



The Exchange

GENDER, AGRICULTURE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT • AUGUST 2003 • VOLUME NO. 37

Peace Corps' Women in Development Newsletter

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OUTDOOR ADVENTURERS: Participants in a leadership camp embark on their first camping trip.

Photo submitted by Jackie Redmer/PCV

First Time for Everything: Kazakhstan's Girls' Leadership Camp

By Nicole Rom and Jackie Redmer/PCVs

Camp GOAL (Girls' Outdoor Adventure for Leadership) was organized to empower girls in Kazakhstan through a hiking trip that emphasized outdoor adventure and leadership. Its purposes were twofold: (1) to enhance leadership skills such as communication, trust, cooperation, and problem solving and (2) to build individual and group confidence with respect to people and the environment. By getting out of their normal surroundings and climbing a mountain, the young women would learn about natural history and the beauty of their country while feeling good about themselves. Volunteers identified a local teacher with experience leading extended camping trips with her students in the mountains. She and her mother, who also helped guide the hike, could not fathom the idea of an all-girls trip. They were sure we needed at least one male for security

purposes. These women, Aleksandra (Sasha) Nikolaevna and Svetlana Fredrovena, were trained during Soviet times as tourist leaders and had been going to the mountains all their lives, and taking students on trips for as long as they had been teachers, but never before without men.

We purchased backpacks, tents, sleeping bags and pads, stoves and fuel bottles, tarps, and other supplies at a local outdoors club. We found a health spa for the first two days of the camp at which the girls could be introduced to the equipment, as well as women's leadership, environmental ethics, and gender topics. Sasha determined the route we would take and assisted with logistics. The group included four female Volunteers, 20 girls, and four teachers, including two translators.

Leadership Training Camp continues on page 12

From the Editors

Dear Readers,

While only 27 percent of Volunteers work in agriculture and environment projects, agricultural and environmental issues such as land use, food security, nutrition, and vanishing natural resources impact the communities in which all Volunteers work. This is why we have chosen to focus volume 37 of *The Exchange* on gender, agriculture, and the environment. Despite increased understanding of the importance of considering gender when working in the agriculture and environment sectors, Volunteers still face significant challenges. Both male and female Volunteers confront stereotypes and must address the challenges of working in traditionally male or female areas. In addition, in many of the countries where they serve, Volunteers find it difficult to increase women's participation in the areas of agriculture and the environment because women's roles in these sectors are often invisible. The challenge for Volunteers then is to identify the roles of women and men in the agricultural and environmental sectors so that projects meet the needs of both women and men.

In this issue you'll find articles on how the hillside farming project in Honduras is building leadership skills of women in the agriculture sector; how Volunteers in Kazakhstan are using camping to teach environmental awareness to girls; and how Peace Corps/Nepal is incorporating gender into its environmental education project.

The technical article, "Gender in the Agriculture and Environment Sectors," explores how other international actors are addressing this issue and how Volunteers can better incorporate a gender perspective in their agriculture and environment activities. Accompanying this article is a case study from Guinea that demonstrates how gender analysis informs the

work of Volunteers. Another article, "Gender-Sensitive Peace Corps Agriculture and Environment Activities," offers examples of ways Volunteers are taking gender into account.

This issue's "How To" column focuses on drama therapy in Togo. Also in this issue are articles on curriculum development and service projects in Ukraine, girls' conferences in El Salvador and Tonga, and a work fair for women in Niger.

The Exchange is a forum for Volunteers to share their successes and challenges in integrating women in development and gender and development approaches into their Peace Corps activities. Your articles educate and inspire Volunteers around the world, so please share with us what you are doing to integrate WID and GAD. We welcome your submissions for the "How To," "Building Sustainability," and "What's Going On" sections and articles on integrating GAD into youth activities for volume 39. We encourage you to send photographs with your articles. Articles and photos can be submitted by e-mail to: TheExchange@peacecorps.gov.

The Exchange tries to represent a diverse set of Volunteer activities around the world. While we are not able to incorporate all submissions, we thank everyone who submitted articles for this issue.

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The Exchange is a publication of the Peace Corps. Letters to the editor are the expressed views of the individual writers and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Peace Corps. We reserve the right to edit for style, clarity, and length.

Zambia GADZ Committee

By Natalie Jackson/PCV

Following the example of other Peace Corps countries in our subregion, Peace Corps/Zambia started a Gender and Development in Zambia (GADZ) committee. During a two-day meeting, elected GADZ point persons laid the foundation of the committee. This involved extensive discussion about the importance of considering gender when working in development; writing a constitution, mission statement, and action plan; and making suggestions on how to integrate basic gender and development principles into training.

Although we may not always be aware that gender is affecting the work that we do, it is an underlying issue that Peace Corps Volunteers should strive to assess and understand. While carrying out information gathering and needs assessment, we need to assess gender roles, gender division of labor, access, power relations, and gender needs in order to promote the inclusion of both men and women in the process of development. In turn, this will increase the chances of achieving sustainable changes.

The GADZ committee's five goals are:

1. Develop and promote projects focusing on increasing awareness of gender equality issues.

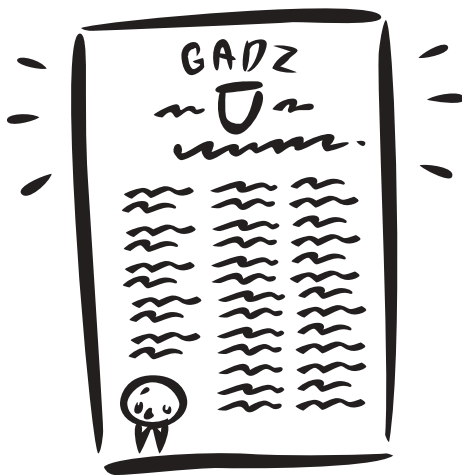
Zambia GADZ Committee continues on page 3

Zambia GADZ Committee continued from page 2

2. Provide and share information and resources among Peace Corps Volunteers about GAD.
3. Network with existing organizations that work with gender issues.
4. Give Peace Corps Volunteers tools and training to incorporate GAD into all projects.
5. Support and encourage Peace Corps Volunteers to incorporate GAD principles on a grass-roots level.

