from other areas that help in the accomplishment of that task.

Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Overcoming the Challenges of Integration***

In Benin, at a training of trainers workshop, staff identified some benefits of integration in the training design process as:
- less redundancy,
- more building on previous learning,
- better ability to train to multilevel classes, and
- more coordinated assessment of the learner's progress.

Example of integration of learning objectives for a lesson plan on purchasing food in the market

This is an example of integrated learning objectives for a four-hour PST time slot. The session in this example was designed to be facilitated by the LCF, but the integrated learning objectives require co-planning with the PCMO and SSC. Given the relevant medical and safety materials, the LCF can train to the specified learning objectives. In this case, trainees apply food-safety guidelines, integrated into the overall session on purchasing food in the market. The food safety guidelines may be introduced in a prior medical session or by medical staff during the beginning of this session.

> Learning objectives:
> - Trainees will apply at least two tips for avoiding theft in the marketplace learned in a prior session.
> - In a role-play, trainees will demonstrate how to deflect unwanted attention in a public context or within a host family.
> - Using a local recipe, trainees will select all ingredients necessary to prepare a dish.
> - Using culturally appropriate questioning techniques, trainees will negotiate the purchase of ingredients for less than the asking price.
> - Given food-safety guidelines, trainees will inquire about the quality of ingredients to purchase the freshest items available in the market.

Sample Week of PST COTE Designed Around Core and Sector Competencies and Learning Objectives

Integration of learning objectives will impact the design of the training calendar. A PST calendar designed around core and sector competencies and learning objectives might look like the one on the following page.

Tips for reading this table:

On Thursday morning at 1200, Core LO 1.10 means that this session covers
Competency 1: Survive, thrive, and integrate in the community
Learning Objective No. 10: Following a security officer panel discussion, trainees will be able to
  a) Identify five categories of security personnel.
  b) List two functions of each.
  c) List two dos and two don'ts at check points.

On Friday at 1700, HSC [Health Sector Competency] 1.14 means that this session covers

Health Sector Competency 1: Promote behavior change for health
Learning Objective No. 14: By the end of PST, based on PCV testimonies and applications outlined in the *Life Skills Manual*, trainees will demonstrate three effective strategies for teaching youth about a particular health or life challenge topic (e.g., sexual relationships, drugs/alcohol/tobacco, peer conflict) using a role-play within their training village group.

Week 3 Tendaba	Monday Feb 25	Tuesday Feb 26	Wednesday Feb 27	Thursday Feb 28	Friday Feb 29
7:00-8:00					
8:00-9:00	**Report unwanted behaviors and express coping strategies (Verbs & Tenses)** **CORE LO 1.2** *CC LCFs*	**Field Trip:** **CHN School, DHT** *DEPART 9:00 PC TRANSPORT* *HSC LO 1.7*	Depart for Tendaba at 7:30, Bikes: Wurokang & Bambako, Others: PC transport **PC staff depart for Tendaba at 10:00 PC transport**	*EAP* CORE LO 1.34 *CC* Alpha	*7:30-8:30* *Immunizations*
8:30-12:00						8:30-12:00 CNA Field Activity **Core LO 2.5**
9:00-10:00			*SC* *Kellie S.* *Sarah A.* Ansumana		Debrief Technical TDAs HSC LO 2.5 *SC* *Gibril & Ansumana*	
10:00-10:15	*Break*					*Gibril, Steph, Rachel, Ansumana, LCFs*
10:15-11:00	**(continued)** *CC LCFs*	*Field Trip Continues* **Visit to Kañeleŋ group** *HSC LO 1.7*	**Bike clinic** CORE LO 1.28 *Nick*	Common Health Problems & TDA Discusión CORE LO 1.9, 1.12, 1.13 *CC* **Aminatta**	
11:00-12:00	Applied Language in the Community CORE LOs 1.2, 1.16 *CC LCFs*				
12:00-13:00			**Debrief Village Experience & Cultural Adaptation** CORE LOs 1.14, 1.22 and 1.30 **CC Sarjo**	Security Personnel & Their Functions **Core LO 1.10** *CC* Alpha	**Strong Emotional Health, Nutrition & Fitness** **Core LO 1.19, 1.20** *CC Aminatta*
13:00-14:00					
14:00-15:00	**Practice Language With the Family** CORE LO1.15, 1.16	*Personal Time*	*Technical Fair: Malaria, Diarrhea, HIV/AIDS, Health Education Unit.* *HSC LO 1.5* *Core LO 1.33* **SC** *Guest speakers*	Technical Fair: EPI, Nutrition, Family Planning and Reproductive and Child Health HSC LO 1.7 **SC** *Guest speakers*	**Strong Emotional Health, Nutrition & Fitness** CORE LO 1.30 *CC Aminatta*
15:00-16:00	*Protocols & Strategies for Conducting Meetings* **Core LO 2.4**	Discuss stressors and coping strategies (Verbs & Tenses) CORE LO 1.30 *CC LCFs*			MCH and Breast Feeding Role-Play **HSC 1.10** *CC Tene*
16:00-17:00	*SC LCFs*		*Language Review* CORE LO1.2, 1.16 and 1.30 **CC** *LCFs*	*First Aid & Handling an Emergency at Site* *Core LO 1.12* *CC Aminata*	
17:00-18:00		*Visit Your Garden* *HSC LO 1.2* *CORE LO 1.19*	*1st Language Test* **Core LO 1.31** **CC Sarjo.LCFs**		Bednet Dipping & ORS **HSC LO 1.12** *SC Adam, Ansumana, Gibril*
18:00-19:00		*Personal Time*	*PC Staff Meeting*	Market Analysis **HSC LO 3.1** *Ansumana & Guest Speaker*	*Neem Cream* **HSC LO 1.15** *SC* **Adam, Ansumana, Gibril**

F.1.7 Developing Ongoing Learning

Ongoing learning is an integral part of the entire Volunteer training continuum. The desired outcome is for Volunteers to become lifelong learners who, after leaving PST, can plan their own learning, build their individual lessons, and select human resources (tutors, mentors, informants) and materials (books, worksheets, dictionaries, audio) available in the community. Volunteers select and practice learning strategies that are most appropriate for their individual learning styles, preferences, and living or working environments. In short, PST is a time to teach Volunteers to plan and implement their own ongoing learning.

Ctrl + click for
Peace Corps Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning Manual – ICE No. M0064

An effective ongoing learning system is modeled early in PST and uses an appropriate combination of (1) structured learning (ISTs, tutoring sessions, developing learning agreements, reflective discussions in groups) and (2) self-directed learning activities (self-identified technical exploration projects, skills exchange, independent language learning). Ongoing learners identify their personal learning styles and strategies, including the practice of meta-cognitive learning processes, goal-setting, capturing learning opportunities, structuring a learning lesson, finding and working with a tutor, securing materials, and building peer and community support.

With the rollout and implementation of the training design and evaluation (TDE) process at posts, there is no better time to structure ongoing language learning systematically. Training and programming staff can integrate ongoing, self-directed language learning into the 27-month Volunteer training cycle by spreading learning objectives throughout the cycle. It is also important to support ongoing learning by providing any necessary ingredients for Volunteers to become effective lifelong learners. See additional discussion and examples in the Part 4:*Management and Implementation* Guide, Section G.3.1.

Typical ways to implement ongoing learning systems:

- Assist Volunteers in developing an individual learning plan.
- Assist Volunteers in selecting individual learning strategies.
- Consider building a learning agreement with trainees during PST (link to the right).
- Discuss learning portfolio options with trainees.
- Compile post-specific guidelines for ongoing learning (link at right).
- Consider developing digital audio materials.
- Explore available reference materials and websites to share with trainees.

Ctrl + click for
Ongoing Language Learning Agreement Sample Template

Ctrl + click for
Ongoing Learning Guidelines Example: Bulgaria

It is important that Volunteers guide their ongoing learning based on the competencies and learning objectives set forth upon their arrival. Each Volunteer's ongoing learning experience will be individualized and will depend upon where he or she is in the process of achieving the learning objectives at each stage of service

Self-directed Learning

With the increased use of community-based training, many posts are building more and more self-directed activities into their COTE. In order to build self-reliance and confidence in trainees, and to strengthen the skills among Volunteers for effective ongoing learning at site, many posts increasingly use self-directed activities in the later weeks of PST (as well as in preparation for IST, MSC, and so on).

A learning activity is more or less self-directed, depending on how much of the decision-making is in the hands of the individual learners.

Ctrl + click for *Self-Directed Session Plan, Benin*

For instance, the learner may be responsible for…

I. Deciding what to learn
1. Assess your needs
2. Set goals

II. Developing a lesson
1. Focus attention: What should I select, pay attention to?
2. Comprehend: How can I make sense of this?
3. Remember: How will I remember it?
4. Check for accuracy.

III. Practicing

How can I use this learning or these skills in my daily work?

IV. Applying new skills in the community

In the community, are there existing people through whom, or resources from which, I can enhance my skills or learn new ones?

V. Evaluating
1. Did I learn it?
2. Did my approach work?

During the first weeks of training, most trainee-directed activities (TDAs) are controlled by instructors (facilitators and other trainers). As trainees gather knowledge and experience, they should try to increase emphasis on trainee-directed activities, emphasizing community contact activities. By the end of training, many aspects will be directed by trainees. The exception to this principle is that competencies and the majority of related learning objectives are set by staff and stakeholders, not the trainee. However, once these competencies and learning objectives are accomplished, trainees are encouraged to pursue appropriate learning opportunities of their choosing. By the end of PST, the aim is to prepare the trainee for a life of mostly self-directed learning after swearing in and throughout service.

Some posts apply the principles of adult learning by allowing trainees to design their own alternative learning activities for certain learning objectives. Trainees meet with a training staff member to develop and document a plan that is appropriate to the specific learning objective(s). Periodically, the trainee checks in with the staff member to report his or her progress, discuss problems, and propose solutions. Two examples of self-directed activities during PST (and additional examples linked at right):

*   One trainee attended a one-week conference directly related to his work.

*   Two trainees with excellent language skills used their language hours to go down to the bus terminal and work with street kids.

As the PST coordinator in Peace Corps/Ecuador explains:

> *"By allowing trainees to take a more active role in both determining their needs and the ways they can meet these needs, we also hope to provide more opportunities for trainees to take initiative and work with greater independence, two qualities which are indispensable for effective service."*

When Peace Corps/Thailand first implemented a more self-directed approach, trainers found the transition challenging, but ultimately rewarding and much improved over previous trainings. One of the technical coordinators commented:

> *"In the beginning it was difficult and at times frustrating, not to have the staff-directed 'structured' plan that existed in previous programs from which to work. I felt the trainees needed more guidance in the first weeks and would have appreciated set sessions in which information and knowledge were given to them directly, a little more 'spoon feeding.' I realize now (as do the trainees) how vital those initial weeks were in terms of setting the stage for the type of learning and adapting this new training philosophy calls for. During the interviews and less formal discussions with the trainees I am continually impressed with their insights and observations in many aspects of Thai culture and everyday life. I believe the first three weeks, although difficult for staff, was a time of planting seeds for adult, self-directed learning to take place, and now the results are showing themselves and they are quite positive."*

Creating Learning Objectives for Ongoing Language Learning

Consider how you are helping language learners gain control over their own learning by incorporating materials and activities that address these six areas, discussed in detail in the *Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning Manual* (ICE No. M0064):

1. Attitude
2. Learning Style
3. Knowledge
4. Strategies
5. Lesson Planning
6. Managing Learning

> Ctrl + click for *Volunteer Ongoing Language Learning Manual* **(ICE No. M0064)**

Consider and discuss the following when applying the elements above to your training designs:
- Do all adult learners want to be self-directed all the time? In your experience, when do they, and when do they not?
- Is it appropriate for the Peace Corps to allow trainees to decide what methods they will use to accomplish certain learning objectives?
- How can you sequence the process from planned, to guided, to self-directed learning?
- How will you nurture curiosity, support motivation, and provide security for those who need it?
- How do you communicate to trainees the rationale of using competencies and learning objectives?
- How can you design learning activities and debriefings so that they build trainee and Volunteer independence (instead of over-dependence on staff and each other)?
- How do you address different learning styles and needs?
- How can you determine readiness for self-directed learning?
- Does it make sense to have some sessions and activities optional? How will you determine which ones?
- How could you set boundaries and accountability?
- How do you help trainees relate the learning to the reality of their service?

F.2 Considerations for Successful Completion of Step 5: Plan Training
- To what extent did you plan your training so it uses adult learning principles?
- To what extent did you plan your training so it uses the experiential learning cycle?
- To what extent did you choose a learning method best suited to achieve each learning objective?

- To what extent did you develop your calendar of training by first considering which learning objectives need to be covered in what order (and only after that considering other factors such as staff schedules and "how we have always done it.")?
- To what extent did you design learning methods to build the Volunteers' skills in ongoing learning?

F.3 Resources for the Training Continuum

All posts can benefit from the wealth of experience and resources that the Peace Corps has available through the Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) and from other posts. You can find a timeline of resources the Peace Corps provides for Volunteers in the continuum at right. The Peace Corps, through its Focus In/Train Up effort, is in the process of developing training packages. Check the latest Focus In/Train Up resources for well-written learning objectives, session plans, and assessment tools.

F.3.1 Resources for Invitees and at Staging

All invitees receive, as part of their information packet, a standard *Peace Corps Volunteer Handbook* (see link at right), and a Volunteer assignment description (VAD). Session plans used at staging can be found on the Intranet (see link at right).

F.3.2 Resources for PST

Some activities that posts have found effective during PST are:

- Trainee visits to their future sites: Note that this can be an emotionally intense experience, so facilitated debriefing is important (see link at right)
- Orientation (or "counterpart") days/workshop: This is to clarify roles and expectations, policies and procedures, and for trainees to get to know their colleagues and initial planning for the first several months at site. See ICE No. T0121: *Working With Supervisors and Counterparts* for suggestions on content and sample sessions. This resource also has a digital model of a counterpart/supervisor handbook with standard Peace Corps language already in it. Posts can just add their specific information and print them.
- Practice with community assessment assignment (diagnostic): Integrating practical use of PACA and project assessment tools is an excellent way to integrate language, technical, and culture training in PST, while preparing Volunteers for an effective first six months of service.
- Sessions that provide ideas for Peace Corps Goals Two and Three

Also see Section G.2: Debriefing for more examples of debriefing sessions for PST. Some Peace Corps resources available to support training in core competencies that posts have found useful for PST are summarized in the following tables:

Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: *Focus In / Train Up*

Ctrl + click for: *Timeline of Resources for all Volunteers*

Ctrl + click for: *ICE Pick: Index of the Most Popular ICE Publications*

Ctrl + click for link to file: *Peace Corps Volunteer Handbook 2009*

Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for current staging session plans and materials.

Ctrl + click for link to file *ICE No. T0121: Working With Supervisors and Counterparts*

Ctrl + click for link to file *Site Visit Debriefing Session Plan*

Ctrl + click for link to file *Goals 2 and 3 activities to encourage*

Ctrl + click for link to file *PST Swearing-in Speech*

Competency: Balance cultural integration with personal well-being

Title	Link
Peer Counseling Training is a trainer's guide for basic skills in listening, communication, counseling, and problem solving. Note that these skills are valuable not only for peer supporters, but also for development facilitators.	*Peer Counseling Training*
Bulgaria Community Entry Passport: An example of an activity and assessment tool for gaining cultural understanding.	Ctrl + click for: *Bulgaria Community Entry Passport*
Diversity Training Modules for Pre-Service Training (ICE No. T0129) These training modules help to build mutual support and community among trainees, and also support the development of strategies for community integration and project success.	Ctrl + click for: *Diversity Training Modules for PST (ICE No. T0129)*
Training for Resiliency (ICE No. T0138K) This contains 13 sessions which can be used alone or in various combinations that meet Volunteer needs at various times during the training cycle.	*Training for Resiliency (ICE No. T0138K)* *List of training resources to support Volunteer resiliency*
A Few Minor Adjustments Prepared by the Counseling and Outreach Unit (known as the Office of Special Services at the time of publication of the document), this resource addresses cultural adjustment issues.	*A Few Minor Adjustments*
On the Home Front Prepared by the Counseling and Outreach Unit (known as the Office of Special Services at the time of publication), this booklet is distributed to the families of Volunteers to learn about life for Volunteers while serving and upon returning to the United States.	*On the Home Front*
A Volunteer's Guide to Community Entry: Learning Local Environmental Knowledge (ICE No. M0071) This handbook provides Volunteers in any sector with a structured way to learn about the biophysical, economic, and social aspects of a host community during pre-service training and the initial months of service.	*ICE No. M0071*

Title	Link
Culture Matters: (ICE No. T0087) This interactive workbook guides the reader through the cross-cultural experience, the major concepts in the intercultural field, and presents exercises, stories, quotations and descriptive text designed to aid the Volunteer in successfully adapting to a new culture. Spanish version - *La Cultura Sí Importa* (ICE No. T0120) *Trainers' Guide* (ICE No. T0103)	*ICE No. T0087* *ICE No. T0120* *ICE No. T0103*
Host Families Matter: The Homestay Manual (ICE No. T0106) This manual outlines the components of a successful homestay program, based on the experiences of staff throughout the field. The manual provides information about planning, organization, and management, and functions as a workbook that can be adapted to the needs of each specific post. The manual also addresses such topics as family selection, medical and financial issues, and training issues, and includes sample evaluation forms and session plans.	*ICE No. T0106*
"A Slice of Life Trainers Guide" This "slice of life" video was used until 2008 at staging to set the stage for discussions about dealing with unwanted attention. The trainer's guide is a useful reference for planning training addressing safety KSAs.	*A Slice of Life Trainer's Guide*
American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Speaking proficiency guidelines.	*ACTFL speaking proficiency guidelines, 1999*
Foundations of Language Training Design: This section will provide language and cross-cultural coordinators (LCCs) with foundational information on language training design and will help them explain Peace Corps' training design system to LCFs who often, due to short-term contracts, cannot fully participate in the TDE process at post. Methods and Approaches for Language Training: This section describes six major language teaching and learning approaches and methods that can be used when developing language sessions, activities and materials: (1) the Communicative Approach; (2) the Audio Lingual Method; (3) Task-based Language Teaching; (4) Content-based Instruction; (5) Cooperative Language Learning; and (6) Total Physical Response (TPR). This list is not exhaustive. PC approach to cross-cultural training: This section contains descriptions and definitions of the three areas of cross-cultural training: (1) culture general; (2) culture specific; and (3) adaptation and self-knowledge Selected language teaching techniques: This section provides samples of teaching techniques for different language proficiency levels and different segments. Each technique is described, including whether it targets knowledge, skills, or attitudes. The advantages and disadvantages of each technique are presented.	*Foundations of Language Training Design* *Methods and Approaches for Language Training* *PC Approaches to cross-cultural training*

Title	Link
Language lesson plan template	***Selected language teaching techniques***
	Language lesson plan template
Language training strategies for 50+ Learners: Older language learners vary in their readiness to learn foreign languages. Learning styles and preferences, life experiences, bilingualism, and past history of learning other languages greatly influence each individual's aptitude to learn a new language. Georgetown University researchers, together with the National Institute on Aging, presented a discussion on several cognitive aspects that tend to change as we age.	***Language training for 50+ Learners***
Foundations of Differentiated Learning: This handout addresses the reasons (why) and the categories (what) in designing differentiated learning. Practical examples on teaching specific language skills and tasks through a differentiated process are provided.	***Foundations of differentiated learning***
Differentiating instruction by Bloom's Taxonomy: This handout discusses how we develop differentiated learning objectives and matching instructional tasks through Bloom's Taxonomy. Bloom's Taxonomy lists different levels of cognitive skills that can be used to sequence learning from simpler to complex and help learners to progress from knowledge and comprehension to application and evaluation as they practice foreign language skills.	***Differentiated instruction by Bloom's taxonomy***
Corruption and Transparency as Development Issues: Training Modules for Staff and Volunteers (ICE No. T0137K) (pre-service and in-service training) These modules may be used to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of Volunteers so they may safely accomplish project goals in challenging environments where corruption is present.	***ICE No. T0137K***

Competency: Facilitate Grassroots Community Development

Title	*Link*
Roles of the Volunteer in Development (ICE No. T0005) This publication contains seven booklets, all of which help maximize Peace Corps Volunteers' effectiveness by addressing a different aspect of the capacity-building roles that Volunteers play.	*ICE No. T0005*
Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual (ICE No. M0053) This is a core resource for posts. PACA training helps Volunteers understand gender and development; develop culturally appropriate observation, interviewing, and facilitation skills; use participatory processes to build partnerships with their communities in the development process; conduct community mapping; put together seasonal calendars; and conduct needs assessment and priority ranking activities effectively. Additional sessions help Volunteers and their communities move from analysis into projects to address their needs. Designed to be paired with … *Idea Book Series: PACA: Using Participatory Analysis for Community Action* (ICE No. M0086)	*ICE No. M0053* *ICE No. M0086*
Promoting Powerful People: A Process for Change (ICE No. T0104) This publication is a training manual that promotes a three-step process for helping people help themselves: listen and observe, discuss and decide, try something. It focuses on the skills Volunteers need to learn to communicate effectively with community members. Whereas the sample content is nutrition, the manual includes basic ideas for modifying sessions to use in other technical areas. It is a good resource for pre-service training and adaptable to any country. It also has a section on using community radio as a communications and development tool, including how to develop radio scripts.	*ICE No. T0104*
Working With Supervisors and Counterparts (ICE No. T0121) Part I addresses the importance of working with supervisors and counterparts in capacity-building partnerships; provides various ways in which the partner relationships may be defined; and indicates how these local partners can be included in the two-year programming and training cycle of a Volunteer. Part II provides a sample one-day workshop for supervisors and counterparts, as well as additional training ideas and sessions. Part III is a sample handbook for supervisors and counterparts that provides a template, standard information, and suggested post-specific information.	*ICE No. T0121*

Title	Link

Session plans from the Dominican Republic:
 	
    Lessons learned in development
    Concepts of development
    Peace Corps philosophy of development
	Lessons learned
	
	Concepts of development
	
	Philosophy of development

Nonformal Education (NFE) Manual (ICE No. M0042) The content of the NFE manual is grounded in the theory and practice of some of the great educational thinkers of our time, including Paolo Freire, Howard Gardner, David Kolb, Malcolm Knowles, and Bernice McCarthy. This manual will help any Volunteer who has to teach, train, or facilitate in the field.	*ICE No. M0042*
Life Skills Manual This manual provides a comprehensive approach to developing skills needed for life, such as communication, decision making, and relationship skills. It addresses development of the whole person, including empowering girls and guiding boys toward new values. It also includes 10 session plans that provide factual information on HIV/AIDS and STDs. (ICE No. M0063 – English) (ICE No. M0065 [Swahili – hard copy only]) (ICE No. M0066 – French) (ICE No. M0072 – Spanish)	*ICE No. M0063: English* *ICE No. M0066: French* *ICE No. M0072: Spanish*
Developing Classroom Materials for Less Commonly Taught Languages, University of Minnesota, (ICE No. TR 136) This book helps language teachers turn authentic "raw materials" into activities for the language classroom. Using authentic materials is important because it helps language learners overcome the anxiety of seeing and hearing the target language in use. The book provides an initial chapter on materials development, and then chapters on how to use written texts, audio materials, video materials, and pictures.	Available in hard copy only.

