



Vision Statement: The Peace Corps Guyana Community serves as a supportive team that fosters and maintains an honest, professional, trusting and inclusive multi-cultural environment; inspiring accountability and cooperative partnerships for sustainable local development.



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

From the Country Director

I want to start by thanking you for taking a moment out of your day to read this brief snapshot highlighting the work and achievements of Peace Corps Guyana this past year.

My hope is that many of you are already a part of the Peace Corps Guyana community. Whether a government partner, a local counterpart, a host family, a collaborator, or a friend; each and every one of you make us who we are. For this, I cannot begin to thank you enough as any successes we share within this document were achievable because of our engagements with each and every one of you throughout the year. For those that this publication might be your first introduction to the work of Peace Corps in Guyana, I greatly appreciate your interest in our agency. I hope that we might find ways to connect and synergize our common interests so that together we may continue to participate in supporting Guyana in meeting its desired developmental goals.

No matter the day, month or year, the one thing I can say about Peace Corps is that there is never a dull moment. Our work and accomplishments in 2019 definitely exemplify this as illustrated by some of our efforts below:

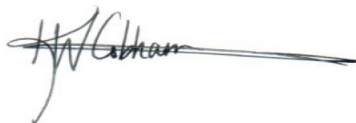
- The year provided us the opportunity to perform fully against our newly revised Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Ministries of Education and Public Health.
- We were able to inaugurate our illustrious Program Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, which were instrumental and supportive in aiding the development, refinement and/or refocusing of our collaborative efforts in the regions. These discussions were critical in measuring and sharing the impacts of our Volunteer investments in priority areas (particularly hinterland communities).
- We saw the close of service of 23 GUY30 (30th group to serve in Guyana) Volunteers in April and in August, the completion of the first full year of service for 28 GUY31 PCVs and the swearing-in of 29 in our newest cohort, GUY32. These Volunteers bring the number of Americans having the honor of serving the country of Guyana to over 1,400.
- We successfully implemented the second year of the Region 2 Department of Education/Peace Corps Model School summer program that attracted 300 inquisitive minds across the Essequibo Coast.

Lastly, the cornerstone of my year was the growth of domestic and international partnership that I witnessed and helped foster. It has been an honor to share with you my enthusiasm for the tremendous potential and skill of each and every Peace Corps Volunteer that accepts an invitation to serve in Guyana. Discussions with Honorable Ministers, Toshoas, Madam First Lady Sandra Granger, Ambassador Ivan Evelyn, Mark Watson (NCN), Gordon Mosely, Regional Education Officers, various actors within the UN family, local as well as International NGOs, members of the private sector and other creative minds throughout Guyana help ensure that Peace Corps Guyana will continue to thrive as we work to fulfill the requests of our government partners.

For this, I thank each and every one of you for your time and support.

I now invite you to peruse the following pages and help us honor the tremendous work we have accomplished alongside our Guyanese counterparts. Feel free to share with any and all.