If you have any ideas about how to incorporate GAD into pre-service training, lessons learned from the field, or information on successful GAD projects, please relay the information to us. Your input and feedback will be useful.

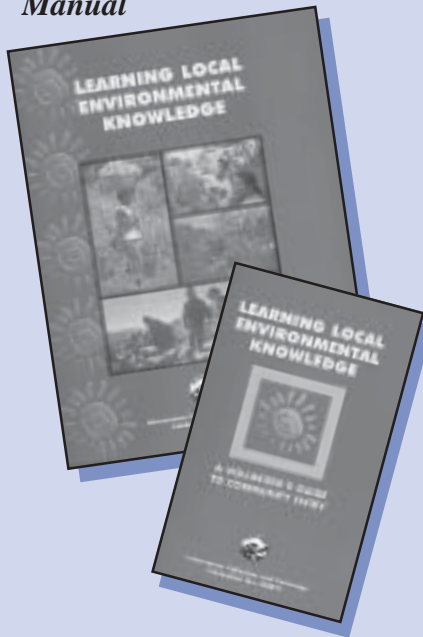
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WID Reviews in ICE

M0071 — *Learning Local Environmental Knowledge: A Volunteer's Guide to Community Entry*

T0126 — *Learning Local Environmental Knowledge: Training Manual*



The *Learning Local Environmental Knowledge* guide and training manual provide Volunteers with a structured way to learn about the biophysical, economic, and social aspects of a host community during the initial months of service. Using these materials, Volunteers explore and discover how community members perceive and relate to their local natural resource base. Increasing their understanding of local practices and livelihood strategies, they become valuable assets for community development. This is an excellent tool for Volunteers to use in their role as learners.

If you would like to use this book and it is not available in your resource center, you may order directly from ICE through your Peace Corps office. List your name, your sector, your address, the book title, and the ICE publication number, and a copy will be sent to you. Send your requests to:

Distribution Management Specialist
Peace Corps/The Center
1111 20th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20526 USA
vwomack@peacecorps.gov

To locate other resources, refer to *The Whole ICE Catalog* (RE 001), which contains a complete listing of technical books and publications from the Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange for use of Peace Corps Volunteers and staff. WID and GAD resources can be found on pages 163 to 171 of the catalog.

If you have a favorite ICE publication, *The Exchange* would like to share your review and comments on how you have used the resource. Please send a note to the WID office with the title and catalog number of the resource, and describe what you thought of the book, how you used it, and for what other projects you think it could be used. If you have found helpful resources not currently distributed through *The Whole ICE Catalog*, please send information on them as well. Through this sharing process, we can continue to help Volunteers find helpful and meaningful resources.

Gender in the Agriculture and Environment Sectors

By Jonathon Landeck/Agriculture and Environment Specialist/Africa

The idea that agriculture and environment projects can be designed and implemented without taking gender into account is not entirely realistic. The social, economic, technical, and political roles of men and women in every environmental conservation and food production project require careful consideration. Men and women have unique knowledge and perceptions about plants, animals, soils, and other natural resources, often resulting in different solutions for the same problems. The U.S. Agency for International Development¹ and the World Bank have established that effective and sustainable agricultural and environmental interventions must involve both women and men, even though their interests and perspectives may differ significantly. Their research shows that male and female farmers are equally efficient food producers when their access to information, credit, inputs, and markets is equitable and when the time women must spend on household and child-care tasks is reduced.

Gender Considerations

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) recognizes gender as a critical component for successful projects, and identifies four objectives in its “Gender and Development Plan of Action” (2002-2007),²

- Promote gender equality in the access to sufficient, safe, and nutritionally adequate food;
- Promote gender equality in the access to, control over, and management of natural resources and agricultural support services;



- Promote gender equality in policy- and decision-making processes at all levels in the agricultural and rural sector; and
- Promote gender equality in opportunities for on- and off-farm employment in rural areas.

These objectives guide FAO’s project planning and implementation, and are used as guidelines to ensure that gender roles and responsibilities are taken into account. The following examples highlight some gender dimensions of each objective and some questions Volunteers might consider in implementing agriculture and environment projects.

Promote gender equality in the access to sufficient, safe, and nutritionally adequate food.

The FAO defines food security as people’s access to available and nutritious food. Therefore, to achieve food security both men and women need the resources to produce food (i.e., land, labor, capital) and the purchasing power to buy food when and where it is not produced or available. Gender equality in food security prompts questions such as:

- Do families prioritize who is fed first, second, and last among household members?
- Who is responsible for ensuring that food is available, safe, nutritious, and well prepared?

Promote gender equality in the access to, control over, and management of natural resources and agricultural support services.

The FAO recognizes that the preservation of biological diversity³ is critical to achieving food security. When forest lands are cleared for timber, when ranges and meadows are overstocked with cattle, or when local bush meat is illegally hunted, there is a negative impact on biodiversity and rural people’s ability to grow and access food is reduced. Therefore, it is important to ask questions about rural men’s and women’s knowledge of their natural resources and their roles in determining how to manage local soils, crops, livestock, timber, and water. For example:

- Who makes decisions about which lands to clear and burn in any given year to grow field crops? Who decides where to plant crops? Who harvests the crops?
- Who determines which seeds to save and store from which crops, how much to store, and how much to sell?
- Is training in safe use of pesticides offered and conveniently available to both women and men?

¹ “Gender and Community Conservation,” *Gender Matters Quarterly* 3. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Women in Development, June 2001.

² Gender and Population Division (SDW), Sustainable Development Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Italy.

³ According to the Convention on Biological Diversity (www.biodiv.org/convention/articles.asp), this term refers to “the variability among living organisms from all sources including, *inter alia*, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.”

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Promote gender equality in policy- and decision-making processes at all levels in the agricultural and rural sector.

National decisions and policies about environmental conservation and agricultural support systems can have significantly different impacts on men and women at the local level. For example, access to credit or subsidies to purchase production inputs or build fences and storage facilities may be contingent on land ownership, tangible collateral (housing, livestock), or the right to sign a legally binding contract. Options like these may not be available to women who farm or manage local natural resources that they do not legally own. When men's and women's roles in natural resource management are understood, project planners can better address issues such as:

- What mechanisms and structures exist or can be established to better ensure the inclusion of rural women and men in biodiversity preservation and food production processes?
- Are local or subregional advisory committees or commodity associations represented at the national level? Who are their representatives?
- If cash crop production is dominated by men, are the food production needs of women farmers considered?

