



Peace Corps

GUYANA



Guy 33 sworn into service

FY 2023

FORWARD TO FULL ONBOARD STRENGTH

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c/o U.S. Embassy Georgetown

Young & Duke Streets

Kingston, Georgetown

Guyana

A photograph of three women of diverse backgrounds cheering enthusiastically with their fists raised. They are standing in front of an American flag. The woman on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a teal shirt. The woman in the center is Black, wearing glasses and an orange shirt. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a black patterned top. The title 'About Us' is overlaid in large black text on a semi-transparent white background.

About Us

In 1966, the year Guyana gained its independence from Britain, Peace Corps received an invitation to send teachers, architects, engineers, and other professionals to help build the new country's capacity. From 1966–71, 138 Volunteers broadened the school curricula to include home economics, crafts, and manual arts; and assisted in developing and carrying out projects for the Ministry of Works and Hydraulics. In March 1995, the Peace Corps officially returned to Guyana. The first Volunteers served with the ministries of Health and Education in 7 of the 10 administrative regions.

To date, more than 1,400 Volunteers have served in Guyana at sites ranging from the capital city of Georgetown, with a population of 300,000, to small, remote Indigenous villages with populations of 300 or fewer.

Vision

Investing in Guyana's communities through service, relationships, and partnerships for a sustainable future.

Values

COLLABORATION

We value all voices and reach for shared ownership of the plans that we implement

CULTURE

We understand that people are changed by exposure to new ideas and traditions and we value the transformative quality of new experiences

EQUITY

We believe that fair and impartial access to opportunity is the underlying goal of development and we recognize that embracing differences is key to achieving our goals

PEOPLE

We value human connections and we strive for a relational approach to strengthening community assets



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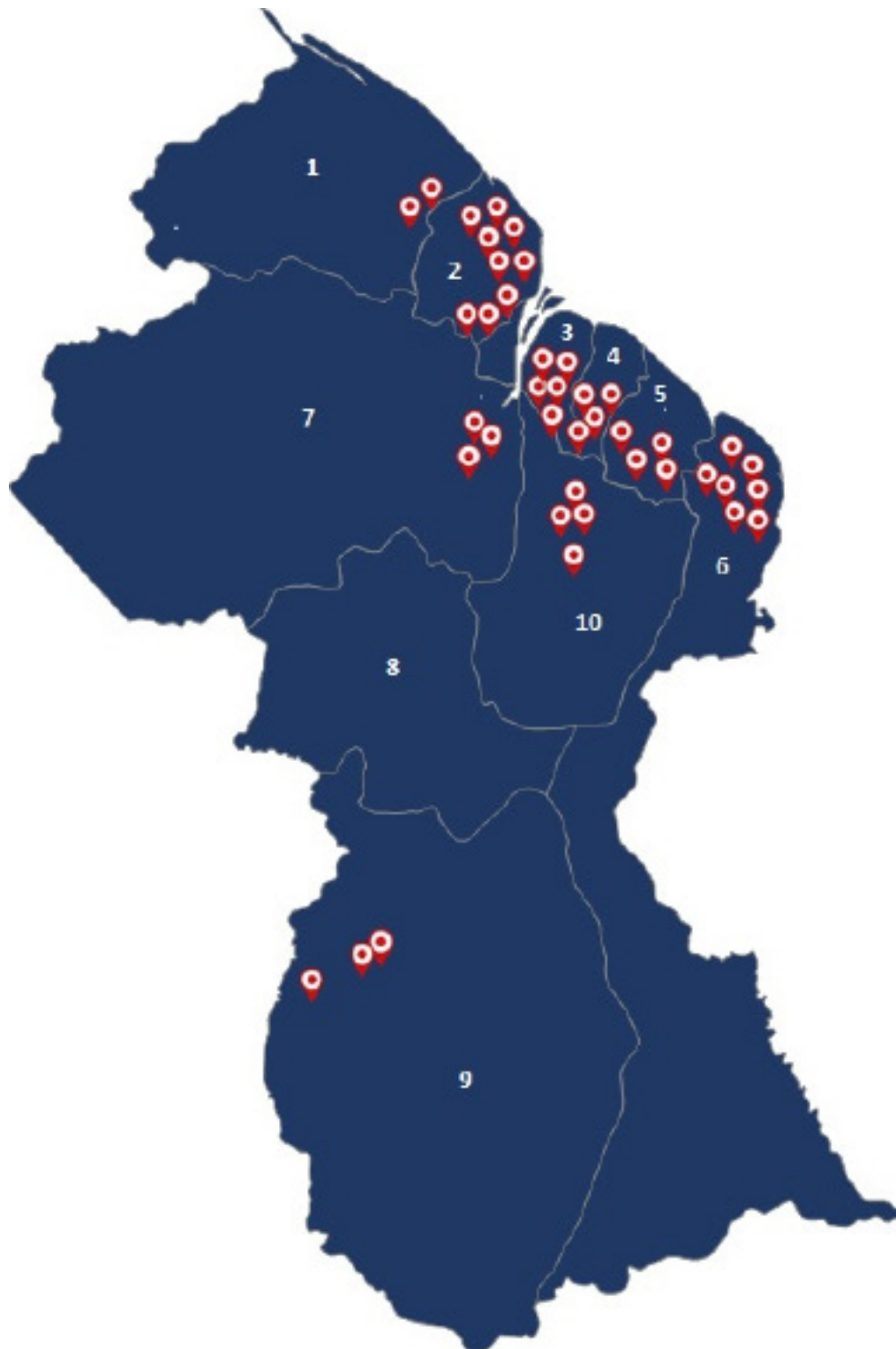
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WHERE WE SERVE