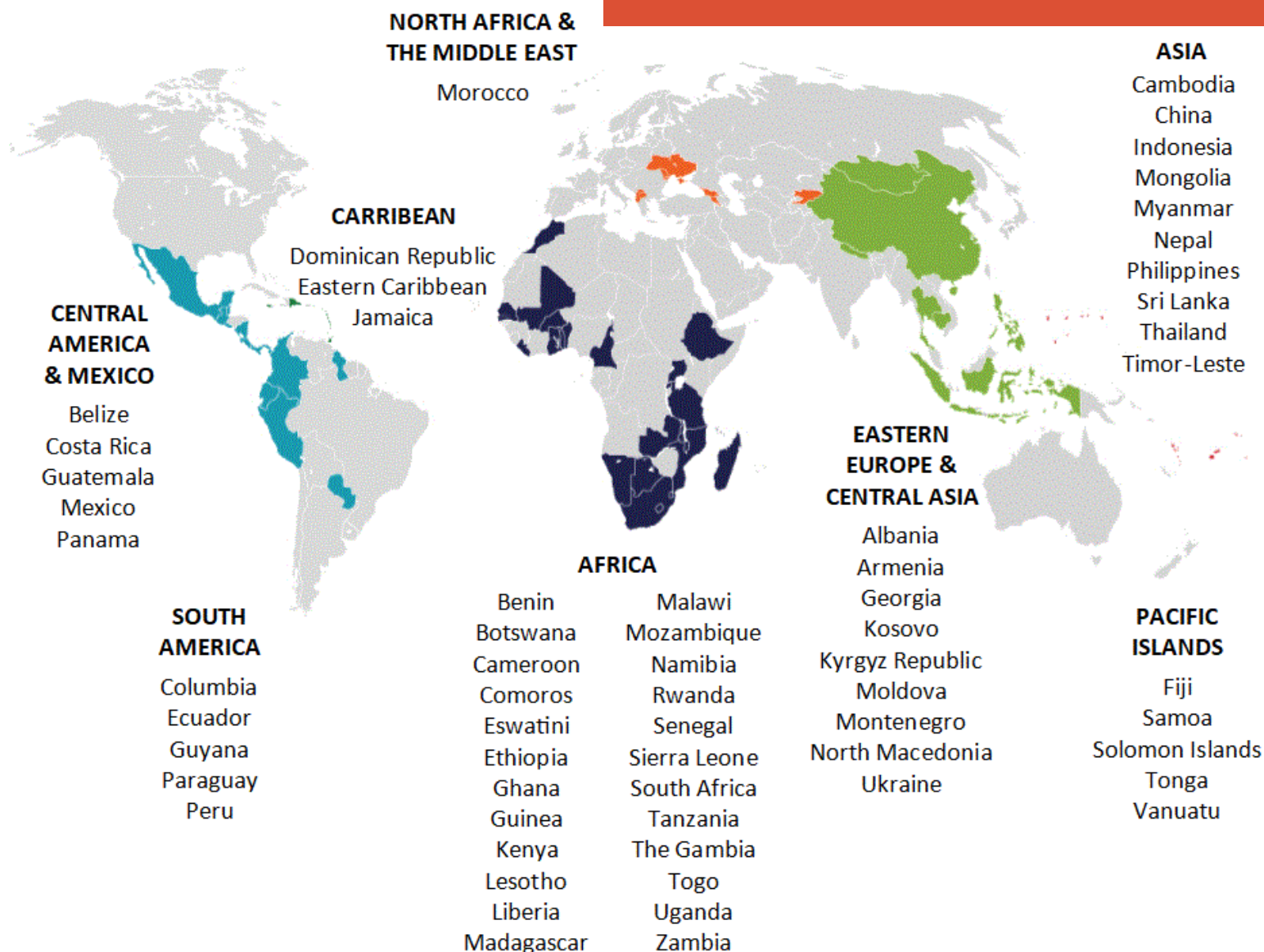
Look out 2020, here we come!



