



Education

The Need

- Education is a pathway to the global economy for people in developing nations and has a greater impact—particularly for girls—on reducing poverty than many other development initiatives. In most developing countries, **few children graduate from secondary school and many do not even finish primary school.** In Ghana, for example, only 50 percent of children complete the fifth grade, and of those, less than half can comprehend a simple paragraph.¹
- When children enroll in a school where the **language of instruction is not their home language, learning challenges and the chances of dropping out increase correspondingly,** especially if their parents are illiterate. Research shows that children who learn to read in their native language first can learn to read in a second language—and generally acquire academic skills—more quickly.²
- In many developing countries, education can be seen as unattractive and consequently attracts weaker students. In universities and teacher colleges, content and pedagogical instruction are often inadequate, and actual classroom practices are still largely dominated by teachers, with students silently copying notes from the blackboard. As a result, **the math, science, and ICT (information and communications technology) teaching force in many developing nations is largely inexperienced and teachers tend to have a limited understanding of their subjects.**³

1. Epstein, Mark and Yuthas, Kristi. Winter 2012. "Redefining Education in the Developing World." Stanford Social Innovation Review. Volume 10, Number 1. http://www.ssireview.org/articles/entry/redefining_education_in_the_developing_world.

2. Mehrotra, Santosh. 1998. "Education for All: Policy Lessons From High Achieving Countries." International Review of Education. Volume 44, Issue 5–6, pp. 461–484.

3. Ottevanger, Wout; van den Akker, Jan; and de Feiter, Leo. 2007. Developing Science, Mathematics, and ICT Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns and Promising Practices. The World Bank Working Paper No. 101. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRREGTOPSEIA/Resources/No.75MICT.pdf>.

Our Approach

The Peace Corps' emphasis on education aligns well with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and UNESCO's Education for All Campaign, especially given the Peace Corps' commitment to placing Volunteers in rural, marginalized, or underserved communities where other programs may not reach.

Education is the Peace Corps' largest sector with 2,620 Volunteers in 51 countries. The Peace Corps' Education projects focus on capacity building of counterparts and teachers, increasing student achievement, and engaging communities in school improvements and student learning. In addition to teaching or co-teaching with host country counterparts, Peace Corps Volunteers also facilitate teacher communities of practice and a large variety of extracurricular activities for students.

Areas of Focus

Supporting literacy instruction in students' home and national languages through formal instruction with teachers, informal extracurricular activities, and collaboration with families to build connections between home and school literacy practices.

Promoting math, science, and technology for development by furnishing hands-on, community-focused technical instruction in English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish. Peace Corps Volunteers supplement classroom learning with math, science, and technology fairs or clubs and prepare students for major exams.

Advancing teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) with counterparts to build teacher capacity and increase student achievement through student-centered learning. Volunteers establish English camps and clubs and serve as conversation partners for teachers whose English competence and confidence may be limited. The Peace Corps is institutionalizing a TEFL Certificate program, based on 30 months of training and two years of supervised teaching experience. The certificate is validated by the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C. It is currently offered at eight posts (Armenia, Benin, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and Thailand) and will be gradually expanded to additional posts annually.

Resources & Contact Information

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Peace Corps Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support (OPATS)

What We Do

Interactive Science Teaching Workshop for college students who will teach seventh grade through ninth grade. The training includes instruction on content-related games, lab-based teaching, guidance on planning and structuring a lesson, and formative assessment. (PC/The Gambia)

Co-planning and co-teaching English in secondary schools with classes of 45 students or more. Co-planning is conducted in English to further improve counterparts' language skills. Lesson planning incorporates different learning styles, critical thinking, and interactive activities. (PC/Nicaragua)