Title	*Link*
Behavior Change References These resources can be helpful for Volunteers in understanding and applying behavior change principles in their work.	*8 Step Behavior Change (Tipping Pt)*
	One-Day Behavior change course
	Barrier Analysis Facilitators Guide
	PowerPoint on Behavior Change
	The New "P-Process" Steps in Strategic Communication
	DBC 6 Day Workshop CORE Group Curricula English
	DBC 6 Day Spanish
PowerPoint: public speaking	*Public Speaking ppt*
Working With Youth (ICE No. M0067) Volunteers' roles are discussed in working directly with youth and enhancing the effectiveness of youth-focused nongovernmental organizations. Chapters lead the reader through planning, implementing, and evaluating youth activities; using appropriate tools, techniques, and games; and adapting many health, education, and leadership activities for youth submitted by Volunteers working around the world.	*ICE No. M0067*
V2 Volunteerism Action Guide (ICE No. CD062) The *V2 Volunteerism Action Guide* is a resource for Volunteers and their community partners to plan, design, implement, and assess local service or volunteerism activities. The aim of the document is to support existing or new host country volunteerism efforts. Applying a service learning approach when possible, this publication shows Volunteers how to add value to their capacity-building work by helping participants in Volunteer activities to identify service learning objectives and integrate reflection (learning) in their work.	*ICE No. CD062 English version* *ICE No. CD063 Spanish version*

Title	Link
HIV/AIDS Training Resource Kit CD-ROM, (ICE No.T0136K) The *HIV/AIDS Training Resource Kit CD-ROM* (accompanied by nine booklets) is a comprehensive set of training resources for posts. It provides session plans, fact sheets, and other resources to help tailor HIV/AIDS training in pre-service training and in-service training to the needs of various groups of trainees and Volunteers. Many of the training modules can be used for Volunteers working in other areas as well, such the modules on behavior change, assessment analysis and prioritizing activities, awareness raising and extension activities, and building partnerships.	Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for HIV/AIDS training resource kit ICE No. T0136K
Income Generation Training Manual (for Volunteers in all sectors) This facilitator's manual is for use in pre-service or in-service training of Volunteers and counterparts in the very basics of starting or developing an income-generating activity. The manual was designed for use in cross-sector training. Training modules can be adapted for any post on any continent.	***Income Generation Training Manual***
Village Savings and Loan Association Manual (for Volunteers in all sectors) This easy-to-use manual provides an overview of the model, and the complete training program to facilitate the setup and management of successful savings-led village banks. Available in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese	***VSLAM English*** ***VSLAM French*** ***VSLAM Spanish*** ***VSLAM Portuguese***
Idea Book Series: Small Project Assistance Program: Supporting Sustainable Community Development (ICE No. M0082*)* This idea book shares specific examples of how Volunteers have transferred skills and built capacity through "hands-on" projects with their communities.	***SPA Idea Book***

F.3.3 Resources for Learning and Events Following PST

As staff members design training events for Volunteers and, when possible, community partners that follow PST, they answer questions such as:

- How well are Volunteers performing their jobs?
- How effectively are they integrating into their communities?
- What additional KSAs do they need?
- How can these needs best be addressed?
- How can we involve work partners so they are able to work more effectively with Volunteers?

The resource linked at right may be helpful as staff consider Volunteers' perspectives in preparation of in-service trainings and mid-service conferences.

Remember that a portion of these conferences should intentionally be designed for Volunteers to provide facilitated, nonjudgmental opportunities to process both technical and emotional challenges, and to develop strategies for coping with or addressing them. A sample tool that proved helpful to Volunteers in Senegal was for experienced Volunteers to share with others their strategies in facing challenges throughout their 27 months at post (link at right on previous page). The training materials in *Corruption and Transparency as Development Issues* (ICE No. T0137K) have an IST module, and the *Training for Resiliency* (ICE No. T0138K) has sessions appropriate for ISTs. Refer to Management and Implementation Section F.1: Understanding Volunteer Hopes and Challenges.

Ctrl + click for link to file for *4-MAT workshop design*	
Ctrl + click for link to file *tips for designing ISTs and the mid-service conference.*	
Ctrl + click for link to file *Senegal – critical periods in the life of a Volunteer.*	

Ongoing Learning

Volunteer On-going Language Learning Manual (ICE No. M0064) This publication teaches Peace Corps language learners to determine their favored learning style and how to identify and reflect on learning style, attitudes, and motivation. It describes various strategies for learning a language outside of formal instruction. This manual is designed as a self-study aid to help Peace Corps Volunteers develop new language skills throughout their service.	*Ongoing Language Learning Manual – ICE No. M0064*
See other resources in Section F.1.7 Developing Ongoing Learning	

"Reconnect" IST

The reconnect IST is the first in-service training and is generally held three to six months after PST and usually lasts three or four days. The purpose of this IST is to reinforce the language and technical skills that were presented during PST. It is also an opportunity to learn new information and skills. IST includes content that reflects needs observed during staff field visits. It also reflects input from Volunteers and work partners. At some posts, staff bring Volunteers together from the same sector but from different groups. This is also an opportunity to review and update a Volunteer's ongoing learning strategy and to support the Volunteer to identify resources in the community that will help him or her to continue building new skills. In many cases, IST is an opportunity for Volunteers and their work partners to work together on common projects or topics.

Typical topics covered at IST follow.

Administrative, policy, language, adjustment, health, and safety issues:
- Honing technical and/or native language skills
- Challenges/successes in cultural adjustment
- Dealing with uncomfortable situations, e.g., ethics, abuse, alcoholism, etc.
- Peer support techniques—listening skills
- Health and safety topics
- Immunizations
- Policies
- Administrative issues and processes

Work-related issues:
- A review of the first three to six months—results of community assessment assignments, accomplishments, and challenges
- Description of the role gender plays in developing and carrying out a project (e.g., division of labor, access to resources, power relations, etc.)
- Update on project—activities, project review, individual meetings with staff
- Working with partners/counterparts, problem solving
- Funding sources
- NGOs—how to work with them
- Technical competencies as identified by Volunteers and staff, sometimes entirely or in part in an open-space forum
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Cross-sectoral collaboration opportunities
- Ideas for secondary activities and summer activities
- Plans for the next nine months

Some posts have chosen to schedule reconnect IST and PDM at the same time so work partners can share the results of the Volunteer community/sector assessment and jointly plan for the coming year.

Project Design and Management Workshop
This training manual is based on a one and one-half- to four-day workshop that reinforces the importance of community participation in all local projects. Sessions show Volunteers and their partners/counterparts how to involve and work with the community

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Ctrl + click for link to file for session plan: *Strengthening Capacity Building*

Ctrl + click for *Open Space Technology*

Ctrl + click for *Above and Beyond: Secondary Activities for Peace Corps Volunteers (ICE No. M0052)*

Ctrl + click for *Tales from Open Space (ICE No. T0089)*

Ctrl + click for *Libraries for All! How to Start and Run a Basic Library (ICE No. RE035)*

Ctrl + click for *Sources of Donated Books (ICE No. RE003)*

FROM THE FIELD

Informal Learning

During an IST in Mozambique, Volunteers and their counterparts, along with host–country and American staff members, held informal "fogueiras" (nighttime fireside discussions) on topics of their choosing. Topics included American and Mozambican diversity, history, and different cultural aspects. Based on the active participation, staff members felt that these informal sessions were highly effective.

through each step of the project design process, from analysis of community assets and needs to planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The initial sessions can be covered in pre-service training.

Ctrl + click for link to file *ICE No. T0107:* *New Project Design and* *Management Workshop* *Training Manual*	Ctrl + click for link to file *ICE No. T0128:* *Le Nouveau Manuel de* *Formation sur L'Elaboration* *et la Gestion des Projets*	Ctrl + click for link to file *ICE No. T0127:* *El Nuevo Manual de* *Capacitación en Diseño y* *Manejo de Proyectos*

PDM can be an opportunity to address work partner learning objectives, including monitoring and evaluation.

Ctrl + click for link to file for session plan: *The Year Ahead*

Midservice Training
The midservice training conference is generally held 12 months after PST. While the midservice point in service is important for reviewing the successes and challenges of Volunteers' service, sharing ideas, and providing additional skills and support as necessary, it is a challenging conference to do well. The individual meetings that take place are usually the most valuable component of this conference. It is also an opportunity to gather feedback from Volunteers on the project and training.

Typical topics covered at midservice training:
- A review of the last year—accomplishments and challenges (both in plenary sessions and through individual meetings with programming staff)
- Strategies to cope with and overcome challenges
- Stress management, time management
- Cross-sectoral collaboration
- Cultural exchange ideas
- Updates on the situation in ministries and the country's politics and economy
- Update on Peace Corps policies
- Review of the project plan, task analysis, training competencies, and learning objectives
- Targeted technical skills (often in open-space format)
- Health and safety topics
- Immunizations
- Plans for the next year, with a focus on sustainability

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

TOT prior to COS
In Panama, programming staff hold a three–day business training of trainers (TOT) in the second year of the Volunteers' service to benefit them and their community partners/work partners. It takes place three to six months prior to the Volunteers' COS. The purpose of the TOT is to increase the partners' facilitation skills and provide them with specific business-training techniques so they can continue the Volunteers' work after the Volunteers leave. The workshop not only validates the contributions of the partners, but also demonstrates the Peace Corps' trust that they have the ability to continue the activities that they and the Volunteers have started. Before the workshop ends, the Volunteers and their partners develop action plans of activities to accomplish before the Volunteers leave.

COS Conference
The purpose of the COS conference is to prepare Volunteers to close out their service, both administratively and in their communities; look at the transition ahead, including their re-entry into U.S. culture; and anticipate whatever comes next for them—higher education, the job market, retirement. Some posts invite partners/counterparts for part of the conference so they can plan with Volunteers how projects will be sustainable after the Volunteers leave. Peace Corps staff use the COS conference to obtain feedback on projects, training, and issues such as Volunteer support. They also engage Volunteers in planning how they can support Peace Corps Goal Three, taking the world back home. The two- to four-day conference is usually held three to four months prior to the end of service.

Ctrl + click for link to file *Close of Service (COS) Trainer's Handbook* **(ICE No. T0007)**

An activity that posts have found effective during the COS conference—which is useful to new Volunteer support:

- Challenges map: Volunteers map out issues they faced in their service by month, their feelings, and successful strategies they used to address those issues. This exercise is valuable to the COSing Volunteers because they value their experience. The output is helpful to trainees who respect the experience of their peers. [This is not in the COS material.]

Ctrl + click for link to file *Senegal – critical periods in the life of a Volunteer*

The *Close of Service (COS) Trainers' Handbook* is designed for use by Peace Corps staff and trainers who facilitate close of service (COS) workshops. It provides resources to assist novice and experienced trainers in preparing for and conducting a successful workshop, and gives an overview in addition to specific guidelines. The manual also contains a sample detailed training design for a three- or four-day workshop.

Ctrl + click for link to file *Goal 3 Resources to Share at COS*

Ctrl + click for link to file for *On the Home Front*

In addition to the *Close of Service (COS) Trainer's Handbook*, staff may also review, in preparation for the COS conference:

- *On the Home Front* (from OSS): Training staff may want to review this handbook as a reference for COS. Some Volunteers have observed that their family members knew more about adjustment to returning home than they did because their families read this booklet.
- COS Kits: Provided to posts for distributing to Volunteers at the COS conference

Ctrl + click for link to file for *Finding the Jobs (compilation of links)*

Other ISTs
A resource that may be useful for an IST with a behavior change focus is linked at right.

Ctrl + click for link to file for *Designing for Behavior Change Workshop Curricula, CORE Group, Spanish*

G. Step 6: Implement Training

It is in the implementation step that the trainees or Volunteers learn the KSAs they need to succeed. This step defines the interaction between learners, trainers, learning objectives, the activities and materials, and the learning environment. The implementation of training may take several forms: trainer facilitated face-to-face learning; trainer- or peer-facilitated distance learning; or self-directed learning individually or in groups. Implementation of learning activities is ongoing and happens before and throughout the Volunteer's entire service.

In this step you will find information and handouts on the following topics:
- Presenting and facilitating
- Debriefing
- Giving feedback

In Part 4: *Management and Implementation*, you will find information on
- Staffing
- Training of trainers
- Logistics and budgeting

G.1 Presenting and Facilitating

Skilled presenters and facilitators establish credibility with the learners. By demonstrating expertise in the content area, using effective training skills, and describing clearly how the training goals and learning objectives relate to improving the learners' performance, the trainer establishes his or her credibility and, thus, inspires learners. This also relates to the adult learning principle of accountability (referenced in Step Five) because the training responds to learners' needs.

To establish credibility, you should
- Review the training session ahead of time and allow time for your own preparation.
- Describe the design of the training course and the learning objectives clearly and thoroughly.
- Explain roles, responsibilities, expectations, and group norms clearly.
- Model positive behavior and attitudes that support the learning objectives.

Skilled presenters and facilitators conduct training in a responsive and collaborative way. Training is much more than the trainer standing in front of the room, lecturing to a group of learners. Effective training means the learners are partners in the learning experience and actively engaged in learning new knowledge and skills. To accomplish this partnership, you must implement the principles of adult learning discussed in the previous steps. You need to balance the training plan with the more immediate interests of the learners (e.g., if they want to talk about other topics or learn different skills) while ensuring that training goals and learning objectives are accomplished in the end.

To create a responsive and collaborative learning environment, you should
- Model and encourage constructive and respectful relationships.
- Provide opportunities for learners to share their expectations.
- Respect and build on the knowledge and skills of learners.
- Encourage the learners to ask questions.
- Encourage learners to explain the training content and their learning to their peers.
- Create a climate of fun by doing things the learners enjoy or find engaging.

Skilled presenters and facilitators create a safe learning environment where learners feel comfortable to try out new ideas, learn from others, explore new viewpoints, and change attitudes and behaviors. A safe learning environment includes all learners, respects everyone's viewpoints, and supports the learners and their needs.

To create a safe learning environment, you should
- Respond politely to naive questions.
- Respect answers and viewpoints different from yours, not belittle learners or other trainers, and offer feedback in ways that are socially appropriate for the learners in the training.
- Encourage learners to try out new behaviors and skills, and provide encouragement and positive feedback when they do.
- Manage any negative individual or group behaviors.

- Help learners to feel comfortable in order to fully participate in the training and learn from one another, as well as from the trainer.
- Help and encourage the learners to look at situations from different perspectives.
- Provide opportunities for learners to answer questions raised by their peers.
- Celebrate "small wins" and positive progress with the whole group.

Skilled presenters and facilitators use effective presentation methods. Use a variety of learning methods and presentation techniques, even during a single session, to engage learners' different styles, keep their energy levels high, maintain interest, and avoid a repetitive training style. Oral and written presentations during sessions should be short and to the point.

To use effective presentation methods, you should
- Give clear and concise directions.
- Explain concepts and procedures clearly.
- Use memorable or vivid examples to illustrate key points.
- Use voice, gestures, silence, movement, posture, space, and appropriate equipment, supplies, and other objects to support and enhance learning.
- Use a variety of methods to reinforce learning.
- Change the presentation approach in response to cues from learners, while still ensuring that learning objectives are met.

Skilled presenters and facilitators use effective facilitation techniques. Common facilitation techniques include summarizing, clarifying, paraphrasing, acknowledging, questioning, and directing learners' contributions to other learners and the group as a whole. Learning methods requiring facilitation skills include small-group activities, case studies, role-plays, games, and discussions.

To use effective facilitation techniques, you should
- Summarize or conclude learning experiences by asking questions about the experience, comparing learners' responses, and helping them to draw conclusions.
- Use techniques such as learning journals, action plans, and peer support to identify ways to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills.
- Ensure application of knowledge and skills by providing appropriate learning opportunities drawn from real-life experiences, such as simulations, role-playing, games, and case studies.
- Assist learners with planning how they will apply their new knowledge and skills.
- Support learners to build their own learning strategies.

Skilled presenters and facilitators check learners' understanding and provide feedback. This can be done by asking learners to rephrase and summarize key messages and also by observing them while they practice applying new knowledge and skills. The trainer should continually monitor the learners' interest and understanding of the content and modify learning methods as needed.

To check learners' understanding and provide feedback, you should
- Monitor the process of training and make adjustments, as needed.
- Listen to and watch learners for evidence of learning and engagement.
- Continually assess learners' progress to help them achieve the learning objectives.
- Gather information informally by asking questions during breaks and meals, providing time for comments on the previous day's learning or daily summaries, and conducting exercises reflecting on the day's content. When problems arise or changes must be made, adjust the course schedule and proceed accordingly.

- Make changes in session designs based on how well learners are accomplishing the learning objectives, on your direct observations, and on learners' feedback.
- Provide opportunities for practical application of knowledge and skills. Learners must have opportunities to practice their new knowledge and skills in a realistic setting. This is the only way they will be able to apply (or transfer) their learning to their actual worksite.
- Link conceptual approaches to real-world applications. Give feedback based on guided practice whenever possible.

Who should be involved?

Everyone who delivers a training session or helps to develop important KSAs in trainees and Volunteers.

Dos and Don'ts for Facilitators (from Peace Corps/Albania)

Do	*Don't*
- Know the material before doing the session. - Exude confidence: be clear, enthusiastic, breathe! - Ensure gender issues are being integrated into the material. - Use humor, stories, and examples that directly relate to their work. - Select an appropriate activity that will meet the needs of your group and have lots of enjoyable energizers/icebreakers on hand. - Use lots of visually appealing handouts and flip charts. - Determine needed supplies, room requirements, and chair setup. - Think through the exercise and visualize potential problems and pitfalls. - Allot enough time for activities. - Clearly explain activity directions and be prepared for questions. - Observe individual participation and involvement during exercises. - Be aware of individuals who may be uncomfortable or not participating. - Follow up the exercise with discussion. - Process activities to reveal the thoughts and feelings not expressed previously. - Be available to talk with participants during break times and outside of training. - Evaluate needs of the group, especially at the end of the day, to see what you can change for the next day. - Evaluate the experience and write down notes for future trainings.	- Impose a solution on the group. - Downplay people's ideas. - Push personal agendas and opinions as the "right" answer. - Dominate the group. - Say "um" or "ah" repeatedly. - Read from a manuscript. - Tell inappropriate or offensive stories. - Make up an answer. - Allow people to bully others in the group. - Take a stance with one section of the group. - Tell too much about your personal experience and life. - Assume the demographics of your group (based on appearance). Ctrl + click for *Participatory Analysis for Community Action (PACA) Training Manual (ICE No. M0053)* — *see Pages 83-89 on facilitation*

Self–evaluation of Facilitation

The document linked below can be used to assess your skills as a trainer or presenter. It also may be helpful to review it before presenting or facilitating a session.

Ctrl + click for link to file for *WID/GAD Observation and Facilitation Skills*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Facilitator Self-Evaluation Checklist*	Ctrl + click for link to file for *Self-evaluation of group facilitation*

G.2 Debriefing

One of the widely respected aspects of Peace Corps training is the community-based approach in which trainees live with host families and are immersed in the local culture. This authentic learning environment provides countless opportunities for experiential learning. However, it is essential to note that experience does not equal understanding. For example, just living in a particular culture does not mean that learners have the tools to process and give meaning to new experiences. Also, just because trainees come with very good technical skills does not mean that they know how to apply those skills in a new cultural context.

Debriefing is key for trainees and Volunteers to elicit meaning from their experiences in the community and to more effectively apply knowledge in new contexts.

What is debriefing?

Debriefing is the process of facilitating a discussion using the experiential learning cycle, briefly summarized using the questions: What? So what? Now what? For more information on the experiential learning cycle, see Step 5: Plan Training, Section F.2.2 Experiential Learning Cycle. In a

> Ctrl + click for link to file for *Processing and Reflection Questions*

classroom setting, debriefing often takes place toward the end of a session when the facilitator encourages participants to reflect on the training activity and discuss how their learning could be applied to other situations. In a community-based setting, debriefing takes the form of a facilitated discussion about homestay experiences, field trips, PACA activities, a technical practicum, or cultural events in the community.

Why is debriefing important?

Whether in the classroom or in the community, debriefing is an essential aspect of training because much of trainees' and Volunteers' learning is internalized through this process. For cross-cultural learning, for example, debriefing ensures that community-based training leads to an accurate understanding of the culture in which one is living.

Implications

The importance of debriefing must be conveyed in the training of trainers. All trainers (language, technical, medical, safety, etc.) must provide explanations, along with information (not just "that is how we do it here"). Training staff must have skills to help trainees interpret experiences in the context of the local culture. COTE design should ensure trainees' experiences are varied but not so overwhelming that they are overloaded with information. Post-activity reflection time for classroom, field, community, and self-directed learning activities should be scheduled.

Examples of Debriefing

G.2.1 Example of Experiential Language Learning Debriefing, from Namibia

A good example of debriefing, also referenced in Step Five in the section on the experiential learning cycle and adult learning principles, is the session plan from Namibia, excerpted below (full session linked at right) to show the debriefing process.

After returning from their one-hour individual walk-around, the group members debrief the entire session using questions that follow the experiential learning cycle.

Debriefing questions:
1. How did it feel to initiate a conversation? (reflection and observation)
2. How did the community members respond or react? (reflection and observation)
3. What words did they use that are different from what we have learned? (analysis and generalization)
4. What cross-cultural observations did you make during this activity? (analysis and generalization)
5. What new words or phrases would you like to learn for the next encounter with community members? (planning and application)

> Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Excerpts of Lesson Plan Using Adult Learning Principles and the Experiential Learning Cycle – Namibia: "Walk Around"***

Other questions may be used as well, based on the facilitator's observations of the group and based on the direction of the conversation. Regardless of how the questions are phrased or how many questions are asked, each step of the experiential learning cycle should be covered.

G.2.2 Example of Debriefing After Field Trips and Homestays

Field trip and homestay experiences are helpful tools for trainees to learn language and host country culture through immersion in authentic situations. A field trip may serve as a powerful content reinforcement activity; learners can apply language and cross-cultural skills they learned in a safe classroom environment to an authentic situation. Living with a host family can move learners beyond dos and don'ts to deeper cross-cultural awareness. In addition, field trips and homestays provide great opportunities for experiential learning.

Debriefing After Field Trips

Debriefing sessions are extremely important to make field trips successful. Debriefing may take more or less time, depending on the activity. For example, if the field trip had an overnight and all training sectors prepared field trip tasks for trainees to accomplish, then it is useful to schedule an entire session for debriefing. It is important to take trainees through the experiential learning cycle during the debriefing:

1. ***What happened?***
   Sample questions: *Describe your experience. What did you observe? What dialogues did you hear? What WID/GAD issues arose? What behaviors of local residents or your host family members did you observe in situation X; in situation Y? How did you feel? Who else had a similar experience?*

2. ***So what?***
   Sample questions: *What did you learn? What may be the hidden meaning of this utterance? How do you know you missed parts of the conversation or meaning?*

3. ***Now what?***
   Sample questions: *What options do you see? If you had to repeat this, how would you go about it differently? How could you make it a better experience? How would you like to follow up on this experience?*

Use the four stages of the experiential learning cycle as a guide when facilitating the discussion about the critical incident:

1. Concrete experience
2. Reflection and observation
3. Analysis and generalization
4. Planning and application

After discussion, trainees may be asked to enact or role-play dialogues they heard or dialogues they initiated themselves during the trip. Language and cross-cultural facilitators are there to assist as necessary.

Debriefing After Homestays

The processing questions for the experiential learning cycle listed above can be used in homestay debriefing sessions. Community-based training provides excellent opportunities to debrief after homestay experiences by reinforcing cross-cultural and language learning.

- **Connecting culture-specific observations with culture-general values.** Trainees' experiences living with a host family can provide clues about the values in that culture (gender roles and responsibilities in the home, hierarchy, communication styles, and so on).

- **Cross-cultural adaptation**
  Trainees experiencing stress from cross-cultural adjustment need the chance to process their experiences constructively in a safe environment. Homestay debriefing sessions can provide this kind of environment.

- **Language learning**
  Homestays make a great "language classroom." A host family provides trainees with a natural and authentic learning environment. Trainees not only practice communication skills as a self-directed activity, but they may also bring home language tasks assigned by LCFs during the application phase in the language classroom. For example, the learning objective might be: "By the end of the week, trainees will independently collect information from at least four female community members concerning their daily activities." During the application phase of learning, trainees may conduct one or several interviews with female members of their host family. In addition, most learning reinforcement may take place at dinner and breakfast tables at home.

For more on debriefing, see *Host Families Matter: The Homestay Manual,* (ICE No. T0106*)*

Tools and Resources

G.3 Giving Feedback

Constructive feedback is essential to the progress of trainees and Volunteers throughout their learning continuum. Feedback is effective when it is based on clear learning objectives, is designed as collaboration between learners and trainers, and provides opportunities for reflection and exploration. Assessment and provision of feedback are continuous processes that are flexible for rapid adjustments, resource reallocations, and performance corrections. Feedback is culturally sensitive: Different cultures may give, receive, and interpret feedback differently.

Important aspects to consider in preparing and delivering feedback to learners:
- Continuously monitor the progress of learners individually and in groups.
- Use learning objectives for evidence of trainees' performance and progress.
- Focus feedback on specific performance rather than on the person—avoid personal judgment.

- Check learners' progress by asking questions, assessing responses, conducting informal conversations, and observing practice sessions.
- Provide constructive and specific feedback to reinforce correct responses or behaviors.
- Offer support that allows the learner to modify inaccurate responses or behaviors.
- Validate learners' questions, feedback, and concerns, while preserving their individual dignity and self-esteem.
- Listen carefully for learners' feedback about their progress and learning needs and respond accordingly.
- Focus feedback on exploration of alternatives rather than being prescriptive about answers or solutions to problems.

Giving feedback relates to the assessment and evaluation process, as the results of assessments determine necessary feedback. For more information on assessment and evaluation, see Step 7: Assess and Evaluate.