Kury Cobham
Country Director, Peace Corps Guyana



Peace Corps Around the World

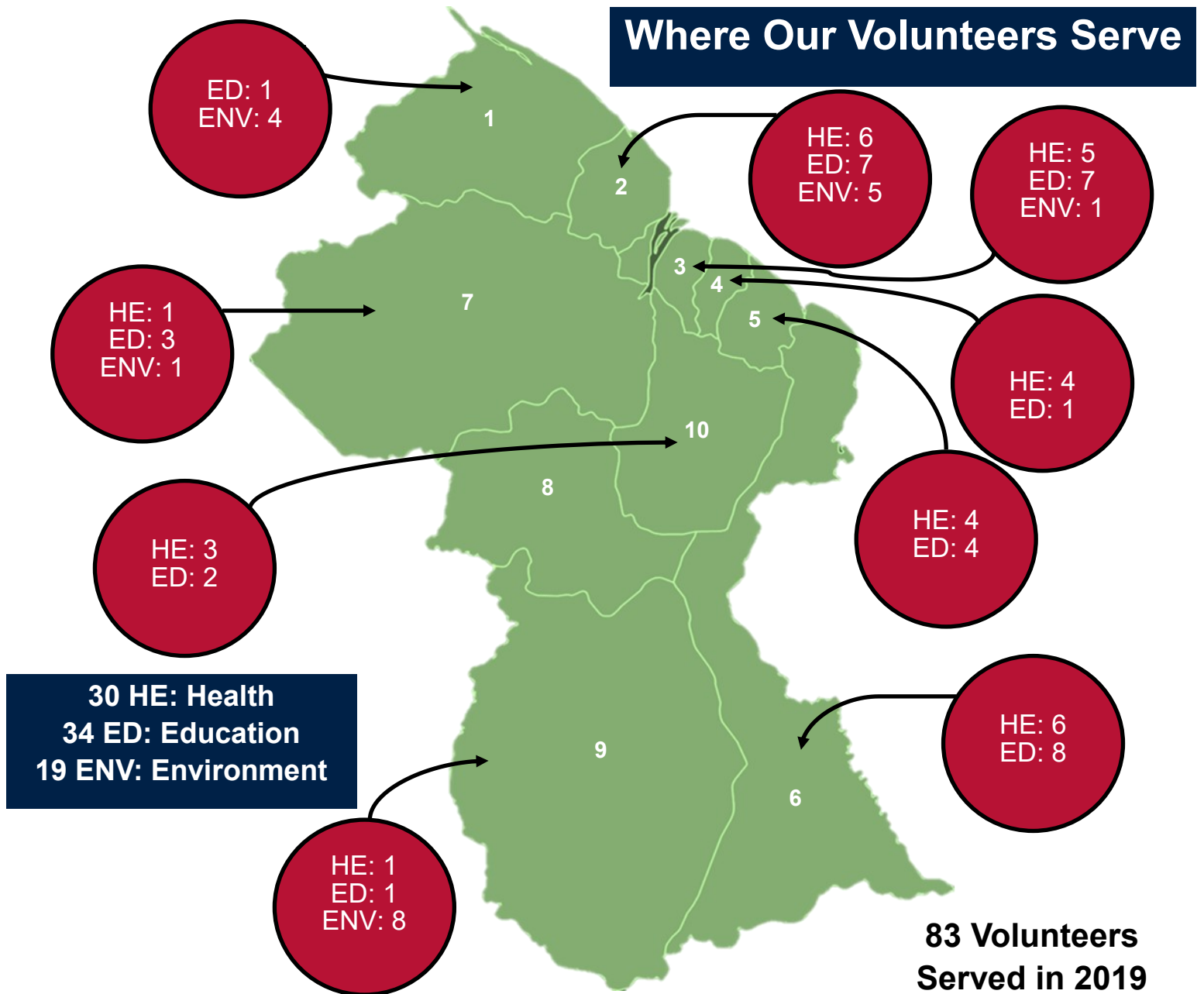


58 years of promoting peace and friendship

Since its establishment in 1961, Peace Corps has pursued a vision of world peace and friendship through the volunteer service of Americans living and working around the globe, promoting community-based development and forging intercultural understanding. Over the past 58 years, more than 235,000 Volunteers have served in 141 countries.

At the invitation of host countries, Volunteers work on global priorities in six sectors: health, education, environment, agriculture, youth, and community economic development. In a world becoming more interdependent each day, the Peace Corps helps face challenges that go beyond borders — environmental shocks and stressors, youth development, food security and gender equality and empowerment.

Where Our Volunteers Serve



Peace Corps in Guyana

Peace Corps has worked in Guyana for nearly 30 years. Volunteers are currently assisting the Ministries of Education, Public Health and the Presidency with projects in early childhood literacy, adolescent health and well-being, and environmental education.

Volunteers live and work in villages and towns from Lethem to Moruca. They respond to the challenges of the changing times with creativity, determination, and compassion. In age, experience and perspective, they represent the diversity of America so we can share our greatest resource — our people — with the communities we serve.



About our Volunteers



US citizens



Average age
26



75% female
25% male



University
graduates



29%
racial or ethnic
minorities



Serve 2 years
following 10
weeks of training



The Year in Review

Ambassador Lynch Visits Peace Corps Volunteers Serving all Over Guyana

Almost immediately upon her arrival to Guyana in February 2019, Ambassador Sarah-Ann Lynch started travelling to further learn about the country and its people. Peace Corps Guyana is so honored that her travel plans always consider the opportunity to spend time with Peace Corps Volunteers and their



counterparts throughout the country. Due to Ambassador Lynch's own service with the United States Peace Corps in Morocco at the beginning of her career, we are grateful that she has both a personal and professional connection to our work and mission.

