Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Host Country Impact Study
Thailand

Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Project

Final Report prepared by the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

About the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning
It is the mission of the Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning (OSIRP) to advance evidence-based management at Peace Corps by guiding agency planning, enhancing the stewardship and governance of agency data, strengthening measurement and evaluation of agency performance and programs, and helping shape agency engagement on certain high-level, government-wide initiatives.

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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronyms

DLA	Department of Local Administration
ESAO	Education Service Area Office
ERIC	English Resource and Information Center
HCN	Host Country National
ICT	Information Communication Technology
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OBEC	Office of Basic Education Commission
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
ONPEC	Office of the National Primary Education Commission
OSIRP	Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning
PC/T	Peace Corps/Thailand
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PST	Pre-Service Training
RTG	Royal Thai Government
SCL	Student-centered learning
TCCO	Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Project
TICA	Thailand International Coordination Agency

Definitions

Beneficiaries	Individuals who receive assistance and help from the project; the people that the project is primarily designed to advantage
Counterparts/project partners	Individuals who work with Peace Corps Volunteers; Volunteers may work with multiple counterparts during their service. Project partners also benefit from the projects, but when they are paired with Volunteers in a professional relationship or when they occupy a particular position in an organization or

community (e.g., community leader), they are considered counterparts

Host family members   Families with whom a Volunteer lived during all or part of his/her training and/or service

Project stakeholders   Host country agency sponsors and partners.[2] These include host-country ministries and local non-governmental agencies that are sponsoring and collaborating on a Peace Corps project. There may be a single agency or several agencies involved in a project in some capacity

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[2] This definition, while narrower than the one commonly used in the development field, is the definition provided in the Peace Corps *Programming and Training Booklet I*.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2008, the Peace Corps launched a series of studies to determine the impact of its Volunteers on two of the agency's three goals: building local capacity and promoting a better understanding of Americans among host country nationals (HCNs). The Peace Corps conducts an annual survey that captures the perspective of currently serving Volunteers.[3] While providing critical insight into the Volunteer experience, the survey can only address one side of the Peace Corps' story. The agency's Host Country Impact Studies, on the other hand, are unique for their focus on learning about the Peace Corps' impact directly from the host country nationals who lived and worked with Volunteers.

This report presents the findings from a study conducted in Thailand in the fall of 2010. The focus of the research was the Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Project (TCCO). The results of the findings from the local research team were shared with the post immediately upon completion of the fieldwork. This OSIRP report is based upon the data collected by the local team and contains a thorough review of the quantitative and qualitative data, supported by respondents' quotes, and some analysis of the data, presented in a format that is standard for all the country reports.

Purpose

Thailand's TCCO Host Country Impact Study assesses the degree to which the Peace Corps has been able to promote innovative educational approaches in schools and carry out projects that support the sustainable growth and development of local schools and communities. The study provides Peace Corps/Thailand with a better understanding of the TCCO Project and the impact it has had on local teachers, students, and schools. In addition, the evaluation provides insight into what host country nationals learned about Americans and how their opinions about Americans changed after working with a Volunteer.

The major research questions addressed in the study are:
- Did skills transfer and capacity building occur?
- What skills were transferred to organizations/communities and individuals as a result of Volunteers' work?
- Were the skills and capacities sustained past the end of the project?
- How satisfied were HCNs with the project work?
- What did HCNs learn about Americans?
- Did HCNs report that their opinions of Americans had changed after interacting with the Peace Corps and Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs)?

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[3]Peace Corps surveyed Volunteers periodically from 1975 to 2002, when a biennial survey was instituted. The survey became an annual survey in 2009 to meet agency reporting requirements.

The evaluation results will be aggregated and analyzed with the results from other Host Country Impact Studies to assess the agency's impact on local partners and participants across the world.

Evaluation Methodology

This report is based on data provided by counterparts, beneficiaries, students, and stakeholders of the TCCO Project during interviews with the research team. The study included interviews with:

- 69 Counterparts
- 74 Beneficiaries
- 35 Primary school students
- 35 Host family respondents
- 41 Stakeholders

The study reached 254 respondents in 30 communities.

All interviews were conducted from August 1 to September 30, 2010 (See Appendix 1 for a full description of the methodology. Please contact OSIRP for a copy of the interview questionnaire.)

Project Design and Purpose

The purpose of the TCCO Project is to assist Thai teachers in improving their student-centered learning (SCL) and participatory teaching methods, and to improve lesson planning, classroom resource development, and the development of community-initiated development projects in education, environment, health or other areas (community networking).[4] The TCCO Project was designed to respond to the educational reforms instituted by the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001) and the 1996 Education Reform Act, which require an SCL approach. However, the curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education constrained the adoption of SCL methods due to its focus on grammar and writing. The project is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Interior.

The goals are listed below:

1. Thai English teachers in rural primary schools will improve and apply participatory and/or student-centered learning approaches, design creative lessons and materials that enhance the curriculum and establish community educator networks.
2. Rural Thai communities will collaborate to enhance the quality of life of students and their families through the development of local learning opportunities and the

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[4] Information on the TCCO Project is taken from *The Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Mid-Project Review,* Peace Corps, August 2006 by Vanessa Hughes and Suvimon Sanguansat,

promotion of HIV/AIDS, life skills, and sustainable, community-initiated development projects.

Evaluation Findings

The evaluation findings indicate that the first three goals of the Community Health Project—expanding participatory learning approaches, improving teachers' English language skills, and engaging students in the classroom (student-centered learning)—were met and sustained. The findings indicate that communities' ability to identify their needs and address at-risk behaviors was less likely to have improved and was the least sustained change.

While the report provides a detailed analysis of all the study findings, the key findings are discussed below.

Agency Goal One Findings

Volunteer Activities
- Volunteers implemented three of the eight project activities: promoting participatory student-centered learning methods, developing lesson plans, and developing and expanding classroom resources
- Volunteers taught or co-taught English in the classroom to students and provided after school classes for teachers
- Volunteers mentored Thai teachers in participatory teaching methods, methods for creating classroom resources, and developing lesson plans
- Volunteers spent less time working with communities on life skills and quality of life activities

Project Participant Training
- Volunteers primarily provided informal training—co-teaching, mentoring, modeling new teaching methods, and coaching—while jointly working on projects.
  - 50 percent of the counterparts said they learned new methods in lesson planning and teaching methods through co-teaching and mentoring
  - 29 percent described receiving training in professional development, principally after-school English lessons
  - 27 percent of the counterparts and 35 of the beneficiaries reported receiving no training

Intended Outcomes: Community Capacity Building

- **School capacity building was achieved**
  - Counterparts (94%) and beneficiaries (94%) reported adopting new participatory teaching methods

- o Counterparts (94%) and beneficiaries (91%) reported student participation in class increased
- o Counterparts (94%) and beneficiaries (91%) reported teachers created and used new materials in the classroom more often

- **Community capacity was somewhat achieved**
  - o 58 percent of the respondents reported the community's ability to identify and address at risky behaviors had improved
  - o Volunteers provided minimal training on identifying community needs
  - o Activities related to working with the community, such as identifying student at-risk behaviors or developing professional networks, met the needs of half of the participants

- **Sustainability of school-based changes varied**
  - o 77 percent of the students reported teachers maintained the new teaching methods
  - o 69 percent of the counterparts and 59 percent of the beneficiaries cited the use of their new teaching methods was fully sustained
  - o 69% of counterparts and 59% of beneficiaries said improved English language skills were sustained
  - o Student participation in class was reported as sustained by 44 percent of the counterparts and 46 percent of the beneficiaries
  - o Counterparts (23%) and beneficiaries (27%) reported the communities' ability to identify address at-risk behaviors as the least sustained change

Intended Outcomes: Individual Capacity Building

- Overall, 86 percent of the respondents reported that the Volunteers' work in building individual capacity had been very effective (63%) or somewhat (23%) effective
  - o *Counterparts* (92%) and beneficiaries (87%) said their increased confidence in teaching and speaking English was the greatest personal change
  - o 87 percent of counterparts and 82 percent of beneficiaries reported increased use of participatory teaching methods
  - o *Students* (100%) reported they participated more in class
  - o *Counterparts* (67%) and *beneficiaries* (61%) reported their individual ability to identify and address at risk behavior in students showed the least change
  - o Both groups reported their use of professional networks changed little
  - o Beneficiaries integrated local knowledge into classroom subjects and lessons better than counterparts
  - o Individual changes showed higher rates of sustainability than the school-level changes
  - o Beneficiaries reported that the project outcomes met their needs to a higher degree than counterparts

Unintended Outcomes
- The Volunteers' methods and demeanor produced a change in the student-teacher relationship in several schools in which teachers adopted the student-centered teaching methods
- Teachers' work habits appear to have changed – in particular in preparing lessons plans, planning and organizing their work, and conducting self-evaluations of each class

Satisfaction with the project was high
- Over 90 percent of counterparts and beneficiaries were somewhat to very satisfied with the project
- 88 percent of counterparts and 96 percent of beneficiaries want to work with a Volunteer again

Factors contributing to success
- Volunteers' desire to work hard and their ability to teach and work with students contributed to success
- Support and collaboration from the Thai teachers and school directors contributed to success
- In some schools, counterparts commented that working with a female Volunteer was more culturally appropriate and removed cultural constraints in the working relationship

Factors hindering the success of the project
- The primary barrier reported by respondents was that Volunteers' time was being split between two different schools
- One quarter of the teachers and school administrators (25%) did not believe the new teaching methods supported the Thai curriculum and viewed the methods as "just playing games"
- Additional factors included inadequate preparation of the Volunteers—poor Thai language skills and little teaching experience—and the age and gender of the Volunteers

Goal Two Findings

Changes in Understanding and Opinions of Americans

Prior to meeting a Volunteer
- 8 percent of counterparts, 15 percent of beneficiaries, and 14 percent of host families had no previous knowledge of Americans
- The primary source of information about Americans was television or movies, with variations by the different groups
- 60 percent of *counterparts r*eported a positive opinion of Americans – 15 percent had a very positive opinion of Americans; 45% had a somewhat positive opinion of Americans

- 42 percent of *beneficiaries* had a very positive opinion of Americans – 8 percent reported a very positive opinion and 34 percent had a somewhat positive opinion of Americans
- 34 percent of *host family members* reported a very positive opinion of Americans; none had a very positive opinion of Americans and 34 percent had a somewhat positive opinion
- A large number of Thais had no firm opinion; 39% of *counterparts*, 51% of *beneficiaries,* and 63% of *host family members* had neither a positive nor a negative opinion of Americans

After interacting with a Volunteer
- 83 percent of *counterparts* reported a positive opinion of Americans – 35 percent stated they had a much more positive opinion of Americans and 48 percent reported a more positive opinion of Americans
- 65 percent of *beneficiaries* reported a positive opinion of Americans – 25 percent reported a much more positive opinion of Americans; 40 percent had a more positive opinion of Americans
- 85 percent of *host family members* reported a positive opinion of Americans – 18 percent had a much more positive opinion of Americans and 67 percent had a more positive opinion
- The greatest change in opinion came from the large group mentioned above who were previously neutral about Americans– after interacting with a Volunteer the numbers had dropped to 8 percent of *counterparts*, 36 percent of *beneficiaries*, and 15 percent of *host family members* who had neither a positive nor a negative opinion of Americans

Influences on Change in Opinions of Americans and Results of Interaction with Volunteers
- Volunteer's ability to integrate into the local community influenced change in opinion
- Respondents reported they adopted a new work ethic, felt more confident, were willing to try new ideas, and more willing to help students after working with a Volunteer
- Interactions with Western tourists heavily influenced Thai respondents' views of Americans. The interaction with a single Volunteer, especially since Peace Corps/Thailand does not place Volunteers consecutively at sites, may not be sufficient to counter the impact of daily encounters with tourists

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

The Peace Corps traces its roots and mission to 1960, when then-Senator 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. From that inspiration grew an agency of the federal government devoted to world peace and friendship.

By the end of 1961, Peace Corps Volunteers were serving in seven countries. Since then, more than 200,000 men and women have served in 139 countries. Peace Corps activities cover issues ranging from education to work in the areas of health and HIV/AIDS to community economic development. Peace Corps Volunteers continue to help countless individuals who want to build a better life for themselves, their children, and their communities.

In carrying out the agency's three core goals, Peace Corps Volunteers make a difference by building local capacity and promoting a better understanding of Americans among host country participants. A major contribution of Peace Corps Volunteers, who live in the communities where they work, stems from their ability to deliver technical interventions directly to beneficiaries living in rural and urban areas that lack sufficient local capacity. Volunteers operate from a community development principle that promotes sustainable projects and strategies.

> ## Peace Corps' Core Goals
>
> **Goal One** - To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
>
> **Goal Two** - To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
>
> **Goal Three** - To help promote a better understanding of other people on the part of Americans.

The interdependence of Goal One and Goal Two is central to the Peace Corps experience, as local beneficiaries develop relationships with Volunteers who communicate in the local language, share everyday experiences, and work collaboratively on a daily basis.

The Peace Corps conducts an annual survey of currently serving Volunteers; however, it tells only one side of the Peace Corps' story.[5] In 2008, the Peace Corps' launched a series of studies to better assess the impact of its Volunteers. These studies are unique for their focus on

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[5]Peace Corps surveyed Volunteers periodically from 1975 to 2002, when a biennial survey was instituted. The survey became an annual survey in 2009 to meet agency reporting requirements.

learning about the Peace Corps' impact directly from the HCNs who lived and worked with Volunteers.

Purpose

This report presents the findings from the Host Country Impact Study conducted in Thailand from August to September of 2010. The project studied was the Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach (TCCO) Project. The study documents host country nationals' perspectives on the impact of Peace Corps Volunteers on skills transfer to and capacity building of host country counterparts, beneficiaries, students, and stakeholders, and changes in their understanding of Americans.

The major research questions addressed in the study are:

- Did skills transfer and capacity building occur?
- What skills were transferred to organizations/communities and individuals as a result of Volunteers' work?
- Were the skills and capacities sustained past the end of the project?
- How satisfied were HCNs with the project work?
- What did HCNs learn about Americans?
- Did HCNs change their opinions Americans interacting with the Peace Corps and Peace Corps Volunteers?

The information gathered will inform Peace Corps staff at post and headquarters about host country nationals' perceptions of the project, the Volunteers and the impact of the work that was undertaken. In conjunction with Volunteer feedback from the Annual Volunteer Survey, this information will allow the Peace Corps to better understand its impact and address areas for improvement. For example, the information may be useful for Volunteer training and for outreach to host families and project partners.

This information is also needed to provide performance information to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the United States Congress. As part of the Peace Corps Improvement Plan, drafted in response to its 2005 Program Assessment Rating Tool review, the Peace Corps proposed the creation of "baselines to measure results including survey data in countries with Peace Corps presence to measure the promotion of a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served."[6]

Feedback from the three pilots conducted in 2008 was used to revise the methodology rolled out to six posts in 2009, ten posts in 2010, and five posts in 2011. A total of 24 posts across Peace Corps' three geographic regions (Africa; Inter-America and the Pacific; and Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia) have conducted host country impact studies. Taken together,

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[6] Office of Management and Budget. *Program Assessment: Peace Corps. International Volunteerism, 2005. Improvement Plan.*

these studies contribute to Peace Corps' ability to document the degree to which the agency is able to both meet the needs of host countries for trained men and women, and to promote a better understanding of Americans among the peoples served.

Thailand Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Project

The main goal of the 1996 Education Reform Act and the Eighth National Education Development Plan (1997-2001) was to shift the Thai education system from a teacher-centered approach to a student-centered learning (SCL) approach.[7]

However, implementing the policy changes produced several constraints. First, most teachers in primary schools did not major in English and second, they worked from a teacher-centered approach. This teacher-centered approach is reinforced by Thai cultural norms, which give high respect to educators and elders. As a result, schools lacked qualified teachers to implement an SCL approach. Finally, national curriculum content and achievement tests did not support SCL and provided no incentives for teachers to adopt the new methods.

The Peace Corps' TCCO project began in 2003 in response to these needs and for three years Volunteers co-taught with Thai teachers in rural primary schools. In 2006, a mid-term project assessment was conducted which resulted in revisions to the project goals and objectives to address the findings of the review. The review showed the project had succeeded in the following areas:

- Increased teachers' and students' confidence and English speaking ability
- Expanded teaching methods through camps and co-teaching
- Increased classroom teaching resources
- Increased the use of lesson planning
- Improved teachers' work habits
- Increased respect for students of different ethnic backgrounds and academic abilities

However, the review revealed the project faced several challenges. The challenges included:

- Cultural differences in work style and language barriers
- Thai participants' lack of understanding of the project goals and purpose
- The Thai education system did not support SCL methods because SCL contradicted Thai cultural norms and teachers would lose status with the new approach
- Volunteers were viewed as substitute teachers who did not have the experience or training to teach
- Community development work was difficult to begin, implement, and sustain due to teacher and Volunteer schedules

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[7] All project information was reported by Vanessa Hughes and Suvimon Sanguansat in *The Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Mid-Project Review,* Peace Corps, August 2006.

The review contained several recommendations, most notably to shift the focus of the project to participatory learning rather than student-centered learning. The latter ran counter to Thai cultural norms with regard to respect for authority and the country's history of rote learning styles.

Peace Corps/Thailand revised the TCCO Project incorporating new goals and objectives to address the challenges outlined in the review.

Project Goals

The current TCCO Project pairs Volunteers with a Thai primary school teacher in a rural school where the two co-teach. Through co-teaching, the project seeks to meet the following goals and objectives:

Goal One: Thai teachers will improve and apply participatory and/or student-centered learning approaches, design creative lessons and materials that enhance the curriculum, and establish community educator networks. The objectives for this goal are:

1. To assess students' needs; plan, conduct and evaluate English lessons across the curriculum; and facilitate a positive learning environment
2. To develop and manage educational resources that support classroom instruction
3. To establish and support informal networks of educators and community leaders who support learning reform and conduct local capacity-building activities for teachers

Goal Two: Communities in Thailand will collaborate to enhance the quality of life of students and their families through the development of local learning opportunities and the promotion of HIV/AIDS, life skills, and the achievement of sustainable community-development projects. The objectives are:

1. To indentify priorities, and design, manage, and evaluate community-initiated development projects in education, environment, health and other areas
2. To engage in life skills and/or HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention and/or education activities and/or life skills activities

Figure 1: Theory of Change for the TCCO Project: Thailand

Problems
1. Primary school teachers lack expertise in teaching English

2. Most teachers still use the old method of teaching English not content-based teaching

3. Lack of English resources & teaching aids

4. Issues in communities involving youth, at-risk behaviors, health, environment, etc.

Goals
1.1 Teachers will apply participatory learning approaches

1.2 Local wisdom will be integrated into lessons& resources for teaching English will be developed

1.3 Networks of local teachers will be created to support one another

2.1 Communities will initiate projects according to their needs

2.2 Communities will promote projects/activities on life skills &HIV/AIDS

Activities
1.1 train teachers in participatory learning

1.2 Teachers assess students' knowledge to plan participatory lessons & co-teach with PCVs

1.3 Teachers, PCVs, locals collaborate to collect local knowledge and integrate into teaching

1.4 Community educators/ teachers establish informal/formal networks

2.1 Communities id issues & assets to design projects

2.2 Communities train life skills/HIV AIDS to target groups

Outcomes
1.1 Teachers lesson plan and use new methods in class

1.2 Teachers integrate local knowledge into lessons and create materials & resources

1.3 Local networks of teachers exchange ideas and resources

2.1 increased personal & prof. development

2.2 Community members/target groups have increased knowledge of life skills/HIV AIDS

Source: Extracted from *The Teacher Collaboration and Community Outreach Mid-Project Review*, August 2006.