Peace Corps Volunteers live at the level of their local counterparts and community members. In Guyana, they live and work in local communities in nine of the ten administrative regions, partnering to address early childhood literacy, adolescent health, and environmental stewardship.

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Peace Corps works in partnership with the Guyanese government and follows their guidance as to the placement and role the volunteers play in the knowledge exchange, between volunteers and counterparts, as they teach students and work with community members. In the first year of service, the volunteer focuses on immersion into the community and co-teaching and the second year of service expands their responsibilities to include other activities such as afterschool clubs and community led and developed projects.

I'm so excited to be writing this introduction for the Peace Corps Guyana 2023 Annual Report. Twenty-four two-year Peace Corps Volunteers were sworn in on August 9, 2023, by Chargé d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy Georgetown, Adrienne Galanek. Prior to swearing-in, the trainees participated in a ten-week pre-service training which included sessions on Guyanese culture, Peace Corps policy, local language and specifics to their program areas. This cohort of volunteers is assigned to sites in towns and villages all over Guyana, in nine of the ten regions. There are nine literacy volunteers, five health volunteers and ten environmental volunteers. All volunteers work in schools directly with students and teachers.

Six Peace Corps Response Volunteers were sworn into service in 2023, three on February 27th, two on September 19th and the sixth on the 4th of October. These volunteers work with the Ministries of Health and Education as well as the Cyril Potter College of Education on developing educational curriculums, health strategies and/or assessments. Also in 2023, there were three Virtual Service Participants that worked with schools and government ministries across Guyana. These virtual volunteers were able to complete specific projects that could be done on-line – the Virtual Service Participant project was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to continue service activities in Guyana.

This report summarizes the transition of staff management, with the departure of the Country Director, Director of Programming & Training and Director of Management & Operations within six months of each other. We are so grateful to have had three amazing Peace Corps international staff that were able to bring their expertise to Peace Corps Guyana. I am so honored to be working here in Guyana with such a talented, experienced, and committed team, that are so passionate about the Peace Corps mission 'to promote friendship and world peace.'



Deborah Conner
Country Director

**Please enjoy this
edition which
highlights the various
volunteer programs,
technical impact of
the projects and our
strong partnerships!**



FAREWELL FRIENDS

- Dr. Nadine Rogers – Country Director
- Elizabeth Mandeville – Director of Programming & Training
- Blair Dudik – Director of Management & Operations

This group of experts led us through the COVID-19 pandemic, return to service, expansion of our service options with the reintroduction of the Response Program and piloting of the Virtual Service project, introduction of staff-led service and enhanced financial services with the establishment of electronic funds transfer (EFT) capabilities.

We thank Nadine, Elizabeth and Blair for their leadership, guidance, vision and commitment to service and wish them well in their new roles.



TRANSITION

We extend sincere thanks to the team of experts who helped us through our transitional phase.



Being part of the swearing-in ceremony for Guy34, visiting volunteers at their sites to hear about their experiences, chatting with the newest Volunteers... I am reminded that Peace Corps service is a journey, not a destination. The transformative nature of living and working in a community for two years, learning to integrate into another culture, it is something to be celebrated for a lifetime.