Examples of Providing Supportive Feedback

Example, from PC/Nicaragua

Nicaragua's PST manual indicates that the pre-service training period is a time of continuous assessment and feedback. In keeping with adult education principles, Nicaragua staff expect that each trainee engages in a process of ongoing self-evaluation and seeks feedback. Simultaneously, Peace Corps staff will objectively assess each trainee's progress during the training cycle and offer feedback.

Assessment and feedback go both ways. Trainees' comments, suggestions, and opinions on any aspect of the training experience, at any time, are both encouraged and valued.

Feedback will be provided to trainees during discussion sessions on different topics during the seminars, in periodic progress reports by the technical and language staff, and by staff review of written work completed during the training cycle. On another level, senior PC program, training, and medical staff will be in close personal communication with trainees to exchange information and offer suggestions regarding adaptation issues, performance in reaching competencies, and in dealing with personal difficulties encountered during the training period.

Linked at right is an example of a Volunteer observation guide from Nicaragua. This template is used to observe evidence that specific learning objectives for Volunteers working in a TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) project have been accomplished. The actual learning objectives informed the creation of this observation sheet, but are contained in other documents. The criteria for evaluation provide observable evidence of the quantity and quality of the Volunteer's work. This template allows the observer to provide specific and constructive feedback to the Volunteer.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *TEFL Classroom Observation Guide — Nicaragua*

Feedback in Individualistic and Collectivist Societies

As stated above, ongoing and constructive feedback supports learning. Also, different cultures may give, receive, and interpret feedback differently. Therefore, both trainers and learners would benefit from understanding how feedback practices vary among cultures.

> Ctrl + click to link to document: *Feedback in Individualistic and Collectivist Societies*

G.4 Considerations for successful completion of training implementation

- Did you establish your credibility with the learners?
- Did you create a safe learning environment?
- Did you conduct learning activities in a responsive and collaborative manner?
- Did you debrief learners after activities in ways that are consistent with the experiential learning cycle and with the principles of adult learning?
- Did you monitor and give feedback to learners in a timely and constructive manner?

H. Step 7: Assess and Evaluate

Assessment and evaluation are processes that tell us whether we are on track and whether the trainees and Volunteers have learned the KSAs they need to succeed.

Definition of Terms

> **Learning Assessment:** Intermittent checks to monitor progress toward accomplishment of learning objectives.
> **Training Evaluation:** A process to determine whether the training design and delivery was effective in enabling learners to acquire necessary KSAs.

Why is this step important?

- Trainees and Volunteers know how well they are doing.
- Staff can objectively know how well trainees are doing.
- Post can improve training based on data.
- Training results can be reported/ rolled up.
- It's the basis for determining "best practices" that are recommended and can be replicated.

Who should be involved?

Trainers, trainees and Volunteers, APCD, safety and security coordinators, medical officers, DPT, and partners/ counterparts. Consider including Volunteers who are representatives on the VAC, on a PAC, or in a TDE working group.

H.1 Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Levels

Donald Kirkpatrick identifies four levels of evaluation. In his framework, each level builds on information from the previous level. Evaluation begins at Level One, and then moves sequentially through Levels Two, Three, and Four. Each level requires more time and a greater degree of analysis.

Kirkpatrick's evaluation model

Level 1: Did the participants like the training?
Level 2: Did the participants learn the KSAs?
Level 3: Do participants use the KSAs on the job?
Level 4: Does the learning make a difference?

The Peace Corps expects that learning objectives will be measured at Kirkpatrick Level Two, "Did the participants learn the KSAs" as reflected in the TDE decision memorandum, which states that "learning results will be measured as each trainee or Volunteer demonstrates the achievement of learning objectives …."

Level Four evaluation is the most difficult level, because there are many intervening factors that contribute to the results. It is difficult to identify what changes in behavior can be attributed to training alone.

The table below summarizes the four levels of Kirkpatrick's model. This table conveys the importance of measuring the accomplishment of learning objectives. You can find it in handout form in the link at right.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Kirkpatrick Model handout*

LEVEL 1: REACTION	Did participants like the training?	Example:
The first level measures how participants react to the training, including their satisfaction with the training, their perception of their own learning, and their perception of the quality of training.		☺ ☹ chart for comments on how trainees felt about a session.
LEVEL 2: LEARNING	Did participants learn the KSAs?	Examples:
The second level measures the amount of learning that actually took place as a result of training. It is used to track the acquisition of learning objectives. *Our agencywide goal is to assess Volunteer learning at least at this level.*		Oral language proficiency exam. Observation rubric for technical presentation.
LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOR	Do participants use the skills?	Example:
The third level measures whether learners are using what they learned in training in their lives or work.		Volunteers with work partners conduct hygiene behavior education activities using techniques learned.
LEVEL 4: RESULTS	Do participants make a difference because of what they learned?	Example:
The fourth level asks if the new skills being used have had an impact. This fourth level often coincides with project outcome indicators.		An increase in the number of families consuming recommended daily allowances of proteins and vitamins.

Adapted from Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994). Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels. San Francisco, Calif.: Berrett-Koehler.

The remainder of this chapter focuses on assessing learning at Kirkpatrick Level Two, and on using data from Kirkpatrick Level Two evaluations, as well as information from other sources, to evaluate training. Reflection and revision of training, including consideration of information from Levels Three and Four of the Kirkpatrick model, are considered in the next chapter, I. Step 8: Reflect and Revise.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Kirkpatrick model white paper*

H.2 Learning Assessment

Learners use assessments to determine how well they are meeting the learning objectives. Often assessments are conducted in a way that engages the learner in reflecting upon what he or she is learning and how it may be applied.

Staff use the learning assessment process to determine the learner's progress toward achieving the competencies and learning objectives. This allows staff to identify learning objectives that trainees or

Volunteers are having trouble meeting so additional support can be arranged—such as ongoing mentoring or training—or training methods can be adapted along the way.

Learning assessments also give staff objective, measurable criteria upon which to recommend whether a trainee should be sworn in as a Volunteer.

Learning assessments are conducted both on an ongoing basis and at certain established times (for example at the middle and end of PST). Learning assessments for Kirkpatrick's Level Two can be done by both first and third parties, and can include

- Observation of performance, using an observation rubric (e.g., field work, simulation, role-play, or a demonstration "station").
- Oral reports and presentations, using a rubric.
- Written tests or quizzes.
- Journals read by staff, portfolios, and checklists.
- Group projects that demonstrate required KSAs.
- Practical demonstration of a skill (such as digging pit latrines or planting trees).
- Products that meet requirements (e.g., completed forms or templates, community map, latrines, session plans).

The results of learning assessments are used to plan further support for the learner. When learning assessment feedback is constructive and collaborative, a partnership is created between learners and trainers to accomplish the learning objectives.

Characteristics of a learning assessment process in the Peace Corps

The learning assessment process should be
- Based on measurable learning objectives.
- A participatory partnership between trainers and learners.
- Understood by all concerned parties.
- Presented in a constructive manner.
- Objective.
- Periodic and ongoing.
- Reviewed and refined periodically.

Sample learning objectives with assessment method

The examples below are drawn from various TDE subregional workshops.

Learning objective:	*Assessment method:*
Using PACA tools, each trainee will work with his or her host family to map, identify, and assess five different water sources in his or her community.	Present a community map with a legend.
Before going on their PST site visit, trainees will wait patiently without complaining when conducting transactions in a bank, a post office, or other location. *Note: This is an example of a learning objective that supports the development of an attitude (flexibility) and that is demonstrated through an observable behavior (waiting patiently).*	Direct observation of trainee behavior, recorded by a facilitator.

Learning objective:	*Assessment method:*
Before starting on his or her PST qualifying project, each trainee will role-play community-focused interviews using at least five culturally appropriate open-ended questions.	Observation by trainer during role-play.
After reviewing the *Peace Corps Handbook*, each trainee will correctly and completely fill out a sample leave form.	Trainee will complete and submit a sample leave form that will be evaluated by the LCF.
After participating in a taxi-stand (or minibus) simulation exercise, each trainee will be able to identify and describe at least five unsafe characteristics of the vehicle in the simulation.	Trainee will present an oral report about safety factors related to road transport.
Based on observations and interviews in their community, trainees will create an activity chart that distinguishes gender roles for each activity involved in current cooking practices (making cook stove, gathering fuel, collecting water, lighting fire, preparing food, cooking food, and cleaning up afterward).	Trainees will produce a chart, diagram, or similar visual aid that depicts the gender role associated with each activity.

Sample learning assessment methods, progress report forms, criterion tests, and an evaluation packet

Example Assessment Methods for Core Competencies		
Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives from the Dominican Republic, 2009*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives from Belize*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Core Competencies and learning objectives Thailand*
Example Progress Report Forms, Criterion Tests, and Final Assessment Packets		
Ctrl + click to link to document: *Sample Progress Report Form, blank, Dominican Republic*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Sample Progress Report Form, completed, Dominican Republic*	
Ctrl + click to link to document: *Example Core criterion tests, Dominican Republic*	Ctrl + click to link to document: *Example PST Qualifying Criteria, Dominican Republic*	

Sample alignment of Steps One through Step Six in TDE from PC/Thailand

On the following pages you will find excerpts of a chart from the Peace Corps/Thailand example linked in the table above that shows the alignment of a core competency, KSAs, learning objectives, learning methods, and assessment methods. Similar charts are used for tracking the accomplishment of the other core and sector competencies.

Trainees or Volunteers could have a copy of each chart that allows them to track their own progress toward meeting the learning objectives and competencies.

Once the evaluations are completed and the chart is filled out for each person, the data can be aggregated for a group. These aggregated data are then used to improve training systems and to generate reports, such as the annual training status report.

The excerpts on the following pages have been edited slightly for clarity and brevity.

CORE COMPETENCY No. 1 – Balance cultural integration with personal well-being					
Sequence number	KSA	Learning objective	Delivery method	Assessment method	Week to evaluate, self-evaluation, staff evaluation, comments
1.1	S—Choose words and actions carefully so you are understood. A—Seek to be appropriately understood.	Before beginning his or her practicum, each trainee will identify five different communication techniques for communicating with simple English in order to receive or perform a desired response.	Role-play (A/B cards), debrief, and practice throughout practicum.	Observation during interview.	*Week 2* ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____ _____
1.4	K—Identify different cultural values between Thai and American society. S—Express oneself in a culturally appropriate way. A—Be willing to adjust some personal values.	After identifying five personal and five Thai cultural values, each trainee will analyze to what extent personal values may require adjustment during life as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand.	Group discussion, observation at CBT site.	Iceberg Venn Diagram.	*Week 2* ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____ _____

CORE COMPETENCY No. 1 – Balance cultural integration with personal well-being					
Sequence number	KSA	Learning objective	Delivery method	Assessment method	Week to evaluate, self-evaluation, staff evaluation, comments
1.7	K—Explain basic nutrition in Thailand and Volunteer's area of the country.	Given the ability to identify key ingredients in Thai foods, each trainee will use Thai language to express his or her food allergies or preferences for at least five different foods.	Role-play and small group discussion in groups. Role-play in language class.	Individual conversations in Thai with five different trainers about food. Food journal assignment at homestay.	*Week 6* ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____ _____
1.10	K—How to do self-directed learning.	Given the guidelines and lesson plan format, each trainee will prepare and successfully achieve the learning objective in at least two self-directed lessons (one language and one cross-cultural, technical, or other topic of interest).	Lecturette or trainee self-directed learning.	Follow up the evaluation in self-directed learning lesson plan.	*Week 3* ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____ _____
1.15	S—Community mapping. K-Geography of area.	During week two of PST, trainees will complete a community mapping project with their language group and trainer to identify at least one of each of the following: safety and security points of interest; key community gathering points; landmarks; and community assets.	Complete community map in groups.	Trainer evaluates map to see if sites are properly identified.	Week 2 ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____

CORE COMPETENCY No. 1 – Balance cultural integration with personal well-being					
Sequence number	KSA	Learning objective	Delivery method	Assessment method	Week to evaluate, self-evaluation, staff evaluation, comments
1.16	K—Assault risk factors in Thailand. S- How to reduce assault risk factors.	Given identification of at least five assault risk factors that Volunteers may encounter in Thailand, trainees will employ at least two strategies to reduce those risks.	Lecturette, case studies, role-play.	Pre-test followed by debriefing at end of session, then observation of trainee behavior.	Week 1 ☐ PCT complete _____ _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____
1.21	K—How local gender roles and norms affect safety and security.	Before homestay and throughout PST, each trainee will state at least two ways in which adherence to local gender roles and norms could affect his or her safety and security and acceptance into the community.	Case Studies.	Journal and group discussion.	Week 1 ☐ PCT complete _____ ☐ Staff sign-off Name: _____

H.3 Training Evaluation

Trainers use training evaluation to determine whether the training design and delivery was effective in accomplishing what was planned.

Information that is used to evaluate training includes
- Data from learning assessments.
- Formal and informal feedback from learners.
- Trainer notes and observations.
- Feedback from other stakeholders (other staff members, partners, host families).
- Data from Volunteers on job performance.

Information used for training evaluation is gathered and recorded by trainers throughout training, but training evaluation is usually done at the end of a training program—and at a certain time after a training event.

H.3.1 After Action Reviews

Posts should conduct a meeting to review PST after the event is complete (or "after action review") to discuss how the training went and how it could be improved next time. After action reviews are often appropriate for in-service training events as well. When you conduct these events, be sure to have the Level Two (and Level Three, if done) assessment data on hand. These data can help steer the conversation toward whether the training "worked," rather than simply whether people liked it.

After-action reviews (AAR) have become widely used in the development field as a way to reflect and revise. The example below is drawn from USAID, but can be adapted for use in Peace Corps training.

The AAR
- Is a dynamic, candid, professional discussion of an event or task that focuses on the results of the event or task.
- Identifies the means to sustain what was done well, plus recommendations on how to improve shortfalls.
- Requires everyone's participation as these insights, observations, or questions will help the team identify and correct deficiencies or maintain strengths.

The AAR is *not*
- A critique or a complaint session. After-action reviews maximize experience by allowing everyone to learn from each other.
- A full-scale evaluation (or evaluation report).
- A cure-all for all problems.

AARs are effective when
- Leaders support them.
- They are performed immediately—by the team, for the team.
- Participants agree to be honest, open, and professional.

Impact or benefits of an AAR:
- Decreases repeats of mistakes or missteps
- Improves morale—everyone can make a difference for the future
- Increases chances for success in similar or related activities
- Promotes open, frequent communication, sharing, and proactive identification of strengths to sustain, and shortcomings to improve

The focus of the AAR is to answer four questions:
1. What did we intend to do?
2. What actually happened?
3. What went well, and why?
4. What can be improved, and how?

After the AAR
The after-action report is produced. This report documents the results of the AAR and can be used to provide a summary for decision makers. The after-action report becomes one of the first documents reviewed when the next round of needs assessment and planning begins.

Adapted from http://www.usaid.gov/km/aar.htm.

H.3.2 Training Evaluation Questions to Ask

Following is a list of suggested questions for an evaluation discussion, organized according to the four larger questions of an after-action review listed above.

What did we intend to do?
1. Briefly re-cap the agreed-upon competencies and learning objectives defined for the event.

What actually happened?
1. Overall, how well did learners achieve the desired learning objectives?
2. What percentage of learners met each learning objective that is associated with a competency? (This is mandated by the Director's decision memo on training, in Appendix E, and is also information collected for the annual training status report.)
3. Which learning objectives were achieved easily and which were more challenging?
4. How well did this group achieve the learning objectives as compared to other groups?

What went well, and why? (Factors influencing achievement of learning objectives, including factors outside of the TDE process)
1. Which aspects of the TDE process and training design positively affected the achievement of learning?
2. Which (if any) factors outside of the TDE process positively affected training quality. For example: project definition, trainees recruited, training and programming integration, teamwork, staff development, weather conditions, safety conditions, or other management issues.

What can be improved, and how? (Factors influencing achievement of learning objectives, including factors outside of the TDE process)
1. Is the level of the standard in the learning objective appropriate to the realities under which the learners are expected to perform, and did the assessment appropriately measure the learning objectives it was designed to measure? Did the Volunteers have appropriate time to learn the objectives?
2. Were necessary materials and resources available to the Volunteers? Should post consider developing or acquiring additional materials?
3. Were Volunteers taught to use the learning objectives as a tool to analyze the quality of their own work? Were objectives used as an instructional tool to help Volunteers in learning them?
4. Which (if any) factors outside of the TDE process negatively affected training quality. For example: project definition, trainees recruited, training and programming integration, teamwork, staff development, weather conditions, safety conditions, or other management issues.
5. Do session plans and training methods need to be revised?
6. Are trainer competencies accurate?
7. Are adult learning principles being applied effectively?

Recommendations and Next Steps
1. Is there a plan about what to do to help Volunteers who did not perform well on the assessments or learning objectives that were not achieved by any Volunteer due to lack of time or other circumstances?
2. What are the recommendations for improving this training event in the future?
3. What other evaluations should be conducted? (Levels Three and Four?)

H.3.3 Using and Communicating the Results of Training Evaluations

Results of training evaluations are used
- To inform strategic decisions about what content to include in future training events (e.g., evaluations from PST identify content that needs to be reinforced during IST).
- To inform strategic decisions about how to improve training.
- To inform strategic decisions about programming (e.g., modifying community expectations, site assignments, and expected project activities if Volunteers do not accomplish the learning objectives and competencies).
- To determine which strategies might be replicated by other posts.

- To demonstrate results of training to stakeholders (including to Peace Corps/Washington via annual training status reports).

H.4 Consideration for Successful Completion of Step 7: Assess and Evaluate

- Did you assess learning at Kirkpatrick's Level Two for all terminal learning objectives?
- Did you hold an after-action review meeting for each training event, and did you complete a final report with recommendations?

H.5 Tool: A Guide to Working with Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Evaluation

Evaluation level	*What questions are addressed?*	*How will information be gathered?*	*What is measured or assessed?*	*How will information be used?*
Level 1: Participants' reactions	• Did you like the training/the session? • Was your time well spent? • Did the material make sense to you? • Will you be able to immediately apply the acquired knowledge and skills? • Were you able to contribute? • Was your opinion taken into consideration? • Was the trainer knowledgeable and helpful? • Was the room comfortable?	• Evaluation questionnaires administered at the end of the session • Reaction questions asked of the group at the end of training • Reaction sheets (smiling/neutral/sad faces) to mark before leaving the room • Focus groups • Individual interviews	• Initial reaction: satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the experience	• To improve training design and delivery • To improve learning climate and learner–trainer interactions
Level 2: Participants' learning	• Did participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and attitudes? • Can they demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes taught? • Were the learning objectives achieved?	• Tests (oral and written) • Simulations and skills demonstrations • Individual or group project presentations (e.g., community map, seasonal calendar) • Participant portfolios • Case study analyses • Observation of practicum	• New knowledge, skills, and attitudes of participants	• To evaluate learner readiness to perform job at site and integrate into the community • To improve training design and delivery

Evaluation level	What questions are addressed?	How will information be gathered?	What is measured or assessed?	How will information be used?
Level 3: Participants' use of new knowledge and skills	• Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge, skills, and attitudes at their job site and in their community? • Are there any knowledge, skills, and attitudes the Volunteers were trained in that they are not using because they do not need them?	• Questionnaires for Volunteers and counterparts • Structured interviews with Volunteers and counterparts/supervisors • Site visits • Volunteer reports • Participant reflections (oral and/or written) • Participant portfolios • Direct observations on the job (site visits)	• Degree and quality of using learned knowledge, skills, and attitudes when performing specific tasks on the job • To what extent were the knowledge and skills taught needed to effectively perform duties	• To improve training design and delivery • To better inform programming • To determine if training prepared Volunteers to do the activities in the project plan
Level 4: The difference that Volunteers made in their jobs and communities because of what they learned * *Reflected in the outcomes of project goals*	• What was the impact of enhanced Volunteer performance on the community and the site? • Were there any desired changes in behavior of community members and counterparts? • Did the school, agency, counterparts and/or community adopt any new practices and procedures as a result of strong Volunteer performance? • Did school, agency, counterparts and/or community make better products or improve bottom line as a result of strong Volunteer performance?	• Project outputs and outcomes • Interviews with counterparts/supervisors, communities and host agencies • Volunteer reports	• Changes in performance of host agencies • Adoption of desired behaviors in communities • Increase in quantity and quality of outputs at Volunteers' sites and communities (e.g., number of libraries built, number of adults with literacy skills)	• To adjust project goals, objectives, and desired outcomes • To improve training design and delivery • To identify factors that prevent the desired changes from happening

* As mentioned in the chart of Kirkpatrick's levels in Section H.1, there are many intervening factors that influence whether Volunteers' activities make a difference (Level Four). The accomplishment of learning objectives and competencies needs to be viewed together with variables in the project and community to identify other factors promoting or inhibiting the desired changes.

Adapted with permission from Guskey, Thomas R. Evaluating Professional Development. *Sage Publications. 2000. Pages 79–81.*

I. Step 8: Reflect and Revise

Reflecting and revising is an ongoing process. Input from stakeholders, data from assessments, and recommendations developed through training evaluations are used to develop, update, and revise the training. This may involve revising or validating competencies, rewriting learning objectives, or using new methods of instruction.

This step involves
1. Reflecting upon the strengths and weaknesses of training, as identified by stakeholders, data from learning assessments, and any Kirkpatrick Levels Three or Four data that are available.
2. Reflecting upon which TDE steps need to be revisited.
3. Proceeding to revise or redesign training.

I.1 Reflect on the Strengths and Weaknesses of Training

Begin by reflecting upon evaluation (or after-action review) report(s) and recommendations, which takes into consideration the extent to which learning objectives were accomplished (Level Two Kirkpatrick, or performance data), as well as stakeholder input. Also review your project status report and training status report (TSR). Historic TSRs are rich sources of data related to challenges, lessons learned, and materials needed throughout the training continuum. Reflections and revisions captured during this critical Step Eight can substantively inform the data documented in a current year's TSR. Add any data or insights about how Volunteers are using the KSAs they acquired in training (Level Three Kirkpatrick) and what impact they are having in their communities (Level Four Kirkpatrick = project outcome data, as represented in the graph linked at right).

Ctrl + click to link: *Kirkpatrick model trainee — HCN*

Ctrl + click for: *Tips on post-led Kirkpatrick Level 3 evaluations of Volunteer training*

Ctrl + click for graphic: *Evaluation of Peace Corps Capacity Building*

While the after-action review focuses on the effectiveness of the training design in enabling Volunteers to acquire learning objectives, the additional Kirkpatrick Levels Three and Four information will allow programmers and trainers to discuss whether the learning objectives were the right ones, or whether they need revisiting. For example, if Volunteers successfully gained the skills they needed to construct latrines, but are not applying these skills because there is no demand for latrines, it could be that they need more training in community motivation and mobilization around the issue of sanitation.

Ctrl + click to link to: *Tonga Site Visit Report Form, Level 3 Evaluation*

As noted in the box below, it is best to make changes to training based first and foremost on data about performance and not just on opinions.

TIP FROM THE FIELD

Be careful about making changes to training based on Level 1 feedback

While there may be some important insights in such Level One feedback, posts have found that often when changes are made based solely on the basis of trainees' feelings, the next group (or the same group!) will have a different opinion the next time. This can lead to the training staff "chasing their tail" around and around—always making changes for the group that just finished. Whether a person enjoyed training is not the best measure of training effectiveness.

I.2 Reflect on Which TDE Steps Need Revisiting

As you begin planning the next iteration of any particular training event, it is important to have a meeting or series of meetings

- To review the TSR and TSR feedback.
- To discuss any programmatic changes that will need to be incorporated into the next training, and how these will affect the KSAs that Volunteers will need.
- To discuss which steps of TDE relate to recommended training improvements.
- To review the TDE checklist and/or TDE action plan, to determine which steps may be incomplete, or need to be updated.
- To integrate Focus In/Train Up session plans into your training continuum.

Repeat only those steps of the TDE that need strengthening based on the data. Whenever possible, build on the good work that has been done previously. Remember that specialists in PC/W can provide support as your post revisits your TDE process.

Ensuring a Thorough Ongoing TDE Process

The accuracy and validity of the training design process rests on each prior step in the TDE process being completed properly. For instance:

If the needs assessment for KSAs step was not comprehensive, then we may have been teaching and evaluating the wrong KSAs. The Volunteer might accomplish all of the learning objectives but still be poorly prepared for service.

If the competencies are not behavioral and integrated, then the evaluation of the learning objectives may focus too much on topics in isolation from each other. The Volunteer might have a lot of information, but be unable to put the pieces together when it comes time to perform a task.

If the learning objectives do not have all four required components, the evaluation will be subjective. The trainee might be sworn in because he or she seems to be performing the learning objective, but we are not really evaluating whether the trainee can do the behaviors to the required standard.