Evaluation Methodology

In 2008, the Peace Corps' Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning (OSIRP) initiated a series of evaluation studies in response to a mandate from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that the agency evaluate the impact of Volunteers in achieving Goal Two.

Three countries were selected to pilot a methodology that would examine the impact of the technical work of Volunteers, and their corollary work of promoting a better understanding of Americans among the people with whom the Volunteers lived and worked. In collaboration with the Peace Corps' country director at each post, OSIRP piloted a methodology to collect information directly from host country nationals about skills transfer and capacity building, as well as changes in their understanding of Americans.

The research was designed by OSIRP social scientists and is implemented in country by a local Senior Researcher and a team of local interviewers under the supervision of the Peace Corps country staff. OSIRP provides technical direction. Prior to the field interviews, researcher training was conducted by the Peace Corps/Thailand office together with an evaluation officer from OSIRP. To ensure comparability across countries, the research uses a standard interview protocol that also incorporates individual project goals in each country. Once the data is collected, researchers enter it into a web-based database and OSIRP provides the data to the team for analysis. OSIRP also prepares a final standard report on the findings of the local research team.

In Thailand, Dr. Walaitat Worakul led the research team of professors, graduate, and undergraduate students from four different universities. The team divided the country into four regions led by the senior researcher and the following professors: Chalad Chantrasombat, Sakchoren Pawapootanont, and Piangchon Rasdusdee. The teams conducted 257 semi-structured interviews in 30 communities across Thailand. OSIRP identified 187 Volunteer placements between 2005 and 2010 for possible participation in the study. A representative, rather than a random, sample was drawn from this list of Volunteer assignment sites. The Thailand research team conducted the interviews between August 1 and September 30, 2010.

Respondents

The interviewees included the following groups (Table 1):

- **Counterparts**: teachers, district officers, and others (69)

- **Beneficiaries:** teachers, English Resource and Information Center (ERIC) managers, community leaders, and community organization representatives. This group also included secondary school students who had studied with the Volunteer (74)

- **Students:** primary students who studied with the Volunteer or were part of after school activities (35)

- **Host family respondents:** families the Volunteer lived next door to, rented a room or house from, or were very close to during all or part of their service (35)

- **Stakeholders:** school directors, Education Service Area Office (ESAO) managers, SAO directors, national level officers, and others (41)

Table 1: Number and Type of Respondents: Thailand TCCO Project

Interview Type	Number of People	Number of Sites
Counterparts	**69**	30
Beneficiaries	**74**	30
Students	**35**	30
Host Family respondents	**35**	30
Stakeholders	**41**	
Total	254	30

Counterparts were primarily teachers (94%) with a few district officials and staff members from schools or provincial education offices (District Official: 3%; Other: 3%) (Figure 2). Over half of the beneficiaries also were teachers (58%). The remaining beneficaries were secondary students (24%) and members of the community such as nurses, hospital staff, HIV/AIDS patients, and teachers who worked on Glow Camps (12%) (Figure 2). Although counterparts and beneficiaries are both teachers, counterparts work directly with the Volunteer as a co-teacher and are the primary target for skill transfer.

Figure 2: Background of Counterparts and Beneficiaries
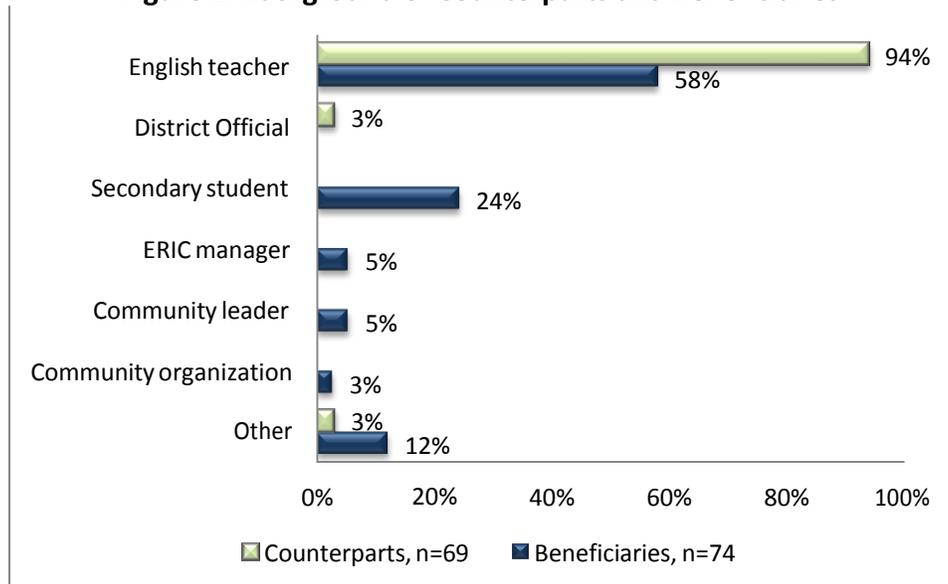
Neighbors comprised the largest group of host family respondents (37%) followed by landlords (24%) and host parents (16%). The majority of stakeholders were school directors (44%) followed by ESAO managers (37%) or other local and national officials (19%).

Seventy-three percent of counterparts (n=67) have ten or more years of experience in their field. Although the Mid-Project Review recommended that Volunteers work with younger teachers who had less experience, schools may not have followed this advice due to Thai cultural norms (which would make it unlikely that a a young or new teacher would be selected for such an honor). Sixty-six percent of stakeholders had been in their field ten or more years (n=41). Thirty-two percent of stakeholders had known about Peace Corps activities for one to two years, including seven respondents who had been in their field for ten or more years. Twenty-seven percent had known about Peace Corps activities for ten years (n=41).

CHAPTER 2: GOAL ONE FINDINGS

All Peace Corps projects support the agency's primary goal of building the technical capacity of local men and women to improve their own lives and conditions within their communities. The purpose of the TCCO Project is to improve the rural Thai teacher's use of participatory teaching methods, as well as to improve the quality of life for Thai students and their families.

Frequency of Interaction with Volunteers

The TCCO Project assigned Volunteers to work in two schools. As a result, project participants tended to interact with the Volunteer two to five times a week rather than daily (Figure 3). Overall, counterparts tended to work with Volunteers most often at work. Beneficiaries and counterparts who reported not working with the Volunteer during work tended to be nurses, hospital staff, and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Figure 3: Frequency of Interaction with Volunteer during Work
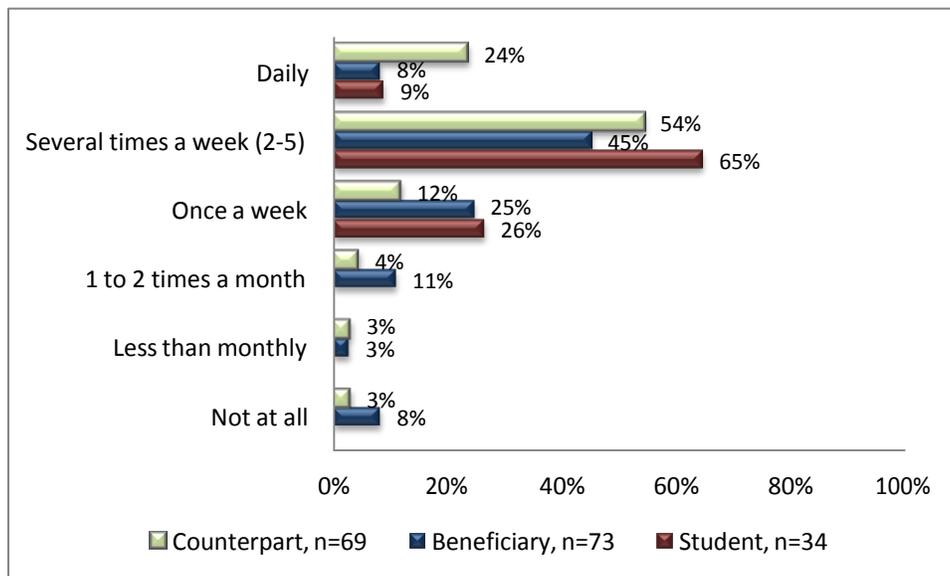
Outside of work, the largest groups of counterparts (44%), beneficiaries (44%), and students (41%) interacted with the Volunteer two to five times a week (Figure 4). Overall, students socialized with Volunteers outside the classroom more often than other respondent groups. More counterparts (16%) responded that they did not socialize with Volunteers at all than beneficiaries (8% – 5 people) and students (9% – 3 people).

Figure 4: Frequency of Interaction with Volunteer Outside of Work

Daily: Counterpart 15%, Beneficiary 8%, Student 3%

Several times a week (2-5): Counterpart 44%, Beneficiary 44%, Student 41%

Once a week: Counterpart 15%, Beneficiary 16%, Student 24%

1 to 2 times a month: Counterpart 10%, Beneficiary 8%, Student 12%

Less than monthly: Beneficiary 15%, Student 12%

Not at all: Counterpart 16%, Beneficiary 8%, Student 9%

Legend: Counterpart, Beneficiary, Student
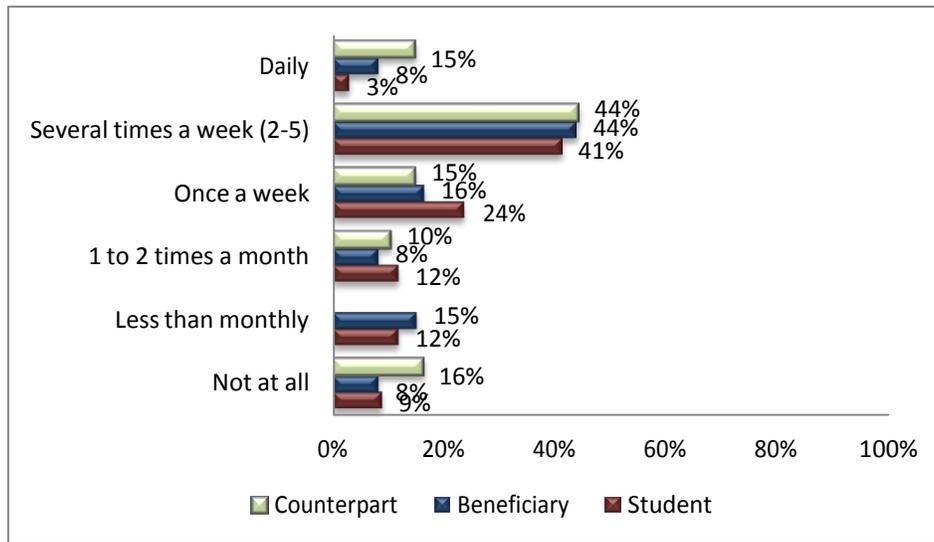
For counterparts, n=69; for beneficiaries, n=73; for students, n=34

Project Activities

Volunteers working in the TCCO Project were expected to achieve the project goals and build capacity through specific activities outlined in the project plan, as well as through activities generated at the grassroots level. These activities also strengthened the capacity-building opportunities that support Goal One of Peace Corps.

The project plan outlines numerous activities to support the project goals. The activities have been grouped into the following categories related to the goals and objectives of the TCCO Project:

- Promote participatory/SCL methods
- Develop lesson plans
- Create student evaluation tools
- Develop and expand classroom resources
- Create networks of teachers
- Create networks of community members to support education
- Collaborate to develop community-initiated development projects
- Enhance the life skills of community members

The majority of *counterparts, beneficiaries,* and *students* described activities related to promoting participatory student-centered learning. Among these activities, respondents most often reported that Volunteers taught or co-taught English in the classroom. They also frequently described the English camps developed by Volunteers, as well as other clubs and sports activities. A few counterparts and beneficiaries explained that

Volunteers conducted English classes for teachers after hours, in addition to teaching students. Relatively few counterparts and beneficiaries (13) described the Volunteers observing classes to assess teaching methods. In three cases, respondents noted that the Volunteer only observed, but never actually taught classes. Throughout the interviews, respondents indicated that watching the Volunteer teach and demonstrate the participatory methods was an integral part of skill-building.

Counterparts and beneficiaries described Volunteers conducting their own lesson planning or training Thai teachers in lesson planning. An equal number of counterparts and beneficiaries described Volunteers creating classroom resource material or working with Volunteers to produce these materials. The materials included creating class activities such as games or contests, expanding the library's collection of books, and assisting librarians with cataloguing. While the project plan states that Volunteers are supposed to work with Thai teachers to develop lesson plans that incorporate local knowledge, only one respondent described the incorporation of these elements into lesson planning.

Volunteers were reported as having conducted relatively few activities in the community. Twelve respondents stated the Volunteer taught English to community members and staff of the local educational offices or community development offices. A few counterparts and beneficiaries described income generation activities conducted by Volunteers, such as designing logos for local products or assisting a women's batik group with marketing. Three respondents described Volunteers working on HIV/AIDS activities, primarily helping to care for patients. Counterparts and beneficiaries most often cited the Volunteers' participation in annual community events and festivals.

Based on the description of activities from respondents, Volunteers conducted few activities related to community development, especially life skill training, identifying social issues and developing solutions, promoting service learning, conducting needs assessments, and creating monitoring and evaluation systems for these activities. Volunteers also conducted few activities to enhance parent participation in education, identify community members with local knowledge to share in the classroom, and create professional networks of teachers.

Any one of these activities is a full-time job and Volunteers may not have the time to address these activities, even though they form part of the project goals. In addition, given that Volunteers are required to teach in two schools in two separate communities, it would be culturally inappropriate to conduct community development activities in one and not the other, thus creating additional work for a Volunteer.

Intended Outcomes

Project activities are expected to lead to specific outcomes that meet project goals, and in so doing meet Peace Corps' primary goal of transferring technical skills and building

local capacity. Performance under the Peace Corps' first goal was examined in three ways:

1. The extent to which local participants observed community and personal changes, and reported gaining new technical skills
2. The extent to which the capacity for maintaining the changes was built once the project ended
3. The extent to which the project met the community and personal needs of local participants

Training provided by Volunteers is one method for increasing the technical capacity of local teachers and one of the immediate outputs of any Peace Corps project. The training received by counterparts and beneficiaries, and the extent to which training enhanced their skills is presented first. Intended outcomes observed by the project partners at the community-level are presented second, followed by the individual-level changes respondents reported.

Training

According to the project plan, training for counterparts and beneficiaries in the TCCO Project was to include student and community assessments, project design, professional development and networking, teaching methods, resource development and lesson planning.

Counterparts and *beneficiaries* most often described informal training provided by the Volunteer, such as Volunteer-led language lessons, observing the Volunteer teach, and working together to create lesson plans. Through this informal process, respondents learned about participatory methods and a new work style which they described as "more systematic."

The training most frequently mentioned by *counterparts* was informal training in teaching methods and lesson planning (50%), which was a core component of the project (Figure 5). Over a quarter of the counterparts (29%) also received training in professional development (Figure 5). Professional development focused principally on English lessons for teachers and school staff once a week after school. This training did not include creating networks of teachers as intended by the project plan.

The training most frequently mentioned by *beneficiaries* was in English speaking skills (27%, Other) and teaching methods (18%)(Figure 5). Another 17 percent reported receiving training in how to conduct student assessments.

A quarter of the counterparts (27%) and over one-third of the beneficiaries (35%) reported they did not receive any training. Many specifically stated they did not receive

any "formal training" from the Volunteer, indicating the distinction they made between formal training and the informal mentoring that many respondents described.

Figure 5: Training Received by Counterparts and Beneficiaries
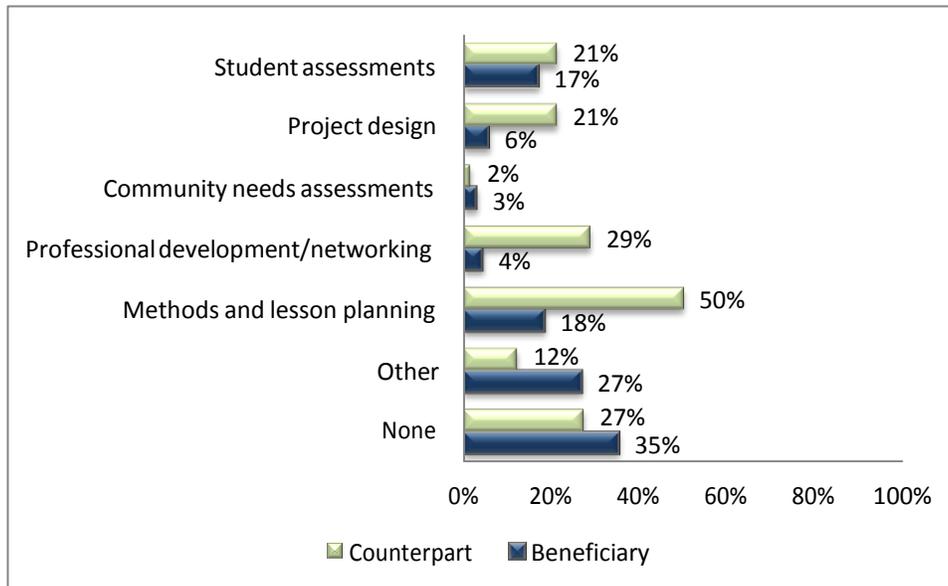
For counterparts, n=66; for beneficiaries, n=71

Counterparts and beneficiaries felt the informal training they received enhanced their skills (Figure 6). Forty-seven percent of counterparts and thirty-nine percent of beneficiaries believed their skills were significantly enhanced. An additional 37 percent of counterparts and 36 percent of beneficiaries reported the training somewhat enhanced their skills. The skill most often cited as improving for both respondent groups was personal English skills. Counterparts also commented that the informal training enhanced their teaching methods and two beneficiaries noted that they use the methods to teach other subjects such as science or math. For example:

> I learned English by observing the Volunteer teaching in class. I didn't teach English but I applied his techniques to my science classes.

Both groups also recognized that the students' skills had been enhanced and that students had a greater desire to learn English.