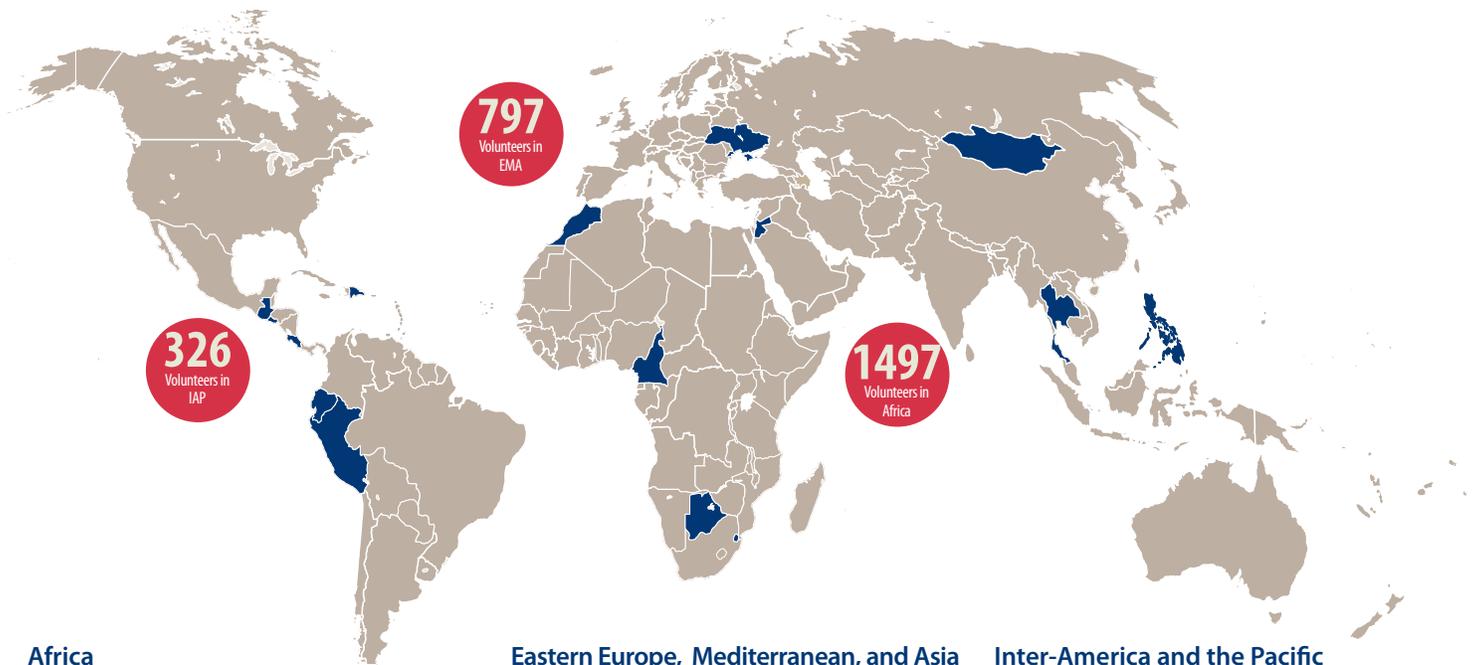
Weekly computer classes for phonics instruction for all primary grade levels, from students who are learning the alphabet to those who are learning about rhyme, contractions, and more. A small class size allows for more individual attention for students who have disabilities or who finish their classwork at a slower pace. (PC/Tonga)

English Drama Clubs build student motivation and confidence to speak English by using the support of scripts. Students are introduced to acting basics, then attend auditions, script read-throughs, and daily rehearsals. They learn how to put on a play, build sets, and promote plays in the community. Some students have adopted leadership roles such as audition coordinator or crew manager. (PC/Cambodia)

Who We Serve

Education Volunteers support **teachers** by helping them build their professional capacity; **students** by promoting academic achievement; and **community members** by serving as a resource for developing small community projects and accessing new knowledge and skills.

Where We Work



Africa

Benin	Liberia	South Africa
Burkina Faso	Madagascar	Tanzania
Cameroon	Malawi	Togo
Comoros	Mozambique	Uganda
Ethiopia	Namibia	Zambia
The Gambia	Rwanda	
Lesotho	Sierra Leone	

Eastern Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia

Albania	Kosovo	Philippines
Armenia	Kyrgyz Republic	Thailand
Cambodia	Macedonia	Ukraine
China	Moldova	
Georgia	Mongolia	
Indonesia		

Inter-America and the Pacific

Colombia	Federated States of Micronesia	Panama
Costa Rica	Grenada	Samoa
Dominica	Guyana	St. Lucia, St. Vincent and The Grenadines
Dominican Republic	Jamaica	Tonga
Ecuador	Nicaragua	Vanuatu
	Palau	

In 2014,



2,620

Peace Corps
Volunteers served as
Education Volunteers
in



50

countries worldwide.