If the learning methods chosen are not appropriate for the learning objectives, the trainee or Volunteer will not be able to meet the learning objective. Trainees might not be sworn in, or might be unprepared for service, through no fault of their own.

If learning objectives are not sequenced carefully, too much may be scheduled into a single event. For instance, trainees might be overwhelmed by learning objectives and sessions in PST, but much of the learning cannot be meaningfully applied until later in service.

If Programming and Training Integration Is An Issue at Your Post …

You may want to use the programming and training integration checklist as a tool to strengthen it.

Situations or Factors That Trigger a Need to Revisit TDE

When a post completes a full TDE process that results in a postwide training design, the programming and training team may ask the question, "Now that we are done, do we need to do it again for the next Volunteer training cycle?" A full TDE redesign is rarely needed if all the steps were followed during the first time. However, to fully answer this question, staff members need to

Ctrl + click to link to document: ***TDE Checklist***

Ctrl + click to link to Intranet site for latest: ***Focus In / Train Up***

TDE_ActionPlan

TDE Summary Action Plan

TDE Brief Action Plan

Training Mgr Action Plan Guatemala 08

Ctrl + click to link to document: ***Programming and Training Integration Checklist***

consider any changes that might have taken place from the time the training design was finished up to the moment of the reflect-and-revise meetings. The following situations illustrate some of the areas that may trigger a training design revision:

Example Situations	*TDE revision actions*
Your post decided to change the scope of the community health project by removing one project objective and adding a new objective on maternal health.	Derivation of KSAs from the new task analysis is needed. All TDE steps will be affected.
In your country, political power was recently transferred to a new government that is very interested in business and income generations. You do not currently have a business project.	A new project will be developed including project objectives and task analysis. New KSAs and sector competencies will emerge. All TDE steps will be affected.
Due to budget cuts, your post needs to cut two weeks off PST. FY09 mark for training is also smaller than last year.	Learning objectives need to be resequenced throughout the 27-month cycle. With no other changes present, the process can be revised starting from Step 5: Plan Training.
In the most recent PST session evaluations, trainees consistently asked for more training and skills practice on nonformal education techniques.	Post may want to revisit the needs assessment to see how nonformal education aligns with the task analysis and other data sources. All TDE steps will be affected.
Your post expects significant growth in the size of the next training group.	You will need to assess how your training methods may need to be revised to accommodate the size of the group.

These situations will differ from post to post. Each country will need to conduct an in-depth situation analysis using multiple data sources, such as evaluations of past trainings (Levels One and Two), workplace performance data (Level Three), the financial situation at post, and any changes in programming. This type of analysis may require more than one meeting or venue; therefore, reflect and revise will take place over an extended period of time.

I.3 Consideration for Successful 'Completion' of Step 8: Reflect and Revise

Peace Corps training design and evaluation is an ongoing process, so use of the term "completion" of this step is not quite accurate. However, the following three questions may guide you as you reflect upon your post's efforts related to this step:
- Did you base your training revisions primarily on data and new information about project directions, not opinions?
- Have you made good progress on your TDE checklist and action plan, and are all post team members contributing to the process?
- Are you continuously improving your training?

PEACE CORPS

Programming and Training Guidance

Version: October 2011

Introduction and Overview

Project Design and Evaluation

Training Design and Evaluation

■ **Management and Implementation**

Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance
Part 4: Management and Implementation

<u>Table of Contents</u>

A. Introduction

Training and supporting a successful group of Volunteers can be a tremendously rewarding experience. Post programming and training staff, working as a team with all post staff, support trainees and Volunteers in their roles as development facilitators and service learners, contributing to improved lives of men and women in their countries of service.

Introduction and Overview
Project Design and Evaluation
Training Design and Evaluation
Management and Implementation

Volunteers are most successful when project plans, training designs, and monitoring and evaluation plans are well developed. They are also most successful when the implementation of those plans is well managed and well executed. This involves planning and budgeting, identifying, preparing and assigning sites, managing a 27-month training continuum, and leading people— sharing a vision, inspiring partners, building teams, supporting them to reach high levels of performance, giving feedback, and facilitating problem solving.

The *Peace Corps P&T Guidance* consists of the following four documents, which provide guidelines for programming and training:

- **Part 1:** *Introduction and Overview:* an introduction to Peace Corps programming and training principles, and an overview of Peace Corps programming and training systems (intended for all Peace Corps staff).

- **Part 2:** *Project Design and Evaluation:* guidelines, strategies, and techniques for revising existing projects or developing new Peace Corps projects, including information analysis and the development of the project plan and the monitoring and evaluation plan (primarily for programming staff).

- **Part 3:** *Training Design and Evaluation:* guidelines for analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation of Volunteer training, so Volunteers gain required knowledge, skills, and attitudes for service (for all staff involved in training).

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Glossary*

- **Part 4:** *Management and Implementation (this guide):* guidelines on programming and training planning, budgeting, staff development, teamwork, communication, site identification and preparation, supporting trainees and Volunteers, and managing training (for all programming and training staff).

Ctrl + click for: *P&T Document Bank Index (Excel)*

This guide includes a number of hyperlinks to reference documents and examples in the same folder as this guidance or on the Peace Corps Intranet. The information and materials included in this guide and the accompanying reference documents represent guidance, tools, and promising practices from Peace Corps staff and Volunteers. Because each post is unique, some of the examples and promising practices presented may not apply to every post, and others may need to be adapted to your situation.

Ctrl + click for: *How to Search in the Document Bank Index (Excel)*

Ctrl + click for: *P&T List of Abbreviations and Acronyms*

B. Planning, Budgeting, and Continual Improvement

By the time a prospective Volunteer receives an invitation, post has budgeted for all of his or her living, training, and programming needs. Post also will have developed a three-year strategic plan, which prioritizes areas post has identified for growth or continual improvement, and will have already told the Office of Recruitment about the number and skill sets of Volunteers needed for the next group of Volunteers.

B.1 Agencywide Planning and Budgeting Processes

The Peace Corps uses the Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) to coordinate agencywide planning and budgeting functions. Its elements are described below.

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Peace Corps Strategic Plan 2009–2014*

B.1.1 Agency Strategic Plan

The Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) leads the agency's strategic planning process. The agencywide strategic plan (link at right) establishes five strategic goals, the first three of which mirror the Peace Corps' core goals:

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

2. Provide a better understanding of Americans on the part of the host country individuals, organizations, and communities served by Volunteers.

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

4. Provide Volunteers, who represent the diversity of Americans, to meet the evolving technical needs of host countries.

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

All posts' three-year strategic plans are developed to align with the agency's strategic plan, as well as with specific guidance provided each year. For example, guidance in 2011 requested that posts address the recommendations of the June 2010 Comprehensive Agency Assessment. This assessment articulates six key strategies:

1. Target our resources

2. Focus on key sectors and train for excellence

3. Recruit talented Volunteers committed to service

4. Leverage the impact of Volunteers with special skills

5. Elevate our Third Goal

6. Strengthen management and operations

B.1.2 Planning and Budget Cycle

An understanding of the Peace Corps planning and budget cycle, represented in the following figure, is important for all programming and training staff as they work as a team with other staff (perhaps adapting the calendar [see box, next page]) to manage post resources and to participate in review and adjustment of budgets at budget review times. Note that the U.S. government fiscal year begins on October 1 and that this diagram includes planning tasks for the next year.

Annual Planning and Budget Cycle

DEC — QTRS (for Q1 and Q2 next FY); VAD for Q4

NOV — QUARTER 1

OCT — SRs (for past FY); CR approval or budget authorization; Fiscal Year Begins / Fiscal Year Ends

JAN — QBR (current FY)

FEB — QTRS (for Q2 and Q3 next FY); VAD (for Q1 next FY)

MAR — IPBS strategic plan (next FY) and 2-year enhancements and reductions; QUARTER 2

APR — Mid-Year Review (current FY)

MAY — QTRS (for Q3 and Q4 next FY); VAD (for Q2 next FY); QUARTER 3

JUN

JUL — QBR (current FY)

AUG — QTRS (for Q4 next FY and Q1 year after); Op Plan + FARs (next FY); VAD for Q3 next FY; QUARTER 4

SEP

CR = Continuing Resolution
FAR = Field Assistance Request
FY = Fiscal Year
IPBS = Integrated Planning and Budget System
Op Plan = Operating Plan
Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 = Quarter 1, 2, 3, 4
QBR = Quarterly Budget Review
QTRS = Quarterly Trainee Request Summary
SRs = Status Reports
VAD = Volunteer Assignment Description

Click on the link to the right for a two-year calendar your post may adapt to plan for these critical events. You may also link at right for questions for programming and training staff to consider at each point in the budgeting cycle, and for a PowerPoint presentation on the financial and administrative systems of the Peace Corps, including imprest funds, Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS), Volunteer-year (V-year), OpPlan, mid-year review (MYR), FOR Post, obligations, and accounting.

> Ctrl + click for: *PC Financial and Administrative Systems ppt.*

> Ctrl + click for: *Programming and Training Budget Cycle Questions*

B.1.3 Status Reports (SRs): October

Project status reports (PSRs), the training status reports (TSR), and initiative reports (IR), collectively called status reports (SRs), offer opportunities for programming and training staff to consider the past year's challenges, successes, lessons learned, and develop plans to improve post projects and Volunteer training in the future. SRs feed directly into post's strategy and budget for the following year, as do mid-year budget reviews, which are used to monitor actual implementation costs of post operations and planned activities. Additional discussion of the PSR can be found in the *Project Design and Evaluation Guide*, Section F.4.

> Ctrl + click for: *Two-year planning calendar for use by posts*

B.1.4 Continuing Resolutions: October

A continuing resolution is a type of appropriations legislation used by the United States Congress to fund government agencies if a formal appropriations bill has not been signed into law by the end of the fiscal year. The legislation takes the form of a joint resolution, and provides funding for existing federal programs at a specific annual rate, not exceeding the prior year's appropriation, normally for a few weeks or months.

> Ctrl + click for: *MS 707: Continuing Resolutions and Lapses in Funding*

Continuing resolutions differ from appropriation acts in that they do not usually appropriate specified sums of money. Rather, they usually appropriate "such amounts as may be necessary" to continue activities at a certain rate of operation. See MS 707 for guidelines on operating under a continuing resolution. Posts should observe the following precautions:

- Avoid scheduling training and travel—including conferences, stagings, or stateside training—within two weeks after the end of a fiscal year or expiration of a continuing resolution.

- Whenever legally possible, avoid entering into leases and contracts that expire at the end of a fiscal year.

The agency, through its budget analysis team and the regions, will set expenditure limits to be followed during continuing resolutions.

HELPFUL HINTS

You may continue with activities funded and obligated in the prior fiscal year under a continuing resolution

Training programs and activities planned, approved, funded, and obligated during the ending fiscal year can and should, in fact, be held during the beginning of the next fiscal year, according to these valid obligations unless there is a lapse in funding. In such circumstances, posts should contact their chief financial officer (CFO) for specific guidance.

B.1.5 Quarterly Trainee Request Summary (QTRS) and Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD): time period varies

The Quarterly Trainee Request Summary (QTRS) form includes the number and types of trainees each project needs for the next year, and is used to provide the office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) information on trainees to recruit. QTRSs are also used by the administrative unit to foresee numbers of trainees and their arrival dates to be included in Volunteer-year charts, which are a basic ingredient of budget estimation. See the *Trainee Request Handbook* for QTRS submission due dates. Usually a draft QTRS for discussion is due 14–16 months prior to the arrival of a training class and a final QTRS is due three months later (one year prior to the arrival of the training class).

Ctrl + click for:
Volunteer Delivery System Timeline

Ctrl + click for:
Trainee Request Handbook

The Volunteer assignment description (VAD), while it has no budgetary impact, is included in the calendar as a reminder that it is due nine to 10 months prior to Volunteer arrival. It provides invitees with information about the country and their work, and is described in the *Project Design and Evaluation Guide*, Section G.2.

B.1.6 Quarterly Budget Reviews (QBRs): January/July and the Mid-Year Budget Review: April

Budgets are reviewed periodically throughout the year: quarterly budget reviews (QBRs) in January and July, and a more in-depth mid-year review (MYR) in April. Each budget review provides PC/Washington with an update on the post's financial status and any changes due to inflation, or minor modifications that may be needed. Budget overruns may then be listed as "unfunded requirements," and submitted for PC/Washington consideration and approval. At these times posts can ask for adjustments to their budget due to circumstances that were not foreseen in a post's Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) document and Operating Plan. Normally, regions will ask posts to fund these new requirements with savings or reductions made somewhere else in their budget, which would in fact represent reprogramming of their funds, up to a region-set maximum ($5K or $10K). If under-spending is expected, this review would include releasing money back to Peace Corps/Washington for use at other posts.

An addendum to each QBR is a one-year Volunteer-year (V-year) chart. See the next section (B.1.7) for a description of the V-year chart. If the average number of Volunteers in-country (Volunteer years) drops below numbers previously projected, posts receive a budget reduction of all direct costs related to the drop in Volunteer numbers.

B.1.7 Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) Strategic Plan: March or April

The IPBS strategic plan sets forth a three-year strategic action plan for Peace Corps posts. A post usually starts this process with a participatory process, including a retreat, led by the country director or DPT, with participation of all senior staff, and indirect input from all staff and Volunteers. The retreat is usually a one-day event, conducted toward the end of January or the beginning of February. At the retreat, programming, training, medical, and administrative staff contribute to post goals and review their alignment with the agency strategic plan. Changes to trainee requests are reviewed to see if they correspond to align with revised strategies and priorities of the post. Submission deadlines are revised and published every year by the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO).

Post's IPBS document includes an analysis of the country, how the post is addressing development needs in an integrated fashion, areas in which the post plans to concentrate its efforts, post-wide goals and objectives, and a clarification of the budget and resources needed to implement the plan. The document also includes a three-year V-year chart, which is a spreadsheet projecting the number of new trainees to arrive and the average number of trainees and Volunteers to be at post each month over a one- or three-year period. The V-year chart includes projections of early terminations, extensions, and transfers. The OCFO Office of Budget Analysis estimates base budgets for their submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) together with the strategic plans.

Posts attach to their IPBS strategic estimations for the cost of enhancements or reductions induced by IPBS suggested changes over the next two years, that, if approved, may be included in OMB submissions.

B.1.8 Operating Plan: August

The Operating Plan, or annual budget, is developed consistent with the country strategy outlined in post's IPBS–strategic plan, and following budget and trainee input ceiling marks as authorized by the regions. While the director of management and administrativion (DMO) usually takes the lead in the final submission, the involvement of programming and training staff in budget development is essential for long-term planning. The OpPlan includes requests for all aspects of funding for pre-service training (PST) and other training events (IST, MST, COS, etc), meetings, and program-related expenses, as well as all other expenses, including rental and utility costs, salaries and benefits, staff travel for Volunteer and trainee support, and their medical and safety and security support.

B.1.9 Field Assistance Requests (FARs): August

Along with the operating plan submission, posts may submit Field Assistance Requests (FARs) to fund supplementary programming and training activities, such as project reviews, training reviews, training of trainer activities, project design and management (PDM) workshops, or innovative in-service training events (IST). For each requested activity, post completes and submits a FAR template that describes the activity and includes a complete budget. The Office of Global Operations, Regions, the Office of AIDS Relief (OAR), and the Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support (OPATS) collaborate to review field assistance requests and select the activities to support in the upcoming fiscal year.

> Ctrl + click for:
> Instructions for operating plans and field assistance requests

> Ctrl + click for:
> Instructions for Field Assistance Requests

A description of FARs and the use of these funds can be found in [Section B.2.4: Field Assistance Requests](#), and in the guidance for FARs provided to posts each year (Intranet link on previous page).

B.2 Funding Sources to Support Programming and Training

As discussed in the *[Project Design and Evaluation Guide](#)*, Section E.6: Resources Needed for Project Implementation, the effectiveness of projects can often be enhanced by securing resources beyond Volunteer training, housing, medical support, and some travel. The Peace Corps philosophy is that every effort should be made

- *To seek local level funding first* so that Volunteer/partner activities are built on resources available to community members, to minimize the need for additional funds, and to maximize the sustainability and replicability of Volunteer efforts. For example, in Bolivia, a Volunteer taught community members how to make their own protective gear for beekeeping.

- *To engage host country regional and national partners through in-kind support* where possible.

- *To draw upon international funds only as necessary and consistent with the Peace Corps approach to development,* as outlined in *The New Project and Design Workshop Training Manual*, ICE No. T0107 (link at right). These could be Peace Corps-managed funds, such as SPA or Partnership, or other international funds.

> Ctrl + click for link to file *ICE No. T0107: The New Project Design and Management Workshop Training Manual*

Wisely used, external resources can nevertheless make projects more effective. For example, sometimes a Volunteer's work can be greatly facilitated by the availability of small funds, such as money for seeds for a demonstration gardening project, that cannot be mobilized with ease at the local level. Volunteer satisfaction and effectiveness can sometimes be greatly increased by the availability of simple resources to allow the project to move to a more advanced phase more quickly.

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Grants tracking sheet, PC Bolivia*

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Excel Summary Table of SPA, PCPP, PEPFAR.* *Note: see second tab for restrictions on payment of Volunteer and training costs*

The table below lists resources typically used to complement projects and training, and where these resources may come from. The links in the table and to the right provide further information on funding programming and training activities.

Sources of Resources Used to Enhance Programming and Training

Special Resources Your Post or Project May Need	*Most Likely Source*	*Other Possible Sources*
Volunteer/ Community Activity Needs		
Volunteer housing	OpPlan	Host country partners
Staff travel	OpPlan	
Volunteer transportation to field sites, special tools, materials	Host country partners	OpPlan
Training for supervisors and work partners (travel, meals, and lodging)	Varies; see restrictions as defined in the Thomas Tighe memo Ctrl + click to **link to Intranet** site for *Overseas Financial Management Handbook*, Section 46, Exhibit A: **Legal Opinion #99-073: "Use of Appropriated Funds for Training of Host Country Nationals",** Thomas Tighe, August 9, 1999 For other workshops: FAR/SPA/PEPFAR; Note that travel for orientation days ("counterpart days") is allowed	Local or other partners

Special Resources Your Post or Project May Need	*Most Likely Source*	*Other Possible Sources*
Tools, construction materials for pre-service training or in-service training	OpPlan Note: include materials even when HCNs participate at ISTs	PEPFAR, SPA if meets requirements
Youth summer camp funding. Note that camps should be sponsored by a local organization.	Host country partners, SPA, PEPFAR, OPSI	PEPFAR, SPA (with restrictions) Peace Corps would not normally fund this
Technical training materials (guides) produced by others or in-country	OpPlan, FAR	NGOs, USAID, SPA or OPSI (if in local language for HCNs) , PEPFAR
Specialized technical training beyond PST and IST to help Volunteers meet ongoing learning objectives	Host country agencies, NGOs	PEPFAR
Very small project funds $200 or less (for example, for seeds, materials) for Volunteers	Host country agencies, OPSI (PCPP, particularly Country Funds), NGOs	PEPFAR – VAST
Small project funds, $500–$6,000, for Volunteer-supported projects (for example, construction costs for latrines)	Host country agencies, OPSI (PCPP), SPA, NGOs,	PEPFAR – VAST
Post and Project Level Needs		
Funding for Project Advisory Committee meetings (travel, hotel, meeting room, refreshments)	Ctrl + click for link to file *on PACs, including tips on budgeting* OpPlan	Host country agencies
Review of project by an outsider, either from your country, another country, or Washington, D.C.	OpPlan, FAR	
Regional or subregional conferences for staff	FAR, Region funding	PEPFAR
Language testers training workshops (for LPI certification)	Ctrl + click for: *Funding for Language Testers Training Workshops* OPATS	

It is important to plan ahead, to understand the limitations and procedures for each funding mechanism, and to have backup plans as appropriate. In one post, a teacher-training project did not achieve its objectives because the training materials acquisition and delivery was delayed several times.

In order to receive funds under a partnership (often from another U.S. government organization, such as USAID), a signed agreement is required. Approval and authorization of funded program agreements is governed by Manual Section 103 and any related operational guidance issued by the Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and Partnerships pursuant to MS-103. See "Interim Partnership Guidance for Posts."

Ctrl + click for link to file *Interim Partnership Guidance for Posts*

B.2.1 Host Country Partners

Community members themselves should contribute both time and resources to support Volunteers and the projects that Volunteers help facilitate. Communities and organizations often provide support for Volunteer office space, computer use, tools, and materials. They sometimes can provide support for Volunteer housing. They also can support spaces for workshops and Volunteer travel to outlying communities. Community members may also have access to low-income credit or may be able to set up credit systems. For example, credit may be used to finance latrines. When a host partner organization is expected to contribute to expenses, such as housing and work-related transportation costs, the host partner organization's responsibilities for these expenses should be reflected in the Volunteer placement document (i.e., the Standard Placement MOU template).

Ctrl + click for: *Standard Placement MOU Template*

At the regional and national levels, funds may be available for workshops or infrastructure. For example, a national agency may be able to provide funds for water and sanitation infrastructure in schools.

B.2.2 Post Operations Plan

Ctrl + click for: *Excel worksheet for calculation of staff and Volunteer travel and per diem, DR*

Some of the above expenses may be most appropriately funded through a post's annual budget, as prioritized in the IPBS, and consistent with funding limits provided to posts by the region. A spreadsheet to aid in calculation of staff and Volunteer annual travel and per diem costs is linked at right.

B.2.3 USAID Small Projects Assistance (SPA)

Many countries have bilateral United States Agency for International Development (USAID) missions that contribute funds to the Peace Corps for community activities and training through the Small Project Assistance (SPA) program. SPA is an agency-level inter-agency agreement between the Peace Corps and USAID. The agreement supports training and capacity building for host country and community partners through two primary components: (1) grant funding for small-scale community-initiated development projects, and (2) Peace Corps-organized and PC-implemented field assistance training aimed at building capacity of Volunteer counterparts and work partners. Each year, Peace Corps posts that participate in the SPA program work with the local USAID mission to determine appropriate funding levels and program areas that will be supported. Funds from all contributing missions are collected annually into a single global funding amendment, which is signed between Peace Corps/Washington and USAID/Washington.

Ctrl + click for: Small Projects Assistance site for latest SPA handbook, SPA idea book, SPA annual report, guidelines for youth camps, SPA abstract, SPA completion report

Ctrl + click for: *SPA Program Handbook*

Ctrl + click for: *SPA Completion Report Form*

While the overall SPA program is managed by staff in the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs and Partnerships (IGAP), each post establishes its own post-specific review process and may set requirements appropriate to the local context (within established bounds). The post-level SPA committee reviews grant requests submitted by communities in conjunction with a Peace Corps Volunteer. The SPA committee is composed of Peace Corps staff and a USAID representative (at the discretion of the mission). It may also possibly include Volunteers and partners/counterparts.

SPA-supported training events may include project design and management workshops, technical workshops, or other activities that directly support capacity building of Volunteers' community counterparts and work partners. With the exception of PDM workshops, SPA funding cannot be used to fund basic Volunteer training costs that otherwise would be paid by the Peace Corps' appropriated budget, including PST costs, reconnect ISTs, mid-service conferences, or COS conferences. SPA funds also may be used to support a country-level evaluation of SPA projects executed in the past. These activities are planned through the Operating Plan/Field Assistance Request process.

For more information about the SPA program, its flexibility and limitations, reference the SPA handbook or go to the SPA Internet site (links at right).

B.2.4 Field Assistance Requests (FARs)

The regions manage a small pool of appropriated resources to fund annual field assistance requests made as part of the operations plan process. Instructions on developing FAR requests are distributed annually with operations plan instructions. While guidance for the use of these funds is reviewed annually to address the evolving needs expressed by posts, the general categories for which these funds have been used are:

Ctrl + click for: *SPA Abstract Form*

- Project reviews
- Training reviews
- Monitoring and evaluation reviews
- Training of trainers
- In-service training beyond the scope of regularly-scheduled training events

Ctrl + click for: *Partners reported by posts in PSRs*

- Materials development.

B.2.5 NGOs and Other Development Organizations

Posts often partner with other development organizations, complementing their strengths and resources. This sometimes takes the form of technical assistance, and Volunteer participation in training with their partners/counterparts. For example, NGOs may provided free training for Volunteers on particular topics, may provide free books for Volunteers, and may help to identify sites in rural areas. Volunteers may also support and complement NGO efforts by contributing to capacity building and sustainability of projects at the community level.