Promote gender equality in opportunities for on- and off-farm employment in rural areas.

Rural development issues related to "who works" versus "who works for wages" are frequently not discussed when environmental conservation and food production projects are planned. In most cases, development workers do not fully understand how the informal labor force is compensated in cash or in kind for its time and energy spent working on farms, in pastures, or in forests. Equity in employment opportunities and compensation between rural men and women is open to question, not to mention

equity between boys and girls. Generally speaking, the private commercial sector has performed poorly in rural areas of developing countries when it comes to generating employment. That is why the rural exodus of young men is a major development issue and why most women, by necessity, develop their own income generation activities. The following are some key issues to consider when promoting gender equality in rural employment opportunities:

- What kinds of employment opportunities exist in environmental conservation and food production in rural areas? (e.g., ecotourism programs and facilities, harvesting and processing non-timber forest products, building and marketing wood-conserving cook stoves)
- Who owns these businesses? Who does the work?
- How do men, women, girls, and boys obtain the investments needed to initiate these "job growth" activities? Are their respective sources of capital different?
- Who has time to engage in these enterprises? Who would cultivate the fields, watch the children, cook the meals, and go to the market instead?
- What skills do men, women, boys, and girls have that would make them more employable? Are they literate and numerate?



How to Include a Gender Perspective

When Volunteers and their counterparts understand the realities highlighted above, their projects better meet community agricultural and environmental needs in the long term. A key question for Volunteers and their counterparts to ask when developing a project is: How do the project objectives support or contradict the social and economic roles and responsibilities of men and women?

Considering gender and development is part of the Peace Corps' overall philosophical approach for effective and sustainable development as mandated in section 2502(d) of the Peace Corps Act. The assumptions of the Peace Corps' GAD approach are that men and women merit equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes and activities that affect their lives, and that natural resource management projects should benefit all household members. To ensure that gender needs of men and women are taken into account, Volunteers and counterparts working in the agriculture and environment sectors need to understand two fundamental issues:

1. The differences and similarities between men's and women's roles and needs related to agriculture and the environment; and
2. How project objectives in the agriculture and environment sectors address these gender roles and needs.

How do Volunteers achieve this? Peace Corps posts around the world integrate a gender perspective into various components of pre-service training (language, cross-cultural, technical, health, and safety and security) as well as in-service training. Yet, few Volunteers in the agriculture and environment sectors conduct adequate gender analysis prior to diving into their work. However, most Volunteers understand local

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GAD-Related Issues and Activities	Yes	No	Not Sure	Comments
Is there a division of labor between men and women in farming activities in the project area?				Determine and describe the division of labor.
Do men and women farmers face constraints in improving productivity?				Determine and describe these constraints.
Do men and women have similar access to and control over resources at the household level?				Determine and describe the access and control that women and men have over resources.
Do men and women farmers have similar understandings of and capacity to adopt sustainable resource management practices?				Determine and describe women's and men's understandings of their capacity to adopt sustainable natural resource management practices.
Is there a common system of land tenure security that treats men and women differently?				Determine and describe the system of land tenure security with reference to ownership and use rights.
Are there institutions that provide support to the particular farming needs of men and women?				Determine and describe the local institutions that support farm production and marketing.

gender norms. For example, in a particular culture, women may work with goats and sheep while men work with cattle. Or men may market meat and grain while women sell vegetables and fruit. Most agriculture and environment Volunteers can identify at least one such gender norm in their communities.

It is important, however, that Volunteers not form stereotypes about men's and women's roles. Gender roles vary within and between cultures, and change over time. For example, even though women may now participate economically in natural resource management activities, this is an area that may have been the domain of men not long ago. Differences in the level and intensity of women's and men's participation in certain activities may exist.

How do men's and women's needs differ in the agriculture and environment sectors? If some women manage gardens to improve the family's health and nutrition, for example, and their husbands do the same in order to sell the produce to obtain cash to buy cattle, men and women may require different kinds of seeds to meet their respective needs. Neither party's need is better or worse than the other, and both ultimately

benefit their families' well-being. Failure on the part of Volunteers and their counterparts to understand differences like these can easily lead to misdirected information, time, money, effort, and even hope.

If gender is such a critical aspect of project planning and implementation, how can Volunteers identify the gender roles and responsibilities in the communities in which they work? Above is a simple checklist adapted from the FAO's GAD framework, which can be used to ensure that gender needs are considered in any agriculture or environment project.

This checklist, along with the questions raised in the FAO objectives, can help Volunteers ensure that the needs of all community members are met. The most important result is that Volunteers and their counterparts become more aware of how to take gender roles and needs into account to ensure that agriculture and environment projects are relevant, effective, and sustainable. Examples of how Volunteers are taking gender into account can be found in two accompanying articles in this issue of *The Exchange*: "A Case Study: Gender Roles in Agroforestry in Guinea" and "Gender-Sensitive Agriculture and Environment Projects."

The following Information Collection and Exchange publications provide further information on integrating a gender perspective into agriculture and environment activities (for information on how to order ICE resources, refer to page 3):

- *Agricultural Extension for Women Farmers in Africa* (WD090)
- *Tools of Gender Analysis: A Guide to Field Methods for Bringing Gender Into Sustainable Resource Management* (WD112)
- *Tools for the Field: Methodologies Handbook for Gender Analysis in Agriculture* (WD114)
- *Women and IPM: Crop Protection Practices and Strategies* (WD136)
- *Women and Environment in the Third World: Alliance for the Future* (WD096)
- *Learning Local Environmental Knowledge: A Volunteer's Guide to Community Entry* (M0071)



Gender-Sensitive Agriculture and Environment Projects



Compiled by Jonathon Landeck/Agriculture and Environment Specialist/Africa and Tammy Boger/WID/GAD and ICT Assistant

The following summaries of Peace Corps agriculture and environment projects illustrate how Volunteers are applying a gender perspective to their work in these two sectors.¹ In other words, these projects take into account both men's and women's roles, responsibilities, needs, and opportunities so that all community members benefit from the projects' purpose and objectives.

