



**PEACE  
CORPS**

# Ghana HOST COUNTRY IMPACT STUDY

## Purpose

In 2008, the Peace Corps launched a series of studies to determine the impact of Volunteers in meeting two of the agency's three goals: building local capacity and promoting a better understanding of Americans among local people in host countries. These Host Country Impact Studies are unique in providing feedback from the people who lived and worked with Peace Corps Volunteers. A Ghanaian research team conducted this study in the winter of 2011, interviewing 106 respondents in 20 communities, and submitted a final report to the post upon completion of the field work. The Peace Corps Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning developed the methods and protocols, trained the local researchers, and produced a series of reports from this and other Host Country Impact Studies.

## Study Focus: Education Project

As of 2012, 4,278 Volunteers have served in Ghana since Peace Corps opened in 1961. The goal of the education project is to support educational reforms in Ghana by improving the quality of math, science, English, and arts education and by increasing students' access to education, especially for girls.

### Peace Corps Goal One

*"To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women."*

### Findings

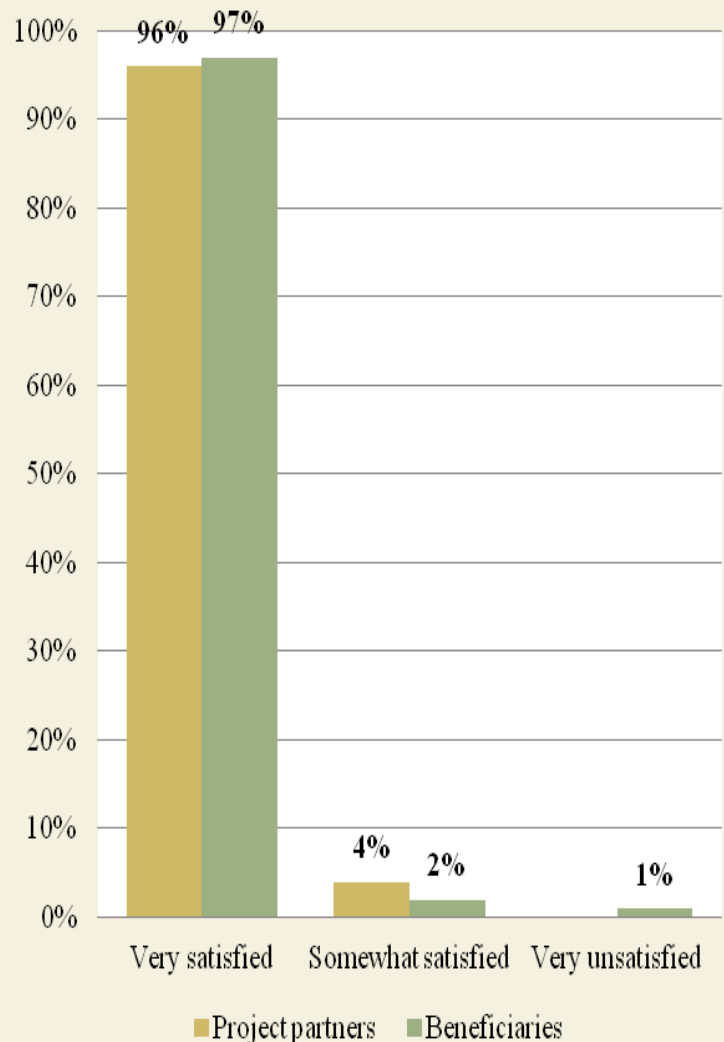
Educational objectives were achieved:

- The number of girls who remained in school and graduated increased.
- 96 percent of the partner teachers and 99 percent of the beneficiaries (school teachers and administrators) with whom the Volunteers worked adopted new student-centered teaching methods.
- Students improved their performance on tests, as reported by 92 percent of project partners and 99 percent of beneficiaries.
- 92 percent of project partners and 99 percent of beneficiaries reported the quality of education improved.
- 96 percent of project partners and 91 percent of beneficiaries reported the school environment was safer.