Ctrl + click for: *PEPFAR fact sheet*

B.2.6 Office of AIDS Relief (OAR)

The Office of AIDS Relief (OAR) provides overall strategic leadership for the achievement of the goals set forth in the agency's HIV/AIDS strategy. OAR oversees the management of the Peace Corps' participation in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). PEPFAR began as a five-year (2003–2008), $15 billion U.S. government initiative to combat the global HIV/AIDS pandemic by supporting treatment of HIV-infected people, prevention of new infections, and care for HIV-infected individuals and AIDS orphans. In 2008, PEPFAR was reauthorized for another five years at $39 billion. The Peace Corps has been an integral part of PEPFAR since 2004, and has leveraged PEPFAR funds for a multitude of programming and training enhancements, including training (PST, IST), PEPFAR-funded Volunteers and staff, and small grants through the Volunteer Activity Support and Training (VAST) program. Posts request and receive PEPFAR funds alongside the Country Operating Plan or Foreign Assistance Operating Plan process in their countries. For additional information about PEPFAR, consult the "PEPFAR 101" presentation, PEPFAR and VAST guidance and fact sheet (links at right).

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *PEPFAR and VAST guidance. Begin with the PEPFAR 101 PowerPoint* presentation

> Ctrl + click for: *PC HIV/AIDS Strategy 2009 - 2014*

B.2.7 Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI)

The Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI) promotes the active global participation of private individuals, organizations, and businesses in Peace Corps efforts at home and abroad. OPSI oversees the Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP). A benefit of Volunteers accessing OPSI funds for projects is the engagement of people in the United States with the communities where Volunteer's work, thus contributing to Peace Corps Goal Three. A disadvantage is that these funds cannot be accessed without Volunteers, thus limiting replicability (and sustainability if funds are used for recurring costs). Note that all gifts must be given in compliance with MS 721.

> Ctrl + click for: MS 720: Peace Corps Partnership Program

> Ctrl + click for: *PCPP Handbook*, the *PCPP Country Fund Authorization form* and *PCPP Country Fund Guidance* located on the right sidebar under the title *PCPP Resources for Posts*

Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP)

The Partnership Program, administered by OPSI, is designed to assist Volunteers in obtaining financial support for approved community-based projects. PCPP does not directly fund projects, but serves as a link to groups, foundations, service organizations, and individuals wanting to contribute to the valuable work Volunteers do with their host communities. Volunteers also play a significant role in funding a project by providing specific names and contact information of family members, friends, and associates who may be interested in supporting the project they are coordinating. Each project must also meet the local contribution requirement. Note that the time to fund a project increases with the project cost. PCPP projects should ideally be $4,000 or less.

> Ctrl + click for: MS 721: Gifts and Contributions to the Peace Corps

> Ctrl + click for: *PCPP Handbook, 2008*

PCPP Country Funds

Launched in 2008, country funds are a mechanism for managing PCPP funds that give individuals, returned Volunteer groups, and other private-sector entities the opportunity to support a specific country while giving posts the flexibility to determine how the money will be allocated among their approved Peace Corps Partnership Program projects. Use of country funds for a PCPP project could speed up funding of a project, making them very appropriate for smaller projects, such as using seeds or tools.

B.2.8 Regions

At times, Africa, EMA, and IAP regions fund staff participation in Overseas Staff Training (OST), regional workshops for staff development. They may also fund staff exchanges. They will seek input from posts as they prioritize their limited funds for these activities.

B.2.9 Other Funding Sources

Some posts have been able to leverage other funding sources, such as

- "Ambassador funds" for small projects that generate good will.

- Funds from other governments. For example, in 2008 the government of Taiwan provided small grants for projects in Kiribati.

- Participating Agency Program Agreements (PAPA) with USAID. These agreements support initiatives that further the objectives of the host country, Peace Corps, and USAID. Depending upon the nature of the agreement, funds may support staff costs, training, equipment, materials, community project implementation, and other appropriate costs. The OPATS Partnership Development Unit can support you to develop the agreement and assist you in obtaining agency approval in accordance with MS 103. If your post is interested in pursuing a PAPA with USAID, be sure to contact your PC/W desk and obtain approval from the region on the concept prior to beginning negotiations.

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for MS103: Interagency Agreements

B.3 Continual Improvement Assessment Tools

Each year, as part of a post's integrated planning and budgeting process, posts analyze results of self-assessments, Volunteer assessments, and feedback from host country partners to monitor progress and determine the post's priorities, goals, and objectives. Similarly, the agency analyzes these results to monitor progress against agency performance indicators and to set agency priorities.

Tools that the Peace Corps has established for self-assessment of a post's training and programming systems are summarized and linked in the following table. In addition, posts may respond to recommendations from an external review, for example from a sector specialist, a regional safety and security officer, or a representative of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG).

> Ctrl + click for: OIG and its work

Continual Improvement Assessment Tools			
Tool		*Comments on Purpose/Use*	*Link*
HCN	Host Country National interviews and surveys	Posts gather information from host country partners during site visits and meetings. They also may gather information through surveys. This feedback is required for reporting on the Agency Performance Indicator 1.3.1.d.	Ctrl + click for example Mexico survey which partners fill out each year on the Internet (anonymous). Ctrl + click for Intranet OSIRP guidance on performance indicators (then click on indicator 1.3.1d).
Volunteer	Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS); required, managed by OSIRP	The Annual Volunteer Survey collects confidential Volunteer feedback on eight areas involving training, programming, Volunteer support, and safety. Volunteers complete the survey during May–July each year; global, regional, and country results are distributed to posts in October of the same year. OSIRP prepares Volunteer survey reports and presentations on the Volunteer survey results throughout the year, including comparisons of cross-year survey results. Project-specific data may be obtained upon request; if fewer than five responses are recorded, the responses may be reported in larger groups to maintain respondents' confidentiality.	Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *Annual Volunteer Survey* information Ctrl + click for link to *"cool tools,"* version Nov 2009 Ctrl + click for link to *Volunteer Survey Analysis Excel sheet*
	Volunteer report form and tool (VRF/VRT); required, managed by post	The VRT provides information on Volunteer activities, challenges, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Posts use this information to adjust the design and implementation of projects and training, to generate reports for partners, and to summarize information reported in the SRs.	Ctrl + click for link to *VRT User Guide*
Self-Assessment	Status reports (SRs); required every October	Posts use the status reports to identify strengths and weaknesses in programming and training, and to inform post priorities for the future. They include the project status reports (PSRs), the initiative reports (IRs) and the training status report (TSR).	For PSR and IRs see Project Design and Evaluation Sections F.4 and F.5.

Continual Improvement Assessment Tools		
Tool	*Comments on Purpose/Use*	*Link*
Administrative Management Control System (AMCS); required annually with IPBS	The AMCS is a self-assessment and reporting tool that focuses on risk factors: administrative, medical, and safety. It also includes limited sections on leadership, programming, and training.	Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for AMCS instructions and Excel tool
Safety and security tools; occasionally required	Link at right for additional tools for annual evaluation of post procedures and systems to ensure safety and security, as codified in MS 270 on the Intranet. As applicable, posts should also review the status of implementation of recommendations from the last EAP and the last PCSSO visit.	Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for Manual Section 270: Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security Ctrl + click for link to Intranet site for Volunteer safety and security resources.
Programming and training evaluation Criteria; optional	This is the most comprehensive self-evaluation tool for programming and training management systems. It includes questions and indicators from the AMCS and the AVS. It is recommended that posts use the tool once a year—for example, at the IPBS planning retreat. It can also be a good tool for self-evaluation prior to an IG visit.	Ctrl + click for link to file ***Programming and Training Evaluation Criteria***
Questions to guide action planning for training; optional	This tool may be useful as a supplement to the TSR and other tools referenced above to guide post teams in discussions of areas for improvement to a post's Volunteer training.	Ctrl + click for: ***Questions to Guide Action Planning for Training***
Programming, training, and evaluation systems summary rubric; optional	A summary table for posts to consider comparing low, medium, and high quality programming and training design and evaluation (TDE) systems.	Ctrl + click for link to file ***P T and E priorities rubric summary***
OIG recommendation at your post or other posts	See your post files for recommendations for your post. You may also want to review recent OIG audits and evaluations of other posts.	Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *OIG office* – reports are linked on the right

(Left vertical label spanning lower rows: Self-Assessment)

Continual Improvement Assessment Tools			
Tool		*Comments on Purpose/Use*	*Link*
	Rubric for evaluating project effectiveness; optional	A draft rubric for self-evaluation of project effectiveness, including information from various sources. Effectiveness is evaluated based on evidence of the extent to which it 1) integrates into local and national development efforts, 2) is appropriate and outcome-focus, 3) is meeting its goals and objectives, 4) effectively trains Volunteers, and 5) effecitvely supports Volunteers.	Ctrl + click for link to file *Project Effectiveness Rubric*
Promising Practices to consider for Self-Assessment	A Case Study of Effective Peace Corps Programs, January 2007	The executive summary of this set of seven surveys of high performing posts provides excellent information on best practices used by posts to improve and maintain high quality programming and training systems. It highlights how leadership can play a role in promoting excellence.	Ctrl + click for link to file *Blueprint for Success: Case Study of Effective PC Programs*
	Characteristics of a High Performing Post	This is an extensive documentation of promising practices from Peace Corps posts around the world. It includes many questions for self-reflection on opportunities to improve post management systems.	Ctrl + click for link to file *Characteristics of a High Performing Post 2009*

C. Programming and Training Staff Development

C.1 Hiring Staff

While the country director and one or two other staff members at post will be hired by PC/W and are considered U.S. direct hire (USDH) staff members, the majority of Peace Corps staff members are hired in-country, in accordance with MS 743. Posts determine their staffing needs and structure, but any additions in staff that result in a budget increase must be approved by the post's region, and should be justified in the post's IPBS document.

Regions have developed guidelines for staffing ratios (for example, number of language cross-cultural facilitators per trainee). These are distributed to posts every year with the IPBS and Operations Plan guidance. See the link at right for an example of this guidance from the Inter-America and Pacific (IAP) region.

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *MS 743: Procurement of Personal Services of Host Country Residents by Contract*

> Ctrl + click for: *IAP staffing ratios 2009*

Developing the Statement of Work (SOW) or Position Description (PD)

Whether hiring permanent or temporary programming and training staff, the first step is to budget and plan for the hiring of the staff member during IPBS and ops planning. If approved, the next step is to write a detailed statement of work (SOW) in accordance with MS 743 (including SOW elements in attachments). In the case of a contract for an organization (such as a training contract), SOWs are included in the request for proposals (RFP). Note that the term "statement of work" is usually used for personal services contractors (PSCs) who are temporary contractors, while the term "position description" is usually used for foreign service national (FSN) staff at posts. The SOW should include the skills required for the position.

SOWs for each position will vary from post to post and among regions. Link below for sample statements of work for typical programming and training positions.

Example SOWs *Ctrl + click to link*	*Example interview questions* *Ctrl + click to link*
Training Manager/Director (Belize) note that this SOW has been flagged as a model SOW by the PC/W contracts office. It has all components recommended for an SOW.	PTU Assistant Homestay Georgia: interview round 1 interview round 2
Program Manager (Kazakhstan) / PM or APCD (IAP) note that the title APCD (in a position description) is limited to USDH or FSN staff. For FSN staff the title in the statement of work will be program manager. However the title the person uses day to day can be APCD.	For sample advertisements for a PM position, click on the link that follows: PM Africa.
Programming and Training Specialist (Panama)	
Project Specialist (Nicaragua)	

Example SOWs *Ctrl + click to link*	Example interview questions *Ctrl + click to link*
Program Assistant (Micronesia)	
Language and Cross-Cultural Coordinator (Kazakhstan)	
Language and Cross-Cultural Facilitator (Guatemala)	
Technical Trainer: TEFL (Nicaragua)	
Technical core coordinator (Honduras)	
Training Logistics Coordinator (Nicaragua)	

Recruiting Temporary Staff

Many posts use temporary staff, particularly for pre-service training (PST) language and technical training.

Notes from the field

Where can I recruit highly qualified temporary staff?

Some posts have found that they can recruit *language* facilitators from among local university professors, secondary school teachers, teacher training program graduates, or from other educational institutions, particularly if their staffing needs coincide with breaks in the local school system.

For *technical* trainers, one post trained specialists from a partner organization. This approach not only helped recruit qualified trainers, but also helped the partner organization work more effectively with Volunteers.

Posts should keep in mind that U.S. government regulations dictate when contracts must be bidded out. Other local laws regarding employment may apply to the recruitment and hiring process. Be sure to consult with your director of management and operations (DMO) regarding procedures and regulations for hiring staff, as well as benefits available to temporary staff. Your DMO is the expert at post on these issues, and has received training to answer your questions. Your DMO may also consult with PC/W with any questions he or she cannot answer.

Interviewing and Selection of Staff

After an SOW has been advertised, the appropriate staff will review candidates, document and justify selection, make an offer, and hire the best candidate who accepts the offer. Several posts have found it valuable to include Volunteers on interview panels to include their perspective when making final decisions.

C.2 Staff Orientation and Training

Peace Corps systems for orientation and ongoing training of both new and more seasoned staff are primarily managed by posts. Training needs are addressed for new staff, as well as more seasoned staff, with priority given to training needed for critical job functions. Supervisors are responsible for orienting and training new staff, with participation of many staff members in the process. Supervisors assess training needs, establish training goals, create staff development plans, and monitor the implementation of those plans. Needs assessments, developed in association with performance evaluations, should guide staff development plans.

Locally hired staff members begin their training in the country in which they are hired. Staff members hired by PC/Washington (U.S. direct hire, or USDH), typically begin their training in Peace Corps/Washington. Well-organized transition notes and files from those who left their old positions can be helpful for new staff members. At the end of this section, you will find links to a new DPT entry strategy, DPT transition notes, an APCD/PM transition notes template, a staff development needs self-assessment form, a form for tracking P&T staff progress on their development plans, a template for a post staff development plan, and an example of a staff development handbook. Your post may find it useful to adapt one or more of these for your situation.

Activities to meet staff members' training needs can be thought of as addressed along a continuum of learning, beginning from the time staff members are hired, and continuing throughout a staff member's employment with the Peace Corps, and may include the following:

- Staff training retreats, workshops, and seminars
- Overseas staff training (OST)
- Training events provided by a specialist invited to post
- Subregional or regional conferences
- One-on-one tutoring or mentoring by a fellow staff member
- Self-directed learning (through Peace Corps resources, books, or completion of online courses or training events)
- Enrollment in locally-offered courses
- Visits with a seasoned staff member from a neighboring post

Ctrl + click for link to file *DPT transition notes template: Bolivia*	Ctrl + click for link to file *DPT transition notes example: Honduras*	Ctrl + click for link to file *DPT transition notes and calendar example: Albania*
Ctrl + click for link to file *APCD/PM transition notes template: Bolivia*	Ctrl + click for link to file *DPT and new staff entry strategies*	Ctrl + click for link to file *Staff development needs assessment form*
Ctrl + click for link to file *Programming and Training Staff Performance Evaluation Tracking Sheet*	Ctrl + click for link to file *Post staff development plan template*	Ctrl + click for link to file *Example staff development handbook Thailand*

Listed in the following table are staff training strategies, session plans, and resources corresponding to DPT and APCD/PM programming and training competencies defined by OPATS in late 2009.

Skill Area	*Strategies/Session plans/Resources*
Peace Corps policies for staff	***Interim Policy IPS 1-03 Fraternization Policy***
Project Design and Evaluation & Site Development Project design Monitoring and evaluation Project management Site identification, preparation, and assignment	***Project Design and Evaluation Guide***
	ICE technical manuals (sector listings) Online learning WebEx or other training facilitated by PC/W specialist OST Local, subregional or regional conferences IRC Managers' newsletter
	Roles of the Volunteer in Development (Ice No. T0005) ***Participatory Program Evaluation (Ice No. R0094)***
	This *Management and Implementation Guide*, in particular Section E: Volunteer Site Identification, Preparation, and Assignment ***Host Families Matter (ICE No. T0106)***
Training Design and Evaluation Principles of nonformal education and adult learning Facilitation Language testing Copyrights	***Training Design and Evaluation Guide***
	TOT or Training Design Workshop ***TOT Core Needs***
	OST
	Training provided by OPATS specialist
	Language testers training for LPI certification; *Find these three manuals on the intranet by clicking here:* ***T0130 English LPI Language Proficiency Interview Manual for Testers*** ***T0131 Spanish LPI Language Proficiency interview Manual for Testers*** ***T0132 French LPI Language Proficiency interview Manual for Testers***
	Diversity Training Modules for Pre-Service Training (ICE No. T0129K)

Skill Area	Strategies/Session plans/Resources
	Staff development modules developed in OPATS (then the Center) by Duane Karlen in 1999, for use for TOTs. Modules include: 1. "Icebreakers" and Opener Activities 9. Facilitation Skills *Karlen staff development modules* *Nonformal education session plan* *Learning styles poster* *Flip chart guidelines* *Guidelines on making posters* *Nonformal education study questions* *Quantum teacher moves* *50+ discussion points* *Copyright guidance* *Community Content-Based Instruction (CCBI Manual) (ICE No. T0112)* *Peace Corps Tales from Open Space (ICE No.T0089)*
Leadership, management and administration Negotiation PC 101 PC/cross-cultural Team-building Managing conflict Strategic thinking Strategic planning Problem solving Communication (including English, public relations)	This *Management and Implementation Guide* OST Staff workshop ICE technical manuals (sector listings) *Greaseless: How to Thrive Without Bribes in Developing Countries*: CD060 (available in hard copy only through ICE)
	Staff development modules developed in OPATS (then the Center) by Duane Karlen in 1999, for use for TOTs. Modules include: 3. Conflict Management 6. Cross-Cultural Skills 7. Effective Leadership 8. Effective Meetings 11. Negotiation Skills 12. Stress Management 13. Teamwork 14. Time Management *Karlen staff development modules*

Skill Area	Strategies/Session plans/Resources
Talent development How to run effective meetings Peace Corps policies Ethics Hiring	**Corruption and Transparency as Development Issues** (ICE No. T0137K) **Multicultural workplace case study session plan** Ctrl + click for link to file **Team-building session plans compiled by Stacy Cummings for staff development workshop in Suriname — 2007**
Supporting Trainees and Volunteers Communication (including English) Volunteer support Resiliency Coaching Counseling Managing expectations Managing conflict Cross-cultural and diversity support Negotiation and problem solving Safety issues	**Peace Corps Academy PowerPoint** OST **Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook (ICE No. T0087)** **La Cultura si Importa: Manual Transcultural del Cuerpo de Paz (ICE No. T0120)** **Culture Matters Trainer's Guide (ICE No. T0103)** **Working With Americans Summary Chart** Resiliency training workshop **Staff training modules for supporting Volunteer resiliency** **Zambia staff workshop materials for Volunteer resiliency support** This *Management and Implementation Guide* Office of Special Service in-country consultations and training Ctrl + click for: **cross-cultural session plan for staff** Ctrl + click for link to file: **Coaching – Breakdown to Breakthrough**

Skill Area	Strategies/Session plans/Resources
	Ctrl + click for link to file *Enhancing Natural Listening Skills*
	Confidentiality training info: PC/Bolivia
	Confidential handling of Volunteer/Trainee allegations: session plan
	Confidential handling of Volunteer/Trainee allegations: PowerPoint
	Staff development modules developed in OPATS (then the Center) by Duane Karlen in 1999, for use for TOTs. Modules include: 2. Communication Skills 3. Conflict Management 4. Consulting Skills 5. Counseling Skills 6. Cross-Cultural Skills 10. Managing Expectations 11. Negotiation Skills *Karlen staff development modules*
	Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *Crime Reporting and Response Overview* (training PowerPoint), March 2009.
Computer Applications Microsoft Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, Word, Project VIDA, VRT/VRF, CIRF	Courses led by post's information and technology specialist (ITS) OST Online learning PC/W-facilitated learning (WebEx or other)

More information on TOT events and the Peace Corps language testers training program can be found in this guide under Section G.1: TOT for PST and Section G.3: Language Tester Training.

C.3 Performance Management

The Peace Corps is committed to supporting staff to perform well and to continually improve its performance by providing specific feedback and supporting opportunities for growth and development. Performance appraisals are governed by MS 743. All personal service contractors (PSC) are evaluated by the country director, or another Peace Corps employee designated by the country director, during and at the completion of their in-country work. Only U.S. direct hire (USDH) and foreign service national (FSN) positions may *supervise* staff. Most Peace Corps staff positions are PSC positions, as both USDH and FSN positions are limited. PSC positions may *oversee* other staff positions, but every position must be assigned an FSN or USDH supervisor. One component of the performance appraisal is the staff development plan.

Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for *MS 743: Procurement of Personal Services of Host Country Residents by Contract*

Giving and Receiving Feedback Across Cultures

Feedback is a key part of effective performance management. The process of giving and receiving feedback is complicated by the diversity of the Peace Corps work force. Although some of the differences among staff members may be based on personal preferences, many are based on cultural preferences. These cultural preferences shape staff members' expectations of each other, and should be accounted for in providing performance feedback. See link above.

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Cross-Cultural Differences in Feedback*

D. Programming and Training Teamwork and Communication

At the heart of our work as a member of a Peace Corps staff is strong relationships. To be effective in our work, we need to work as a team. This means sharing information across projects and job functions, communicating effectively across cultures, and building trust among the staff.

D.1 Building Effective Teams

When there is strong cooperation and coordination among staff, the synergy makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts. Even though one might assume that teamwork comes easily, staff members who have worked together successfully know that it requires conscious effort and ongoing attention. Use the checklist linked at right and summarized below to analyze, reflect, and discuss how well staff members are laying the groundwork for working together as a team.

Ctrl + click to link to: *Five R's of Effective Teams*

Ctrl + click to link to: *Characteristics of an Effective Team*

The characteristics of an effective team can be summarized on five fingers. The five R's of team-building, further detailed in the document linked at right:

Ctrl + click to link to: *Characteristics of Effective Team Leaders*

1. Reason: team members understand how their activities contribute to a clear vision
2. Roles: team members know what their roles are and are trained to perform them
3. Rules: systems are fair and consistent
4. Relationships: team members trust, respect, and effectively communicate with each other
5. Rewards: team members feel their work is valued, fairly compensated, and they have opportunities for growth

Ctrl + click to link to: *Symptoms of Team Problems*

An example agenda and lesson plans for a staff development workshop on team-building is in the table in Section C.2: Staff Orientation and Training.

D.2 Working Effectively Across Differences

The Peace Corps work force is multicultural, made up of employees from the United States and the host country. There is also great diversity within each of these groups. Staff and Volunteers come from diverse racial, ethnic, age, sexual orientation, religious, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. This multicultural workplace environment can be challenging, and, when staff members learn how to work effectively across cultural differences, rewarding.

One way to improve cross-cultural communication among staff is to facilitate a session on the multicultural workplace. Staff retreats,

Working With Americans Summary Chart

workshops, and extended staff meetings provide opportunities to proactively address the cross-cultural differences and develop a stronger team. The session plans for "multicultural workplace case study" and "cross-cultural continuum" in the table in Section C.2: Staff Orientation and Training are designed to help teams improve cross-cultural communication. Also see the working with Americans summary chart.

D.3 Training and Programming Integration

Integration of programming and training refers to how programming and training staff support each other's roles throughout the life of a project. Programming drives training, and training informs programming. Programming and training staff need to work together to build and maintain quality programming and training, including

Ctrl + click for: *Diagram Showing how Task Analysis Links Programming and Training*

- Ensuring that post requests candidates who can be trained to the needs of the project
- Ensuring that Volunteers are trained in the right skills in the right sequence, and use the skills they are trained in
- Supporting trainees
- Determining which site assignments will best match trainee skills, interests, and work styles
- Planning, budgeting for, and implementing quality training

Ctrl + click for link to file *How the project plan influences quality programming and training*

Ctrl + click for link to file *Programming and Training Integration checklist, 2 page version*

Because programming and training staff are often physically separated from each other and because their perspectives are different, sometimes opportunities for effective teamwork are lost, and training may become disconnected from programming. Link on the right for a checklist to help your team develop ideas on how to better integrate programming and training and track your progress (two-page or seven-page version).

Ctrl + click for link to file *Programming and Training Integration checklist, 7 page version*

Examples of programming and training integration activities that are sometimes overlooked at posts:

- Trainers providing feedback to programmers on the complexity of the project framework/plan and its implications for training (answering the question "Can we train to this plan?")
- Trainers participating on the project advisory committee and in project reviews (in particular the opening and debriefing meetings)

Ctrl + click for link to file *Situations for Post to Discuss Related to Managing the TDE Process and Managing Programming and Training Integration*

- Programmers working with trainers to improve the quality of the task analysis

- Programmers working with trainers to define technical learning objectives

- Programmers working with trainers to design training that matches the performance context or environment as closely as possible

- Programmers co-facilitating training, in a way that reflects an understanding of the principles of adult learning

- Programmers participating in evaluation of how much learning occurred, whether it is being used on the job, and what impact training is having on the success of a project

- Trainers conducting site visits and interacting with partners/ counterparts to better understand the context of Volunteer work and the effectiveness of training

> Ctrl + click for link to:
> *Scenarios illustrating how training informs programming*

For scenarios that help illustrate how training informs programming, click on the box at right.