Agriculture

- In the **Dominican Republic** Volunteers and counterparts increase female farmers' access to information, resources, and opportunities related to new production methods, marketing, and accounting.
- Many families in **Ecuador** rely on growing potatoes and onions for their livelihood. Volunteers and counterparts introduce rabbits and guinea pigs to promote nutrition for families while taking women's workload into consideration. Women learn how to make nutritional meals with guinea pigs or rabbits raised at home. Volunteers work primarily with women and youth, who were not involved in this project when the emphasis was on cattle and other large animals.
- In **Guatemala** women and girls are blurring traditional gender roles by engaging in horticulture. Volunteers teach women how to use compost and green manures in their kitchen gardens, and provide technical assistance to indigenous women in grafting techniques for fruit trees, traditionally a male role. Women in Guatemala have the primary responsibility for raising animals for consumption, and a Volunteer helped assemble basic veterinary kits for chickens and pigs to address the limited access to veterinary treatment and the loss of livestock from disease. Women now know how to vaccinate, and by providing vaccinations they are raising money to buy veterinary supplies such as antibiotics for their communities. They sell these supplies at a small profit and reinvest the earnings to increase the inventory of veterinary kits. The women are also learning about antibiotics, castration, deworming, how to give injections, and how to recognize and treat illnesses. Most important, they are learning basic principles of animal sanitation and disease prevention so that they can reduce their livestock losses and veterinary expenses. In turn, these women are teaching others in their community.
- Volunteers and counterparts in **Honduras** promote women as leaders in agriculture, since women are rarely recognized as community leaders and are not encouraged to actively share their knowledge with others. Through regional workshops women discuss topics such as self-esteem and self-motivation and receive training in small-animal (mostly chickens and pigs) care. Workshop participants have built 87 chicken coops and established 18 vaccination programs for chickens. They also teach other women how to prepare chicken feed and reproduction cages. Volunteers continue to involve men and youth to help them understand and support women's roles as leaders and agricultural producers in their communities. While keeping many of their traditional roles intact, the women have modified their own views and the views of others regarding their role.
- In **Panama** Volunteers held a seminar, titled "Backyard Nutrition," to help rural women address malnutrition resulting from the lack of arable land. Participants from various ethnic groups came together to learn about feasible techniques for growing food in their "backyards." Representatives from various national agencies addressed topics such as nutrition, the dietary needs of children, no-cost protein and vitamins, garden bed preparation, and seed beds. Two women who had attended previous seminars gave talks on self-esteem and medicinal plants.
- A Master's International Volunteer in **Paraguay** did her research on the role of rural women in the economy. She discovered that most women's interest in additional learning focused on small-animal production. While many Volunteers assume that fieldwork and crop production are the responsibility of men in rural areas, they are beginning to discover a variety of other patterns, such as women managing fields where *mandioca*, used to feed animals, is grown.
- One of the objectives of the agriculture project in **Senegal** is to improve seed variety and cultivation methods. To this end, Volunteers and counterparts are building the skills of both male and female farmers in areas outside their traditional roles. For example, Volunteers are working to popularize upland rice cultivation among male farmers, though rice cultivation is traditionally a women's activity.
- Women in **Zambia** have initiated several fish-farming ventures, challenging a traditional perception that fish farming is men's work. Volunteers advocate family

¹ These examples are taken from the fiscal year 2002 project status reports. For more information on Peace Corps agriculture and environment projects as well as WID and GAD, ask your APCD for a copy of the Peace Corps' 2002 Project and Training Status Reports: Global Summary and Promising Practices.

A Case Study: Gender Roles in Agroforestry in Guinea

By Jonathon Landeck/Agriculture and Environment Specialist/Africa

To understand how gender shapes environmental activities, it is important to be aware of who uses resources and how, who is affected by resource use, and who has the authority to make decisions about resource use. Gender analysis is an important tool for learning about men's and women's different perspectives in order to avoid reliance on stereotypes. The following case study is an example of the roles of male and female farmers in one agricultural ecosystem. It demonstrates how Volunteers can use gender analysis to design projects that respect gender roles and address barriers to women's participation.

Case Study

In the highlands of Guinea, male and female farmers have significantly different roles with respect to soil and crop management. The women grow maize year after year in plots around their homes. These fields are protected from livestock by permanent fences built by men. The maize crops are fertilized solely by the application of leaf



mulch, which women cut from trees in the surrounding forest. The mulch adds organic nutrients to the crop and suppresses weed growth. Taro, a root crop, is commonly intercropped with the maize. In fields beyond the fenced-in maize, the men grow upland rice, peanuts, sorghum, and *fonio*, a small grain. These fields are planted for three to five years and then left fallow for five to 10 years. To control livestock movement, the men build fences around these fields. When new land

is cleared for cultivation, the hillside is burned.

Both women and men understand the value of decomposed tree leaves as a fertilizer even though they use them in different ways. The women use leaves cut from trees to mulch their maize, while the men maintain trees in their fields because the leaves that fall add fertility to soils even when the leaves are burned¹ during land clearing. Women have little use for fire in their fields

¹ In both cases, the leaves add nutrients, but burned leaves contribute different nutrients than leaf mulch.

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Gender-Sensitive Projects continued from page 7

management of fish-farming activities rather than individual or group management. Family management results in increased fish production, more equitable distribution of benefits, and better chances for long-term sustainability.

Environment

- Volunteers in **Nepal** help female members of community forest groups develop the leadership and organizational skills they need to voice their views and to motivate other women to become involved in natural resources management. Group members are developing action

plans and networking with similar groups to share best practices.

- Young girls interested in environmental protection participated in six GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) camps in **Romania**. The camps, heavily focused on environmental issues, were designed to promote awareness and train future leaders.
- In **Samoa** a Volunteer assisted her counterpart in gathering and recording traditional knowledge of natural resources from villagers. The Volunteer interacted mainly with women, who tend to remain

quiet in discussions that include men, even though women do most of the harvesting of marine organisms from shallow areas of the reef and lagoon.

- Volunteers and counterparts in **Tanzania** teach women how to use fuel-efficient cook stoves. The women now spend less time harvesting wood for cooking and use fewer trees as sources of fuel.
- A Volunteer in **The Gambia** taught beekeeping, traditionally a male-only activity, to 38 men and 16 women. Five of the women are now keeping bees as a business.