Within her 10-months as Ambassador to Guyana, she has visited Volunteers in Regions 6, 9 and 10. She was also so gracious to extend her residence as the venue for our most premier event of the year, the annual Peace Corps Swearing-In Ceremony. This year marked the 32nd group to be identified to serve in the Co-operative Republic of Guyana. During her event speech, she reminded Trainees "that you are committing to two years of service – service to your country, the United States, and service to the Guyanese citizens in your communities and beyond. As with those before you, we expect excellence; we expect professionalism; and we expect commitment during your two years of Peace Corps service. We are all proud of you, and you should be proud of yourselves in this moment." Those powerful words continue to echo in the memories of those Volunteers she swore in that day and beyond.

Peace Corps Guyana will be forever thankful to Ambassador Lynch for her support and commitment to our efforts, for always considering our perspective, for valuing our voice and for serving as a consummate role model to Peace Corps staff and Volunteers alike each and every day.



"The Peace Corps' special ingredient in Guyana and globally is a people-to people-approach to learning, reinforcing, and building capacity at the community level. And 53 years later, Volunteers are still serving the people of Guyana, having lived and worked in all ten regions of this beautiful country."

- U.S. Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, Sarah-Ann Lynch

The Year in Review

Annual Project Advisory Committee Meetings

Each of Peace Corps' three programs have established Project Advisory Committees (PACs) comprising of our technical partners within key government ministries (Public Health, Education and Ministry of the Presidency), regional level partners, (Regional Education and Health staff), along with development partner agencies (multilateral, non-governmental and community-based organizations) whose programs are aligned to the Peace Corps projects.

PAC meetings occur twice a year and provide a forum for sharing updates, identifying synergies, discussing new avenues for collaboration and brainstorming ideas for mitigating any challenges Volunteers face in their work to promote Literacy, Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) and Environmental Science.

Over the past year the PAC meetings also focused on updating our partners on the progress of work done under our new logical project frameworks, training opportunities and identifying areas for collaboration as it relates to Volunteer work. We have also utilized this forum to gather input from our partners on our placement strategy for new Volunteers.



Environment Project PAC Meeting - May, 2019



Health Project PAC Meeting - May, 2019



Education Project PAC Meeting - May, 2019

The Year in Review

Welcoming Our 32nd Group of Peace Corps Volunteers (GUY32)

In early June, 30 Peace Corps trainees arrived in Guyana to begin pre-service training. Representing 19 out of the 50 states in America, the new trainees range in age from 21 to 50 years old. Over the course of 10 weeks, they lived with host families in Region 2 villages, and developed the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to succeed during their two-year service. Training topics included, but were not limited to, participatory approaches to community development; Creolese language and Guyanese culture; staying healthy and safe in a new environment, and intensive technical training in their project sector. Training concluded with a two-day Supervisor and Counterpart Conference for local teachers who will be working alongside the Volunteers, focusing on the partnership between Peace Corps and Ministries, intercultural behaviors and values and Peace Corps policies and procedures.



GUY32 Swearing-in Ceremony

On August 7, Peace Corps Guyana swore in 29 new Volunteers to begin their 2-year assignments in communities all over Guyana. The event, hosted by U.S. Ambassador Sarah-Ann Lynch, was attended by First Lady Sandra Granger; Honorable Dr. Nicolette Henry, Minister of Education; Honorable Dawn Hastings-Williams, Minister of State; Honorable Valerie Garrido-Lowe, Minister within the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Honorable Dr. Karen Cummings, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Ambassador Ivan Evelyn, Chief Protocol as well as many other Peace Corps national, regional and local partners.

Honorable Dr. Nicolette Henry, in her remarks, said that "It should be commended that 29 selfless individuals left the comfort of their homes, communities and families to give of their service for the advancement of peace and development." Minister of State, Honorable Dawn Hastings-Williams stated that "The Peace Corps Environment Volunteers come at a pivotal time in Guyana's history where the government is focused on the implementation of the Green State Development agenda with the objective of building an eco-friendly economy where societal development and economic growth are in harmony with the conservation and preservation of our natural resources." Minister Garrido-Lowe called on the "Volunteers to immerse into the culture of Guyana, even learning the indigenous languages." Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Karen Gordon-Campbell, who spoke on behalf of Public Health Minister, Volda Lawrence, said, "Last year, we renewed our partnership with the signing of a MOU to help in addressing the important gap in the health of our Guyanese youth. Peace Corps Volunteers have been dynamic – forming health clubs and strengthening existing ones in the secondary schools."