Figure 6: Extent Training Enhanced Skills of Counterparts and Beneficiaries

Significantly enhanced — 47% (Counterpart), 39% (Beneficiary)
Somewhat enhanced — 37% (Counterpart), 36% (Beneficiary)
Did not enhance — 16% (Counterpart), 25% (Beneficiary)

Counterpart | Beneficiary
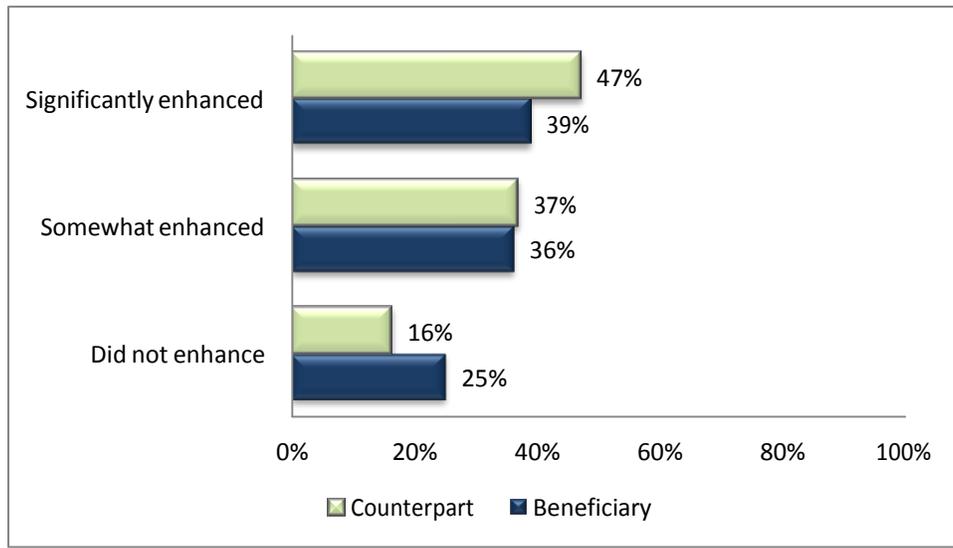
For counterparts n=68, for beneficiaries n=72

School-Level Change

The project theory of change (Figure 1) generated a list of project outcomes which were incorporated into the questionnaire. Counterparts, beneficiaries, and stakeholders were asked about the following school-level outcomes:

1. Teacher confidence in teaching and speaking English
2. Teachers using participatory learning methods
3. Engagement of students in class
4. Teachers using new resources and materials in class
5. Teachers integrating local experience/knowledge into lessons
6. Teachers developing professional networks
7. Ability of community to identify and address at risk behaviors

Counterparts, beneficiaries, and stakeholders were asked about project outcomes through a series of questions. For each project outcome derived from the project plan, respondents were asked if changes had occurred and about the direction of those changes, whether the school's needs had been met, and, where applicable, whether the change had been maintained after the Volunteer departed. Students also were asked open-ended questions about how their classes had changed and whether those changes had been maintained by their teachers.

Stakeholders were also asked about changes in the quality of life for students and their families, and whether these changes met the communities' needs and had been sustained after the Volunteer left.

Students were asked what changes they saw in their schools and what positive effects resulted from the Volunteers' work. They were also asked to what extent the schools and teachers were able to maintain those changes.

Changes Resulting from the Project

Most of the project outcomes showed high rates of change according to counterparts and beneficiaries. *Counterparts* rated three outcomes, which are the core goals of the TCCO project,[8] equally high for improved capacity building after working with the Volunteer (94%)(Figure 7):

- Engagement of students in class increased
- Teachers created and used new materials in the classroom more often
- Teachers used participatory learning methods

Counterparts also noted that the teachers' confidence in speaking and teaching English had improved after working with a Volunteer (92%).

Figure 7: Counterpart Assessment of School Changes Related to Project Outcomes

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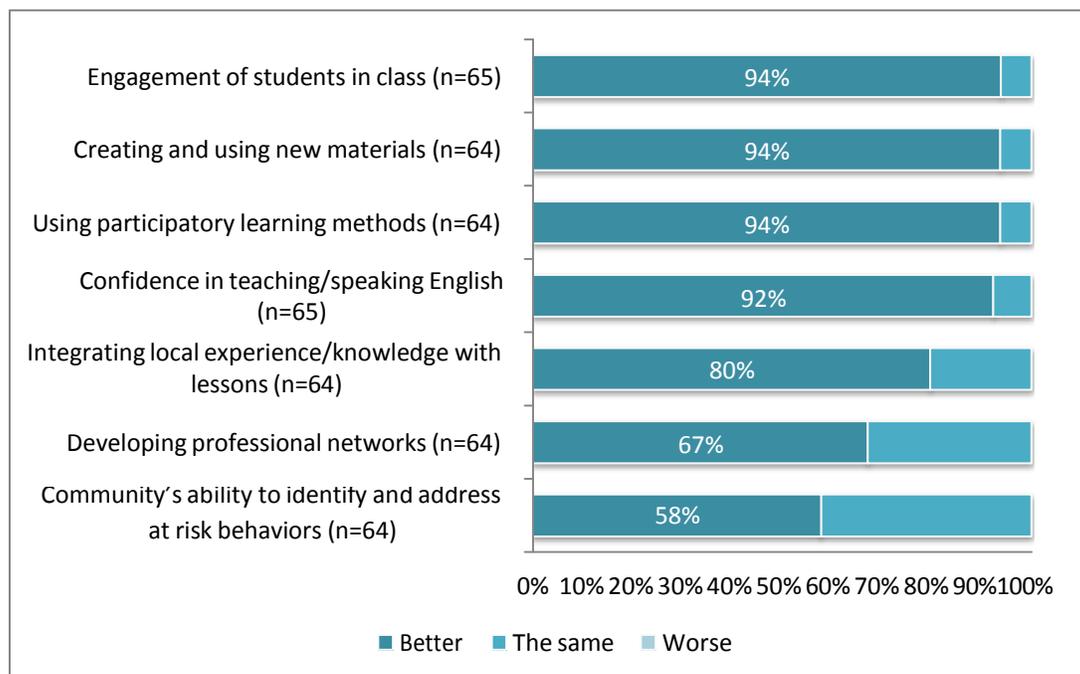
[8] Respondents were asked about the extent to which they saw changes related to each outcome in their school, community, business, or government office on the following scale: much better; somewhat better; the same; somewhat worse; and much worse. OSIRP grouped the "much better" and "somewhat better" responses into one category called "better." The categories of "somewhat worse" and "worse" were grouped into a single category called "worse." This resulted in the following scale: better, the same, and worse.

Beneficiaries reported their confidence in both teaching and speaking English (94%) had increased and teachers use of participatory methods (94%) improved after working with a Volunteer (Figure 8). According to beneficiaries, student engagement in class improved (91%) and teachers increased their use of new resource materials (91%).

The beneficiaries rated the three remaining outcomes – integrating local knowledge into lessons (79%), developing professional networks (67%), and community's ability to address risky behaviors (58%) – in the same order as the counterparts. However, fewer beneficiaries answered the question about developing professional networks (n=47), which may indicate they had not observed progress on this specific outcome.

Figure 8: Beneficiary Assessment of School Changes Related to Project Outcomes
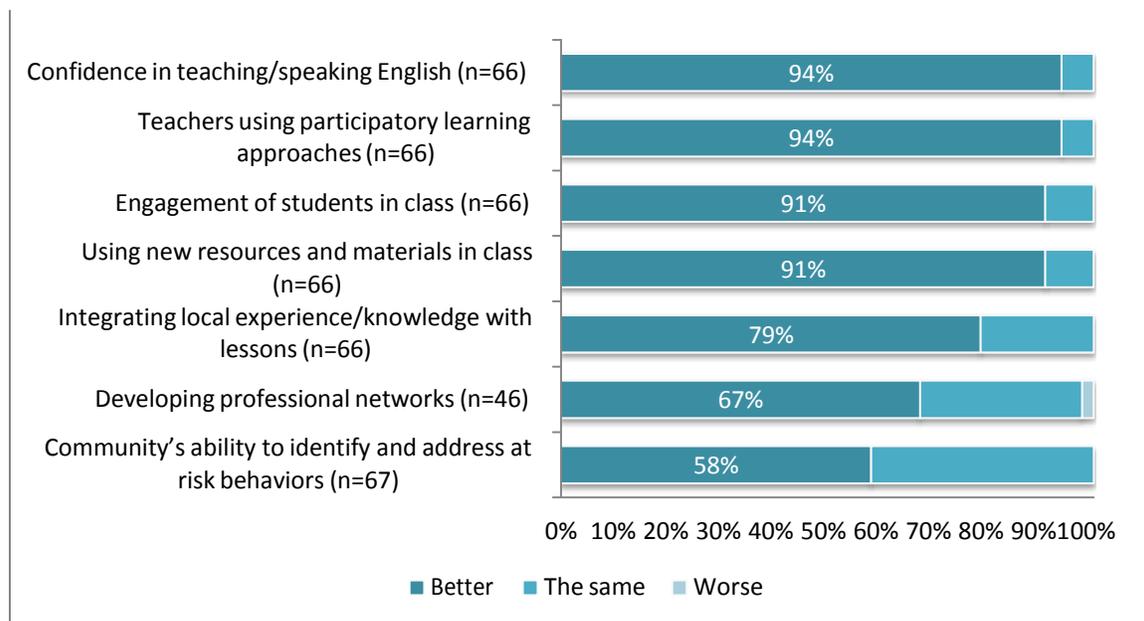
Counterparts and beneficiaries both reported high rates of improvement for confidence in teaching and speaking English, using particiaptory learning methods, student participation in class and using new resources, suggesting that these were major changes resulting from the TCCO Project. However, both sets of respondents reported lower rates of change for developing professional networks and identifying and addressing at risk behaviors (Figures 7 and 8). As noted earlier, beneficiaries reported they received little to no training in developing professional networks and identifying community needs, which could be the reason for the lower rate of change. Although 29 percent of counterparts stated they received training in professional development and networking, they considered the private English classes taught by Volunteers to be professional development.

In a separate question, the majority of counterparts and beneficiaries stated that participatory teaching methods and new resources were the most significant positive

outcomes of the project. Counterparts and beneficiaries noted that students were more motivated to learn, learned more quickly, and showed greater self-confidence as a result of the methods introduced by the Volunteers. In open-ended responses, many of the respondents stated they observed these changes in the Volunteer's classroom, but did not adopt the methods themselves.

Sixty-one percent of *students* reported that the Volunteers' teaching style was somewhat different from that of their regular teacher, while thirty-three percent said it was significantly different. Students most often cited the difference as the Volunteer's use of games, songs, dancing, and contests in the class to teach them vocabulary and sentence structure. Students commented that the Thai teachers use memorization and text-based approaches whereas the Volunteer used activities. According to students, this made English more fun and easier to learn. For example:

> *A big difference. While the Thai teacher asks students to jot down words and memorize them, the Volunteer has a more fun teaching style—they use word cards, songs and games along with the content which keeps me amused.*

Students also noted that the Volunteer's lessons were better planned in comparison to their regular teacher's classes and that the Volunteer only spoke English in class. Several students commented that students were allowed to ask questions when they did not understand a concept or word and that the Volunteer would chat with them before class, practices that Thai teachers would not allow. As a result, students noted they had a different relationship with the Volunteer as a teacher.

Stakeholders reported a consistent change for the better among all of the outcomes. The two most frequently reported changes were a better quality of life for students and families (92%) and teachers' use of participatory methods (92%, n=38). The second most reported change was increased student and teacher confidence in speaking English (90% each, n=39).

Sustainability of School Change

Respondents were then asked to assess the extent to which the changes had been maintained by school administrators, teachers, and students on the following scale: yes, to some extent, and no.[9]

Counterparts (61%) and *beneficiaries* (51%) cited confidence in their new teaching skills and their personal English language skills as the most fully sustained change (Figures 9 and 10). An improved confidence in teaching and speaking English was also the second most frequently cited change at the school level. The reports of improved English skills

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[9] Respondents were also given a choice of "unsure," but these responses were not included in this analysis.

and the high level of sustained change suggest Volunteers made a strong impact in participants' language capacity (Figure 7).

The increased participation of students in class was the second most sustained change according to counterparts (44%) and beneficiaries (46%) (Figures 9 and 10). This outcome was the highest rated in terms of the direction of change, but the moderate level of sustainability reported indicates that teachers faced difficulties maintaining student participation in class. This may mean that teachers have not been able to maintain the participatory methods or the level of classroom resources. Both of these outcomes ranked relatively low in terms of sustainability for counterparts and beneficiaries. This beneficiary's comment indicates why teachers did not maintain the new methods and student participation:

> *Some teachers still use games in the classroom and practice language skills learned from the Volunteer. But most teachers were not interested in sustaining the results of the Volunteer's work because they had too many things to do and some teachers did not like the Volunteer's behavior, hence didn't appreciate his work.* –Beneficiary

Figure 9: Counterpart Assessment of Sustainability at the School Level

	Yes	To some extent	No
Confidence in teaching/speaking English (n=59)	61%	37%	
Engagement of students in class (n=62)	44%	53%	
Creating and using new materials (n=60)	38%	58%	
Using participatory learning methods (n=60)	35%	58%	
Developing professional networks (n=50)	28%	66%	
Integrating local experience/knowledge with lessons (n=56)	25%	70%	
Community's ability to identify and address at risk behaviors (n=47)	23%	70%	

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Yes ■ To some extent ■ No

Figure 10: Beneficiary Assessment of Sustainability at the School Level

Confidence in teaching/speaking English (n=59): Yes 51%, To some extent 46%

Engagement of students in class (n=54): Yes 46%, To some extent 48%

Using participatory learning methods (n=55): Yes 38%, To some extent 56%

Integrating local experience/knowledge with lessons (n=48): Yes 35%, To some extent 58%

Developing professional networks (n=35): Yes 34%, To some extent 57%

Creating and using new materials (n=56): Yes 34%, To some extent 59%

Community's ability to identify and address at risk behaviors (n=41): Yes 27%, To some extent 68%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Yes ■ To some extent ■ No

Students confirmed that their Thai teachers had better English pronunciation after studying with the Volunteer. Twenty-three percent (8 of 35) students reported changes in teaching methods had not been sustained because Thai teachers returned to their memorization and text-based methods.

Both counterparts (23%) and beneficiaries (27%) reported the communities' ability to identify and address at risk behaviors as the least sustained change. This outcome also showed the least amount of change, according to both respondent groups. An almost an equal percentage of counterparts (80%) and beneficiaries (79%) reported teachers were better incorporating local experience or knowledge into lessons, though few had described this activity (Figures 7 and 8). Beneficiaries (35%) felt this outcome had been sustained to a greater extent than counterparts (25%) (Figures 9 and 10).

Among *stakeholders,* 42 percent most frequently reported that the improved quality of life for students and families had been fully sustained (n=36). Another 44 percent reported this outcome had been sustained to some extent. Improved quality of life was also the most frequently reported change by stakeholders, supporting the idea that Volunteers' work significantly impacted students' lives. Stakeholders reported increased integration of local experience and knowledge into classroom lessons as the second most fully sustained change (32%), with an additional 53 percent reporting this change as somewhat sustained. Although beneficiaries reported this outcome as sustained at approximately the same levels, counterparts did not feel this outcome had been sustained.

Extent to which Changes Met School Needs

Finally, respondents were asked to assess how well the changes met the community's needs. *Counterparts* believed that their improved confidence in teaching and speaking English best met their needs (77%)(Figure 11). This outcome was also the highest rated for levels of change and sustainability. Similarly, student engagement in class also met the majority of counterpart's needs (70%) and they rated it highly for observed changes and sustainability. These responses indicate that Volunteers had the greatest impact on teachers' skills and confidence and on their ability to engage students in class.

The outcome that *beneficiaries* most often stated met their needs was improved confidence in teaching and speaking English (88%)(Figure 12). Beneficiaries also rated this outcome highly in terms of level of change and sustainability (Figure 10).

Beneficiaries rated using participatory learning approaches as the second highest outcome for meeting their needs (84%). This outcome was second highest in terms of change, but relatively low for sustainability as reported by beneficiaries. This suggests that beneficiaries recognize the benefit of the approaches, but may have difficulty in implementing the methods once the Volunteer leaves.

**Figure 11: Counterpart Assessment of How Well Changes Met Community Needs**
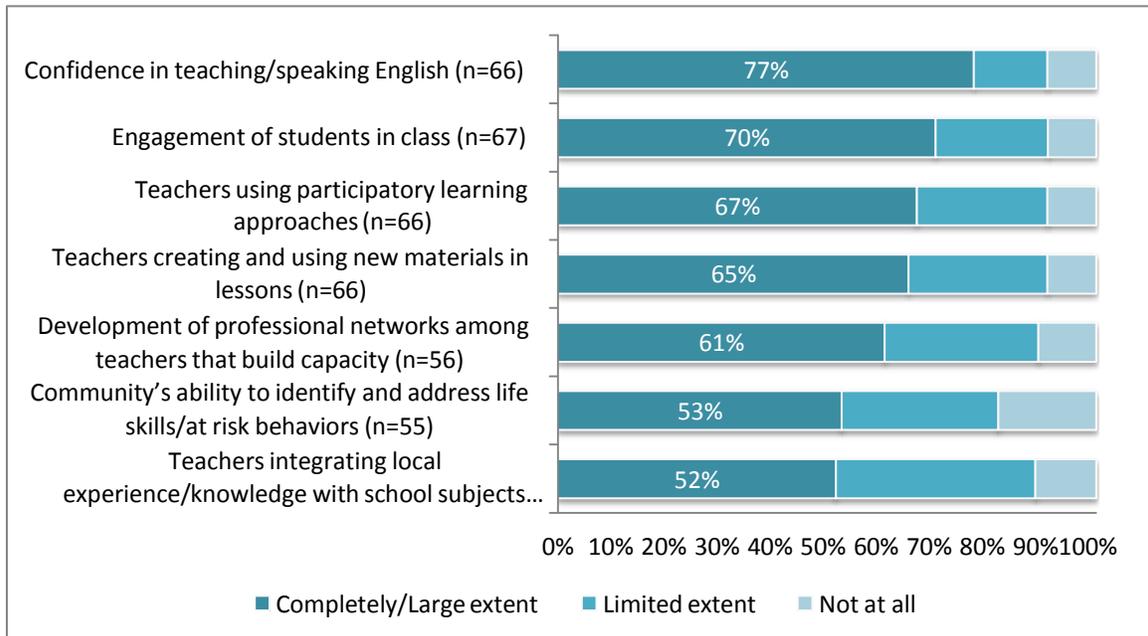
Both counterparts (53%) and beneficiaries (53%) reported that the community's ability to identify and address at risk behaviors met their needs the least. Additionally, counterparts also felt that integrating local experiences into lessons did not meet their

needs (52%) while beneficiaries felt that developing professional networks did not meet their needs (58%).

Overall, beneficiaries and counterparts viewed their increased confidence in teaching and speaking English and students' increased engagement in class as the most successful outcomes of the project.