A Case Study continued from page 8

because they don't rely on burned leaves to suppress weed growth. Moreover, women prefer to mulch their crop with younger, smaller leaves because these decompose quicker than older ones. While women consider mulching to be their most onerous task, they see it as indispensable to maize production. Men, in contrast, see weeding as one of several labor-intensive tasks, including fence building and land clearing.

Thus, both men and women in this region perceive the presence of trees in cropland as the determining factor in soil fertility. Men also see certain trees and grasses as an indicator that land is relatively fertile. They like trees to grow on their cropland during fallow periods because the trees that fall when they clear the land inhibit soil from washing down hillside slopes when it rains. Except for fruit trees growing next to houses, the fields that women cultivate remain rela-

tively treeless because trees compete with maize for sunlight and water.

Gender Analysis

Some of the gender roles, division of labor, access to resources, power relations, and gender needs² of men and women in this community can be determined from examining the farming systems described. Using only the information from the above case study, what can you determine about how gender roles impact agroforestry?

From this exercise, it is clear that even a modest examination of the different roles and perceptions of male and female farmers offers insight on what gender-sensitive agroforestry might look like. In this example, Volunteers would determine and take into account which tree species men value most

for soil fertility and conservation for their fields (rice, sorghum, *fonio*, peanut) and which trees women value most for mulching their maize fields.

An agroforestry activity might take advantage of fences that men have already built as barriers to livestock that might otherwise graze on newly planted trees. It might also consider strategic locations for planting new trees. For example, trees planted to benefit women's work would be closer to their maize fields than the trees from which they currently gather leaves for mulch. But they would not be close enough to compete with maize for sunlight, water, and nutrients. Trees planted to benefit men's work, on the other hand, would best be planted at more or less equidistant points across the field to help ensure the uniformity of leaves dropped from trees and, likewise, the uniformity of soil fertility.

Gender Roles	Women ...	Men ...
Who uses the natural resources of these communities, and how?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use land close to home to grow maize, taro, and fruit. • Use leaves cut from trees and animal manure to fertilize maize and taro fields. • Use wood for permanent fences (built by men) to enclose maize fields and control livestock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use land farther from home to grow grains and peanuts. • Use leaves that fall from trees growing on farmland, burning them before seeding. • Use wood to build temporary fences to enclose grain fields and control livestock.
Who is affected by the use of these resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men, women, and children are affected in a positive way because maize is the most valuable grain crop sold in local and regional markets, and it is nutritious. • Men, women, and children are affected in a negative way by deforestation from fence building around maize fields, which degrades the local environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men, women, and children are affected in a positive way because rice, <i>fonio</i>, sorghum, and peanuts are staple foods. • Men, women, and children are affected negatively by deforestation from land clearing and fence building, which degrades the local environment.
Who has the authority to make decisions about resource use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women decide which tree leaves to use for mulching maize and when to apply the mulch. • Women decide how much maize to sell, when to sell it, how much to save for planting, and how much to serve as meals. • Women decide how much staple food to sell, when to sell it, how much to save, and how much to cook. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men decide which fields to clear, when to burn the fields, and when and where to plant various crops on the hillside. • Men decide where to build new fences to expand maize fields and which fences need repair. • Men decide where to build temporary fences around nonmaize croplands.

² For a detailed description of this gender analysis framework, see *The Exchange*, volume 32 (winter 2000), page 9.

Integrating Gender Into Environmental Education and Awareness in Nepal

By Wendy King/WIDTECH Consultant

In an effort to incorporate a gender perspective into Volunteer and staff training, Peace Corps/Nepal engaged a consultant through WIDTECH (Women in Development Technical Assistance Project) with support from USAID to design and facilitate sessions on gender and caste for an environmental education in-service training. The objectives of the gender and caste component of the training were to:

- Ensure the ability of Volunteers and their counterparts to address gender issues in environmental education; promote gender-sensitive environmental education; and conduct such activities in schools, with families, and with communities; and
- Increase the ability of Peace Corps/Nepal staff and other participants to provide guidance to Volunteers and counterparts not involved in this training on integrating gender perspectives into their environmental education activities.



concepts, practical tools, and activities. The five workshop sessions introduced topics such as gender, gender terminology, gender in the project cycle, gender analysis tools, masculinity, gender assessment of environmental education materials, caste perspectives, and human trafficking. In support of mainstreaming gender perspectives, the gender and caste sessions were incorporated throughout the five-day workshop.

The strategy for the gender and caste component was to balance theory and practical tools. However, the strategy was adapted to the Peace Corps context in response to daily evaluations, consultations with participants, and the limited time allocated for the gender and caste component.

The final activity of the workshop was action planning that focused on environmental education in five sectors (education, health, natural resources management, water and sanitation, and youth development). Each of the action plans effectively incorporated key gender and caste perspectives and approaches:

- The natural resources management group planned to develop a paper production enterprise with a gender balance in planning, implementing, and benefiting from the enterprise.
- The water and sanitation group's priorities were education and awareness focus-

ing on enrollment and retention of girls and other low-caste groups such as untouchables in schools and provision of sanitation messages in schools, such as the importance of regular hand washing for good health.

- The health group decided to focus on education for three groups: newly married couples; boys and girls in grades 8, 9, and 10 and village women.
- The youth development group decided to organize a camp for boys, girls, and low-caste youth.
- The education group planned to address a specific obstacle for girls and other low-caste groups attending school by constructing water and toilet facilities at schools.

In their final action plans, all groups reflected sharper gender perspectives and increased awareness. Peace Corps/Nepal staff commented that they gained a clearer understanding of gender and development and will now be able to provide stronger guidance to Volunteers. Peace Corps/Nepal's next steps include building on this foundation by mainstreaming gender and development into pre-service training and other in-service trainings and by harnessing the ideas, commitment, and experience of local NGOs that are working on gender and development.

You can access a complete report by Wendy King on the WIDTECH website (www.widtech.org) under the training section.

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In light of the broad range of participants' experiences and needs, the gender and caste component was designed to provide basic

Supporting Women Agricultural Leaders in Honduras

By Luis Estrada/APCD/Hillside Farming

The Peace Corps' family hillside farming project in Honduras addresses the need for female leaders in the agriculture sector by helping women develop their talents and skills. Regional conferences have been an enormous success in achieving this goal. The women go back to their sites motivated to work with Volunteers on project activities, and they participate more actively in other community development activities.