2019 IN NUMBERS

- **2,028** students participated in HFLE sessions
- **2,014** students completed an intervention that included gender norms
- **627** students demonstrated strengthened life skills (ex. positive self-concept, self-control, etc.)
- **24** teachers' skills were enhanced to deliver HFLE curriculum
- **21** teachers demonstrated at least 2 innovative student-centered techniques while delivering the HFLE curriculum
- **30** parents/caregivers reported improved communication skills with their children

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Project Profile: Health

Empowering boys and girls 10-14 to adopt life skills for healthy behavior (30 Volunteers)

In cooperation with the Ministries of Education and Public Health, Peace Corps works with secondary schools, youth-friendly health facilities, parents and communities to help raise a new generation of youth with a healthy outlook on the future.

Key Activities

- **Building Teachers' Capacity to Deliver HFLE**
Teachers and Volunteers co-facilitate HFLE curriculum and explore ways to teach life skills more effectively.
- **Supporting Youth in Clubs and Camps**
Volunteers and community counterparts co-facilitate informal opportunities for youth to build knowledge and practice life skills; they also link them to youth-friendly health services.
- **Supporting Delivery of Youth-friendly Services**
With the Ministry of Public Health, Volunteers co-facilitate workshops, and provide informal support to help healthcare workers develop non-clinical skills.
- **Helping Parents and Caregivers Support Adolescents**
Working with Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and community groups, Volunteers co-facilitate discussions and learning to share information about adolescent health and allow adults to practice skill building.

"Peace Corps Guyana is a critical partner and has played a significant role in improving the health outcomes of adolescents throughout Guyana. They have embraced the vision of the Adolescent Health Unit and by extension the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) in increasing health literacy and accessibility to quality adolescent health friendly/responsive services throughout the country and particularly in the far flung hinterland regions."

- Dr. Travis Freeman, Focal Point, Adolescent Health Unit, MoPH (2018-2019)



2019 IN NUMBERS

- **860** students taught literacy skills in a school setting
- **322** students demonstrated improvement in literacy skills on a standardized student assessment tool
- **457** family members/caregivers participated in a Volunteer-sponsored school or community activity
- **26** family engagement programs were coordinated/organized by Volunteers
- **41** teachers engaged in literacy co-planning/co-teaching
- **23** teachers demonstrated gender-equitable classroom practices

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Project Profile: Education

Working with students, teachers and parents to improve primary literacy (34 Volunteers)

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education's National Centre for Educational Resource Development (NCERD), Peace Corps works with select primary schools across Guyana.

Key Activities

- **Teaching Children to Read**
 One-on-one, in small group pull-outs, and in the classroom Volunteers teach alphabet knowledge, phonemic and phonological awareness, phonics and comprehension to children in grades 1-4.
- **Building Teacher Capacity**
 Teachers and Volunteers work together, forming communities of practice and exploring ways to teach more effectively - from student-centered learning techniques to improved classroom management.
- **Enhancing the Learning Environment**
 Teachers and Volunteers co-develop learning materials and resources, including classroom libraries, to support literacy.
- **Supporting Parents and Caregivers**
 Working with PTAs and parent groups, Volunteers help adults learn how to help their children learn.

"The presence of the Peace Corps Volunteers in Region 6 has proven to be fruitful. Our schools have been benefiting from school libraries, interactive learning spaces. The Volunteers have provided services in pull out sessions, one on one tutoring and summer camp coordination. As the Regional Literacy Coordinator, I can say we are truly blessed to have the support of the Peace Corps Volunteers in our schools."

- Simone Dainty, Regional Literacy Coordinator, Region 6



Project Profile: Environment

Helping youth develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be good environmental stewards (19 Volunteers)

2019 IN NUMBERS

- **760** inquiry-based science lessons co-planned
- **42** teachers co-taught inquiry-based science lessons
- **26** teachers prepared lesson plans and materials that enhanced the teaching of science and the environment
- **22** teachers incorporated active learning methods into their inquiry-based science lessons
- **600** youth participated in outdoor education activities

In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, and the Ministry of the Presidency, Department of Environment, Peace Corps works with teachers, students, and community members to teach science more effectively, stimulate a love of nature, and empower youth to be environmental leaders.