Figure 12: Beneficiary Assessment of How Well Changes Met Community Needs
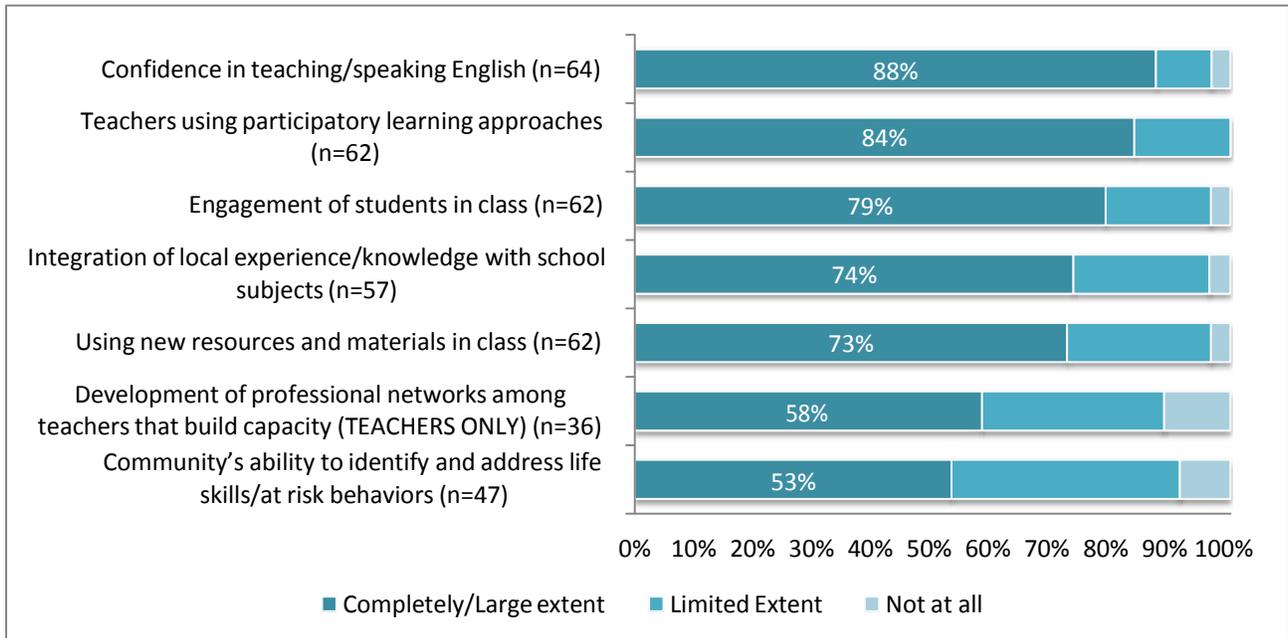
Among *stakeholders,* 72 percent reported that the improved quality of life for students and families met their needs completely or to large extent (n=39). Sixty-nine percent of stakeholders reported teachers using participatory teaching methods also met their needs completely or to a large extent. Stakeholders rated these two practices highly in terms of change and sustained activities. Like other respondents, stakeholders believed that the community's ability to identify and address at risk behaviors least mettheir needs (38%).

Changes at the Individual Level

The project theory of change model (Figure 1) generated a list of individual or personal-level project outcomes. Counterparts and beneficiaries were asked about the extent to which they saw changes in themselves related to each of the following outcomes:

1. Your confidence in teaching and speaking English
2. Your ability to use participatory learning methods

3. Your quality of life
4. Your ability to integrate local experience/knowledge into lessons
5. Your development of professional networks
6. Your ability to identify and address at-risk behaviors

Counterparts and beneficiaries were asked about individual-level project outcomes through a series of questions. For each individual outcome derived from the project plan, respondents were asked if changes had occurred and about the direction of those changes, whether their needs had been met, and, where applicable, whether they had maintained the change after the Volunteer departed. Stakeholders were not asked about individual-level changes since they did not work with the Volunteer on a daily basis, and were more involved in the design and implementation of the project.

Individual Changes Resulting from the Project

Overall, a majority of both *counterparts* and *beneficiaries* felt their technical skills had improved as a result of working with the Volunteer. *Counterparts* (92%) and beneficiaries (87%) felt the greatest personal change had been in their confidence in teaching and speaking English (Figures 13 and 14). Eighty-seven percent of counterparts and eighty-two percent of beneficiaries reported their use of participatory teaching methods was better. *Students* (100%) reported that their participation in class was better. Based on the data for counterparts and beneficiaries, improved confidence in speaking and teaching English was a significant change at both the personal and community levels.

Figure 13: Counterpart Assessment of Individual Changes Related to Project Outcomes
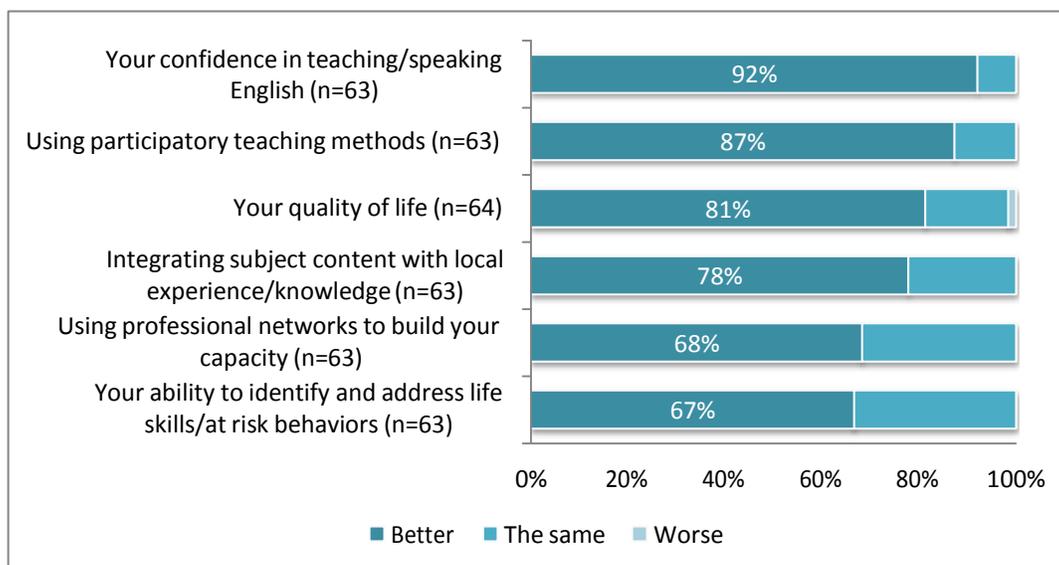
Both *counterparts* (67%) and *beneficiaries* (61%) reported their individual ability to identify and address at risk behavior in students showed the least change (Figures 13 and 14). Both groups also reported that there was little change in terms of using professional networks. These responses correspond with their responses regarding community changes where they had reported these as the least sustained and needed outcomes. The consistency of their answers suggests that these outcomes may have had limited impact for beneficiaries and counterparts.

Figure 14: Beneficiary Assessment of Individual Changes Related to Project Outcomes
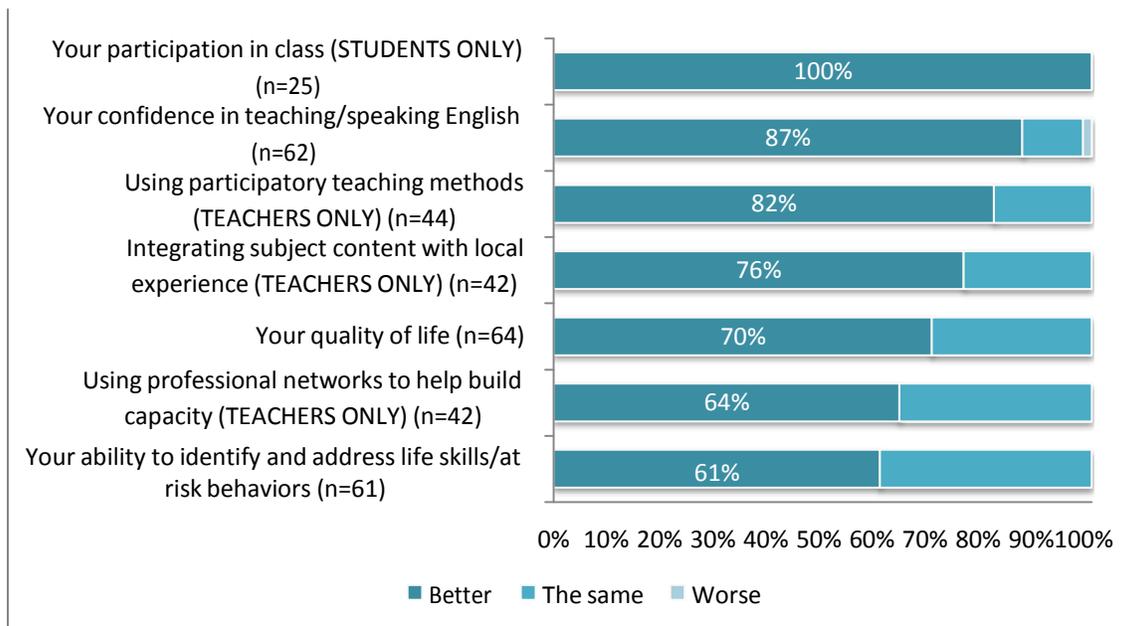
In a separate question, *counterparts* were asked how effective Volunteers' work was overall in building their individual capacity and the capacity of the other community members (Figure 15). Sixty-three percent stated the activities were very effective in building their individual capacity and another twenty-three percent reported that the activities had been somewhat effective in building their capacity. Counterparts who reported the Volunteers' work as effective felt the school's capacity had been built because teachers' language skills, teaching methods, and confidence had improved. For example,

> *Very effective. Teachers have more confidence in teaching and expressing themselves in English. I personally got to know family background of my students better,(especially those from broken or problematic familities) through the PCV because she spent a lot of time with the students and they bacame quite close to her. The Volunteer also helped to build a good image for our school.* – Counterpart

They also felt that students' motivation and desire to learn and study had improved, as well as students' academic performance.

Figure 15: Effectiveness of Volunteers' Work in Building Individual Capacity
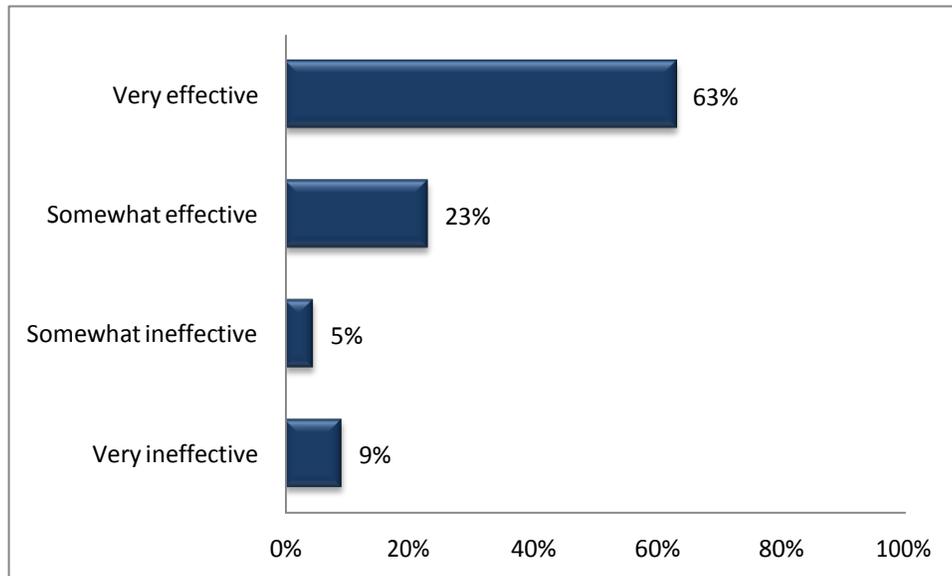
For counterparts, n=65

Counterparts were less certain about the effectiveness of Volunteers' work in building community capacity. Twenty-one percent stated the Volunteers' work had been somewhat or very ineffective in building community capacity. In these instances, respondents noted that the Volunteer was not a qualified teacher or that the Volunteer did not work outside the school with the community. Respondents noted that the Volunteer built the capacity of community members in only a few cases. One counterpart commented:

> *The Volunteer played an important role in teaching villagers, teachers, nurses, and police officers English language which really helps increase their English skills.* – Counterpart

Sustainability of Individual Changes

Counterparts and *beneficiaries* felt the changes had been sustained to some extent. Counterparts (97%) and beneficiaries (100%) most often reported their confidence in teaching and speaking English had been sustained fully or to some extent (Figures 16 and 17). This reflected their most often cited personal and community level change, as well.

Counterparts and beneficiaries did not agree on the second highest sustained personal change. Counterparts felt they had sustained their personal use of participatory teaching methods fully (47%) or to some extent (50%) (Figure 16). Beneficiaries reported they continued to integrate local content into classroom subjects, fully (37%) or to some extent (60%) (Figure 17).

Figure 16: Counterpart Assessment of Sustainability at the Individual Level
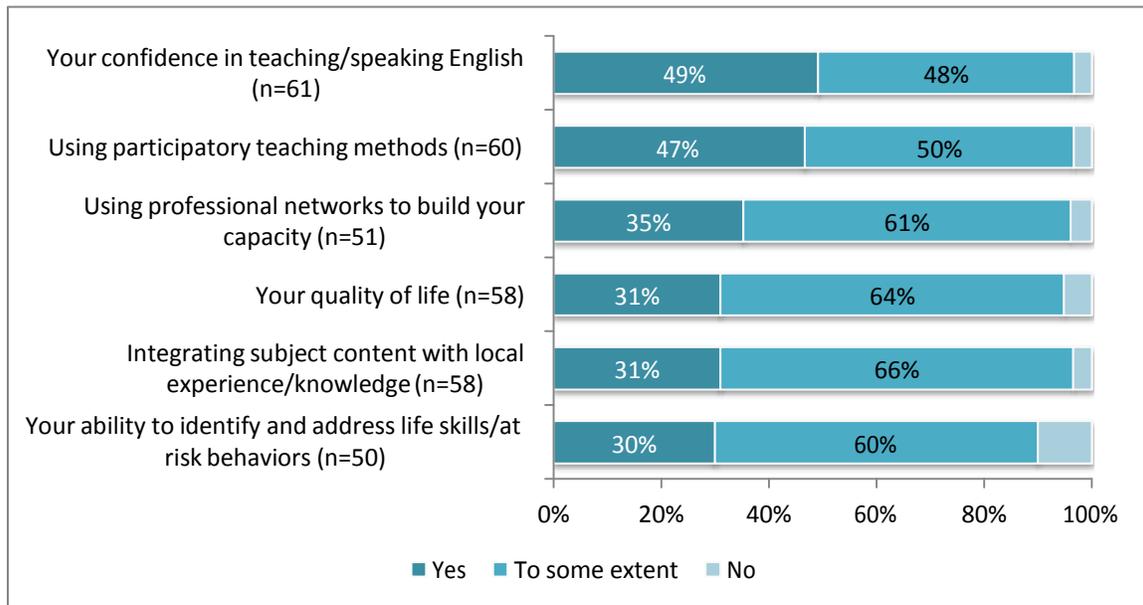
As with other questions, counterparts and beneficiaries reported that their ability to identify and address at risk behaviors among students as one of the least sustained outcomes (Figure 16 and 17). This was also one of the outcomes showing the least amount of change at both the individual and community levels.

Figure 17: Beneficiary Assessment of Sustainability at the Individual Level

Category	Yes	To some extent
Your confidence in teaching/speaking English (n=53)	53%	47%
Integrating subject content with local experience (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=35)	37%	60%
Using participatory teaching methods (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=37)	32%	62%
Your participation in class (STUDENTS ONLY) (n=19)	32%	68%
Using professional networks to help build capacity (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=33)	27%	64%
Your ability to identify and address life skills/at risk behaviors (n=39)	23%	72%
Your quality of life (n=40)	20%	68%

Legend: ■ Yes ■ To some extent ■ No

Extent to which Changes Met Individual Needs

Beneficiaries reported that the project outcomes met their needs to a higher degree than counterparts (Figure 18 and 19). Counterparts (77%) and beneficiaries (84%) most often reported that their increased confidence in speaking and teaching English met their needs completely or to a large extent. This outcome was the most frequently cited change and the most sustained change at the individual level for counterparts; counterparts consider this outcome to have had the most impact on their individual capacity building.

Counterparts and beneficiaries disagreed on the second most reported outcome to fully meet their needs, reflecting the difference in sustained outcomes. Counterparts (66%) reported that using participatory teaching methods had fully met their needs, while beneficiaries (82%) reported that integrating local content into classroom subjects better met their needs. This response on integrating local knowledge contrasts with counterparts (59%) who reported this outcome least met their individual needs. Students (91%) reported that their increased participation in class met their needs completely or to a large extent.

**Figure 18: Counterpart Assessment of how Outcomes Met their Individual Needs**

Category	Completely/Large extent
Your confidence in teaching/speaking English (n=65)	77%
Using participatory teaching methods (n=64)	66%
Using professional networks to build your capacity (n=57)	63%
Your quality of life (n=65)	60%
Integrating subject content with local experience/knowledge (n=64)	59%
Your ability to identify and address life skills/at risk behaviors (n=59)	58%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Completely/Large extent   ■ Limited extent   ■ Not at all

Figure 19: Beneficiary Assessment of how Outcomes Met their Individual Needs

Category	Completely/Large extent
Your participation in class (STUDENTS ONLY) (n=23)	91%
Your confidence in teaching/speaking English (n=58)	84%
Integrating subject content with local experience (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=38)	82%
Using participatory teaching methods (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=39)	69%
Your quality of life (n=45)	69%
Your ability to identify and address life skills/at risk behaviors (n=46)	63%
Using professional networks to help build capacity (TEACHERS ONLY) (n=34)	56%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Completely/Large extent   ■ Limited Extent   ■ Not at all

How Skills are Used Personally and Professionally

Respondents were asked how often they used the skills gained from the project in their professional and personal lives, and which skills they used most frequently. Thirty-two percent of *counterparts* used the skills they learned during the project on a daily basis for work (Figure 20). Another 29 percent of counterparts reported using their new skills

on a weekly basis. They reported using the teaching methods, resource materials and lesson planning most often. For example, these counterparts described how they used the skills:

I think I improved my skills about 70% in teaching techniques. I'm now more confident in pronouncing and communicating in English. Other teachers also are enthusiastic to improve the lessons. They have applied Volunteer's techniques in class.

I think the Volunteer helped improve the teachers' English skills and capabilities. We went from having no ideas about English to being able to communicate in English (both speaking and writing).

I can develop lesson plans and prepare materials by myself, not just copying from books. Because I became more disciplined and keep strict deadlines, other teachers also take me as a role model.

In addition, they also stated they spoke more English in class and had adopted the Volunteer's work style: punctuality, planning, and generosity to colleagues.

However, 24 percent of counterparts reported that they did not use any of the skills in their professional life. As one counterpart explained, "I didn't learn anything from the Volunteer because the Volunteer didn't share their knowledge or experience."