- Jennifer Goette



It was a pleasure working with such a caring and professional team who truly care for the safety and wellbeing of our Volunteers. In my limited travels outside of Georgetown I have been able to sample the delicious cuisine and catch a glimpse of the diversity of the people of this fine nation and to feel their warmth and hospitality.

- James "Jaime" Kuklinski



Our work here in Guyana is challenging, and yet I'm humbled by the many people I've met: our staff, counterparts and volunteers, observing their commitment and dedication to building relationships between our countries and assisting in the strengthening Guyana's health, environment, and education sectors.

- Dan Breneman

The staff and volunteers appreciate your service and guidance.

WELCOME TO GUYANA

- Deborah Conner – Country Director
- Karen Gardenier – Director of Programming & Training
- Anne Turner – Director of Management & Operations

Deborah is a returned Peace Corps Volunteer and just recently concluded service as the Country Director for Peace Corps North Macedonia. She has worked with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and various international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) including the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, International Rescue Committee, Mercy Corps and Management Sciences for Health.

Karen served as Director of Programming and Training in Ghana for three years before moving to Guyana. She previously worked in the Office of International Programs at Colorado State University and, was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Kyrgyzstan from 2002–2004.

Anne's first Peace Corps service was as a Volunteer in Estonia. She was the Director of Management & Operations in the Philippines, Mongolia and Kyrgyzstan, and the Chief Administrative Officer in the Office of the Chief Information Officer. She also served as Director of Operations at Americorps and worked at the United States Agency for International Development Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance and the University of Maryland, Baltimore.



PEACE CORPS RESPONSE & VIRTUAL SERVICE



The Response and Virtual Service programs recruit professionals with diverse skills and the expertise for short-term, high-impact service.

Response Volunteers first arrived in Guyana in 2006. From then to 2018, 79 persons served under the program supporting locally-prioritized initiatives such as organizational strengthening, care of orphans and vulnerable children, and community education in support of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

Since February 2023, the Response program returned to Guyana with six Volunteers, four of whom are currently in service.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Peace Corps sought alternative service models to continue contributing globally. In addition to staff-led service innovations, the Virtual Service program was established. Over the last 3 years, more than 10 participants have supported schools and ministry partners across Guyana.

Response Volunteers have supported the Ministry of Health in developing tools to support the implementation of the draft National Strategy on Adolescent Health, including health facility assessment and creation of the Adolescent Health Orientation and Training Manual. They have also worked to support the literacy team at the Cyril Potter College of Education (teacher training institution) on aligning the literacy curriculum to include additional techniques and research. Volunteer support has also led to on track completion design of a specialized three-tiered community-based literacy intervention for the Ministry of Education to help communities become readers. Specialist expertise is also bolstering our support to the Ministry of Education through the reviewing of the Health and Family Life Education curriculum for pre-service teachers at the Cyril Potter College of Education as well as working closely with the Ministry of Education on engagement with the Parent Teachers Associations to empower them on their functions and include best strategies for parent involvement in the academic lives of their children.

In 2023, Virtual Service participants supported local partners on delivering environmentally sustainable business practices through business plans and training of community members on key business concepts which would impact the day-to-day operations of businesses.



To us the Peace Corps Education Volunteers are an integral human resource in our quest to achieve higher levels of literacy rates. Peace Corps Volunteers enrich our education system with their diverse qualities, expertise, experiences and messages of love, motivation, and encouragement.

Stembiso Grant
Assistant Chief Education
Officer-Literacy
Ministry of Education

THE EDUCATION PROJECT

The 'Read to Achieve' program managed by the Education sector focuses primarily on improving the literacy rates of students at grades one-four of the primary school system. The program also seeks to provide opportunities for teachers and Peace Corps Volunteers to exchange strategies, skills and knowledge related to literacy, gender equitable practices and the development of resources through co-teaching, co-planning, and co-facilitation methodologies. Additionally, the volunteers work with families and parents to promote literacy related activities within their homes and communities.

The Education Program has a total of fifteen Volunteers, six of whom are serving under cohort Guy33 and nine serving under cohort Guy34. Guy33 has been in the country for one year and contributed data based on specific indicators in the education framework. Guy34 volunteers, at site for these first few months, have just started to implement the framework. One Response Volunteer is working on designing a specialized three-tiered intervention program for the Ministry of Education which will also be used as a resource in our Education Program.