As a result of these previous successes, a regional conference was held in western Honduras to provide women the opportunity to exchange experiences and learn from one another. It was a big event for many of the participants, most of whom had never left their communities before. For example, one participant lives on a model farm and helps train local farmers with her husband. While her husband has traveled to many places in the country and has attended, organized, and led conferences, she had never gone farther than the departmental capital, 25 kilometers away. When a Volunteer invited her to participate, she assumed he was inviting her husband; she was thrilled when she realized the Volunteer wanted *her* to come.

Although some of the women were nervous during discussions, they were able to overcome their fears with the support of Volunteers and the other participants. Discussion topics included leadership, self-esteem, motivation, and communication skills. Two women who had participated in previous workshops taught participants how to use medicinal plants and how to cook with *gandul* (a cousin of the soybean). During the



SEEDS OF SUCCESS: Future agricultural leaders are nurtured in Honduras.

File photo from Peace Corps/Honduras

diploma ceremony at the close of the conference, many participants shed tears and several remarked that their diploma was the first they had ever received.

After these conferences, participants continue to work with Volunteers and share the information and skills they acquired with their communities. The women, with support from Volunteers, have organized meetings to deliver training in leadership, gender roles, and technical skills. Some women needed additional support, but most demonstrated a high commitment to conducting formal training sessions and field demonstrations. For example,

- Pascuala Sánchez is now president of the local community council;
- Cándida Vásquez is now giving training sessions with her husband on their farm;
- Paula Acosta has been elected by the municipal council to be the spokesperson for the villages;

- Some of the women joined Volunteers in building chicken coops and pigpens; and
- Fondo Cristiano, an NGO, supports the women by paying for follow-up training.

A highlight of these events is when women who attended previous conferences lead the conference events and share their experiences and skills. One of the keys to a successful conference is to help women increase their self-esteem, which is done through motivational sessions and activities that help them realize how much they contribute to the daily life of their families. Once women learn to appreciate themselves, it is easier to introduce leadership or technical skills.

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Women's Group of Hope and Progress in Nicaragua

By Meme McKee/PCV

My Nicaraguan counterpart, who has a long history of working with male farmers, and I invited all the farmers' wives to a meeting in order to form a working group for future activities. He explained that the group would have to form a board, including a president, vice president, and so forth. At the mention of this requirement, the meeting went no further. All previously interested eyes suddenly changed, and I was left feeling lost and confused. My counterpart zoomed off on his motorcycle, and I watched the women walk away slowly, looking back as if they wanted to say something more.

The next day, they approached me one by one, and I soon learned that they were afraid they could not fulfill the needs of the group. The reason, many said, was that they could not read or write; others said that while

they could read, they had never been asked to do so. They had been frightened by the formal approach and wondered how they could be in such a group. When I called another meeting to explain that the group would not need a board after all, interest skyrocketed.

Our first project was to start a tree garden. Several women volunteered to bring seeds that had recently fallen, and my counterpart contributed plastic bags. Three months later, each of the 16 women planted 35 trees on their farms for reforestation. After a few months of working together, the women told me they were interested in a chicken project. The group then formed a directive board, developed a proposal, and solicited funds, and the project began to unfold. We quickly saw that the project would involve the work of both men and women. As we now reach

our one-year anniversary, 16 chicken pens are being finished, each of which will hold a stock of 10 new birds. Now when we have meetings, I can hardly get in a single word. The women have taken on the leadership role.

Together we have learned that development is about how we can better the lives of the whole family, and how women and men can work together to accomplish that goal. The members of the Women's Group of Hope and Progress have accomplished amazing things because they believe in themselves and in their capabilities.

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First Time for Everything continued from page 1

After arriving at the sanitarium, we did introductions and icebreakers, went through the rules of the camp, discussed the schedule for the next couple of days, and divided the girls into two groups of 10 for hiking. Sessions at the sanitarium focused on environmental awareness, basic laws of ecology, and the leave-no-trace approach to hiking and camping. There also was a two-hour lesson on gender roles, the difference between the terms sex and gender, and women in leadership. Sasha and Svetlana familiarized the girls with the equipment, including how to pack and carry a backpack, set up a tent, and start a campfire. The afternoon and evening programs focused on group dynamics, trust, leadership building, and critical thinking.

During the hike, girls had daily duties that included selecting and setting up a campsite, building a fire, cooking, and cleaning. At evening campfires, girls spoke about what they hoped to learn during the week, what challenges they had faced and overcome, and something they had discovered about themselves. We sang songs, told scary stories, and introduced the girls to s'mores. Sasha and

Svetlana led a day hike up to a glacier, where we crossed the Kora River several times. On smaller excursions to caves and on nature hikes, we learned about the wild mushrooms and herbs of the area. An environmental scavenger hunt featured exercises in critical thinking and problem solving, and various blindfold activities built trust among the girls.

Sasha and Svetlana learned that it is possible to take a group of only girls into the woods, to cross rivers with only female hands, and to hike steep inclines by supporting one another. They learned that girls, too, can gather wood for a fire. For many of the girls, this was not only the first time they had left home but the first time they had carried a backpack, slept in a tent, and carried six days' worth of food. They were empowered because they learned to trust, depend



***BUILDING SELF-SUFFICIENCY:**
Guides Aleksandra Nikolaevna and Svetlana Fredrovena teach campers how to pitch their own tents.*

Photo submitted by Jackie Redmer/PCV

on, and support one another and overcame both social and physical challenges. They also experienced the joys of living in nature for an extended period of time.

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Engendering Development

By Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator

“Engendering Development” is an ongoing column that provides theories and tools for integrating a gender perspective into programming and training.

Recent articles for this column have focused on the Peace Corps’ strategy to incorporate gender into programming and training. In this article, we step outside the Peace Corps to look at other global efforts to address gender issues in a variety of contexts. Every three years, the Association for Women’s Rights in Development holds an international forum to provide the opportunity to develop strategies, share ideas, build skills, and provide support to advance gender equality and social justice. It is the largest regularly held international forum on gender equality outside the United Nations system.