**Figure 20: Frequency of Skills Used in Professional Life by Counterparts**

For counterparts, n=66
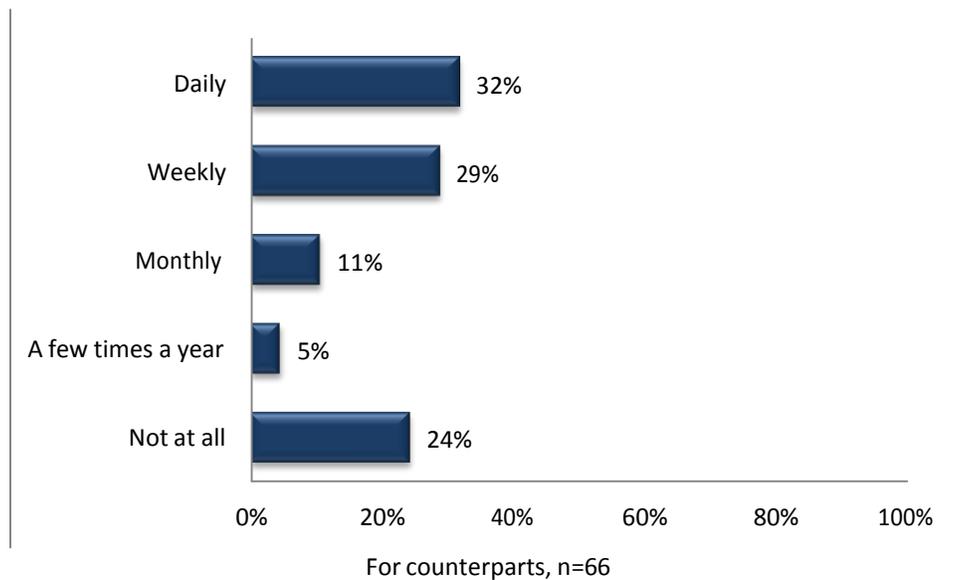
Figure 21: Frequency of Skills Used in Personal Life

Counterparts, n=66, for beneficiaries n=73
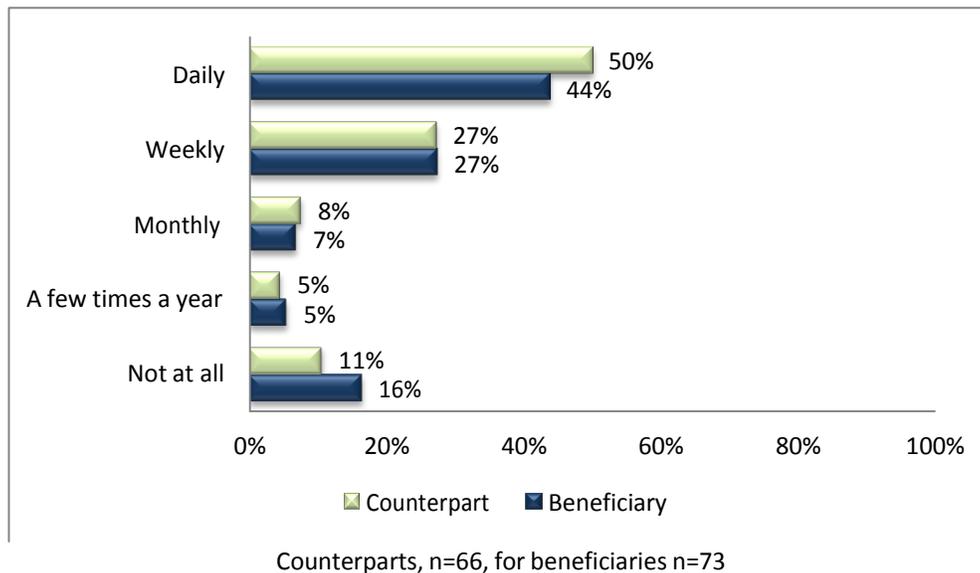
In their personal lives, 50 percent of counterparts stated that they used new skills from the project on a daily basis (Figure 21). Forty-four percent of *beneficiaries* reported using new skills in their personal lives on a daily basis (Figure 21). Another 27 percent of both counterparts and beneficiaries reported using new skills on a weekly basis. Counterparts and beneficiaries most frequently reported speaking English more often, especially with Western tourists. Counterparts also noted that they have more confidence in general, while beneficiaries reported teaching English to their own children at home.

A moderate percentage of counterparts (11%) and beneficiaries (16%) said they did not use the skills at all. Several beneficiaries noted they no longer have any opportunities to speak English.

Unintended Outcomes

Research teams asked respondents to describe other changes and accomplishments resulting from the work of the Volunteer beyond those defined by the project plan.

Other Changes and Accomplishments

The TCCO Project produced two unintended outcomes across several of the sites, and a few unintended outcomes at individual sites. According to counterparts, beneficiaries, and students, the Volunteers' methods and demeanor produced a change in the student teacher relationship at several schools. Students reported that teachers now chatted with students prior to class and were more willing to allow students to ask questions during class. Teachers reported that the class atmosphere is much better. They are not

as inhibited to play games or dance in class and several teachers stated they knew their students better. For example, these counterparts commented about the change:

> *Through the Volunteer, I personally got to know the family background of my students better, especially those from broken or problematic families. The Volunteer spent a lot of time with the students and they became quite close to her.*

> *I'm more helpful and concentrate on students' personal issues which make them happier. We're getting closer.*

> *I pay more respect to people even if they are younger and our students. I'm more open to accept students' ideas now.*

For students, this meant a friendlier learning environment in which teachers did not punish students as they had prior to working with a Volunteer. These methods, however, challenge Thai cultural norms. A student-teacher relationship based on mutual learning and respect contradicted the traditional hierarchical structure of Thai classrooms. Such a dramatic change in social relations needs to be actively managed through a change management system and Volunteers should be prepared for reactions to these changes.

The second unintended outcome across the sites was a change in teachers' work habits. Many teachers commented that they had adopted the Volunteer's work style. They reported planning and organizing their work, in addition to lesson planning, arriving to class on time, and conducting self-evaluations of each class.

Two individual schools reported additional unintended outcomes. Respondents from one school commented that during the Volunteer's service the school became an English center, as this beneficiary explained:

> *The Volunteer organized English courses for teachers from schools within the same ESAO. So our school eventually became a center for English activities such as English camps.*

According to respondents, the school continues to be a center for English activities and a resource to other schools. In addition, this same school has initiated a mainstreaming program for learning disabled students based on the Volunteer's recommendations. A beneficiary noted that:

> *The Volunteer also engaged students with learning disabilities (LD) in class activities just like other normal students. She believed that they could learn and did not agree to treat them differently or to call them LD students. The Volunteer*

said these students would not be separated in the U.S. but would be integrated with other students because they could be trained.

Respondents from another school commented that teachers outside the English department had adopted the participatory teaching methods, including several science teachers. The science teachers reported observing the Volunteer's methods and then working with the Volunteer to adapt them to the science courses.

Not all of the unintended outcomes were positive. Several teachers noted that working with the Volunteer created extra work for them. These teachers commented that they spent time with the Volunteer developing lesson plans and teaching materials, but also continued to develop their own lesson plans. They blamed this double work on two issues:

1) The Volunteer worked intermittently at their school because Volunteers split their time between two schools. As a result, teachers found it difficult to have continuity and progression in the lessons. .
2) The Volunteer's methods and lesson plans did not match the state curriculum.

In southern Thailand, Volunteers worked in Muslim schools. Teachers in the South commented that the Volunteers took up most of their teaching hours which required the Thai teacher to hold make-up classes on the weekends. These make-up classes interrupted the religious courses students took at the *pondok*—an informal religious school associated with the local mosque.

In general, the double workload stemmed from teachers' belief that the methods and content used by the Volunteers did not support the state curriculum. This indicates that Volunteers are not actively showing teachers how their work supports the curriculum. In addition, the mid-project review conducted in 2006 identified this issue as

Factors Affecting Project Performance

Respondents were asked a series of questions to ascertain what factors contributed to the success of the project, what factors hindered the project outcomes, the reasons why change was not sustained, and the degree to which the daily interaction with the Volunteer caused the change. This section outlines these findings.

Factors Contributing to the Project's Success

Counterparts and *beneficiaries* overwhelmingly reported that the Volunteer's desire to work and teach, and their willingness to work hard were the primary factors in the success of the TCCO Project. Respondents linked the Volunteer's willingness to teach and their hard work to their professionalism and to an innate fondness for children,

which the respondents felt all teachers should possess. Counterparts also felt that the Volunteer's ability to adapt to the local culture and learn Thai or a local dialect was part of the success of the project. Adapting to the local culture included dressing properly as a teacher, learning how to show respect to elders, and being flexible. Learning the local dialect was particularly important for Volunteers working in southern Thailand and those working in the north in Karen-speaking villages.

Another factor in the success of the project, according to counterparts and beneficiaries, was the support and collaboration of teachers and school directors. Teachers described supporting the Volunteer in several ways, such as teaching them about Thai culture and school policies, and even recognizing Americans' need for privacy.

One factor that played an important, but hidden, role in the success of the project was gender. Female counterparts in southern Thailand commented that working with a female Volunteer was more culturally appropriate and did not place any cultural constraints on their working relationship. Those female counterparts who worked with male volunteers, noted that it was culturally inappropriate for them to work individually with the Volunteer.

Factors that Hindered and Limited Project Outcomes

Counterparts, beneficiaries, and *stakeholders* were asked what factors hindered the project's success. According to counterparts and beneficiaries, the Volunteers inability to speak Thai was the major barrier to success. Many respondents noted that the Volunteer learned Thai or the local dialect after several months, but stated that until the Volunteer's Thai improved students had a difficult time understanding Volunteers, and teachers or school directors with limited English skills had to act as translators. Several respondents noted that Volunteers did not learn Thai even after two years, which made it difficult to form working relationships with other teachers. For example, one beneficiary noted that teachers were still using hand signals to communicate with the Volunteer at the end of two years of service.

Two other barriers to success were mentioned frequently by respondents. First, respondents explained that having Volunteers work at two different schools meant Volunteers were too busy commuting back and forth on bikes that often did not work in the rainy season. They complained that having the Volunteer only two days a week made planning difficult and meant that Volunteers could not develop continuous lessons that built on each other.

Second, respondents from several sites noted that the Volunteer was "too old" and not healthy enough to work. They commented that they expected a younger, more active Volunteer. This group of respondents remarked that older Volunteers tended to have difficulties learning Thai or refused to learn Thai, were not flexible, did not participate in school activities and spent a great deal of time in local hospitals or home sick.

Respondents also noted that the older Volunteers had more difficulties commuting back and forth between schools on bicycles. Due to these barriers, respondents did not feel that older Volunteers had made a significant impact.

Other constraints to the project included teachers who were too busy to work with the Volunteer, and--according to students--teachers who did not want to change their teaching methods. As confirmation, three counterparts named the teaching methods as a barrier to the success of the project because Volunteers "only played games" and did not include any actual content in the lesson.

Counterparts and beneficiaries were asked to describe any factors that limited the school's ability to maintain the changes (Figure 22). Counterparts (29%) and beneficiaries (28%) reported that teachers lacked the skills to maintain the changes resulting from the project. Specifically, counterparts and beneficiaries reported that teachers who had worked with the Volunteer had been reassigned to another school and that schools lacked teachers who could speak English well enough to teach. In some cases, schools did not have a dedicated English teacher and therefore when the Volunteer departed, the English classes stopped.

Figure 22: Counterparts and Beneficiaries: Factors Limiting the Project Outcomes
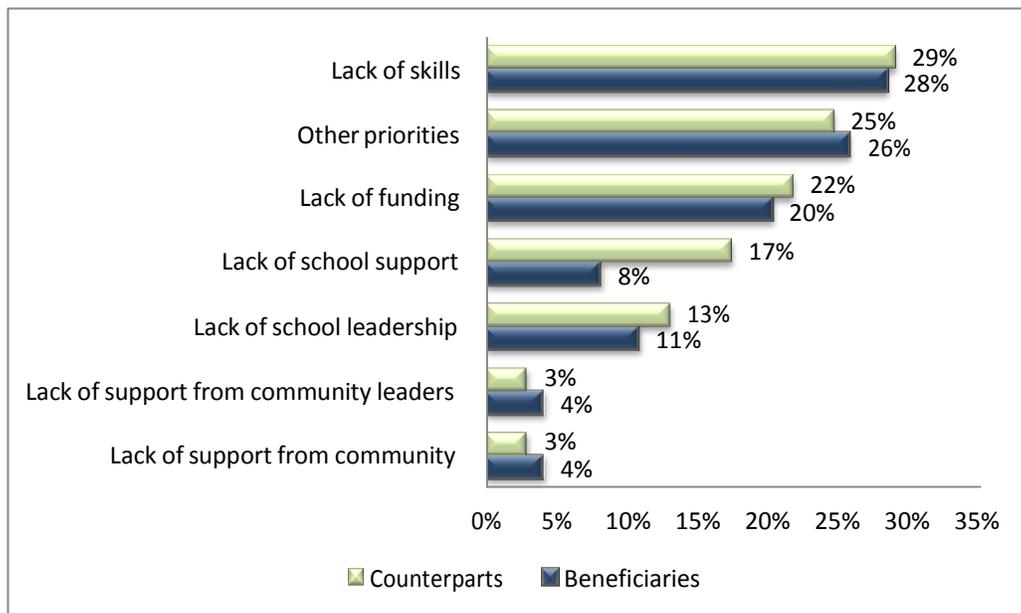
For counterparts, n=69; for beneficiaries, n=74

Counterparts (25%) and beneficiaries (26%) also reported that other priorities prevented schools from maintaining the changes. The other priorities reported by respondents included teachers who were too busy to teach English or maintain the teaching materials. In addition, other priorities included teachers and administrators

who did not adopt the teaching methods because they viewed them as contradicting the Thai state curriculum. For example, one counterpart commented:

> *Teachers do not have too much time due to a lot of work and activities. Teaching techniques are different; the Volunteer's style can't be used much for teaching in Thailand due to Thai education assessment system.*

Some counterparts (22%) and beneficiaries (20%) reported lack of funding as another barrier to sustainability. Respondents cited the costs for maintaining teacher materials, theater groups, and English camps. However, most respondents cited the costs for having a full-time English teacher as a barrier to the project's sustainability.

Contrary to the opinions provided by counterparts and beneficiaries, *stakeholders* (n=41) cited the lack of skills and training as the fourth largest barrier to sustaining the changes (24%). These respondents reported the largest barrier to maintaining change was the lack of school support (41%). This barrier included ESAO offices not supporting more training for teachers, teachers not adopting the new teaching methods, and new school directors who did not accept the new teaching methods.

The second barrier to sustainability was the lack of funding to maintain the changes that had been introduced (37%). In this case, many stakeholders said schools lacked budgets to maintain the teaching resources and equipment created by the Volunteer. They also commented that schools did not have the budget to hire foreign teachers who spoke English. Overall, respondents implied that only foreign or native English speakers could teach English. For example, this stakeholder commented:

> *The Volunteer stayed only two years. After the Volunteer left, the project was not continued because the school didn't have a budget to hire foreign teachers to teach English.*

These responses suggest that participants believe only native speakers can teach English and continue the activities initiated by Volunteers. This raises questions about sustainability and expectations for skills to transfer to local teachers.

The third barrier to change was the lack of support from the community leaders. Stakeholders noted that Muslim communities do not encourage their children to learn English and in several cases stakeholders reported that the project, especially secondary activities on health, did not meet the school's needs.

**Degree to which Daily Interaction with Volunteers Caused the Change**

Respondents were asked how important the daily interactions with the Volunteer were in facilitating or causing the changes they had described. As stated earlier, 54 percent of

counterparts and 45 percent of beneficiaries worked with the Volunteer several times a week.

This level of interaction was very important in facilitating change for 37 percent of counterparts and 25 percent of beneficiaries (Figure 23). A further 48 percent of counterparts and 49 percent of beneficiaries stated the daily interaction was somewhat important for facilitating change. An analysis of the open-ended responses revealed a possible translation problem when administering the survey, resulting in validity issues for this question.[10] Once these responses were removed from the data set, 44 percent of counterparts and 37 percent of beneficiaries reported the hands on interaction as very important (Figure 24).

Figure 23: Importance of Daily Interaction in Causing Change
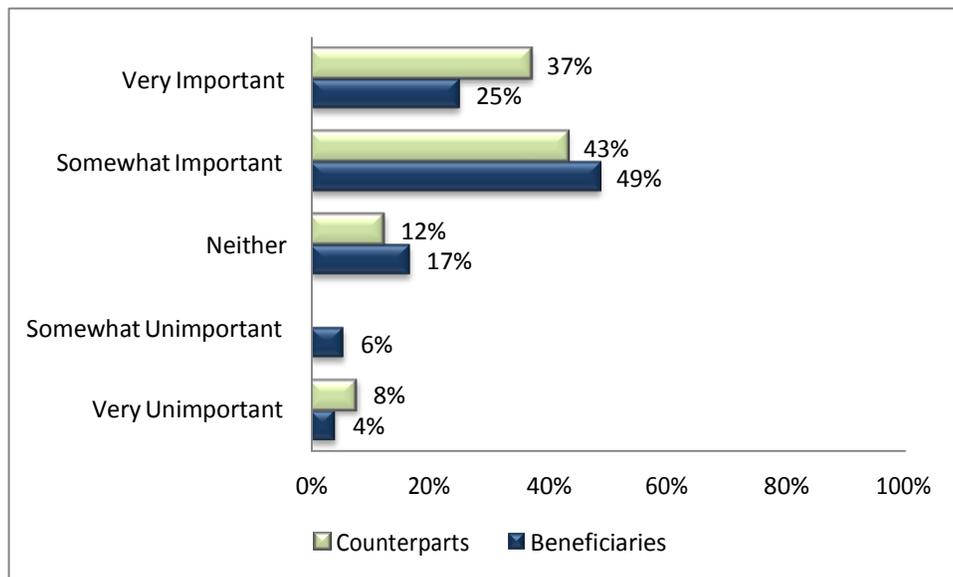
For counterparts, n=65; for beneficiaries, n=72

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[10] Some interviewers apparently used the word "community" rather than "school" in the question "To what degree was the hands-on/day-to-day interaction with the Peace Corps Volunteer important in facilitating the changes in you and the school?" As a result, 37 beneficiaries and 10 counterparts reported they did not know what the Volunteer did in the community since they worked in the school and did not live in the community.

Figure 24: Importance of Daily Interaction in Causing Change Controlled for Validity

Very Important — 44%, 37%
Somewhat Important — 47%, 57%
Neither — 5%
Somewhat Unimportant — 3%
Very Unimportant — 4%, 3%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

☐ Counterparts ■ Beneficiaries
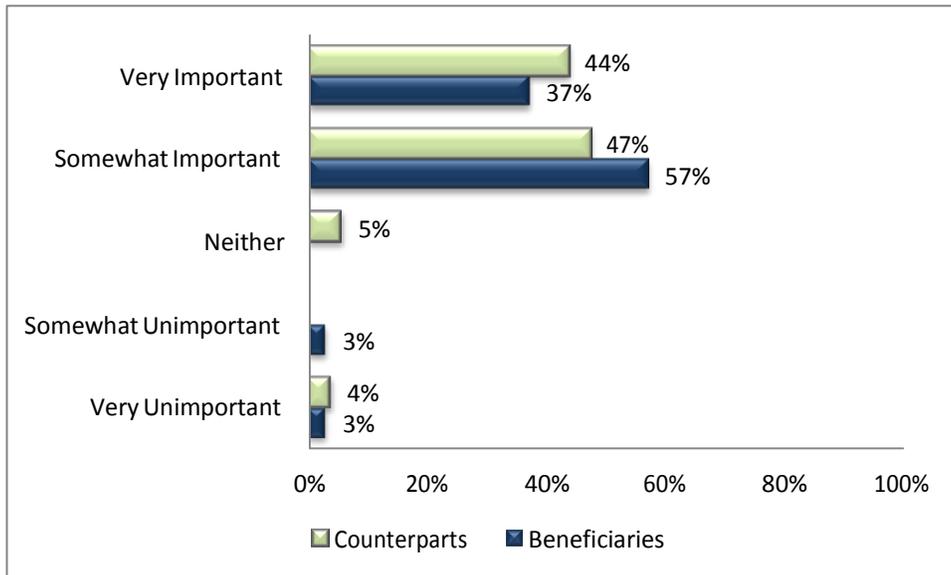
For counterparts, n=55; for beneficiaries, n=35

For *counterparts* and *beneficiaries*, the primary factor facilitating change was the ability of the Volunteer to motivate students to learn and enjoy English, and to see improvement in language abilities. Respondents also commented that the cross-cultural aspects of the interaction allowed teachers, students, and community members to expand their ideas of the world and learn to work with people from other cultures.