E. Volunteer Site Development

The quality of a Volunteer's housing and work is one of the more critical features of a safe and successful Peace Corps experience. Volunteers can more easily thrive when their sites and homes are safe, their families and neighbors are welcoming, their role and work assignment are well-defined, and partners and host families understand their roles. Site preparation requires a team of staff and Volunteers who follow, and periodically update, procedures established at post that comply with MS 270.

Site development includes the six steps outlined in the graphic on the following page. The focus of this section is the first four steps of the site development process, the steps prior to Volunteers' arrival at their sites.

Once the Volunteers arrive at their sites, they play an important role in further development of a site throughout their service, and particularly during their first months of service.

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for Manual Section 270: Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security

Site Development Process

	1. Identify Potential Sites	2. Prepare Sites	3. Select Sites	4. Prepare Trainees & Assign Sites	5. Further Develop Sites	6. Phase Out Sites
Timeframe	- 10-12 months before PST	- 3-9 months before PST	- 0-3 months before PST	- PST Week 1-9 (varies)	- 0-24 months of service each Volunteer	- 0-3 months prior to date last Volunteer leaves
Team Members	- APCD/PM, ministry officials, partner agency department or district level officials, PAC members, Volunteers, current project partners, staff from other development organizations, embassy regional security officer, other Peace Corps staff	- APCD/PM, PCMO, PS, PTS or PA, PCVL, neighboring Volunteers, SSC, another APCD, driver	- APCD/PM, PTO, SSC, CD, PCMO, PTS, PA, other APCDs, TM, PCVL, partner organizations	- APCD/PM, CD, PTO, TM, technical trainers, LCFs, PCMO, Volunteers involved in training, SSC, PTS, PA	- APCD/PM, PCVL, neighboring Volunteers, neighboring project partners	- APCD/PM, ministry officials, partner agency departmental or district level officials, Volunteer, PCVL
Meetings & Visits	- Initial Meetings: APCD initially meets government officials, NGOs, & community members - At midservice conference and site visits, discuss sites with Volunteers - At senior staff meeting, review site placement strategy	- Visit to site to talk with potential counterpart agency, local officials, potential host families, & other stakeholders - Visits to site to follow-up on remaining issues, homestay, & counterpart details	- Staff meeting to confirm site for all projects	- Site announcements - Counterpart/orientation day - Trainee site visits	- Site visit in first three months - Additional site visits	- Site closing visit with celebration if appropriate
Staff Tasks	- Consult Volunteers - Review past sites - Set deadline for follow-up on initial interest - Give potential sites info about Peace Corps	- Check with SSC, PCMO - Check (or Begin) site history file - Site emergency contact information in VIDA	- Site must meet all mandatory site criteria - Site must be approved by CD, PCMO, & SSC (PTO in some cases) - Inform sites if selected or not selected	- Project partner or supervisor orientation - Volunteer orientation	- Sign partner agreement - Presentation of Volunteer in community	- Communicate with host organization
Volunteer Tasks	- Propose new sites - Give feedback on existing sites - Visit potential sites	- Visit sites, meet potential families, if possible, conduct activity in potential new sites - Share experience as Volunteer with community	- Site visit to follow up on expectations and arrangements	- Trainees may be asked for input on where they prefer to be assigned - PCVLs may provide input on assignments	- Volunteer community/ sector assessment - Volunteer work with patrons - PCVL support - Maintain housing	- Volunteer documents (site report, DOS), work, accomplishments, any issues
Documents	- Volunteer Request Form - Site Development Packet - PC information packets	- Site survey (detailed info) - Site criteria (checklist) - Housing checklist		- Site information packet - Confirmation of assignment/ counterpart day invitation - Rejection letter to partners not receiving Volunteers	- Partner agreement - Site visit reports - VRFs - Update site history files as appropriate - Volunteer site notebook - Site locator form	- Documentation of site accomplishments and reason for closing

E.1 Promising Practices in Site Preparation

The following is a summary of promising practices that posts have successfully implemented in response to typical site preparation challenges.

Promising Practices	*Site Preparation Challenges*
Sound site identification strategies and criteria: • Involvement of host partners in selection of sites • Clearly defined criteria shared with Volunteers and partners, including documented plans for evolving roles of each generation of Volunteer at a particular site	Finding appropriate sites that meet all established criteria. Phasing out sites.
Minimizing surprises • Use a system to document input from Volunteers on future use of the site for their project or for other projects. • A driver, the SSC, or partner asks about a host family • A nearby Volunteer visits host family and spends some time getting to know them (Kazakhstan) • Begin the process of identifying sites earlier, and regard site development as an ongoing, year-long process. • Do not rely on just one person to prepare sites for each project. Use a staff team to support site preparation, with well-defined roles and backups. The team might include the DPT, SSC, PTS, and PA, among others. In Guinea the driver's play an important role by gathering honest information about the community and the potential host families. • Use Volunteers to visit new sites. • Regional PCVLs involved in site identification and preparation (Panama). • Use NGOs to provide information about sites (Kazakhstan). • Use of systems to manage the site preparation process, and to schedule preparation effectively (Niger, Honduras).	Volunteers may be unknowingly placed with families with domestic violence or alcohol issues. Promised upgrades (such as a door) may not be made by the time the Volunteer arrives for site visit or to live. Sometimes Volunteers are met with surprises such as their home not being ready, a staffing change at the host agency that the Peace Corps was unaware of, or a safety situation that the Peace Corps was unaware of. These may be due to lack of time on the part of the APCD/PM to follow-up on site issues, or constraints to site visits, such as difficulty traveling during the rainy season.
Managing trainee expectations: • Phone calls to invitees. • Volunteer community/sector assessment/diagnostic assignment . • Site assignment packets that are comprehensive enough to credibly communicate the site preparation process (yes, so many visits were made and so many people consulted) and the limitations of the process, while at the same time not overly specific about activities and agreements such that Volunteers do not have expectations that more has been set in place than is reality. • Volunteer further identifies work partners/ counterparts to work with during first 90 days (Georgia TEFL, Dominican Republic, Peru). • Clarify that staff "prepare" sites, and Volunteers play a role in "development" of their own sites.	Sometimes trainee complaints about site development come down to inappropriate expectations, such as that they can easily be placed in a site adjacent to a girl/boy friend met during training, that their work will be highly structured, that their assigned partners will not need to change, or that there will be no misconceptions in their community about the role of a Volunteer.

Promising Practices	*Site Preparation Challenges*
• First generation Volunteers at a sight are recognized as "opening it up," while second and third Volunteers at a site focus more on implementation and sustainability. • Volunteer training on how to work with host country partners. • PowerPoints and handouts that help clarify expectations. Ctrl + click for link to file *What is a Counterpart?* Ctrl + click for link to file *Paraguay presentation on site preparation for trainees*	
<u>Managing partner/family expectations and follow-through on commitments</u>: • Use of a signed agreement that defines the Volunteer and partner roles (Georgia). • Go over task analysis with partners. • Have partners go through a process to solicit Volunteers that demonstrates commitment and follow-through. • Strong training for partners to clarify expectations and roles: link to Tonga example presentation for partners. • Partner and Volunteer work plans reviewed with PC programming staff. • Host family support and training (Cameroon). • Always have a second family ready as a backup plan, or have several choices ready from which the Volunteer can select (Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan).	Sometimes communities or work partners do not understand their role, the role of a Volunteer or the capacity in which Volunteers should be used.

E.2 Step 0: Organize the Process (Roles, Timeline)

All Volunteer sites should meet all programming and safety criteria and be ready for their Volunteers well before swearing-in. Per MS 270, the country director is responsible for ensuring that procedures are in place to be certain that sites meet post-defined safety and security criteria. APCD/PMs typically prepare more sites than needed, taking into account that circumstances can change (both site readiness and trainees arriving).

Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for Manual Section 270: Volunteer/ Trainee Safety and Security

Ctrl + click for link to file *Niger: Case Study of Effective Program, 2006*

Develop or Revise Project Site Selection Strategy

Each project's site selection strategy is included in its project plan (see Part 2: *Project Design and Evaluation Guide* Section E: Step 3: Define or Revise Project Implementation Plan). The strategy may define particular geographical areas or characteristics of sites and partners most suitable for maximizing the effectiveness of the project in achieving its target goals and objectives. Ideally, APCD/PMs work as a team to develop an integrated post strategy, as highlighted in the Niger case study report (link at right).

Develop Post/Project Site Selection Criteria

Posts develop site selection criteria, including programming and health and safety issues, in accordance with MS 270. For example, post programming criteria may include verification that community partner(s) have been identified who have the interest and resources to support Volunteers in their work. One element of the post's site selection criteria will be housing criteria. Sometimes in addition to post-wide criteria, projects develop additional criteria, specific to the project.

Develop Post Site Preparation Procedures

Posts also develop site preparation procedures to ensure that each site meets its site criteria prior to each Volunteer or trainee arrival at site, as required by MS 270. Link to examples at right for post-specific procedures and process/documentation organization.

Site Preparation Teams

While the APCD/PM leads the site preparation process for his or her project, all steps in the site preparation process will be strengthened by involving stakeholders at various stages, as indicated in the previous site development process figure.

Site Criteria Examples:	Costa Rica Guinea Panama Guatemala: safety
Housing Checklist Examples:	Belize Suriname Dominican Republic
Post site preparation procedures Examples:	Belize Gambia Panama Zambia Jordan Suriname Bulgaria

Ctrl + click for: *Costa Rica site development management*

HELPFUL HINTS

If the ministry wishes to delegate where to place Volunteers…

In some countries a ministry plays a strong role in identifying sites. In this case, it is important that the ministry understands and honors the Peace Corps' placement criteria. Site preparation visits that include both a ministry representative and a Peace Corps representative is a promising practice, if feasible.

Timeline for Site Preparation

It is highly recommended that programming staff establish calendars for site preparation, including coordination meetings, in such a way that the various staff members involved in the process or affected by the outcome can optimally coordinate their work, including the PCMO, DMO, SSC, and TM.

Ctrl + click for: *Panama Volunteer request form in Spanish*

Site Development Reports, Forms, and Checklists

Standard report formats, forms, and checklists can help ensure that information is gathered to verify which sites meet the site criteria and to evaluate each site. Examples of tools used by posts:

Site Evaluation Form: for sites under consideration for follow-on Volunteers, provides current or past Volunteer input on programmatic and safety considerations for the site.	Site Evaluation by PCV.doc
Volunteer Replacement Request Form: designed for Volunteers who believe that a follow-on Volunteer should be placed in their site.	Replacement Request Form for Agroforesty Kenya.doc
Volunteer Request Form: filled out by potential partner agencies to demonstrate their interest in working with the Peace Corps and to identify the areas in which they would like training and support.	Philippines General Teachers: Turkmenistan
Site Survey Form: completed by APCD/PM or by the community partner agency; provides information on the site, including safety and security issues.	Staff Site Assessment form, Philippines School information form, Tanzania Papua New Guinea community survey form
Site Development Tracking Sheet	Costa Rica Site Dev Matrix
Site Development Report Forms (may be passed to Volunteers)	Panama Costa Rica

Site History Documentation

Early in the site identification process, it is important to understand any safety information about a site, any issues the Peace Corps has had in a site that might affect the safety or work of a Volunteer, and recommendations about the suitability of a site. Much of this information is available through experienced staff members, but documentation of key information is critical, and indeed is required by MS270. Site history documentation includes both electronically accessible information (VIDA, documents linked to VIDA, and other files) and hard copy files. The documentation should be readily located so that any new APCD/PM will find all information post has on record that might affect the work and safety of a Volunteer.

Ctrl + click for: *Site Evaluation by Volunteer*

Ctrl + click for: *Volunteer Replacement Form, Kenya: includes safety information*

Post must have a site history document which describes the system for documenting site history information by listing all of the site history information available and where it can be found. The document must be reviewed annually for validity. At a minimum, this document must contain clear direction for the reader to locate

- Completed site survey forms/information.
- Completed site criteria checklists/information.
- Housing checklists/information.
- Notations about *crime incidents* (omitting victims' personally identifying information).
- Any *Volunteer feedback* related to safety or recommendations on placements of future Volunteers in sites, including COS reports.
- Volunteer requests.
- Agency/community agreements.
- Site visit documentation.
- Records of any *safety concerns observed during site visits*, including transportation issues, records of housing safety concerns, observations about host families, or housing changes made for safety reasons.
- *Names of past Volunteers and partners* (these are included in VIDA).
- *Other information critical to site placement considerations,* including events reported in the local news, communications issues, natural disasters, records of important phone calls, impressions about local officials, and issues that affected Volunteers in the site.
- A record of areas or sites currently restricted from Volunteer placements or restricted in the past, the date the restriction was placed in effect or lifted, and the conditions that would need to change for current restrictions to be lifted. Such restrictions can be noted in VIDA. Decisions about which sites are restricted and conditions needed to change the restriction should be made by the CD.

> Ctrl + click for link to file
> *Tip Sheet: Use of VIDA 2.0 for Site Development and Site History*

How to Organize Site History Documents

HELPFUL HINTS

Keeping safety-related site history documents by geographical location rather than (or as well as, if cross-referenced) by sector or Volunteer group is important to facilitate their use by other Peace Corps staff members during the site identification step.

Example of VIDA Entry for Volunteer Relocated for Safety Reasons

HELPFUL HINTS

On July 17, 2007, female PC Volunteer was relocated to another site due to safety and security concerns. The Volunteer reported to SSC that there were gun-shooting incidents inside her village a few times during the last three weeks; the reason for the shootings was a dispute between two families in the village. The SSC met with the liaison officer at the Public Security Directorate to discuss the issue, and based on safety and security concerns regarding the Volunteer's site at the time, Peace Corps/ Jordan made the decision to relocate the Volunteer.

Other information important for assessing and preparing sites should also be filed, well organized, and accessible, and may include the following:

- Volunteer community/sector assessments by past Volunteers
- Volunteer projects
- Photos
- Volunteer report forms
- Past site preparation documentation, with all related information
- Site visit reports
- Maps

Regional Meetings With Interested Partners

Peace Corps/Bulgaria and PC/Kazakhstan use regional meetings where all schools or NGOs that have expressed an interest in working with the Peace Corps are invited to attend.

Note that site history files should complement project history files, covered in Part 2: *Project Design and Evaluation Guide*, Section G.4.

For electronic files, it is wise for posts

1. To adopt conventions for where files are stored.

2. To adopt naming conventions or nomenclature for standard documents, so they are uniformly entered and easily located using a search function.

E.3 Step 1: Identify Potential Sites (Including Replacement Sites)

The objective of this step is to identify placements for Volunteers with agencies and communities that are able and willing to support Volunteers, and where Volunteers with partners can contribute to achieving the project's goals and objectives. This step involves

a) *Determining which existing sites are appropriate for follow-on (replacement Volunteers),* post staff evaluate existing sites based on recommendations from Volunteers, input from partners, a definition of a sound work role for the new Volunteer, site support and safety, whether Volunteer work at the site has completed project objectives, and sustainability considerations. See also Section E.8: Step 6, Phase Out Sites.

b) *Encouraging potential partner agencies to request Volunteers,* post staff share informational material and talk to officials, communities, and development organizations about Volunteer placement. Staff and Volunteers make preliminary site visits to identify interested communities. During these visits they promote the Peace Corps in general and the specific project. They leave materials behind and, if it appears that the site has potential for being a partner with the Peace Corps, they encourage the agency or community to submit a Volunteer Request Form.

Peace Corps Information Packets

Some posts have developed Peace Corps information packets for prospective partner communities or organizations. These packets include a PC post brochure or annual report, an overview of the project, expectations of the Peace Corps and partners, overview and timing of the site selection process, and a Volunteer request form. The materials are organized in a folder that can easily be mailed or left at a site. Also refer to Section D.5: Communicating With Volunteers and Partners.

c) *Compiling a list of potential sites*, based on input from Volunteers, staff and partners, Volunteer request forms received, and APCD/PM experience.

Reducing the list to a number of sites that can be reasonably visited the number of times required to ensure compliance with post site criteria (usually at least two, and could be as many as six for some sites). The APCD/PM will take into consideration whether the site currently or reasonably soon will meet post's site criteria, the project strategy, and site clustering considerations. The APCD/PM should also take into consideration staff, Volunteer, and partner input.

Volunteer request forms: filled out by potential partner agencies to demonstrate their interest in working with the Peace Corps and to identify the areas in which they would like training and support.

Replacement form: filled out by Volunteers to recommend that a follow-on Volunteer be placed at their site.

Philippines

General

Teachers: Tanzania

Agroforestry: Kenya

> **Categories for Ranking Sites**
>
> *The following categories are used by Peace Corps/Kyrgyz Republic when it scouts for potential sites:*
>
> *Promising Sites: Sites that must be further developed, but that are generally enthusiastic about and prepared for collaboration with a Volunteer, and that have no unresolved issues or concerns (such as a safety concern, unclear expectations, etc.).*
>
> *Borderline Sites: Sites that could be developed as suitable sites if necessary, or sites that are promising but have one or more unresolved issues (such as safety concerns, unclear expectations, etc.) that must be resolved before the site can be considered "ready."*
>
> *Currently Unsuitable Sites: Sites that are not prepared or suitable for collaboration with a Volunteer at this time.*

E.4 Step 2: Prepare Communities

The objectives of this step are

a) *To orient the potential partners and host families to the Peace Corps* development philosophy and the project's purpose, goals, and objectives. Also share with the partner, community, and host family the importance of cultural exchange (Peace Corps Goals Two and Three).

b) *To assess the interest of the community, partner agency, proposed supervisor, and proposed work partner* in working with the Peace Corps. It is important to understand the reasons why the community and partner organization(s) want a Volunteer, and to stress the *responsibilities* of partners.

c) *To gather and verify information to ensure that the site, including housing, meets post's criteria;* conditions in a site or in a house selected for a Volunteer may change. It is important that the last visit to the site made by a staff member be within four months of arrival of the Volunteer.

d) *To ensure that site information, including local authorities and emergency contact, is recorded in VIDA*.

e) *To get agreement on expectations* of Volunteers by the community and partners for the duration of the Peace Corps' involvement. Discuss the project with the partner agency and community so they understand and support what the project is trying to accomplish and have clear expectations of what they and the Volunteer will do.

f) *To clarify and get agreement on host family and partners' roles and responsibilities.* Orienting the potential supervisor and community partner/counterpart to their responsibilities and to the project goals and objectives are critical. Emphasize to communities, partners, and host families their roles in ensuring a Volunteer's safety, security, and health. Be sure to nurture the multiple individuals who will work with Volunteers, not just their work partners (link to *What is a counterpart* at right)—all of them need to understand the Peace Corps and the role of the Volunteer. At the same time, prepare them for the flexibility in their roles that may be expected. An example of a tool that Georgia uses to help communicate clearly the role of the Peace Corps and of supervisors and partners can be accessed by the link to the right.

Participation of partners and Volunteers in this step can add value to the process.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD **Assessing Community Unity and Leadership — Vanuatu**

The PC/Vanuatu *Site Development Procedures Manual* outlines the following indicators of community unity and leadership to assess at each of two site development visits and meetings:

1) Are there disputes over chiefly title or a significant number of land disputes? (If so, this is an indicator of low levels of leadership.)

2) Is there a chief or council of chiefs responsible for making and implementing decisions on behalf of the community? (This is an indicator in favor of strong leadership.)

3) Did the chief or other community leader organize the community meeting with full participation from the community? (If not, this is an indicator of a weakness in community leadership.)

4) Peace Corps committee established or pre-existing committee identified by community to work with the Peace Corps Volunteer.

5) Community liaison is identified and Peace Corps staff explain role directly to designated person.

6) Is the Volunteer house ready?

7) If not a rural community (e.g., urban or provincial center or boarding school), is there adequate other community leadership in place (e.g., police presence, local chief with authority over area, community council, strong school leadership)?

E.5 Step 3: Select Sites

After all the sites have been visited, review the information, apply the selection criteria, and identify the best sites for Volunteer placement. The initial list of final sites should include a number of extra sites in case unexpected changes affect the readiness of sites, or suitable housing is not ready at a site prior to the date set for site assignments.

Click on the link to the right for a tool used by Costa Rica to summarize critical data about sites and to keep senior staff at post informed of the site selection progress.

Be sure to notify sites that have been chosen to receive a Volunteer, as well as sites that will not receive a Volunteer, and the reasons why, as soon as possible. When communicating with the sites that have been selected, be sure to remind them of the orientation workshop ("counterpart conference"), and to mention that until the trainees swear in, there may be changes.

E.6 Step 4: Prepare Trainees and Assign Sites

Successful Volunteer placement involves understanding partner agency needs, understanding the knowledge, skills, work styles and preferences of trainees, and managing expectations. Trainee preparation and site assignment include

a) *Managing trainee expectations about their sites and their work partners.* It is important for trainees to understand that their work partners may well change, their communities may not have completely understood the role of the Volunteer despite orientation by staff, and they will play an important role in the continued development of the site. Trainees should understand that "counterpart" or "work partner" is a function, not necessarily a particular person or title. A work partner is whoever is willing to work with a Volunteer to jointly learn and apply their mutual learning on the job or in the community (link to Paraguay presentation at right).

b) *Conducting trainee interviews.* PST provides an opportunity for programming staff to get to know the trainees. Through discussions and conversations, staff can identify factors that influence site-matching decisions, including trainee strengths and weaknesses, optimum work environments, and trainee work preferences.

c) *Providing trainee with preliminary site information.* Most posts provide trainees with preliminary information about sites, at least including the type of work to be performed, and the skills needed (including language skills). Sites suitable for married couples are usually identified.

d) *Providing trainees the opportunity to state their preferences.* Some posts have found that involving trainees in the matching process builds a collaborative relationship from the beginning. Trainees and Volunteers want to have control over their lives. Allowing them to have input into the process gives

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Ctrl + click for link to file *Costa Rica site status summary sheet*

Strategy for Host Families

In Lesotho, programming staff use a very effective strategy to ensure that host families are ready for their Volunteers. Programming staff give each host family a date when they will return to videotape their house and family. They explain that the tape will be shown to the trainee during PST. If accommodations for the Volunteer are not ready by the specified date, the Peace Corps will not video their home, and the family will not host a Volunteer.

Ctrl + click for: *Working with counterparts in the classroom, Georgia*

Ctrl + click for: *Working With Supervisors and Counterparts ICE No. T0121*

Ctrl + click for: *Volunteer and APCD Responsibilities, DR*

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them a sense of control, and, in most cases, staff can match them to one of their preferences. However, training and programming staff should caution the trainees that, while Peace Corps staff will make every effort to place them in one of their choices, for a number of reasons it may not be possible. The decision of the APCD/PM is final, and the Peace Corps expects that Volunteers, as professionals, will do their best wherever they are placed.

e) *Matching trainees to sites* The next step in Volunteer placement includes reviewing site requirements, trainee skills, trainee preferences, and any health-related considerations that must be taken into account. Staff members who should be involved in the process include the training manager, language and cross-cultural coordinators, trainers, PCMO, DPT, and CD. It might also be prudent to involve the ministry or work partners in the placement of Volunteers. After all the factors have been reviewed, the staff should discuss where to place each trainee and make placement decisions. After the matching process is complete, consider giving those involved in the site selection decision process time to think about their decisions, at least overnight.

> Ctrl + click for: *Paraguay presentation on site preparation for trainees*

> Ctrl + click for: Trainee input, combining technical and other factors; *Site Placement Factors to Consider - Malawi*

f) *Preparing site information packets.* Prior to announcing the sites, prepare site information packets for Volunteers. The following documents may be included in site information packets:

> Ctrl + click for: *Costa Rica "site survey form"* compiled information for trainees

- Volunteer request form
- Community survey forms
- Site/housing criteria checklists
- Site work expectations involving documentation of previous work done at a site, particularly if the new Volunteer will be expected to continue an effort begun by a previous Volunteer
- Volunteer COS report, if a Volunteer has been at the site
- Information on site safety, including statistics on recorded Volunteer incidents and details of past incidents if they may have an impact on Volunteer safety
- Site visit information that is not confidential and adds value to understanding the site and assignment
- Map of the region showing where the site is located
- Photographs of the site and agency activities
- Newspaper clippings about the site
- Information on other development efforts at the site or in the area
- Dates of site visits and contacts made

g) *Announcing Site Assignments.* Trainees can be anxious as they wait for their fate to be announced. Staff can ease the tension and make site announcements by considering

- *Announcing placements for all projects on the same day and time*. If one APCD/PM announces site placements on one day and another APCD/PM for the same training group announces site placements on another day, it may cause bad feelings toward one or both of the APCD/PMs.