Key Activities

- **Supporting the Teaching of Science**
Volunteers and primary school teachers team up to develop new materials and deliver dynamic lessons in and out of the classroom.
- **Growing Youth Environmental Leadership**
Community members and Volunteers co-facilitate afterschool and weekend wildlife club activities for boys and girls, encouraging exploration of nature, supporting cultural traditions and offering opportunities for youth to grow as leaders.
- **Working with Youth and Adults to Address Local Environmental Issues**
Volunteers collaborate with their host community to build awareness of local environmental issues and take action to address them.

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"The Peace Corps Environment program has been of great support to the effective implementation of the science curriculum at the primary level in hinterland and riverine districts. Due to the shortage of teachers, more so qualified teachers in those districts, Peace Corps Volunteer teachers who have been strategically placed to increase learners' knowledge, skills and attitudes in science through hands-on, minds-on activities have produced success stories in classrooms. Science at schools where Peace Corps Volunteers are attached has been at its best for the past two years. This is due to the fun, exciting, interactive and effective approaches used by Volunteers in the teaching and learning of primary science. Our local teachers working along with the Volunteers have been gaining knowledge, skills and positive attitudes to better implement the science curriculum as they collaboratively plan and deliver lessons."

- Keisa Johnson-Richards, Subject Specialist, Science, NCERD

Bridging Cultures

The home stay experience is an integral part of the Peace Corps Guyana program and helps achieve Peace Corps' goal of intercultural exchange. To assist with effective community integration, each Volunteer lives with a welcoming family during their initial 10-weeks of training and for their first five months at site. The family helps prepare the Volunteer to serve safely, happily and productively in their community by supporting their understanding of cultural norms, introducing them to fellow community members and teaching them about day to day life. Families and Volunteers share chores, family events, and holidays and gain insight into one another's culture. Many develop relationships that last a lifetime.



"There were not very many things I was worried about while preparing to serve with Peace Corps, but my stay with a host family was one. Living in such close quarters with strangers from an entirely different culture than my own was an incredibly daunting idea. Once I got to know my host family though, I saw that my fears were completely unfounded. The family I live with has been nothing but patient with me while I navigate my new surroundings, loving with me when I need their support most, humorous as we've spent time together gaffing, and sassy when I really need someone to call me out as we all need from time to time. My host parents even introduce me to strangers as one of their own. I am confident in my new role as a Volunteer because of the support that I receive from my host family."

- PCV Liam GUY32 Environment Region 4



"When I talk about things that are challenging with my host mom, she hears my point of view from my culture and brings in the Guyanese culture perspective so that I can understand things better. She then gives me advice on how I can best address the situation. It's been one of the most helpful parts of my service."

- PCV Kim GUY32 Health Region 2



"As the oldest PCV in my cohort, my training host family welcomed me with open arms, treated me with respect, and genuinely cared for my wellbeing. I immediately felt at home and benefited from their knowledge, experiences, guidance and suggestions. Even since transitioning to my permanent site, the entire family has continued to be my support. It has been such a blessing to have found my forever family in Guyana."

- PCV Nikky GUY32 Education Region 3

Small Project Assistance from USAID

Since 2014, Peace Corps Guyana has partnered with USAID under the Small Project Assistance (SPA) program to build the capacity of host country individuals, organizations and communities to meet their own development needs and priorities.

The SPA program provides resources to Peace Corps in the program areas of Education Systems.

We have used these funds to offer important technical trainings to Volunteers and their community counterparts and to support grants for Volunteers and communities to implement small projects that will result in capacity building.

In 2019 SPA funds, totaling \$25,000 USD, were used to conduct three technical training workshops, one on the delivery of the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) curriculum and developing youth through clubs; one on the intricacies of co-teaching and co-planning and another on how to deliver interactive science lessons in student-centered ways and apply effective environmental science techniques.

In all, these workshops trained 40 Volunteers and 40 Guyanese counterparts, representing 30 different communities across 8 regions, to increase their ability to work with students and youth.

In addition, SPA funds supported two Volunteer and community-led grants whose projects are profiled in the Success Stories on the following pages.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

GUYANA

SUCCESS

Summer Health and Wellness Camp

A SPA grant helps promote health and wellness among youth.



Children participated in Camp W.I.S.E., promoting Wellness and Inspiring Student Excellence, hosted by 5 Peace Corps Volunteers in collaboration with local teachers from the school.