Extent to which Participants Maintained Change

The majority of *counterparts* and *beneficiaries* felt they had maintained the changes from the project to a large extent (Figure 25). Fifty-one percent of *counterparts* reported they had maintained the changes to a large extent and another sixteen percent reported maintaining the changes completely. Thirty-seven percent of *beneficiaries* stated they had maintained the changes to a large extent and another eighteen percent stated they had maintained the changes completely (Figure 25).

Figure 25: Extent to which Counterparts and Beneficiaries Maintained Changes

Completely 100%
- 16%
- 18%

Largely About 75%
- 51%
- 37%

Somewhat About 50%
- 18%
- 26%

Not much About 25%
- 7%
- 9%

Not at all <25%
- 8%
- 10%

Counterparts ▢   Beneficiaries ■
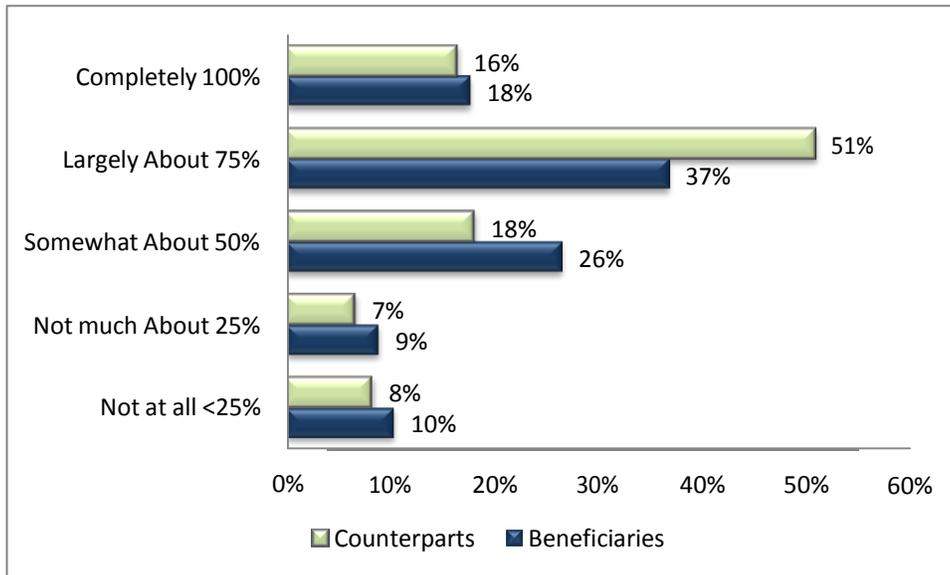
For counterparts, n=61; for beneficiaries, n=68

Counterparts explained that teaching methods and materials had been completely to largely maintained, including lesson planning and English camps. Respondents reporting that changes had been maintained to a lesser extent cited methods and materials as the elements of the project they chose to maintain. However, several respondents noted that teachers and schools tended to maintain the activities and methods considered "useful" to them. Finally, many teachers reported they did not receive any more training once the Volunteer left.

Beneficiaries tended to report on how they had individually maintained changes. As a result, most stated they maintained their improved pronunciation skills, expanded vocabularies, and increased self-confidence. A few also stated that students had maintained these skills as well, and some students reported continued high performance in English as they continued their education.

Counterparts and beneficiaries reporting that the changes had not been maintained explained, in some cases, that the Volunteer did not conduct any activities, and therefore there was little to maintain. In other cases, teachers who had worked with the Volunteer had either retired or moved to another school, and therefore the changes were not maintained at the school where the Volunteer served. However, a few of the teachers who worked with the Volunteer and transferred to a new school, continued using the new teaching methods,

> *I don't know because I moved out of Rasom school. But at Nhongnang school I still use the teaching materials and teaching plan.*

Stakeholders reported that the changes had been largely maintained (29%) or somewhat maintained (32%) (n=41). Stakeholders commented that teachers were able to sustain the teaching methods and self-confidence gained by working with the Volunteer. One stakeholder noted that:

> *Teachers who had worked with Volunteer performed better in training organized by ESAO. Teachers continue to integrate local content into English lessons. Some of these teachers have eventually become resource persons in ESAO training. Students' knowledge had also increased. Before the Volunteer came, the school never won any academic contest. After one year of service, students from this school had won several English contests at the ESAO level.*

Satisfaction with Outcomes

Researchers asked counterparts, beneficiaries, and stakeholders about their satisfaction with the project through two different questions. One directly asked about satisfaction level and reasons for satisfaction, while another asked if respondents would host another Volunteer.

Overall Satisfaction

Counterparts (71%) and *beneficiaries* (66%) reported they were very satisfied with the changes resulting from the project and the work of the Volunteer (Figure 26). Twenty-one percent of counterparts and thirty percent of beneficiaries reported they were somewhat satisfied.

Most counterparts and beneficiaries were satisfied with students' improved performance and increased motivation. These respondents also noted that students were more confident. In some cases, respondents reported that students performed better on standardized tests and had improved their grades. Respondents were also satisfied with the new methods and increased access to teaching aids. Many counterparts were satisfied with the project outcomes because of the Volunteers' ability to adjust to Thai culture, their flexibility, or their teaching skills.

Conversely, counterparts (8%) and beneficiaries (4%) who were not satisfied with the project outcomes (Figure 26) cited the Volunteers' inflexibility and their inability to adjust to the local culture. According to respondents, inflexible Volunteers did not participate in after school activities or other work asked of them. In a few cases the Volunteer refused to co-teach or impart any skills and knowledge to teachers in the school. A few noted that the Volunteer did not seem to like children and was unfriendly to staff and students.

Figure 26: Counterpart and Beneficiary Satisfaction
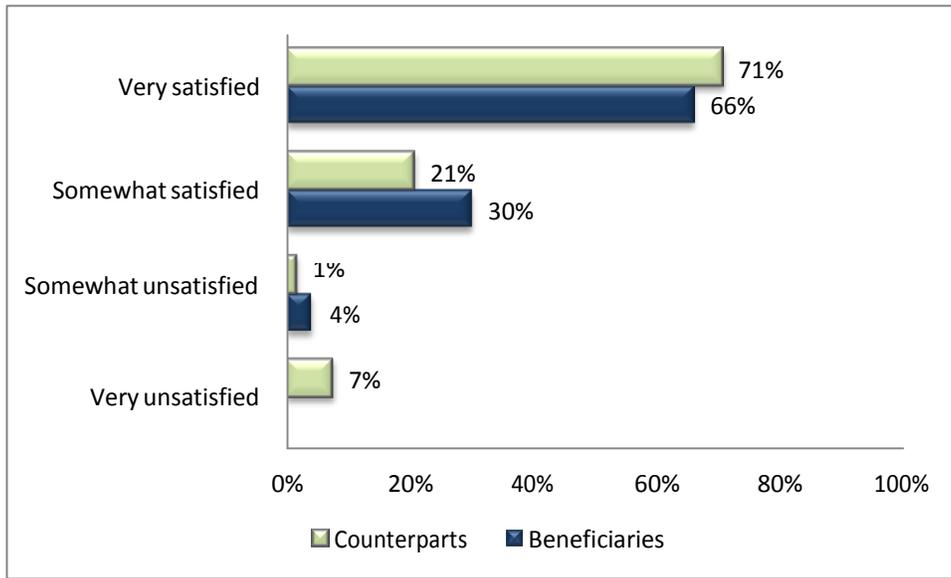
For counterparts, n=68; for beneficiaries, n=71

Over half of the *stakeholders* (62%) reported they were very satisfied with the project outcomes and one third reported they were somewhat satisfied (33%) (n=41). Stakeholders were satisfied because of improved student motivation and performance, and also improved teacher performance.

Five percent of stakeholders were somewhat unsatisfied. These respondents were not satisfied because Volunteers did not meet the school's expectations or seemed like a "burden" to the community. A few stakeholders who were somewhat satisfied also commented that the Volunteer did not meet expectations specifically that the Volunteer was sick all the time or split their time between two schools.

Desire to Work with Peace Corps Again

Another measure of satisfaction is whether counterparts and beneficiaries would want to work with another Volunteer. This question brought a key programmatic issue to the surface that has a significant effect on impact.

The Thai government does not allow Peace Corps to place Volunteers at the same site consecutively. Therefore, when asked if they wanted another Volunteer 88 percent of *counterparts* and 96 percent of *beneficiaries* reported that they would want to work with another Volunteer (Figure 27). However, these respondents also recognized that their schools would not receive another Volunteer in the future. They frequently commented that the Thai government and Peace Corps should change the policy of not consecutively placing Volunteers at sites. They also commented that Peace Corps/Thailand should change the project plan to place Volunteers in only one school where they would work full-time. This counterpart gave several recommendations:

There should be a revision of the rule to allow Volunteers to work continually in the same place. Our school needs many Volunteers to teach here. It is highly recommended that Volunteers and their colleagues should be the same sex so they can work closely together.

The majority of counterparts and beneficiaries want to work with another Volunteer to continue the high level of student motivation and language skill development initiated by the Volunteer. Respondents also stated they want another Volunteer because it is important for students to learn from a native speaker. These comments suggest that current teachers find it difficult to motivate students even with the new teaching methods, and a few students commented that although the teachers continue to use these methods, the classes are not as fun as the Volunteer's class.

Respondents in southern Thailand explained that placing Volunteers in Muslim communities might require additional community preparation:

Putting a PCV into a Muslim community must be carefully planned because most Muslims are still receiving negative information about Americans. The counterpart teacher felt frustrated because he was pressured by Muslim parents and community members [to not work with the Volunteer].

Figure 27: Counterpart and Beneficiary: Want Another Volunteer
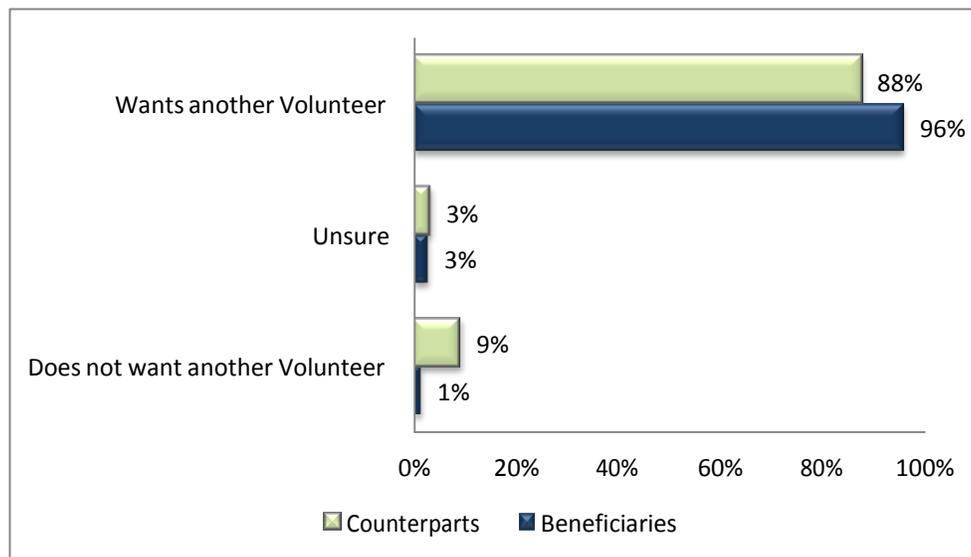
For counterparts, n= 64 for beneficiaries, n= 73

However, 9 percent of counterparts indicated they did not want to work with another Peace Corps Volunteer. Counterparts cited the lack of teaching skills of the Volunteers

and their lack of desire to teach, which created negative impressions of Peace Corps as this counterpart commented:

> *My vision of Peace Corps is negative now. I don't feel comfortable getting another Volunteer if the Volunteer has the same behavior. They didn't do anything to be better. However, if there will be a Volunteer again, I prefer one who is willing to work.*

In addition, although the majority of the respondents want to work with another Volunteer, several believe that a younger, more qualified Volunteer would do a better job. Respondents who did not want another Volunteer also described the burden Volunteers placed on schools, for example:

> *I don't want more Volunteers. Actually, we have to take care of them rather than them contributing anything to us; like they go out at night.*

Beneficiaries who reported they did not want another Volunteer also characterized the Volunteer as a burden. However, these respondents linked this burden to the lack of school support which placed extra work on the counterparts. Several respondents suggested that Peace Corps recruit better Volunteers who work hard or who are younger.

Summary Goal One

The project successfully transferred several skills to students, teachers, and other school staff, meeting the primary project goal. Participants improved their confidence in speaking and teaching English. They gained new resources for the classroom and adopted participatory or student-centered learning methods. Changes in language skills, teaching methods, and student participation in class were sustained to some extent and 61 percent of counterparts continued to use the skills professionally on a daily or weekly basis. These three outcomes were also reported as best meeting participants' needs. In addition, many teachers commented that they had adopted the Volunteer's work style, such as planning and organizing their work, arriving to class on time, and conducting self-evaluations of each class.

The project, on some levels, continued to face the challenges and barriers outlined in the mid-project review conducted in 1996. For example, slightly more than a quarter of the respondents reported not adopting the new teaching methods. Student-centered teaching methods challenge Thai cultural norms, which accord high respect to teachers and elders. Student-centered learning alters the student-teacher relationship by making teachers facilitators of learning and acknowledging that students contribute their own knowledge to the learning process. Another continuing challenge from the earlier project design involved the Volunteer's time in schools and in communities.

Respondents felt strongly that Volunteers working in two schools or in the communities did not best serve the schools' needs.

The Volunteer's willingness to work hard and their desire to teach contributed to the success of the project. Respondents also noted the Volunteer's demeanor and teaching methods changed the student-teacher relationship at many schools, creating an unintended success by creating a better learning environment.

Several factors presented challenges to the program. Volunteers' Thai language skills were critical for project success, but respondents noted that Volunteers did not always acquire the necessary language skills. Respondents also noted that working with a Volunteer added to their workload, and in southern Thailand some teachers held classes on the weekend. Gender was a factor that both hindered and helped the project in southern Thailand. Respondents in the predominantly Muslim south reported that female teachers could more easily work with female Volunteers, as this did not violate Muslim law. Respondents also commented that female teachers could not work with male Volunteers as effectively, reducing the levels of change and skills transfer.

Finally, respondents recognized the Thai government did not place Volunteers at sites consecutively. They noted that two years was not long enough to train teachers in the methods and build the capacity of the school. They would like Peace Corps to work with the Thai government to review this policy.

CHAPTER 3: GOAL TWO FINDINGS

This section addresses how and to what extent Volunteers promoted a better understanding of Americans among the Thai teachers, students, and school staff with whom they worked and lived. The section begins with a description of project participants' sources of information about Americans followed by what counterparts, beneficiaries, host families, and students thought about Americans prior to working and living with a Volunteer and how their opinions of Americans changed after interacting with Volunteers.

The subsequent section discusses the causes of change according to respondents, including descriptions of the ways Thais interacted with Volunteers and the frequency of those interactions. The section also describes their impact on respondents' behaviors and outlook on life. The section ends with conclusions and recommendations based on the findings on agency Goal Two.

Sources of Information about Americans

Prior to the arrival of a Peace Corps Volunteer, the primary source of information about Americans for all project participants (65%) was television or movies (Figure 28). Additional sources of information included the internet for counterparts (48%), beneficiaries (36%), and host families (20%). Another 20 percent of host families learned about Americans by interacting with them in Thailand, primarily as tourists. Students reported studying Americans in school (49%).

Figure 28: Sources of Information about Americans
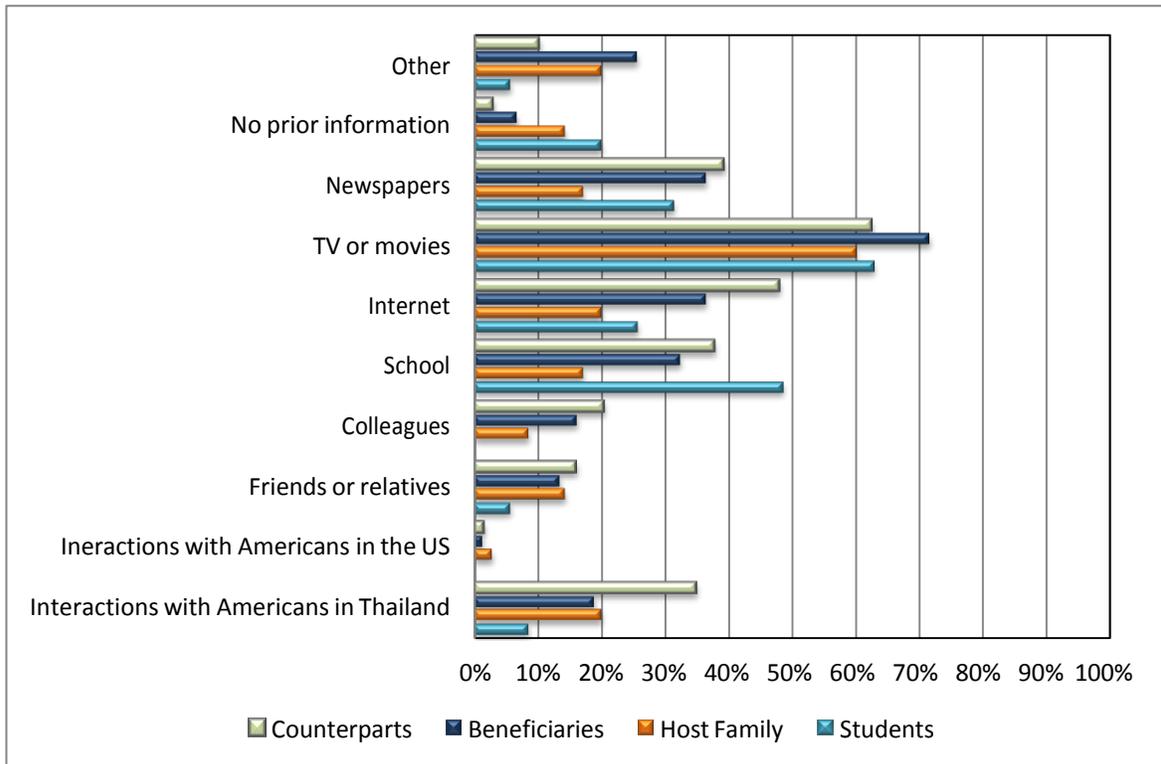
For counterparts, n=68; for beneficiaries, n=74; for host families, n=35; for students, n=35

Changes in Understanding and Opinions about Americans

Counterparts, beneficiaries, and host families showed an increased understanding of Americans after interacting with a Volunteer. Before interacting with a Volunteer, 41 percent of *counterparts* reported a limited knowledge of Americans, while 8 percent reported no understanding of Americans (Figure 29). After interacting with a Volunteer, nine percent of counterparts reported a limited understanding of Americans, while 42 percent reported a thorough understanding (Figure 29).