HELPFUL HINTS

When is it best to make site announcements?

Posts handle the timing of site announcements differently. Some posts make the announcements during the last several weeks of PST. They feel that this timing allows staff to get to know trainees better so that they can better match their skills, work styles, and evolving preferences to the needs of the partners.

Other posts find that the benefits of announcing placements in the early weeks of PST outweigh the advantages of waiting until the last few weeks. This may be important when there is more than one language spoken in the country and post needs to begin differentiated language training early in PST. Early site announcements also help trainees not to be anxious about their future homes for a long period of time and give them a better context into which to put information and skill-building that lead to increased learning. Trainees can also concentrate earlier on what they feel they will need at site.

Some posts go partway, by announcing site languages before announcing sites.

- *Planning special activities for the day of site announcements*. Some posts create a large map of the country on the ground or floor and announce, one-by-one, who is going to which site.

- *Planning social time after the announcements* to let the trainees ask further questions about their sites, celebrate the news, and decide what they need to do in preparation for their life and work in their future homes.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD

Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) Guide to Regions at Site Announcement Day

In Costa Rica, we invited Volunteer advisory council (VAC) regional representatives to site assignment events. After receiving sites, trainees broke into groups with their VAC regional representatives and were given a "Volunteer Guide to Costa Rica" (an insider's guide developed by Volunteers for Volunteers, highlighting each region, a la *Lonely Planet*) and talked more specifically about the region to which they had been assigned. Trainees appreciated the interaction and the information.

E.7 Step 5: Support and Monitor Site Development by Volunteers

From the day that new Volunteers arrive at their sites until the day that a site is closed, the Volunteers play the principal role in site development, supported by Peace Corps staff. Specifically, staff can support further site development by ensuring that host country partners, Volunteers, and host families clearly understand their roles, and support Volunteer integration, cultural exchange, and safety …

- With orientation day ("counterpart workshop") (see ICE No. T0121: Working with Volunteers and Counterparts for further discussion and Bolivia agenda in Spanish links to the right).
- With follow up on Volunteer completion of site locator forms.
- With partner agreements (further discussed below).
- With supervisor/work partner handbooks.
- With initial site visits (at least one during the first three months at site).
- With continued site visits.

Ctrl + click for link to file
Georgia small enterprise development supervisor's handbook 2007

Ctrl + click for link to file
Tonga Presentation for Partners

Ctrl + click for link to file
ICE No. T0121: Working With Volunteers and Counterparts

Ctrl + click for link to file
Bolivia Orientation Day Agenda — Spanish

TIPS FROM THE FIELD

Which Partners Participate in Orientation Day and Project Design Workshop

Several posts have strategically targeted different partners to participate in orientation day ("counterpart workshop") and the project design and management workshop, to broaden the opportunities for in-depth training on the role of partners, as well as to better target the right training to the right partner. For example, a supervisor may be the right partner to participate in orientation day, whereas a work partner may be more appropriate for the project design and management workshop.

Placement Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

In order to ensure that roles and responsibilities, expectations, and other terms and conditions of placement are clearly understood and documented, an agreement, such as an MOU, setting forth such terms should, in all cases where feasible, be put in place and signed between the Peace Corps post and the hosting/assignment organization for each Volunteer placement. Depending upon the Peace Corps' broader institutional relationship with the organization to which the Volunteer will be assigned, the specific documentation that is required will differ. Options, as outlined in the document "Interim Partnership Guidance for Posts" are:

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Placement MOU template developed by the PC Office of the General Counsel 2010*

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Interim Partnership Guidelines for Posts*

1) A position description and a reference to the national/ ministry MOU (for a local government entity that is connected to a host ministry or agency with which the Peace Corps has an MOU);

2) A signed implementing instrument, with a position description attached (for affiliates of organizations with which the Peace Corps has a regional or global MOU); or

3) A standard placement MOU, with a position description attached.

All MOUs that are signed must have an English version. Non-English versions may also be prepared at the request of the other party, but should include a clear statement that the English language version of the document takes precedence.

Because MOUs are legal instruments, the Office of the General Counsel requests that any changes to the template the first time a post uses the template be reviewed by it at least once and anytime thereafter when significant changes are made.

> In cases where formalizing an agreement regarding the Volunteer's assignment is not feasible due to language or legal barriers, at a minimum the post should have a discussion with the host organization regarding the terms and conditions of the Volunteer assignment and the roles and responsibilities of the partners.

> Ctrl + click for link to file *Philippines Position Description, Coastal Resource Management*

In addition to the detailed Volunteer position description, a placement MOU may include as an attachment a work plan for the first six months, and outputs for the first and second years, as in the two Philippines assignment contracts (links at right), or the details of the work plan may be determined as a result of the Volunteer community/sector assessment, as appropriate for the project.

The Role of Volunteers in Site Development

Once they arrive at their sites, Volunteers become the key players in further site development …

- By completing their site locator forms.
- By continuing to clarify the role of the Peace Corps and of Volunteers.
- By getting to know their assigned organization, reviewing their task analysis with partners.
- By getting to know their host family, communicating whereabouts to host family and partners, and following safety recommendations.
- By conducting a detailed Volunteer community/sector assessment (refer to Part 2: *Project Design and Evaluation,* Section F.2.1), involving partners, sharing the results with partners, and developing an action plan with their partners.
- By involving work partner participation in planning and implementing activities.
- By planning and carrying out work activities with partners.
- By monitoring and evaluating achievement of project goals and objectives with partners.
- By building the capacity of service providers.
- By working with partners to establish systems to ensure sustainability.
- By fostering networking of their partners to share resources, coordinate, and collaborate to learn from and institutionalize the development process.

Peace Corps staff members, at this stage of site development, serve the role of supporting, coaching, reinforcing roles, reviewing progress and providing feedback, and mentoring Volunteers and their partners.

E.8 Step 6: Phase Out Sites

The decision to leave a site should include input from the partner organization with each generation of Volunteers, and may also involve input from the project advisory committee. Sites may be phased out for several reasons:

1. *Objectives have been accomplished.* In this case, the accomplishment of objectives should be discussed during the last site visits, so it is not a surprise to the agency and community when the last Volunteer leaves.
2. *Safety reasons.* The site no longer meets safety requirements of the Peace Corps. This may result in a sudden decision to withdraw the Volunteer, or may be the result of a policy change affecting placement of new Volunteers.
3. *Site no longer is appropriate for Volunteer work.* This could be due to lack of community support, or could be due to unforeseen changes in programs and support of other agencies with whom the Volunteer works.

In the first case, and often in the second and third cases, phasing out the Peace Corps' involvement can be a time to celebrate the progress Volunteers have made with their partners. For this reason, it is appropriate to hold a special event that celebrates the partnership. Recognize those who have worked hard and celebrate what they have achieved.

Notes from the field

Valuing former partners

Peace Corps/Togo makes it a point to include some former work partners on their Project Advisory Committees, while other former work partners serve as mentors for new partners.

Be sure that documentation of what was accomplished in the site and why the decision was made to phase out the site is prepared and filed in a way that future APCD/PMs may easily access it. Entering critical information in VIDA when a site is phased out is highly recommended, at least to include why the site was phased out and the conditions that would need to exist for the site to be used again in the future.

F. Supporting Trainees and Volunteers

Peace Corps service is a challenging experience, in terms of language limitations, cultural adjustments, and work challenges. In addition, Volunteers may deal with loss or crisis, all while separated from their traditional support systems. All staff and Volunteers play a role in listening to trainees and Volunteers, and in providing guidance and encouragement to them as they work through challenges. Whether or not Volunteers feel supported can make or break their service and their trust in staff. The overall goal of Volunteer support is to foster responsible, professional, emotionally resilient Volunteers.

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Developing and maintaining Volunteer resiliency: a team effort at post*

What is "Volunteer Resiliency"?

Volunteer resiliency refers to the individual's capacity to effectively manage the effects of cumulative stress, seek and provide support, and work as a safe and productive Volunteer.

The roles that programming and training staff members play in Volunteer support are described in this section. They work as a team with other staff and Volunteers to support Volunteer resiliency as described in the document linked at right.

F.1 Understanding Trainee and Volunteer Hopes and Challenges

Volunteers choose to join the Peace Corps for a variety of reasons. To different degrees, the top motivations that Volunteers express for joining the Peace Corps (per the Annual Volunteer Survey, 2009):

> Ctrl + click for: *Annual Volunteer Survey* information

- *Help others:* to make a difference in the lives of those least fortunate in terms of income, education, and opportunities; to commit two years of their lives acting on their belief in the importance of altruism, a concern for the welfare of others.

- *Personal growth:* to learn new skills, including language skills, cross-cultural skills, and skills that may be relevant to their future careers.

- *Travel/adventure:* for adventure, and the opportunity to travel.

- *Different culture:* to experience living in a culture different from their own, and to make connections with people in that culture.

- *International experience:* to gain experience living and working in another country.

The high expectations that Volunteers have of the Peace Corps motivate them throughout their training and service, but also contribute to their frustrations with language barriers, cultural adjustments, and work challenges. Emotional challenges that Volunteers face during their service include loss, isolation, loneliness, inadequacy, and feeling unproductive. The degree of loss, disconnection, and change experienced by Volunteers and trainees is significant.

When Volunteers are unable to resolve the challenges of adaptation and finding meaningful work, they may feel lonely, isolated, miserable and bored. They may feel anxiety, depression, sadness, and anger; and they may choose to end their service prior to completion of their 27-month commitment. Volunteers will seek human connection to calm unfamiliar stressful states.

Understanding the "Life Cycle Model" that Joseph English developed in the early years of the Peace Corps (when Volunteers were trained in the United States) can help a post's resiliency team focus Volunteer support efforts at critical times in Volunteers' two-year service. Joseph English noticed a pattern of peak periods of Volunteer anger from unresolved issues in the seventh and 12th months, which led to early termination decisions that peaked in the ninth and 15th months.
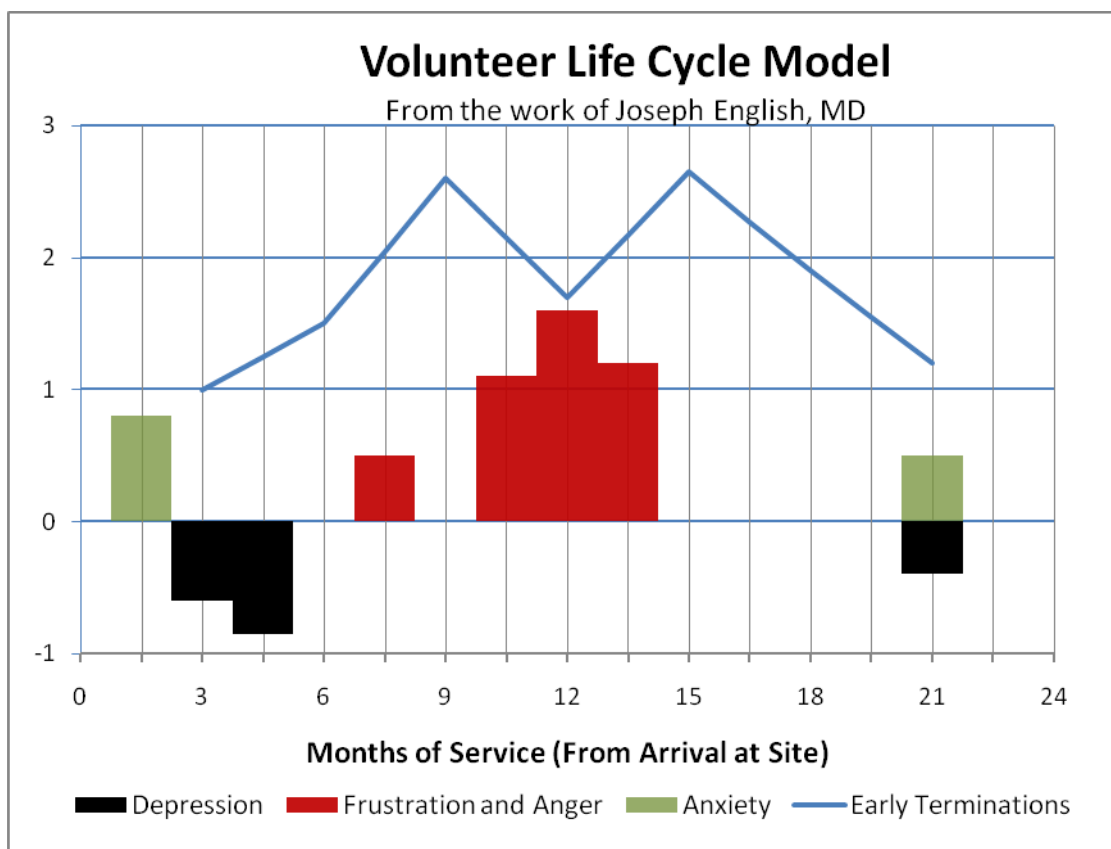
Note: The Joseph English model was based on training in the United States and 24 months of service at post.

It is critical to *not* use the life cycle model as predictive or a basis for understanding any individual Volunteer's emotional behavior. Although this model was first introduced in the 1970's, it remains relevant as a way to "reframe" Volunteer challenges in a nonjudgmental way. Every generation of Volunteers has had to deal with a negative generalization that has been used to explain difficult behaviors or emotions. In the '60s and '70s, discouraged Volunteers were often seen as "loose cannons and draft dodgers"; in the later '70s and '80s, they were sometimes said to be "only in the Peace Corps to pad their resumes"; and in the '90s and the first decade after 2000, some Volunteers have been labeled as "the millennium generation spoiled by instant technology." None of these generalizations help staff or posts know what to do to assist a struggling Volunteer.

Ctrl + click for link to file for further understanding of the *Volunteer life cycle model*

The life cycle model may help the staff team at post …

- ***To train Volunteers to understand they are not alone,*** that strong unfamiliar feelings can be a normal part of cross-cultural adaptation, and that periodic reconnection with the group or other Volunteers should be an integral part of a strategy to help Volunteers remain emotionally resilient and productive.

- *To plan and support nonjudgmental opportunities for trainees, Volunteers, and U.S. direct hire staff to process challenges*, and consider their timing to match typical peak periods of anxiety, anger and depression, specifically a) after site visit during PST, b) at the 3–4 month "reconnect" IST, and c) at the mid-service conference. At these events, a group debriefing should be conducted by a facilitator trained in listening skills. The facilitator could be a peer support Volunteer, DPT, U.S. PCMO, or local U.S. trainer or counselor. While trainees and Volunteers may address their experiences outside of formal sessions, it is also important for the larger group to process what has been learned or experienced to be sure that all issues have been addressed, to maximize productive discussions of options to address issues, and in a way that staff are aware of critical issues, importantly including sexual harassment. These sessions are most successful when facilitated by someone with strong facilitation and cross-cultural skills, and are usually best managed when that person is a staff member or Volunteer from the United States.

- *To support Volunteers' strategies* to avert and manage challenges that vary through their 27 months of service.

- *To consider and plan for optimal support for Volunteers at critical times*, particularly those struggling the most with the challenges of adaptation and engaging in meaningful work, with coaching, mediation, and technical resources.

F.2 Preparing Volunteers for Challenges

F.2.1 Training

Peace Corps staff help prepare resilient Volunteers by defining and developing pre-service and in-service training to meet learning objectives related to community integration, health, safety, security, and Peace Corps policies related to these areas. Some resources available to posts to support training in these areas:

> Ctrl + click for: *Timeline of Resources for all Volunteers*

- *Integrate and adapt to a new country*, including learning new language skills. Resources available to support these KSAs:

> Ctrl + click for: *Peace Corps Volunteer Handbook 2009*

  o Invitee materials*, including the *Peace Corps Volunteer Handbook* and the Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD).

  o *A Few Minor Adjustments (COU)*, a handbook for Volunteers to help them with the adjustment to a new country and culture, distributed during training. It also includes a chapter on adjusting when returning to the United States.

> *A Few Minor Adjustments*

> *Culture Matters (ICE No. T0087)*

  o *Culture Matters (ICE No. T0087),* a workbook to help Volunteers understand cultural values and learn how to bridge cross-cultural differences; see Chapter 6, "Adjusting to a New Culture."

> *Culture Matters Trainers Guide (ICE No. T0103)*

  o *On the Home Front (COU)*, a handbook available in English and Spanish, distributed to the families of Volunteers about life for Volunteers while serving and upon returning to the United States.

> *On the Home Front*

> Ctrl + click for: *Sample Safety and Security Learning Objectives*

- *Manage safety risks and abide by Peace Corps safety policies.* Posts should develop their own learning objectives related to this area, and are encouraged to refer to the *sample safety and security learning objectives* (link at right) as a reference.

- *Respond to and manage crisis situations.*

- *Develop safe and culturally appropriate strategies* to avert and manage emotional and technical challenges that vary throughout their 27 months of service. Experienced Volunteers can play a key role in helping prepare trainees. The COS activity from Senegal linked at right is an effective way to share experienced Volunteers' strategies with trainees. Some posts have worked with current Volunteers to create a booklet that other Volunteers can refer to when things are not going well.

Ctrl + click for: *Senegal — critical periods in the life of a Volunteer*

Ctrl + click for: *Peer Counseling Training*

- *Support each other. Peer Counseling Training (OMS)* is a trainer's guide for basic skills in listening, communication, counseling, and problem solving that is valuable not only for peer supporters (members of peer support groups or any Volunteer), but also for development facilitators.

CORE EXPECTATIONS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

1. Prepare your personal and professional life to make a commitment to serve abroad for a full term of 27 months.

2. Commit to improving the quality of life of the people with whom you live and work; and, in doing so, share your skills, adapt them, and learn new skills as needed.

3. Serve where Peace Corps asks you to go, under conditions of hardship if necessary, and with the flexibility needed for effective service.

4. Recognize that your successful and sustainable development work is based on the local trust and confidence you build by living in, and respectfully integrating yourself into, your host community and culture.

5. Recognize that you are responsible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for your personal conduct and professional performance.

6. Engage with host country partners in a spirit of cooperation, mutual learning, and respect.

7. Work within the rules and regulations of the Peace Corps and the local and national laws of the country where you serve.

8. Exercise judgment and personal responsibility to protect your health, safety, and well-being, and that of others.

9. Recognize that you will be perceived in your host country and community as a representative of the people, culture, values, and traditions of the United States of America.

10. Represent responsibly the people, cultures, values, and traditions of your host country and community to people in the United States, both during and following your service.

Volunteer Expectations vs. Reality 2008 Summary (Data from the All-Volunteer Survey)

Further discussion of the *Core Expectations*

F.2.2 Set Clear Expectations

People work better, smarter, and harder when their morale is high. A first step in building and maintaining Volunteer morale is to help the Volunteers to have realistic expectations. See Volunteer Expectations vs. Reality 2008 Summary (link above) for information from the Annual Volunteer Survey on how Volunteer expectations matched reality. The Peace Corps and posts set expectations in materials that invitees receive, in every interaction with trainees and Volunteers, and during PST.

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for: the *Peace Corps Manual*

Core Expectations

The core expectations for Peace Corps Volunteers were developed and disseminated in 2008 as part of a larger effort by the Peace Corps to manage the expectations of applicants, trainees, Volunteers, staff, and host country partners. They were designed to serve as an agencywide umbrella for post-specific expectations.

> Ctrl + click for: *PC Zambia Volunteer Handbook 2008*

Post Volunteer handbook

> Ctrl + click for: *PC Peru Volunteer Handbook 07-08*

Post Volunteer handbooks, developed to include sections of the *Peace Corps Manual* relevant to Volunteers, as well as post-specific policies, are also important for setting clear expectations and communicating post and worldwide policies. It is highly recommended that Peace Corps manual sections be references in post handbooks in such a way that both staff and Volunteers are aware of which policies have been set worldwide and posts can more easily verify whether worldwide policy updates have been reflected in their Volunteer handbooks.

F.3 Supporting Volunteers Throughout Their Training and Service

Volunteers feel most fulfilled

> Ctrl + click for: *Chart of Training Resources to Support Volunteer Resiliency*

- When they feel needed and valued.
- When they find their work meaningful and interesting.
- When they believe they are making improvements in people's lives, particularly the lives of the least fortunate.
- When they feel connected, having built relationships with other Volunteers, work partners, host family members, and supervisors. This connection is particularly important to reduce the emotional stress of loss and disconnection inherent in the Peace Corps Volunteer experience.

> Ctrl + click for: *Training for Resiliency (ICE No. T0138K)*

Therefore, the support of Volunteers, usually through site visits and ongoing training for Volunteers and, to the extent feasible, partners and homestay families, must focus on both the emotional and technical aspects of the Volunteer's service.

F.3.1 Active Listening, Counseling, and Coaching

Staff members play an important role in counseling, which is to say providing help and support for Volunteers, creating a climate of acceptance, and assisting the Volunteer to explore, understand, and act, often to resolve a problem.

Active listening is a key first step for both counseling and coaching. It serves two vital purposes:

1. *To articulate and validate emotions;* too often we make the mistake of proposing solutions when our most important role is to put ourselves in the other person's shoes and offer empathy.

2. *To facilitate identification of underlying issues*; for example, alcohol abuse is usually not the problem, but a symptom of an underlying issue.

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Enhancing Natural Listening Skills*

Click on the file to the right for tips and guidance on active listening.

Steps to help solve an identified Volunteer problem:

1. Listen.
2. Respond (to the feeling and content).
3. Identify the problem, and determine if it is a problem the Volunteer or the staff needs to take the lead to resolve.

> Ctrl + click for: *Volunteer Support PowerPoint*

4. If the Volunteer needs to take the lead, support the Volunteer to choose the best course of action.
5. If you, the staff person, need to take the lead:
   a. Clearly state the concern.
   b. Clearly state expectations.
   c. Clearly state consequences.
6. Make a plan.
7. Follow through.

Staff members also play a role in coaching, or supporting Volunteers in a process that enables learning, development, and performance improvement. Link to the document at right for tips on coaching. Also note that the training for resiliency toolkit has a section on coaching.

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Coaching – Breakdown to Breakthrough*

F.3.2 Supporting Cultural Exchange and Community Service Activities

Cultural Exchange Activities

Cultural exchange activities support Volunteer integration, help build their need for connection in their sites, and support Peace Corps Goals Two and Three.

One way Volunteers can build connection and engage in meaningful activities is through the Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools (CWWS) correspondence match program. This program links current Volunteers with teachers and their classrooms, as well as student groups (Boy/Girl Scouts, language clubs, etc.) in the United States. Through the exchange of letters, photographs, artwork, videos, emails, and other educational materials, U.S. students learn about other countries and cultures, and about the lives of Peace Corps Volunteers.

> Ctrl key + click for:
> *Paul D. Coverdell World Wise Schools*

> Ctrl + click for: *World Wise Schools Resources for Volunteers*

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Volunteer Media Opportunities*

> Ctrl + click for: *World Wise Schools Brochure*

Volunteers may also choose to publish information about their work and experiences on a blog or in an article published in the United States. Note that CWWS has a set of resources and publications to help Volunteers share stories. Also note that MS 204, Sections 3.9-3.10, MS 543, post's Volunteer handbook and the link above provide some guidance, for Volunteers' contact with the media.

> Ctrl + click for: *World Wise Schools Match Handbook*

> Ctrl + click for: **MS 543, Use of IT Systems by Volunteers, Trainees, and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers**

> Ctrl + click for: **MS 204, 3.9: political expression, 3.10 contact with the media, 3.11 publication of articles**

Community Service ("Secondary") Activities

All Volunteers engage in some form of community service that is in addition to activities that support the goals and objectives of their assigned projects and activities that support Peace Corps Goals Two and Three. This community service supports their integration in the community, their modeling of Volunteerism, and their desire to feel they are accomplishing something at times when their assigned project work is frustrating. In most cases, community service activities should be structured to occupy less than 20 percent of a Volunteer's time on an annual basis, so that a Volunteer does not become too over-committed to fulfill his or her assignments. Because Volunteers often look for ideas for community service activities, posts may provide resources and training for high-impact community service activity ideas. One example of such a resource is linked at right.

> Ctrl + click for: *V2 Volunteerism Action Guide* (ICE No. CD062)

> Ctrl + click for: *Quick wins: ideas for community service activities, Bolivia*

F.3.3 Volunteer-to-Volunteer Connection and Support

Connection with communities is vital for effective service, but many Volunteers also need to connect periodically in their native language with a peer. The post's resiliency support team should share a common vision about the extent to which peer visits are encouraged or discouraged, the policies related to them, and the flexibility with which the needs for connection of Volunteers can be met.