From July 8-12, 2019, a primary school, located in west coast Berbice, hosted a Health and Wellness summer camp, funded through a SPA grant, to address the community's concerns about student literacy and wellness. The school decided on the Health and Wellness theme because many residents of the community and surrounding villages do not have access to health and wellness resources or are unaware of where to go to seek assistance.

This camp was facilitated by five local Peace Corps volunteers in collaboration with the teachers the primary school. Three of the Peace Corps volunteers specialize in literacy, while two volunteers works in the health sector. All of the teachers from the primary school were trained by the Ministry of Education on teaching HFLE (Health and Family Life Education) topics to youth.

Camp W.I.S.E. stands for promoting Wellness and Inspiring Student Excellence. Students learned about healthy eating, goal-setting, positive communication, coping with stress and the importance of maintaining our physical health. They also participated in a Career Day, made stress balls with sand and balloons, participated in yoga and group meditation, played volleyball/ cricket, and even danced the afternoon away during the ZUMBA session to promote health and wellness.

Local businesses/organizations donated food and drinks. Parents helped to blow up balloons, print materials, and support the effort. Peace Corps Volunteers traveled from different villages and regions to assist. The camp was well received by the community and other schools have asked to participate in the future. Teachers have decided to plan a wellness camp next summer based on what they learned while participating this year.

- Peace Corps Volunteer Gina A.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

GUYANA

SUCCESS

Creating Sustainability in Health Education on the Essequibo Coast

Thanks to a SPA grant, Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) teachers are more empowered to teach youth life skills to make healthy decisions and lead productive lives.



HFLE educators completed a 3-day teachers training workshop to support their confidence and ability to successfully teach HFLE curriculum to secondary students in their schools.

Through a SPA grant, 4 Peace Corps Volunteers, along with 3 experienced local Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) teachers facilitated a comprehensive and engaging HFLE training workshop for local teachers in Region 2.

The workshop covered a range of HFLE related topics including understanding and teaching challenging HFLE curriculum topics, adapting activities and games to convey important life skills, the benefits of pre and post assessments to gauge knowledge gain and behavior changes and how to create HFLE friendly classrooms. These 3 days also provided teachers with an opportunity to share their own experiences teaching HFLE, ask questions, and contribute valuable feedback about the curriculum and the current implementation of HFLE in their schools, which will be shared with the Department of Education to further improve the program in schools.

The Regional Department of Education provided additional sponsorship and was a driving force behind encouraging Head Teachers to send 2 teachers from their schools to the workshop. In total, 9 teachers participated. Grant funds were used to create a resource booklet outlining difficult content, activities and games to incorporate into lessons, and sample lesson plans.

A teacher at a local secondary school recounted that, “HFLE is such an important class because it gives students the opportunity to learn important life skills to make healthy decisions and lead productive lives. Teachers are aware of the benefits of the subject, however they lack the necessary training and skills to implement the curriculum effectively.”

- Peace Corps Volunteer Meredith B.

Peace Corps Guyana Staff



Front row from left:

Stephanie Williams, Training Manager
Millicent Benjamin, Medical Officer
Kellon Gibbons, Cashier
Sasha Lindo, Admin & Comms Specialist
Yemi Oshodi,
Director of Programming & Training
Chandra Dautram, Janitress
Jean Vyfhuis, Medical Officer
Wendy Hershberger,
Director of Management & Operations
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Program Manager - Environment
Dena James,
Language and Cross Culture Facilitator
Michelle Henry, Financial Specialist
Jami Herring, Peace Corps Volunteer Leader

Back row from left:

Roger Wilson,
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Jennel Gray, Medical Secretary
Brian Thorington, General Services Assistant
Quincy Richards, Language and Cross Culture
Facilitator
Alesha Berkley, Administrative Assistant
Andrew Duesbury, Driver
Harry Persaud, Safety & Security Assistant
Flavio Rose, Safety and Security Manager
Jamal Goodluck,
Program and Training Specialist, Education
Merica George,
Program & Training Specialist - Health
Samantha Daisy, Peace Corps Volunteer Leader
Ray Chatterpaul, Language and Cross Culture
Facilitator

Not Pictured -* **Colin Goodluck, General Services
Manager; **Frederick Adrian**, IT Specialist; and **Patrick
Hawker**, Janitor