The ninth international forum, which focused on “Reinventing Globalization,” was held in Guadalajara, Mexico, in October 2002. There were five themes: women’s rights and economic change, young women and leadership, gender equality and new technologies, feminist organizational development, and women’s rights and the new global order. More than 1,300 male and female policymakers, practitioners, donors, researchers, grass-roots activists, students, and business people from over 100 countries participated.

Over 150 workshops, debates, plenary sessions, and skill-building sessions allowed participants to analyze current approaches to economic and political change and strategize on how to translate ideas into concrete actions. The program was designed to forge action plans to further women’s rights, build practical skills, facilitate international networking, and create inclusive spaces for both young and adult women, as well as for participants with a variety of backgrounds and experience.

With over 43 sessions each day, there was a wide range of topics, including funding trends for women’s rights, power and negotiation, domestic violence and pop culture, and leadership for the future of gender and development as well as the women’s human rights movement. Two sessions of particular relevance to the work of Peace Corps Volunteers are highlighted below.

Trafficking in Persons: The Development Response was presented by the Women in Development office of the U.S. Agency for International Development. The U.S. government’s approach to trafficking is an integrated strategy based on prevention, protection and assistance for victims, and prosecution of traffickers. USAID is positioned to play an important role in the government’s anti-trafficking efforts. A significant part of USAID’s development assistance is aimed at programs that help create conditions that



lessen the vulnerability of women and children to traffickers, such as poverty reduction, girls’ education, promotion of the rule of law, and equal economic and political opportunities for women. While not sufficient by themselves to eliminate trafficking, these programs provide important reinforcement for activities specifically targeted at the prevention of trafficking and assistance and protection for victims.

You Work With Adults, Don’t You? was presented by members of the Youth Coalition, an international organization that promotes the sexual and reproductive rights of youth. This skill-building session for youth and those who work with young people asked the provocative question “How do we work effectively with adults?” By sharing best (and worst) practices,

participants learned communication and networking strategies, inclusive advocacy techniques, how to develop leadership and learning partnerships, and where feminist youth organizational development is headed—all the ingredients needed to build successful youth-adult partnerships.

Session participants identified obstacles to youth’s participation in adult environments, which include lack of respect, lack of a feeling of belonging, lack of trust and confidence in youth, and the fact that the lack of a university degree is equated with lack of knowledge. Participants also identified reasons for the obstacles and strategies to address them. Reasons include the tendency to treat youth like children; resistance to the ideas and passion of youth as a movement toward radical change; equating credibility with the attainment of university degrees; and the painful process of realizing that one’s own youth is lost. Some of the strategies for increasing youth’s participation are identifying adults who believe in and can support youth; encouraging youth to organize themselves; being sensitive to organizations’ internal politics; and promoting the benefits of viewing projects from the perspective of youth.

The website of the Association for Women’s Rights in Development (www.awid.org) is full of information to inspire, educate, and connect individuals and organizations that are working to promote gender equality around the globe. Click on “AWID’s 9th International Forum” for workshop summaries, the text of plenary session speeches, information on AWID’s Globalize This! campaign, and more.

How To...

Using Drama to Build Confidence in Togo

By Jessica Krakow/PCV

NOTE: This article discusses how to conduct drama sessions with youth. The role plays described below can be very powerful and may raise strong emotions among participants. Sessions such as these should be conducted only by facilitators who have the necessary skills (such as conflict resolution and negotiation) to help students address the emotions that are raised. Volunteers interested in using this approach should first watch those experienced in conducting role plays or practice with their colleagues before facilitating role plays with students.

The more I study the issue of girls' education, the more I realize that getting girls into school is only half of the equation. Often yelled at by teachers and taunted by boys, girls are timid and shy. Without the confidence to speak up, girls cannot succeed. One method of boosting their self-confidence is through role plays, a technique that uses drama to explore emotions or aid in personal discovery. The hypothetical nature of the scenarios and the controlled environment of the role plays provide a safe place for girls to express themselves. They are able to step outside their shy personas and abandon the roles they adopt to fit the standards of society. The exercises allow girls to discover the self-awareness and self-confidence necessary to succeed in school. Because of their greater maturity, high school girls are the most appropriate group for this type of activity.

Since it is essential that a group be small enough for members to become close to and trust one another, groups should be limited to no more than 17 girls. During the first few meetings, the group should focus on getting to know one another on a more personal level to create trust through culturally specific games, singing, and dancing. Facilitators should learn girls' names to forge a closer relationship with them. For homework, the girls might write something (anonymously if preferred) describing the challenges they face in school and what discourages them from attending. It is important to get the girls' perspective and understand exactly where their constraints lie in order to develop appropriate role-playing scenarios.

Following are three of the scenarios that I have used. During the scenes, stand nearby for support. If the girls are confused or get stuck (repeating the same lines or not listening to each other), they can motion for assistance and (without stopping the scene) you can explain the scene again. Quietly whisper a question to them, such as "What do you really want to say?" or "What are you afraid to say?" This gives the girls ideas without telling them how to run the scene. The more control the girls have over the scenes, the more power they will feel through their words and actions and the more



ACTING OUT: Teens role-play as part of a drama club in Togo.
Photo by Jessica Krakow/PCV

their self-confidence will soar. It is important to make sure that the girls in the audience are respectful during the scenes to support the focus and honesty of the actors.

Sample Scenarios

- Pick one girl to play a father who refuses to send his daughter to school and another actor to play a girl who is trying to convince her father that she should continue with school. The girls will probably jump right into the scene, with the father refusing and the daughter pleading. The best part of this exercise is the amazing release that the girls feel. Discovering what they truly want to say and do gives them confidence and power. This exercise is designed to help girls understand the elements of their relationships, where the conflicts lie, and most important, the other person's side. In the process, the girls find their own voices and practice ways of communicating with others.
- A girl tells a friend she is pregnant. This scenario makes the issue more real, allowing girls to imagine what the situation would feel like if it were happening to them.
- A girl tells her friend that she has contracted HIV. With this scenario, the girls begin to see that AIDS does indeed exist and

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that they need to consider how to protect themselves while also comforting those who are infected. The objective is to release the fear of this disease and create awareness that it can happen to anyone—one's best friend or even oneself.