The changes in the schools were sustained:

- 100 percent of partners and 88 percent of beneficiaries reported the school environment remained safe after the Volunteer left.
- 88 percent of project partners and 93 percent of beneficiaries continued using, on a daily basis, the professional skills they learned from the Volunteer.

### Satisfaction with Changes Resulting from Peace Corps Projects





## Peace Corps Goal Two

*“To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the people served.”*

### Findings

*Before* interacting with Volunteers:

- 96 percent of project partners and 92 percent of beneficiaries learned about Americans from television or movies.
- Some Ghanaian respondents described Americans as racist and powerful, and that they looked down on Africans.
- Others described them as hard workers and people who wanted to give aid.

*After* interacting with Volunteers:

- Project partners and beneficiaries most frequently described Americans as hard workers, honest, and friendly, individuals who could adapt to another culture.
- Project partners and beneficiaries said they themselves had become more confident, more accommodating to people with different opinions, and more respectful of students.

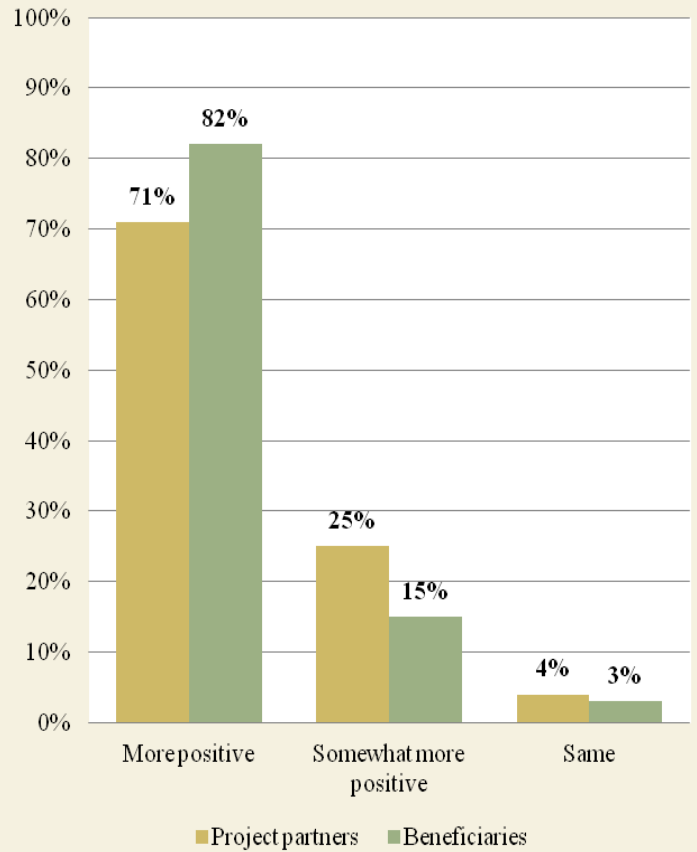
Ghanaian respondent: *“I now respect students and teach them to the best of my abilities. I am friendly to all and very easy going. I hardly become annoyed.”*

Ghanaian counterpart: *“The way [the Volunteers] integrated with us and behaved like us; they were like natives.”*

Ghanaian beneficiary: *“The inter-personal relations were perfect. I went out with the Volunteer to eat local food; he had become a local guy mixing freely with everyone to my delight and surprise.”*

Ghanaian respondent: *“There was no difference between them and us. They were not rich after all. They were friendly, mixed freely and did everything like Ghanaians.”*

### Opinion of Americans After Interacting with Volunteers



Overall, more girls stayed in school and their graduation rate increased. Students improved their English language skills, teachers changed their teaching methods, and students and teachers developed a more participatory environment in the classroom. Participants also increased their awareness of HIV/AIDS and gender issues, and gained a sense of civic responsibility. Participants’ opinions about Americans became more positive.