For this report, the sector focuses on the outcomes of five indicators from the Logic Framework for the Education Sector. These indicators are based on the number of students taught literacy skills in school and out-of-school settings, students showing improvement in literacy skills, teachers engaged in co-planning and co-teaching sessions with volunteers and teachers engaged in training on gender based and inclusive classroom strategies.

204

learners were taught literacy-based instructions in a school setting.

62

learners were taught literacy skills through reading clubs and summer camps.

8

teachers co-planned and co-taught lessons with the education volunteers.

22

teachers attended training sessions targeting gender-based classroom strategies.

74

learners achieved reading success and demonstrated improved literacy skills.



“Peace Corps is beneficial to Guyana, but most especially to our pupils. Volunteers bring needed skills and resources to their service. They force us, as teachers, to think outside the box and give fresh eyes to our profession with their creativity and commitment to projects.”

Delana Jones
Graduate Senior Mistress

THE ENVIRONMENT PROJECT

The Peace Corps Guyana Environment Program, titled "Environmental Education for Community Conservation," aims to boost the environmental stewardship capacity of Guyanese individuals at the grassroots level, aligning with national and international environmental priorities. Through collaboration with partners, the program integrates science and environmental education to foster a heightened sense of place, and awareness in the local population. These combined efforts are anticipated to generate lasting socio-ecological outcomes, propelling significant community conservation initiatives. In schools, volunteers collaborate with grades three-six teachers to deliver interactive science lessons using inquiry-based methods aimed at enhancing critical thinking. Beyond classrooms, the program involves students and youth in camps and clubs, placing emphasis on biodiversity appreciation and leadership development. Volunteers and community partners also lead community assessments addressing solid waste management issues and other environmental challenges.

During FY23, our project exceeded anticipated targets, with four Volunteers reporting achievements in alignment with the logic project framework. We extend our gratitude to all our partners for their unwavering support of our volunteers and eagerly anticipate their continued collaboration in the future.

510

lessons on science and the environment were co-taught.

397

youth increased their knowledge of biodiversity and environmental issues.

36

teachers guided to create lessons plans and materials that enhance the teaching of science and the environment.

31

teachers incorporated active learning methods to teach science and the environment to their students.

4

volunteers supported solid waste management practices in their respective schools.



The consistency, support and dedication Peace Corps Volunteers bring to working towards the goal of ensuring healthy adolescents, which in turn is equivalent to healthy adults, across the length and breath of Guyana is a great asset to the department and by extension, the Ministry of Health.

Nurse Shawina Davis
Nurse with responsibilities for the
Adolescent Friendly Initiative
Adolescent Health Unit,
Ministry of Health

THE HEALTH PROJECT

The goal of the project is that Youth in Guyana lead productive lives through access to quality health and life skills education and youth-friendly services. In a phased approach, Peace Corps Volunteers implement the three project objectives focused on students ages ten-fourteen (grades seven to nine) in secondary schools. Volunteers collaborate with Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) teachers to co-facilitate the Ministry of Education's HFLE curriculum in the classrooms as well as conduct activities within school clubs and camps. They engage Parent Teachers' Associations (PTA) and schools' staff to support parents and caregivers' abilities to interact and communicate with their adolescents on various health and wellness topics. Through collaboration, Volunteers also support the enhancement of teachers' delivery of the HFLE curriculum by sharing innovative techniques and improving adolescent-friendly services by working with health care workers to implement the adolescent friendly standards at local health centers.

The health project is supported by two cohorts; Guy33 who arrived in country in September 2022 (started in schools in January 2023) and Guy34 who arrived in June and started in schools in September 2023.

For the FY23 reporting period, volunteers completed phase one of the health project activities by working with teachers in secondary schools across Guyana to enhance the delivery of the Ministry of Education's Health and Family Life Education curriculum.

2013

students reached with individual or small-group level training on youth health and wellbeing.

1604

students completed an evidence-based intervention integrating gender norms.

35

teachers trained to work effectively with youth on matters related to their health.

33

teachers demonstrated at least two student-centered techniques to deliver health and life skills curriculum.

38

youth participated in clubs that incorporate life skills development.