Figure 29: Counterpart Understanding of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer

	Before	After
Thorough	17%	42%
Moderate	35%	48%
Limited	41%	9%
No understanding	8%	2%
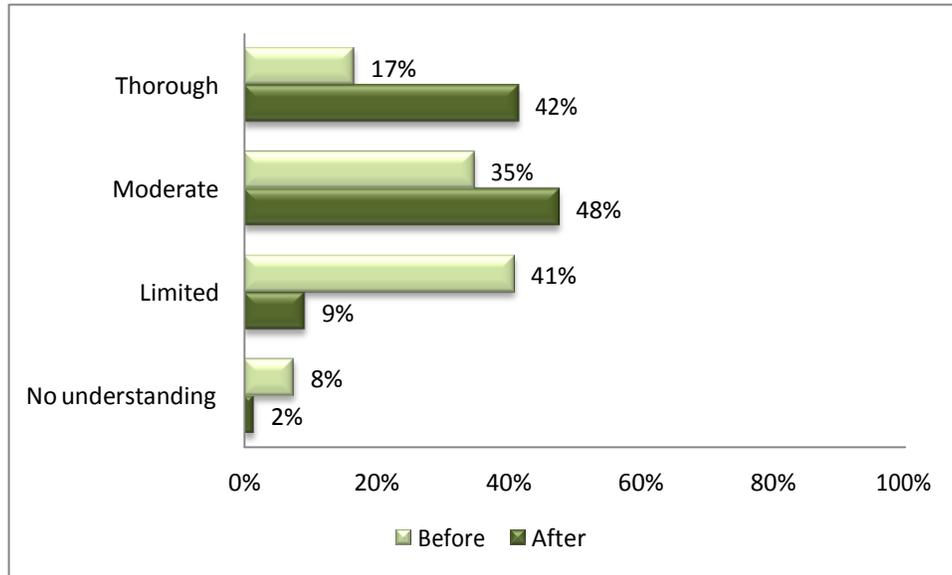
For counterparts, n=65

Before working with a Volunteer, 15 percent of *beneficiaries* reported they did not have any understanding of Americans, while 41 percent reported a limited understanding (Figure 30). After interacting with a Volunteer, beneficiaries had a more thorough (29%) or moderate understanding of Americans (49%) (Figure 30).

Figure 30: Beneficiary Understanding of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer

	Before	After
Thorough	11%	29%
Moderate	33%	49%
Limited	41%	18%
No understanding	15%	4%
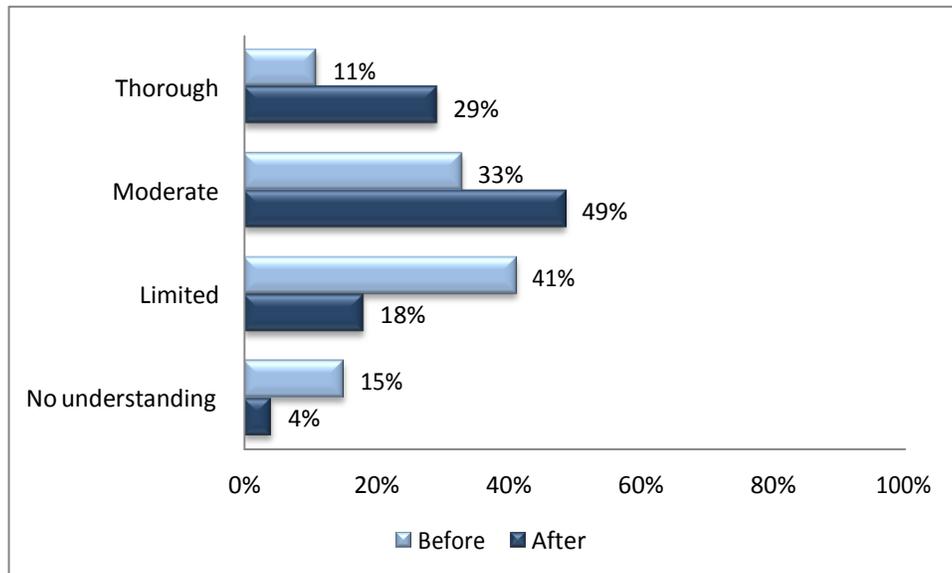
For beneficiaries, n=74

Before interacting with a Volunteer, 65 percent of the host families reported limited (51%) or no understanding (14%) of Americans (Figure 31). After interacting with the Volunteer, 88 percent of the respondents reported a moderate (57%) to thorough (31%) understanding of Americans (Figure 31).

Figure 31: Host Family Understanding of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer
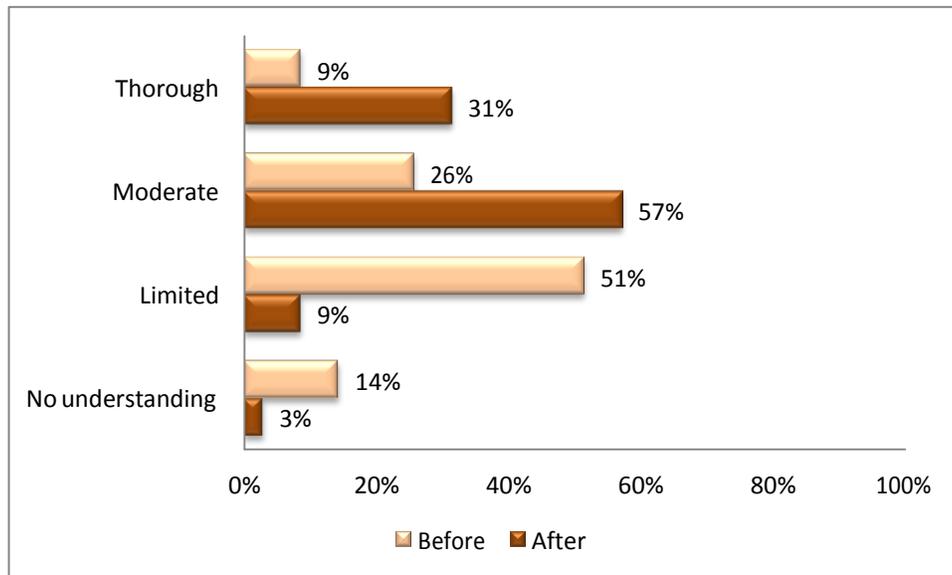

For host families, n=35

Respondents also showed increases in positive opinions about Americans after working with a Volunteer. When asked what their opinion was about Americans prior to working with a Volunteer, 60 percent of the counterparts had a very positive (15%) or somewhat positive opinion (45%) of Americans and 39 percent of *counterparts* had neither a positive nor a negative opinion of Americans (Figure 32). After interacting with a Volunteer, 83 percent of counterparts reported they had a very positive opinion of Americans (35%) or a somewhat more positive (48%) opinion.

Three percent of counterparts (2 people) reported their opinion was somewhat more negative while six percent (4 people) stated their opinion of Americans was more negative (Figure 32). These respondents explained the Volunteer in their site was a poor representative of Americans because these Volunteers were "hot-tempered," selfish, inflexible, irresponsible, and took advantage of school staff and community members. These descriptions of Volunteers contradicted the respondents' opinions of Americans prior to working with a Volunteer, which included a counterpart who had described Americans as "good," but reported after knowing the Volunteer at the site, "If the Volunteer represents all Americans, then I'm negative [about] them all and won't allow any to visit my country."

Figure 32: Counterpart Opinions of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer

	Before	After
Very positive/more positive	15%	35%
Somewhat positive/more positive	45%	48%
Neither positive nor negative/the same	39%	8%
Somewhat more negative		3%
More negative		6%

For counterparts, n=66
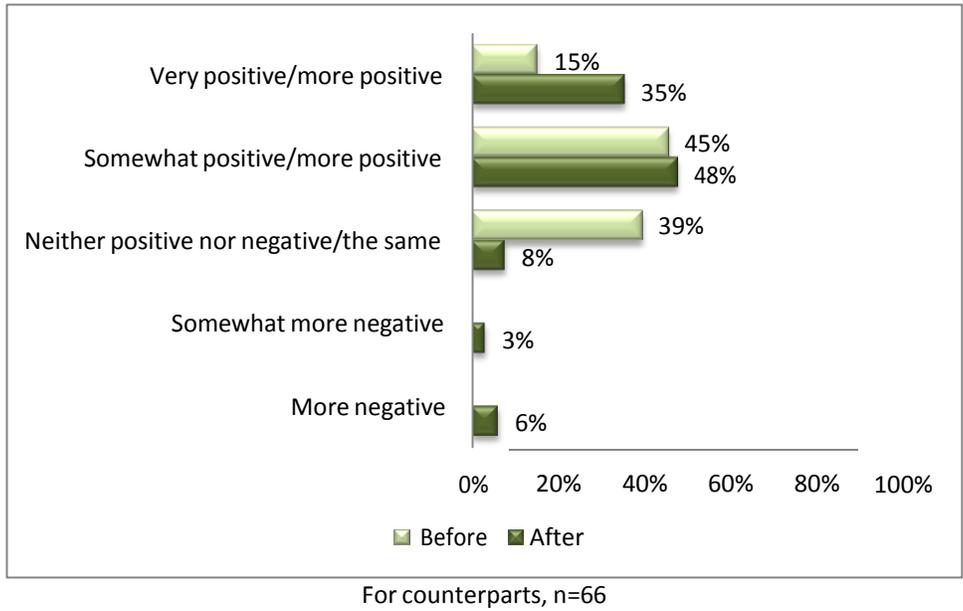
Prior to working with a Volunteer, 6 percent of *beneficiaries* reported a very (1%) to somewhat negative (5%) opinion of Americans, while only 8 percent reported a very positive opinion (Figure 33). After interacting with a Volunteer, 25 percent reported a more positive opinion and none of the beneficiaries reported a negative opinion (Figure 33).

Figure 33: Beneficiary Opinions of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer

	Before	After
Very positive/more positive	8%	25%
Somewhat positive/more positive	34%	40%
Neither positive nor negative/the same	51%	36%
Somewhat negative	5%	
Very negative	1%	

For beneficiaries, n=73
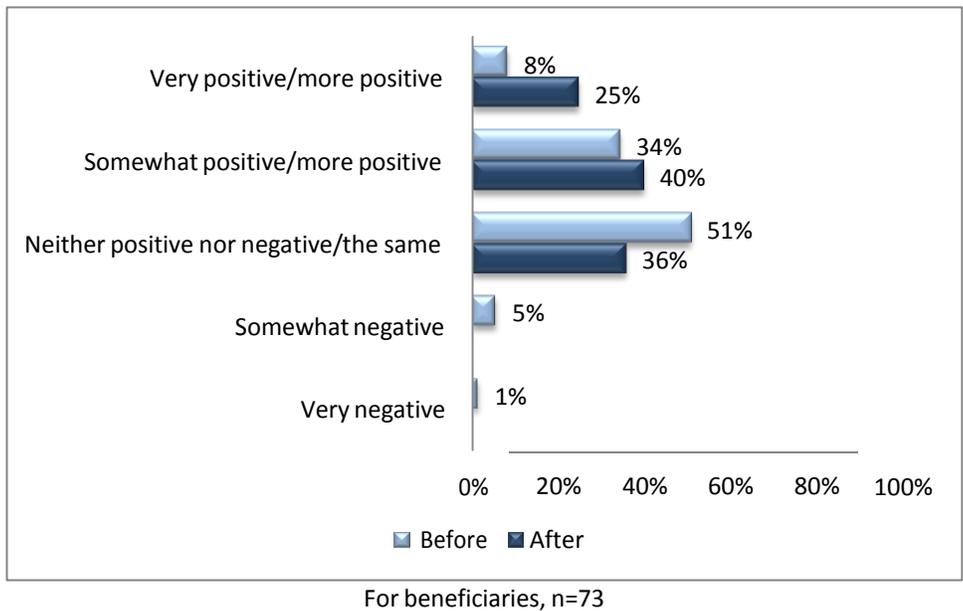
Among *host family* respondents, 3 percent had a somewhat negative opinion of Americans prior to interacting with a Volunteer and 63 percent had neither a positive nor a negative opinion (Figure 34). After hosting a Volunteer, none of the host family respondents had a negative opinion. Sixty-seven percent had a somewhat more positive opinion, while 18 percent had a more positive opinion.

Figure 34: Host Family Opinions of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer
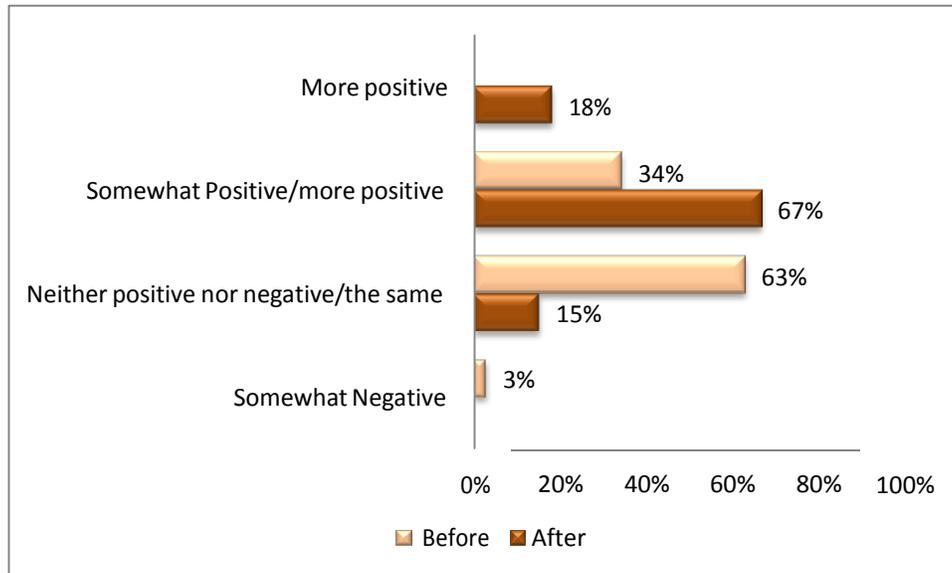
For host family respondents, n=33

Among *students,* 15 percent reported a negative opinion and 53 percent reported neither a positive nor a negative opinion about Americans before working with a Volunteer (Figure 35). After working with the Volunteer, students showed increases in positive opinions with 21 percent reporting a more positive opinion and 59 percent reporting a somewhat more positive opinion. None of the students reported negative opinions after working with a Volunteer.

Figure 35: Student Opinions of Americans Before and After Interacting with a Volunteer

	Before	After
Very positive/more positive	9%	21%
Somewhat positive/more positive	24%	59%
Neither positive nor negative/the same	53%	21%
Somewhat negative	12%	
Very negative	3%	
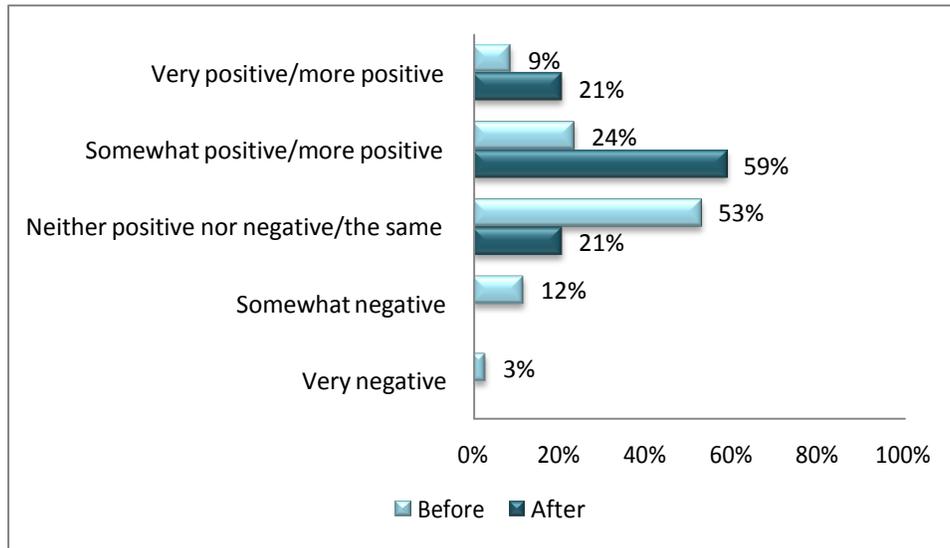
For students, n=34

Counterparts and *beneficiaries* gave four general descriptions of Americans when asked what their opinion was about Americans prior to working with a Volunteer. One recurring description (19 respondents) was "They are like us, we are all human." In other words, some people were good and some people were bad just as in Thailand, and they did not want to generalize about Americans. Another description (67 respondents) of Americans was based on personal characteristics, such as independent, self-reliant, hard workers who are punctual, kind and smart. The third recurring description of Americans was based on impressions from Western tourists in Thailand (29 respondents).[11] This group of counterparts and beneficiaries stated all Western tourists were the same, for example:

> *I cannot differentiate between Americans and other Westerners. To me, all Westerners have light skin, blue eyes, and are tall.* –Beneficiary

Respondents in this group described Americans as rich people who bring bad influences to Thailand, such as drugs and sex tourism, and who dress and act insensitively. Many also noted that Westerners look down on or take advantage of developing countries. The final description was of Americans as part of a modern, global super power (22 respondents). Respondents in this group described America as a developed super power and Americans as people who use force to solve problems, have loose family ties, and have a hidden agenda. Americans, for this group, tended to be scary and powerful.

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[11] Respondents used the Thai word "farang" in their descriptions, which specifically denotes Westerners rather than all foreigners.

After interacting with a Volunteer, respondents whose opinion of Americans was based on impressions from Western tourists or America as a super power now described Americans more positively. In many cases, respondents described Americans as kind, friendly, and generous. They observed that Americans work hard and plan their work systematically, leading some to report that Americans are more rational and less emotional than Thai people or Asians in general. A few respondents stated that Americans are closer to their families than they imagined, but raise their children to be self-reliant. Instead of being scary and forceful, Americans were good-tempered and creative, and committed to their work. One counterpart recounted how their opinion changed:

> *I had never worked with Americans before so I did not quite understand how they thought or behaved. Before the arrival of the PCV, I was quite worried whether he could work here. I was not even sure whether we should request a PCV for fear that he may hurt or harass the students [as per some news reports]. Now I have realized that there are also good Westerners, not always like in the news. Americans are friendly. They are good teachers who care a lot about the students. They are punctual, like to please others, like to participate in activities, like to make friends and have a positive [attitude] toward others.*

In several cases (17 respondents), counterparts and beneficiaries stated that one Volunteer could not represent the entire American population. Therefore, these respondents did not want to generalize even after working with a Volunteer, as these beneficiaries explained:

> *[I thought] Americans are like another class. They think they are superior. American tourists in Thailand come for drugs and sex. They dress improperly and could be bad role models for Thai teenagers. The Volunteer was a gentleman, but I'm not sure if all Americans would be the same as him.* –Beneficiary

> *Although the PCV had some problems with the students, he was a good colleague who could help me improve my English language. But I don't think all Americans will be like him. People are different and I don't want to generalize from just one case.* –Beneficiary

Host family respondents were also reluctant to generalize their experience with a single Volunteer to the entire American population. Prior to hosting a Volunteer, host family respondents most often described Americans as smart. However, many respondents in this group also noted that all Western tourists were the same. After interacting with a Volunteer, host family members reported that they could not generalize about all Americans based on their interaction with a single Volunteer. For example:

> *I think the American Volunteer who came to our community was good. She helped the women's group and never caused any problems. However, this cannot*

be generalized to all Americans. It really depends on each individual's characteristics.