> Ctrl + click for: *Overview of VACs*

F.3.4 Volunteer Advisory Councils and Volunteer Leaders

One form of Volunteer leadership practiced by posts is the support of a Volunteer advisory council (VAC). VACs serve as a voice for, and also are excellent resources for, suggesting solutions to issues faced by Volunteers. See *Characteristics of a High Performing Post* for a further description of the functions of a VAC.

> Ctrl + click for: *Example Volunteer Advisory Council By-Laws, Dominican Republic*

Many posts have found that Volunteer leaders (PCVLs) can play a valuable role in increasing Volunteer support, particularly with technical support and with assisting struggling Volunteers to seek out options for overcoming obstacles (see Bolivia PCVL handbook for an example of how one post used PCVLs). Volunteer leaders can also support quality programming by supporting project development and evaluation. However, Volunteer leader positions must be developed and approved in accordance with MS 202, which requires that Volunteer leaders be assigned at least one substantive Volunteer program or activity with an assigned partner, and that PCVLs do not fill staff positions, but assist staff. For example, Volunteer leaders, and other Volunteers can assist with pre-service training, but should not be assigned as full-time technical trainers.

Ctrl + click for: **MS 202: Volunteer Leaders**

Ctrl + click for: *Bolivia Volunteer Leader Handbook*

Ctrl + click for: *Guidance on the role of Volunteers in training*

Ctrl + click for: *Expectations for PCVLs, DR*

Ctrl + click for: *Characteristics of a High Performing Post 2009*

F.3.5 Site Visits

The objectives of site visits:

- To support Volunteers in managing the safety, integration, and project challenges they face, and to congratulate them on their accomplishments
- To monitor and evaluate project work
- To support host families and community partners in their roles in supporting Volunteer safety, integration, cultural exchange, and work
- To gauge partner satisfaction with Volunteers

Observing Volunteers while they work provides specific information that APCD/PMs can use to give Volunteers feedback on how to increase their effectiveness. Taking time to sit and talk one–on–one encourages Volunteers to assess their situation and identify where they need to take action or ask for assistance.

Site visits can be helpful in these ways:

- Demonstrating appreciation of the Volunteer, host family, and partners
- Strengthening the ability of the staff member to support the Volunteer, both in terms of the relationship with the Volunteer and in terms of understanding of the Volunteer's situation
- Supporting Volunteer integration; note that safety and support are based on the Volunteer building authentic, trusting relationships
- Reinforcing the role of the Peace Corps and clarifying expectations
- Identifying technical training needs for ISTs
- Continuing to build professional relationships with Volunteers and their colleagues
- Negotiation, mediation, and conflict resolution
- Building the support of decision makers, including local officials for the project and Volunteers
- Site assessment

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Walking the Walk

In Panama, Peace Corps administrative staff go out to the field once a year. But they do not merely travel by Peace Corps vehicle. Instead, they take the same means of transportation that Volunteers use, whatever it takes to get them to the site and back to the office. They also spend the night. This experience helps them understand and appreciate Volunteer challenges and requests for support.

HELPFUL HINTS

Little things mean a lot

There are little things that Peace Corps staff can do that are greatly appreciated by Volunteers and demonstrate a genuine caring and support. Before leaving for site visits, identify the Volunteers in the area to be visited. Then gather as many of their packages and mail that can fit into the vehicle or be carried. Also ask the PCMO if there are any medical items needed by those Volunteers. And check with other staff to see if there are messages that can be delivered.

At the end of each site visit, write a short note to the Volunteers visited, showing appreciation for different aspects of the visit, giving support and feedback, making observations, and stating what follow up will be done and by when.

Site visits are made not only by programming staff, but also by the CD, PCMO, SSC, training staff, and administrative staff. Visits by other staff members do not take the place of site visits from programming staff. It is critical that programming staff make the agreed-upon scheduled visits to Volunteer sites and sit down with each Volunteer alone to discuss what and how he or she is doing. Volunteers should play a role in determining how the time will be spent on the visit, and staff should communicate how the visit will go with the Volunteer prior to the visit. See link at right for a form used by Honduras for Volunteers to request site visits in addition to regularly scheduled visits, as well as to communicate what and how to accomplish visit objectives.

Ctrl + click for:
Honduras Site Visit Request Form

HELPFUL HINTS

Communicate your schedule

Posts have found it useful to communicate site visit dates one to two months ahead of time so that Volunteers know in advance when staff members will be in their area. This facilitates sending and receiving messages. It also helps work partners plan their schedules around the visit.

Standards and Guidelines for Site Visits

Many posts have developed standards (minimum expectations) and guidelines (suggested activities) for site visits to help ensure that the time spent is productive and valued by Volunteers, their supervisors or community partners, and community members. Standards and guidelines are post-specific and should be developed collaboratively by programming and training staff, the SSC, the PCMO, the DMO, Volunteers, and partners. They usually include criteria for the number of visits to a site, the issues discussed, and the time spent at sites. Link at right for an example.

Ctrl + click for:
Honduras Programmatic Site Visit Procedures

Site Visit Reports

Posts approach site visit reports differently. Some find it useful to include written questions. Others divide the form into broad categories and leave it up to the APCD/PM to ask the appropriate questions and report the relevant information. Posts with projects in education often use forms during classroom observations. This facilitates feedback on lesson content and teaching skills.

Ctrl + click for:
Honduras Programmatic Site Visit Report Form

Ctrl + click for:
Honduras General Site Visit Report Form

Ctrl + click for: *Tonga site visit report*

For ideas on site visit reports, refer to the following documents *(see links on previous page)*:

- *Site visit report form*
- *Co-teaching observation form (TEFL classroom observation guide)*

HELPFUL HINTS

Don't leave home without a camera!

A camera! There can never be enough good photographs of Volunteers and their partners in action. Photos can be used in reports that go to ministries, agencies, and Peace Corps/Washington. They can be sent to supervisors and community partners as a "thank you" for their support and a productive site visit. They can be posted on boards in the Peace Corps office to show Volunteers and staff the great things that are happening at sites. Limit the number of posed group shots where everyone lines up in rows. A better choice is action photos that tell a story—the project's story.

F.3.6 Setting High Expectations and Providing Feedback on Volunteer Work and Reports

Volunteers are motivated when their APCD/PM has high expectations of them and follows up on issues they face. Some examples of how APCD/PMs can set these expectations and follow up with Volunteers:

- From your first meeting, make it clear that you are proud of the work that Volunteers are doing and that Volunteers are in-country to work.
- Be responsive with email and reports. Always respond in a timely manner to questions related to project activities.
- Ask for monthly reports on Volunteer progress on their diagnostic/community assessment assignments.
- Have Volunteers present the results of their diagnostic/community assessment assignments at the "reconnect" IST.
- Provide feedback on the diagnostic/community assessment assignments.
- Read and provide timely feedback to Volunteer report forms (VRFs). Send a follow-up note or call each Volunteer who sends in a report. Comment on something that is in the Volunteer's report.
- Share lessons learned, successes, and analysis of data (the project status in meeting project goals and objectives and trends in activities or results) from VRFs with Volunteers. Most Volunteers will make a concerted effort to complete their VRFs if they know the information is being used.

F.3.7 Technical and Other Resources

Another way staff members can support Volunteers in their work is to provide them with strong technical and project-funding information, ideas, and guidance.

Volunteer Site Information (Notebooks and Electronic Files)

Some posts ask Volunteers to keep site notebooks or electronic files that they can give to the Volunteer who follows them at their site. These might contain

- Community assessment/diagnostic information.
- Contact lists.
- Names of people who are important to meet.

- Any other information that will help the next Volunteer integrate effectively into the community and become productive.

Technical Resource Books and Electronic Files

Technical resource files and books to inform Volunteers on their project activities and community service ("secondary") activities come from a number of different sources, including Volunteers, staff, ICE, and community agencies. These resources can be used in training and can be stored in the post's Information Resource Center (IRC). Letting trainees and Volunteers know about them and making them easily available can save Volunteers from "reinventing the wheel."

<div style="border:1px solid #000; background:#b3a2c7; padding:5px;">
Ctrl + click for:
Project Plan User Guide, Tonga CE
</div>

Information Resource Centers (IRCs)

Each post decides how best to collect, store, distribute, and track resource books and electronic materials. Many posts have an Information Resource Center (IRC) at the Peace Corps office. Some have regional IRCs where Volunteers at nearby sites can use and check out books without having to go into the capital. An IRC may include both ICE and locally obtained books and other resources. Posts may contact Information Collection & Exchange (ICE) for guidance in developing and managing IRCs.

Information Collection & Exchange (ICE) Resources

ICE is a resource for "how-to" manuals, training guides, curricula, lesson plans, and case studies published by the Peace Corps and other sources. ICE resources can be found on the intranet.

Many ICE resources are available electronically. These are distributed to Volunteers on *Sharing Promising Practices: Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) Digital Documents CD-ROM* (ICE No. RE014K). The electronic ICE resources are also accessible to staff in the document bank accompanying this guidance, and the Intranet. To request copies of *Sharing Promising Practices* CD-ROM (ICE No. RE014K) for distribution to all trainees and Volunteers, send your order to iceorders@peacecorps.gov.

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Post Exchanges

Some posts are close enough to each other to facilitate regional meetings where Volunteers and staff visit one another to share information. For example, staff and Volunteers in Uzbekistan wanted to learn about the successful English summer camps in Turkmenistan. One APCD and four Volunteers traveled to Turkmenistan, learned about the program, and returned to their country with materials and new ideas to implement in Uzbekistan.

</div>

Post-Produced Resources

You may decide to produce technical resources for a project or post that cannot be found elsewhere or that synthesize information found elsewhere. This may be appropriate where the intention is to incorporate country-specific examples or produce a resource that can be used by partners in the local language. An example of such a resource is a life skills/gender calendar and accompanying classroom guide produced by Peace Corps/ Bolivia, linked at right.

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Ctrl + click for: *Bolivia Life Skills / Gender Calendar and Classroom Guide*
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If you decide you may want to produce such a resource:

1. Research existing information and contact the OPATS specialist. The specialist may know of existing resources that may serve the purpose you intend for your resource or could help you to produce your resource.

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Ctrl + click for: *Copyright Guidance*
</div>

2. Discuss among senior staff the resources (time and financial) needed for post publication. Volunteers and training staff may contribute to the content of the publication. Your OPATS specialist or country desk may have ideas on how to finance a publication.

3. As you work on your publication, be sure that you are not violating copyright laws. See the copyright guidance link on the right.

If your post has developed a useful resource, please share it with your OPATS specialist. Your OPATS specialist will share your resource with other posts. You may also request that your resource be published through ICE (see link at right). Many ICE resources are developed by the field or developed from resources developed by the field.

> Ctrl + click for: *Guidance for Producing and Printing PC Publications*

Sharing electronic files
Most posts now share with Volunteers many technical resources electronically (on CDs or jump drives), rather than on paper. In addition, some posts have established systems, using SharePoint or other software, to share electronic files between staff and Volunteers. These can be a good way for staff to share technical information with Volunteers. See Section D.5 Communicating with Volunteers and Partners.

Helping Volunteers Help Their Communities to Access Resources

In their role as development facilitators, Volunteers often help their communities access resources to meet community priorities. As mentioned in Section B.2: Funding Sources to Support Programming and Training, the Peace Corps philosophy is that, for maximum sustainability and replicability, Volunteers with partners should make every effort to help their communities 1) seek local level funding first, 2) seek host country regional and national support, and 3) draw upon international funds only as necessary.

> Ctrl + click for: **MS 204 Volunteer Conduct**

> Ctrl + click for: **MS 720.3.3 Peace Corps Partnership Program**

If Volunteers with their partners choose to help their communities seek outside funding, note:

- Most posts advise Volunteers not to seek funding during their first three months at their job site, and therefore training on learning objectives related to outside funding is usually scheduled not during PST but at the three- to four-month IST.

- Volunteers helping communities to seek outside funding should always do so in a way that increases the organization's capacity to assess and plan projects, and to write strong grant proposals.

- As outlined in MS 204.3.7, Volunteer Code of Ethics and 3.8 Volunteer Financial Gain, Volunteers and trainees may not accept payment for their services except from the Peace Corps, or engage in any activity for personal financial gain within the host country.

- As outlined in MS 720.3.3, OPSI is the only Peace Corps office authorized to generate support and accept donations for a Partnership project. Volunteers are not authorized to accept donations on behalf of the Peace Corps. Volunteers may publicize their Partnership Program projects.

- Volunteers may help their community solicit grants or donations, but they may never directly receive the funds themselves unless it is done through the Partnership Program.

- Posts normally advise Volunteers to communicate with the Peace Corps whenever they are considering helping their communities seek outside funding. Peace Corps programming staff provide feedback to Volunteers on the proposed activity, and programming, training, and administrative staff may advise Volunteers on how to comply with the above-mentioned policies.

F.4 Authorizing and Managing Site Changes

Sometimes a site change is an appropriate way to help a Volunteer achieve effective service. Site changes may be appropriate …

- When new safety concerns emerge in a site; these could be related to transportation, communication, crime, or threatening relationships.

- When unexpected changes or unanticipated obstacles create a situation in which Volunteer work is unproductive, despite attempts by the Volunteer, with staff support, to resolve the obstacles.

In some cases, a change of housing, organization, or work assignment within the same site may resolve the issues. In other cases, staff may feel that a site change is not likely to result in a positive outcome, and may encourage the Volunteer to resign.

In all cases where staff members feel that a site change may be appropriate, it is important that

- Clear criteria be used to make site change decisions.

- The APCD/PM, PCMO, and CD be involved in the decision.

- All staff understand the rationale for the decision.

- A personal visit to the site be made by the programming staff person who was principally responsible for communicating with the host agency during site preparation to convey the rationale for the decision (respecting confidentiality as appropriate) to the host family and partners.

F.5 Preparing for and Managing Crises

Many Volunteers will inevitably be affected by a crisis, perhaps at their sites or elsewhere in the country. It could be a critical medical issue, a loss or critical illness of a family member, an arrest, a crime, or another type of crisis. Support for Volunteers during these times is particularly important, safeguarding a Volunteer's privacy, yet optimizing support by post. Posts must be sure to strike an appropriate balance between supporting Volunteers and confidentiality (see confidentiality resource linked at right).

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Confidentiality considerations*

> Ctrl + click for:
> *Confidentiality Quiz*

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for MS 220, 6.0 **Emergency leave**

Loss of a Family Member in the United States

The Counseling and Outreach Unit may authorize emergency leave and travel, at Peace Corps expense, for Volunteers or trainees in the event of a medical emergency of an immediate family member, as defined by MS 220 Section 6.0 Emergency Leave (link at right). When a Volunteer experiences the loss of a family member or close friend that does not qualify for emergency leave, some Volunteers choose to take leave or leave without pay, and find a way to pay for their own way home. Click on link at right for ideas on how to support Volunteers who experience grief and loss when travel home is not possible.

> Ctrl + click for: *Coping from afar*

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for **Crime Reporting and Response Overview** (training PowerPoint), March 2009

Crime

Crime victims can experience feelings of mistrust, anger, anxiety, fear, and despair. When someone is victimized overseas, these feelings may also be accompanied by confusion. When away from home, crime victims often don't fully understand their needs, their surroundings, and the

resources that are available to them. When Peace Corps staff respond to crimes, they can help Volunteers make sense of confusing events and provide support to address physical, psychological, legal, and financial problems.

Many victims also blame themselves and are ashamed of having been victimized. Staff should avoid contributing to those feelings. Effective victim advocates avoid victim-blaming and do not suggest that victims did something to deserve or attract a crime. Instead, the focus can be on the victim's experience and on recovery.

The Peace Corps Office of Safety and Security has prepared an online course to help staff…

- To discern when to report crimes against Volunteers.
- To understand how best to support Volunteer crime victims.
- To anticipate what assistance is available from the Office of Safety and Security.
- To prepare to respond deliberately to crime incidents.

F.6 High Risk Behavior, Early Termination, and Administrative Separation

Stress, anxiety, and depression in a discouraged, disconnected person may lead to high risk behaviors as a primary coping strategy *because they help relieve stress and anxiety*. In an emotionally charged environment, the need for belonging may override safety.

> Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for MS 284: **Early Termination** (including administrative separation 284.4)

When dealing with trainees and Volunteers who behave inappropriately, staff should aim to make the best decisions for the trainee or Volunteer and for the future of the Peace Corps in the country. Because of the sensitive nature of the risks and the likely need for disciplinary action, staff members should also be sure to always inform the CD and document all incidents and feedback. Staff members should also be careful to strike an appropriate balance between safeguarding the trainee or Volunteer's privacy and his or her safety.

Sometimes the most appropriate course of action is to encourage a trainee or Volunteer to resign, to not swear in a trainee, or to administratively separate a Volunteer. In most cases, these situations develop over time, during which the TM, APCD/PM, CD, and other staff may counsel the trainee or Volunteer and may give him or her written feedback on behaviors to improve for successful service.

F.7 Lasting Romantic Relationships

Some Volunteers fall in love and face the emotional challenge of decisions about those relationships as well as the logistical challenge of obtaining a legal visa for their loved one. Peace Corps staff members do not play a role in the process to obtain a visa, but they can provide information about options and processes necessary to obtain different types of visas. It may be helpful to have one staff person be the dedicated expert on visa issues to help Volunteers with valuable information. Marriage and fiancé or fiancée visas are usually cumbersome but viable; however, the challenge is great both for those who prefer to wait until their loved one has lived in the United States prior to making a marriage decision and for homosexual couples.

TIPS FROM THE FIELD

Consular officers can be helpful

In Bolivia, at the COS conference the consular officer would participate via speaker phone call to answer Volunteer questions about the visa process for their loved ones.

F.8 Improving Team Trainee and Volunteer Support

An effective Volunteer support team should have a shared understanding of the roles that the team members play and should trust one another and communicate as appropriate, while respecting the privacy concerns of Volunteers. If your team members would like to improve their Volunteer support skills or systems, review the staff resiliency training resources and consider staff meetings or workshops for staff to improve Volunteer support skills and teamwork.

Ctrl + click for: *Developing and maintaining post resiliency*

Ctrl + click for: *Zambia materials for staff workshop on resiliency*

G. Managing the Volunteer Training Continuum

Management and support of the Volunteer training continuum is a team effort, led by the training manager, but with participation of a broad range of staff, including the country director, director of programming and training (DPT), APCD/PMs, the PCMO, the director of management and operations, the safety and security coordinator, program assistants, drivers, and of course the entire training staff in the preparation, logistics, and leading of sessions. Posts that would like to improve this team effort should refer to Section D.3: Training and Programming Integration. Volunteers and Volunteer leaders also often play a role in training, but they should not be assigned as full-time trainers; their roles should follow the *Guidelines on the Role of Volunteers in Training* (see link on right).

Ctrl + click for: *Timeline for PST Preparation*

Ctrl + click for: *Training Design and Evaluation Guide*

Ctrl + click for: *Guidelines on the Role of Volunteers in Training*

Preparation for a new group of trainees begins as much as 12 months prior to their arrival in-country. A brief overview of major steps involved in PST preparation (the most significant training event for incoming groups) is included below; link to the right for a detailed timeline checklist that can be adapted by posts for logistics in PST preparation, or to the Part 3: *Training Design and Evaluation* guide for a complete description of the TDE process. Along with training design (TDE) steps, large portions of time preparing for PST are spent selecting and preparing training sites and preparing homestay families (see *Host Families Matter: the Homestay Manual* (ICE No. T0106).

Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for MS 202: Volunteer Leaders

Ctrl + click for: *Host Families Matter: the Homestay Manual* (**ICE No. T0106)**

TDE Implementation Timeline for One Input

TDE Steps	How	When & Where
Step ❶ Conduct Needs Assessment for KSAs	• Review of PST evaluation documents • Task analysis with APCDs/PMs • Focus groups	• PST debriefing, After-action meetings • Group meetings, VACs • Site visits, in-service trainings, COS conference
Step ❷ Analyze KSAs		
Step ❸ Create Competencies from KSAs	• Cooperative discussions • Team meetings	• 1-day or multiple-day staff meeting
Step ❹ Write Learning Objectives from KSAs		
Step ❺ Plan Training: COTE, sequencing learning objectives, developing session plans and materials, selecting teaching techniques	• Cooperative discussions • Use learning objectives to populate COTE and determine time slots	• 1-day or multiple-day staff meeting • ToT
Step ❻ Implement Training	• Experiential learning techniques • Formative and summative assessment tools • Cooperative discussions	• Training sites • PST After-action meetings • ISTs
Step ❼ Assess and Evaluate		
Step ❽ Reflect and Revise		

Left axis labels: MONTHS BEFORE PST BEGINS (12, 6, 3, 1), PST & BEYOND

G.1 Training of Trainers (TOT) for Pre-Service Training (PST)

Because pre-service training staff are often hired for only part of the year, and often some are new to the Peace Corps, many posts conduct training of trainers workshops or have some other method to ensure that trainers accomplish a set of learning objectives prior to the start of PST. Topics covered usually include:

- Application of the TDE system

> Ctrl + click for link to file *TOT outline*

- Training macro-strategies, including experiential learning methodologies, applying adult learning principles, learning styles, 4MAT lesson planning, and principles of community based training
- Staff roles in ensuring trainee safety and security, as well as adherence to policies.
- Staff roles in the Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
- Coaching and counseling trainees and Volunteers
- Working with communities to support training

The length and structure of training of trainers workshops vary from post to post. The majority of posts hold their TOTs immediately preceding the PST. TOTs last from one week to three weeks. A frequently used model includes a general TOT, followed by content-specific workshops for language and cultural facilitators (LCFs) and technical trainers. If feasible, a longer TOT of a minimum of two weeks will provide more valuable knowledge and skill-building for temporary PST staff.

G.2 Training Content Review Workshop, or Training Design Workshop (TDW)

Ctrl + click to link to document: *Training Design and Evaluation Guide*

Some posts, particularly those with full-time training staff that do not hold TOTs, will hold a TDW for all staff associated with training, or meetings with a subset of staff to discuss technical training. During the design phase of PST the training staff brings together programming and other Peace Corps staff, Volunteers, and work partners to develop training goals, competencies, and a calendar of sessions and activities. The team usually focuses its discussion on TDE Step 5: Plan the Training, and answers questions such as the following:

- Based on the competencies and learning objectives that trainees need to meet and the skills they have, what is the content that we need to include?

- What methodologies should we use to optimize these learning opportunities?

- What kinds of sessions and activities will most efficiently and effectively support the trainees as they learn?

- Who will be responsible for covering specific competencies in sessions and activities?

- Which evaluation methods will we use to determine that trainees are ready for the first three to six months of service, and who will be responsible for them?

G.3 Language Tester Training

The Peace Corps language proficiency testing program responds to a congressional mandate that *"No person shall be assigned to duty as a Volunteer ... in any foreign country or area unless at the time of such assignment he possesses such reasonable proficiency as his assignment requires in speaking the language of the country or area to which he is assigned."* (Peace Corps Act 1961), also registered in the Federal Register on March 28, 1969, 22 CFR Part 305, and reflected in *Peace Corps Manual Section 201: Eligibility and Standards for Peace Corps Volunteer Service.*

Ctrl + click for **link to Intranet** site for **PC MS 201: Eligibility and Standards for Peace Corps Volunteer Service**

Individual countries establish a minimum level of functional ability to perform the Volunteer's duties and, at the end of Volunteers' pre-service training, testers certify whether they have reached this level and, therefore, are prepared to continue their service in-country.

In order to test the effectiveness of language acquisition, interviewers are trained and certified to assess trainees' and Volunteers' oral proficiency with an assessment known as the language proficiency interview (LPI).

G.3.1 The Language Proficiency Interview (LPI)

The LPI consists of an oral interview. With the language proficiency interview, the Peace Corps joins a group of educational, governmental, and private institutions that rely on a language proficiency assessment to evaluate and inform their members regarding their linguistic functional ability. This program enables the organization to collect and interpret information about the level of linguistic preparedness of trainees and Volunteers, and the quality of the language program.

G.3.2 LPI Tester Certification

Through a certification process, Peace Corps language proficiency interview testers are certified to test in the languages taught by Peace Corps programs. Peace Corps LPI-certified testers are professionals who have completed a rigorous training program and have met established criteria for certification by the Peace Corps. Peace Corps LPI-certified

Ctrl + click for:
Funding for Language Testers Training Workshops

testers are authorized to conduct LPIs and to assign ratings in their own local languages. Peace Corps LPI-tester certification is valid for a maximum of five years. At the end of five years, testers must recertify. Requests for this training should be included in a post's IPBS document and operations plan. See link at right for funding guidance.

Find these three manuals on the intranet by clicking here:
T0130 English LPI Language Proficiency Interview Manual for Testers
T0131 Spanish LPI Language Proficiency interview Manual for Testers
T0132 French LPI Language Proficiency interview Manual for Testers