SUSTAINING PARTNERSHIPS



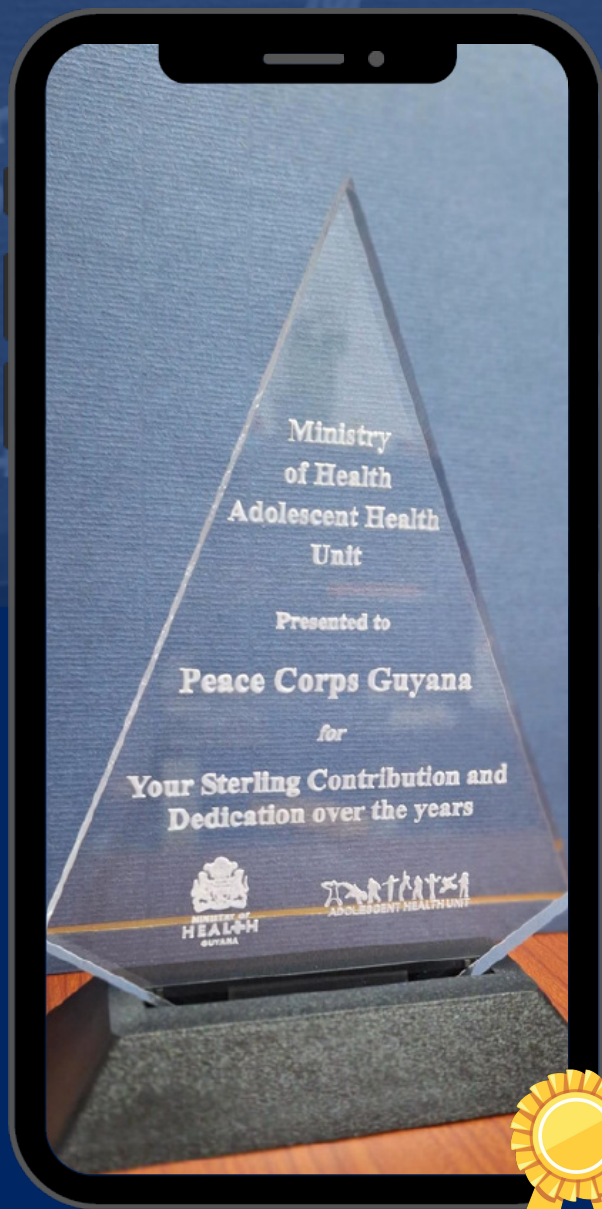
Partnership is a key element of what we do as an agency. From the support of local government partners that welcome us to Guyana, to the school leaders and teachers alongside whom our Volunteers serve, to the community counterparts who support our Volunteers' integration, everything we do relies on a foundation of true partnership, trust and collaboration.

On December 6, 2023, Honorable Dr. Frank Anthony, Minister of Health received a courtesy call from our team. New Country Director, Deborah Conner and new Director of Programming and Training, Karen Gardenier, were accompanied by Program Manager for the Health project, Lucy Cumberbatch.

Dr. Anthony offered congratulations on these new appointments and the group discussed areas of mutual interest and collaboration to enhance the public health sector.

We continue to support the people of Guyana in their development aspirations.

Shoutout!



On November 19, 2023, Peace Corps Guyana was recognized for our sterling contribution and dedication in the form of technical personnel and Volunteers' support of the School Health Clubs program by the Ministry of Health.

We dedicate this award to every Volunteer and local counterpart who has worked to ensure the objectives of our Health project.

A Peace Corps volunteer, a woman with dark hair wearing a light blue polo shirt and a colorful patterned skirt, is sitting on a wooden bench in a schoolyard. She is holding a book titled 'PROVINCE' and looking down at it. Several children in school uniforms are sitting on the bench and on the ground around her, some looking at the book. In the background, there is a chain-link fence, a white car, and a building. The scene is outdoors with trees and grass.

Thank You to all of our partners, communities and host families.

**For more
information**

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 www.peacecorps.gov/guyana/



Peace Corps Guyana Volunteers with Chargé d'Affaires, U.S. Embassy Georgetown, Adrienne Galanek (seated center) and (left to right) Director of Management & Operations, Anne Turner, Acting Country Director, Jennifer Goette, Advisor to the Minister Health, Dr. Leslie Ramsammy and Deputy Chief Education Officer-Development, Volika Jaikishun.
Guy 34 Swearing-In Ceremony
August 2023



**Peace
Corps**
GUYANA