

Spring 2008

Partnership

The Newsletter of Peace Corps' Office of Private Sector Initiatives

Beekeeping in the Heart of the Andes

Nestled on the majestic slopes of the Andes Mountains lies a community that has struggled to reconcile its natural beauty with so much need. More than 200 families in this community in Bolivia suffered from rural isolation and government neglect. In order to fundamentally change their prospects, the villagers decided to boost their incomes in a way that would also enhance their nutritional intake. The perfect solution was to introduce beekeeping.

Working with the Peace Corps Volunteer, the community created a plan to build two beekeeping sites (or apiaries) containing a total of 30 bee boxes. In order to increase the project's sustainability the community planted thousands of flowering trees for the bees to feed on. Additionally, planting these trees also helped to prevent destructive soil erosion on the mountainside. As they built the apiaries, the community members also took classes on creating and maintaining commercial beehives.

With the first labeled jar of honey ready for sale, this community is so proud of how far they have come. The support of donors from across the United States, an extremely motivated Peace Corps Volunteer, and the hard work of the entire community, has resulted in 5,000 trees being planted and two apiaries being constructed. The honey being produced is now being sold around the region, as well as being used by the local schools to supplement their students' meals. This project has done more than just improve a town's material well being; it has shown them how big they can dream if they work together as a community.



Above: Peace Corps Volunteer and two community members inspect the beehives they have built high in the mountains of Bolivia.

The Chrysler Foundation

The Office of Private Sector Initiatives (OPSI) is proud to announce that The Chrysler Foundation has made a generous donation to OPSI and the Peace Corps Partnership Program to be used for projects assisting with basic needs, education, and agriculture. The President of The Chrysler Foundation, Frank Fountain, an RPCV in India from 1966 to 1968, is very excited by what can be achieved by working with the Partnership Program. According to Mr. Fountain, "The Chrysler Foundation is making a difference in all of these places where Volunteers are working. I don't think there is a more efficient way to help people at the grassroots level than the way that the Peace Corps Partnership offers us." OPSI would like to thank The Chrysler Foundation for helping the Partnership Program affect positive change in communities around the globe.

Women's Empowerment in Cameroon

For orphaned girls in Cameroon it is the exception rather than the rule to receive vocational training. However, thanks to the hard work and dedication of community leaders and the generosity of Peace Corps donors in the United States, twenty girls were given the amazing opportunity to learn skills that will prepare them for a better future.

Through the Partnership Program, the local women's association trained girls from the community in cooking and sewing, and educated them on health topics, including proper hygiene. The women of this community dedicated themselves to this project, teaching classes everyday without compensation. By the time classes were completed, the girls had accomplished many tasks using their newfound crocheting, knitting, embroidery, cross-stitch, and machine work skills.

Also, because the program was implemented by members of the local women's association, the girls were automatically connected to a network of strong, positive Cameroonian women. The girls hope to incorporate the skills they have learned into income generating activities for themselves and their families. With the women's association successfully completing this initiative, they look forward continuing these trainings to assist future generations of entrepreneurial young women.

Exercising the Body and Mind in Moldova

The importance of incorporating physical education into school curriculum is vital in fostering proper youth development and health. Children who participate in physical education and exercise on a regular basis are more likely to perform better in school, live longer, healthier lives and have higher self-confidence. In the long-term, the entire community suffers when students are deprived of proper physical education instruction and adequate exercise opportunities.

Harsh, cold winters and the lack of an indoor sports facility and equipment had forced 300 Moldovan elementary students to exercise in a tiny classroom designed for language instruction. This situation resulted in virtually no physical education opportunities for the students and noise disruptions for the students in the adjacent classrooms. The school director and the Peace Corps Volunteer teaching at the school led a team of community members through a Partnership Program project that has resulted in a new sports hall and sports equipment.

Though created to improve student



Above: Moldovan students excited to be exercising in their new school gymnasium.

fitness, the town has been energized by this fantastic new sports facility. Providing labor and materials, the whole community worked together to create a place where students exercise and learn about healthy living. This project provided students with a place to play but, more importantly, they had the opportunity to witness what can be accomplished when the community embraces civic responsibility and volunteerism.

To find out more about the Peace Corps Partnership Program, or see a list of projects in need of funding, contact us at:

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