Prior to working with a Volunteer, the majority of *students* found Americans scary because of the height differences between Thais and Americans, as this student described:

I can't distinguish who is American or not. They [Westerners] all look alike. They look scary because of their huge figure.

This respondent also touched on another description by students, and all of the respondents—all Westerners look alike. After working with a Volunteer, students who once viewed Americans as scary now believed they were kind. Students who believed all Westerners were the same reported that tourists have different purposes than Volunteers and do not represent all Westerners. Another student explained the difference:

I did now know which one was an American; Westerners all look alike. I think most Westerners do not dress properly. Some women expose their bodies too much. But I think they like travelling since most of them always visit tourist sites. The Volunteer though always dressed properly when teaching. I realized that Westerners aren't all the same. Some dress properly, some don't, depending on each individual.

Only 23 percent of all respondents mentioned interactions with Americans in Thailand as a source of information. However, these interactions with Western tourists heavily influenced Thai respondents' views of Americans. Based on these statements, the experience with a single Volunteer may constitute sufficient interaction to counter the stereotypes and daily encounters with Western tourists.

Causes for Changes in Opinion

Respondents described what caused the changes in opinions through a series of open-ended questions that asked about specific activities, memories, and learning experiences. These narratives were correlated against the level of interaction respondents had with the Volunteer who served in their school.

Level of Interaction with Volunteers

Counterparts and *students* primarily interacted with Volunteers in the school setting while *beneficiaries* interacted with Volunteers equally at school and socially outside of work. In Thailand, Volunteers do not live with host families but rent lodging from landlords. Members of the community and neighbors act as relatives or family-like friends. These *host family* respondents primarily interacted with Volunteers outside of

school in a home or community setting. When asked why they wanted to host a Volunteer, one third (10 of 30) of the host family respondents stated they wanted the cross-cultural experience. Another five respondents wanted to improve their English. However, six respondents stated they did not have much interest in hosting a Volunteer, but had a house or apartment to rent. Four mentioned being chosen by the school or ESAO to act as the host family.

Most Frequent Activities

The activities *counterparts* and *beneficiaries* engaged in most often with Volunteers fall into two categories: those related to work (n=82) and those outside of work or of a more social nature (n=50).

At work, counterparts and beneficiaries collaborated primarily with Volunteers on two activities. First, 55 percent of counterparts and beneficiaries reported collaborating on classroom teaching. Another 21 percent of respondents also described working on school events, English camps, and clubs together. The next most frequently mentioned interaction was lesson planning (17%). Outside of work, 64 percent of beneficiaries and counterparts reported sharing meals and cooking together and 26 percent reported talking with the Volunteer. Slightly fewer (24%) stated they attended holiday events and went sight-seeing.

Not surprisingly, 56 percent of *host families* mentioned cooking and sharing meals as the most frequent activity they did with Volunteers. Eating together was followed by talking and teaching to each other in English and Thai.

When asked about the nature of their relationship with Volunteers, 16 of 26 host families commented that the Volunteer was like a family member to them. For example:

> *We feel like brothers and sisters. The Volunteer respected me and my wife as a brother and sister. We helped each other in many things and ate together just like in a family. Before she left, the Volunteer gave her bicycle to us as a reminder of our relationship.*

Host family respondents also described the Volunteer as a friend and role model. Three host family respondents noted that the Volunteer seldom had contact with them after the Volunteer had their own internet access and one respondent described the Volunteer as "just a tenant."

Most Memorable Activities

The most memorable activities for *counterparts, beneficiaries,* and *host family* respondents were not actually activities but related instead to the Volunteers' demeanor (103 of 155). The majority of counterparts and beneficiaries found the

Volunteers' friendliness and their ability to adapt to local Thai culture, especially developing harmonious relationships, their most memorable behaviors.

Respondents linked building harmonious relationships with the Volunteer's ability to adapt to local cultural norms and become integrated into the school and community. This included working hard to gain respect from colleagues:

> *The Volunteer was a capable person, worked hard and always tried to introduce new techniques/activities in the classroom. She was friendly and often had small gifts to distribute to the students. She dressed properly, not like most foreign tourist[s] in Thailand.*

The Volunteer's behavior set them apart from the Western tourists the Thai respondents' were accustomed to seeing..

Counterparts and beneficiaries also recalled specific events or interactions that demonstrated the Volunteer's friendliness and ability to build good relationships. For example, these beneficiaries recalled:

> *At the beginning, I was reluctant to work with the Volunteer because I didn't have training in English Education. But the Volunteer came to me and told me not to be afraid to talk with her. Eventually, we found out later on that we could work together very well and had fun co-teaching.*

> *The Volunteer put a lot of effort into making sure that students got the best out of each lesson. The Volunteer used her own money to make teaching aids and do other extra activities. When the Volunteer first arrived, we invited her to join a Boy Scout camp. I taught her to sing Thai songs and she could sing two songs within a short time. She took note of every new thing she learn[ed]/saw and could remember [such as] birthdays of every colleague and friend here.*

Counterparts also recalled how the methods used by the Volunteer improved student performance and their desire to study English. In a few cases, respondents recalled the dedication of the Volunteer and the difference in how Volunteers worked with students:

> *I remember the enthusiasm, strong commitment, and determination of the Volunteer. She was challenged by some students at the beginning but she never gave up. She used activities to 'break the ice' and develop rapport with the student. She paid attention to students' background and tried to use different approaches with students with different backgrounds. For example, for drug abuse groups, she tried to identify the causes and deal with them. For students from broken homes, she looked after them with special care.*

A few counterparts and beneficiaries recalled negative memories. One beneficiary recalled a Volunteer's "bad temper" and fights between the Volunteer, teachers, and students. A counterpart in southern Thailand recalled that the Volunteer should not have been assigned to teach, and enumerated the reasons as being tardy to work, insensitive to Thai cultural practices ("*drinking coffee in the classroom while teaching, which isn't proper in Thai culture*") and unwilling to take on additional responsibilities in the classroom.

In those few instances where the few counterparts and beneficiaries recalled negative memories, their opinion of Americans had become more negative. One counterpart in southern Thailand explained:

> *I currently view Americans negatively. Some who work here are educated, some aren't. They are unemployed and just want to travel. They get expenses for living and accommodations.*

Some of the host family respondents (31%) recalled how friendly the Volunteer was and commented on the Volunteer's ability to adapt to rural Thai culture. A few host family respondents recalled specific events. For example, this landlord remembered:

> *The Volunteer was well-mannered. She was sincere and really cared about my well-being. After she left, I fell ill. She flew back to visit me at her own expense.*

What Volunteers Did to Change Opinions and What Project Participants Learned About Americans

Of those who reported a more positive or somewhat more positive opinion of Americans, 27 percent of the *counterparts* and *beneficiaries* stated the Volunteer's work style had caused the change. These respondents described hard-working, punctual, and enthusiastic Volunteers who liked teaching and were generous with their time and knowledge. Another group (18%) said they changed their opinions because of the Volunteer's friendliness, kindness, and caring. These respondents learned that Americans respect other cultures and are not materialistic, arrogant, or individualistic as they had assumed. As these respondents explained:

> *She respected local tradition. For example, she dressed in a long sarong like other women in the South. She was also enthusiastic to share knowledge and exchange ideas on the two cultures. –Counterpart*

> *Like a Buddhist, the Volunteer has a simple lifestyle: not materialistic, concerned and cares about other people, grateful, and giving friendships importance. This contrasts with what I have heard; that Americans are selfish. –Beneficiary*

Not all respondents had positive experiences with Volunteers. In these cases, respondents became more negative in their opinion about Americans. For example,

> *Previously, I thought most Americans are good because I've been impressed with the American Volunteer teacher I had as a child. But this Volunteer's performance makes me feel bad about Peace Corps and American people.*

Host family members also cited the Volunteers' kindness and ability to adapt to Thai cultural norms as the reason they changed their opinion about Americans. Respondents often compared their previous impressions of Americans to their new ones, especially linking the Volunteer's behavior to Americans having a kind heart. For example:

> *The Volunteer paid high attention to her work. She liked to offer help to others. This changed my concept about Americans. Before I thought Americans were self-centered, not paying much attention about others. After knowing the Volunteer, I realized she was different. So I'd say many Americans have kind hearts.*

Impact of the Changes on Participants' Behavior and Outlook on Life

As the final question of the interview, respondents were asked how they had changed their behavior or outlook on life as a result of interacting with the Volunteer. *Counterparts* and *beneficiaries* who reported a more positive or somewhat more positive opinion of Americans stated they had:

- Adopted the Volunteers' work style and become more responsible, organized, and patient, and used better time management
- Become more confident at work and more willing to try new ideas at work or listen to different opinions
- Adopted a more positive view of life and were more willing to help students.

The majority of *host family* respondents (65%) commented that they had changed their personal behavior or outlook on life. Several reported they planned their work more and took greater responsibility.

Summary Goal Two

The Volunteers' demeanor and ability to build harmonious relationships among Thai people helped create a more positive understanding and view of Americans among participants. Volunteers' actions included friendliness, kindness, and the ability to integrate into the community. In addition, the Volunteer's behavior set them apart from Western tourists—the benchmark many respondents used to describe Americans

before interacting with a Volunteer. In these cases, respondents commented that Volunteers respected local tradition, dressed modestly, and were not individualistic, as they had imagined.

Counterparts and beneficiaries changed their behavior and outlook on life after working with a Volunteer. They were more confident, had better work habits, and were more willing to try new ideas and to help students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal One

Overall, the findings suggest the impacts from the TCCO Project help Peace Corps meet Goal One: building capacity among host country nationals. Volunteers focused their attention and activities on the TCCO Project's goal one, which meant they worked in the schools. The project has showed success in transferring skills and building capacity among counterparts and beneficiaries in the three primary areas for this project goal:

- Engaging students in class
- Creating and using new materials in the classroom
- Using participatory learning methods

In addition, increased confidence in speaking and teaching English was a significant change at the personal and school level. Teachers also integrated local experience or knowledge into their lessons.

The moderate level of sustainability for these changes suggests that teachers and school administrators face difficulties in maintaining the changes once the Volunteer completes his or her service. Most of the factors affecting sustainability are systemic to the Thai education system or culturally-based. For example, a quarter of the teachers and administrators did want to adopt the new teaching methods because they believed that the new participatory, student-centered methods did not support the national curriculum and/or that the shift in student-teacher relationships challenged Thai cultural norms, in terms of a loss of respect for teachers.

Recommendations: Volunteers should be well-versed in the Thai national curriculum and able to articulate how their student-centered learning methods, and especially their results, support national testing standards. Further, Volunteers could be better prepared to explain how these changes support Thai cultural norms.

The project requires that Volunteers work in two schools, commuting by bicycle to each school. Respondents noted this placed a heavy workload on Volunteers and riding bikes between villages and towns was difficult and not always practical. They also noted that working with the Volunteer only two days a week limited the level of skill transfer and hampered the continuity of learning. In addition, the second goal of the project required Volunteers to conduct community development activities, in addition to teaching in two schools. Teaching in a single school is a full-time job without the additional required activities in the community or commuting to another school.

Recommendation: The project could consider narrowing the focus of activities and locations to a single school in which Volunteers could work with school staff and

community members to conduct a needs assessment of the school and community and then work together to address the identified needs.

Gender had an important, albeit hidden, role in the success of the project. Female counterparts in southern Thailand found working with a female Volunteer more culturally appropriate, as no cultural constraints arose in their working relationship. The ease of working together facilitated greater skills transfer. On the other hand, male Volunteers working with female teachers in southern Thailand faced difficulties because they could not build a strong working relationship under Muslim law.

Recommendation: Peace Corps/Thailand should review the dynamics of gender relationships between counterparts and Volunteers when placing Volunteers in southern Thailand.

Goal Two

The findings suggest the TCCO Project contributed to Peace Corps' Goal Two: improving the understanding of Americans in Host Countries. Respondents improved their understanding and opinion about Americans after interacting with a Volunteer. The Volunteer's ability to integrate and respect local culture changed respondents' images of Americans from that of "Western tourist" who dresses inappropriately, drinks, takes drugs, and in other ways offends Thai norms, to someone who is able to adjust to a different culture and who is respectful and helpful.

Recommendation: Peace Corps/Thailand should consider using the findings from this study as a teaching resource in their cross-cultural training curriculum.

APPENDIX 1: OSIRP METHODOLOGY

Site Selection

In Thailand, the team conducted interviews in 25 communities where Volunteers worked. The sample sites were a representative sample rather than a random sample and were generated from the list of Volunteer assignments in the TCCO Project since 2005. Sites in which the Volunteer had served less than 12 months, had married someone at site, had remained at site after the close of their service, or sites that were extremely remote were excluded. Individual respondents were then selected in one of three ways:

1. At many sites, only one counterpart had worked with a Volunteer. In those cases, once the site was selected, so was the counterpart.

2. With regard to the selection of beneficiaries and host family members, and in cases where more than one possible counterpart was available, post staff and/or the Volunteer proposed individuals known to have had significant involvement in the project or with the Volunteer. Within a host family, the person with the most experience with the Volunteer was interviewed.

3. In cases where there were still multiple possible respondents, the research team randomly selected the respondents.

4. In cases where respondents had moved or were no longer at site, researchers either located their current contact information or conducted snowball sampling to locate other respondents who had worked with the Volunteer.

Data Collection

The research questions and interview protocols were designed by staff from the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) and refined through consultations with the Country Director, Director of Programming and Training, and the Program Manager in Thailand.

The team of local interviewers, supervised by a host country senior researcher contracted in country, carried out all the interviews. Interviewers used written protocols specific to each category of respondents and conducted semi-structured interviews. The team received a one-week training from OSIRP staff covering the purpose of the research, the questionnaires, and methods for conducting the field work.

The research teams also reviewed existing performance data routinely reported by posts in Volunteers' Project Status Reports, as well as the results of the Peace Corps'

Annual Volunteer Surveys and any previous evaluations or project reviews. However, the results presented in this report are almost exclusively based on the interview data collected through this study.

Two hundred and thirteen individuals were interviewed in Thailand for the study.

What data were collected?

The counterparts, beneficiaries, and stakeholders were asked questions related to both Goal One and Goal Two. Host family members were asked only questions related to Goal Two. The categories covered with each of the groups are shown in the table below.

Summary of Interview Questions by Respondent Type

Respondent Type	Question Categories	Approximate Length of interview
Counterpart .	Goal One 1. Clarification of the project purpose 2. Respondent's work history in the field and with the Peace Corps 3. Frequency of contact with the Volunteer 4. Project orientation 5. Project outcomes and satisfaction with the project 6. Community and individual-level changes 7. Maintenance of project outcomes Goal Two 1. Source of information and opinion of Americans prior to the Peace Corps work 2. Type of information learned about Americans from interaction with the Volunteer 3. Opinion of Americans after interaction with the Volunteer 4. Particular behaviors/attitudes that Volunteers exhibited that helped improve respondents' understanding of Americans	60-90 minutes
Beneficiary	Goal 1 1. Clarification of the project purpose 2. Frequency of contact with the Volunteer 3. Project outcomes and satisfaction with the project 4. Community and individual-level changes 5. Maintenance of project outcomes Goal Two 1. Source of information and opinion of Americans prior to	60-90 minutes

Respondent Type	Question Categories	Approximate Length of interview
	the Peace Corps work 2. Type of information learned about Americans from interaction with the Volunteer 3. Opinion of Americans after interaction with the Volunteer 4. Particular behaviors/attitudes that Volunteers exhibited that helped improve respondents' understanding of Americans	
Host Family Member	Goal Two 1. Source of information and opinion of Americans prior to the Peace Corps work 2. Type of information learned about Americans from interaction with the Volunteer 3. Opinion of Americans after interaction with the Volunteer 4. Particular behaviors/attitudes that Volunteers exhibited that helped improve respondents' understanding of Americans 5. Behavioral changes based on knowing the Volunteer	30 minutes

APPENDIX 2: RESEARCH TEAM METHODOLOGY[12]

The assessment was conducted through field interviews with people who have worked and lived with the Volunteers. The respondents were classified according to the nature of their relationship/interaction with the Volunteers. The questionnaires for the stakeholder, counterpart and beneficiary cover question sets for both goals whereas that for the host family focuses only on Goal Two.

All of the questionnaires were developed by the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) in the Peace Corps Headquarters and were translated into Thai by the Thai Senior Researcher. The Thai translation was then translated back into English by Peace Corps/Thailand office staff to check the accuracy of the translation. After piloting the questionnaires during the training of field researchers, the question sets were adjusted based on feedback from the interviewees.

Data collection

The field interviews were conducted by six teams of field researchers led by Senior Researcher and Research Associates. Prior to the field interviews, researcher training was conducted by the Peace Corps/Thailand office together with an evaluation officer from OSIRP. The training covered content on [the] background and the goal of Peace Corps, objectives of the impact evaluation, evaluation concept, method, and tool, as well as field pilot interviews with respondents from a former Peace Corps site.

The sites for the interviews were chosen through a systematic sampling method by OSIRP. Altogether, 25 TCCO sites were selected throughout all regions of the country. Most of them were 'former' sites, meaning the PCVs had left the sites for 1-5 years.

Interview partners were identified primarily according to their roles in the project and a list of potential interviewees for all sites was prepared by the Peace Corps/Thailand office. Additional interviewees were located through snow ball sampling conducted by interviewers during fieldwork.

Field interviews took place simultaneously in the 25 sites from August 1 to September 30, 2010. In addition, a focus group discussion was conducted with Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) and Ministerial officers from the Department of Local Administration (DLA).

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[12] This section was excerpted (with minor editing) from the research report developed by the in-country research team. As a result the formatting and style vary from those used in the body of the report. Dr. Walaitat Worakul, *Peace Corps Host Country Impact Assessment, Thailand Report,"* pg.10-12, 2011.

Data analysis

Raw data was entered into the data system, Datstat, which was designed especially for this study. The excel tables containing a summary of quantitative data and full details of qualitative data were then provided to the Senior Researcher for further analysis and reporting. Quantitative analysis of the data was based mainly on the percentages, while qualitative analysis was based on both deductive and inductive methods. For some questions, data was categorized under the predefined headings based on related theory/knowledge commonly accepted. In some other cases, data categories were identified after the data was scrutinized for interesting answers. English translation of the data in Datstat was also provided to the Peace Corps for its further reference.