Processing

It is important to help the girls process the scenes that they have just viewed or enacted. One way of doing this is to have the audience ask questions of the actors while they are still in character. For example, "How do you feel when people are scared of you because you have AIDS?" The actors reply in character, making themselves completely three-dimensional. This gives members of the audience a chance to express their opinions and feelings. After the question-and-answer period, thank the actors for their performances and allow them to rejoin the larger group. As a large group, discuss what they have learned, how these lessons have affected them, and what they hope to take with them from this activity.

Theater sheds light on different worldviews, helping people open up to new ways of thinking. "Wow," a girl might think, "I never thought of it like that before." Slowly, with that change of perspective, girls begin to change unsafe behavior into productive, helpful behavior, which, if I'm not mistaken, is what development is all about.

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Tips for Conducting Role Plays

- Be conscientious in selecting actors for specific roles, especially with sensitive scenarios.
- Encourage actors to use "I" statements instead of "you." For example, instead of saying, "You made me angry when you said I was ugly," girls should be encouraged to say, "I feel mad when I am told that I am ugly."
- Do not get upset with the girls or penalize them for the way the scenes evolve. Allow the girls to think and act for themselves.
- When actors react to a scene with fear, have the girls switch roles and do the same scene again to allow them to experience what it is like to be each character. Afterward, talk about why they were scared and do the scene yet again. Generally, the girls will be much more open and responsive.
- Switching roles is also useful when both characters are extremely stubborn and refuse to see the other character's side. This opens their eyes to another point of view, leads to greater comprehension, and eventually evokes a more satisfying resolution.
- Be flexible. Do not have a definite teaching or directing plan. Give the girls the characters and a rough background, but let them discover their creativity and spontaneity. The exciting part of this work is that it is always the girls who come up with the ideas. If they are uncomfortable or unsure of something, try to explain better or simplify the scene, but never run the scene for them. Never say: "You must say no" or "You will get pregnant." Rather, ask: "What do you want to say?"
- Do not lose patience. If the role plays do not run smoothly, remember where the girls are coming from and start over or explain the scene further. The idea is to coax them out of a shy place and let them learn to talk at their own pace. This gives them a sense of their individuality and allows them to let go of their fears and take control.

WHAT'S GOING ON...

Building Bridges to the Future in Russia Far East

By Marguerite Rupsis/PCV

One hundred Russian businesswomen from Khabarovsk, Russia, gathered with Peace Corps Volunteers for the first annual International Women's Conference. Organized in collaboration with the Russian American Education Center (ARC), the theme of the conference was "Building Bridges to the Future." The conference was a great chance for experienced businesswomen to share ideas and work on plans for a future consulting center to assist in the creation of new businesses. The three main goals of the conference were to increase contact among business leaders and the ARC, to discuss and seek solutions to the common problems that face modern businesswomen, and to provide information about possible sources of funding and assistance.

In opening remarks, the chairman of the Khabarovsk Economic Committee, Alexander Levinthal, spoke of the success of businesswomen in Khabarovsk and their impact on the city's economy. He noted a steady increase in the number of businesses founded by women, as well as women's increased involvement in local business events.

The conference featured speeches by local business leaders, including bank representatives, who spoke about their consulting services and opportunities for low-interest loans. A round table focused on the creation of a citywide business resource center that could provide consultation services on a volunteer basis. A majority of participants agreed to ask the local government administration to provide support to the Kha-

barovsk Businesswomen's Union and other local businesswomen in their establishment of the resource center.

Volunteers gathered after the conference to share their thoughts. While everyone agreed that the conference differed greatly from their expectations, all were pleased that it had been entirely Russian led and organized. This bodes well for the future of this event and the ability to continue it without the Peace Corps' assistance.

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Teaching Gender Issues in Ukraine

By Elizabeth Spears/PCV

Recognizing that the issue of gender and development is not a high-profile one in Ukraine, TEFL Volunteers decided to develop a curriculum for teaching the concept of gender and gender roles to their students.

The curriculum involves defining gender and societal roles, recognizing stereotypes, and exploring equality and nontraditional roles. Volunteers tested the curriculum in their classrooms and at summer camps, identifying what worked and what did not. They compiled the results in a 22-lesson manual for a two-day workshop, enabling other Volunteers to use the materials. Students in five classrooms at the secondary school and university levels subsequently were introduced to these concepts.

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The *Whole ICE Catalog* lists numerous resources to help Volunteers teach gender and development topics. The following are a few examples:

In the Classroom: Empowering Girls (M0083)

Gender and Development: The CEDPA Training Manual Series, Vol. III (WD133)

The Oxfam Gender Training Manual (WD139)

Gender Relations Analysis: A Guide for Trainers (WD138)

Choose a Future: Issues and Options for Adolescent Girls (WD127)

Choose a Future: Issues and Options for Adolescent Boys (YD132)

Life Skills Manual (M0061)

Choices: A Teen Woman's Journal for Self-Awareness and Planning (WD135)

In addition, many Peace Corps publications are available electronically through the online library at :
www.peacecorps.gov/library.

Peace Corps/Niger's Women's Work Fair

By Kim Ziropoulos/PCV

The Women's Work Fair brought together female community leaders to provide skills training, information sessions, and a forum for the exchange of experiences and ideas. Volunteers from across Niger worked with their host communities to select motivated women who are both leaders in their communities and active in small income-generating activities.

The introductory session of the fair stressed the importance of follow-up on a local level. After a preview of the schedule, the women divided themselves into groups of Hausa and Zarma speakers (the fair was facilitated in both local languages).

The information sessions focused on AIDS, traditional health practices, small business and money management, reproductive health, and women's rights under Islam. Participants discussed the traditional health practices in their regions and learned about the positive and negative impacts of those practices. In the money management session, the women described their income-generating activities and shared ideas about improving and expanding them. They calculated profit, learned ways to maximize earnings, considered their responsibilities and expenses, and developed a list of economic



SQUEEZING A FUTURE FROM PEANUTS: Participants in Niger's Women's Work Fair learn to extract oil during a session on income-generating activities.

Photo submitted by Assalama Sidi Dawalak/APCD/Education

priorities. Next came a riveting discussion of women's rights, during which the women asked myriad questions. The program also included a video promoting girls' education in both Hausa and Zarma.

Four practical sessions gave the women a chance to learn and practice new skills, such as how to make bread over a traditional cooking fire, prepare weaning porridges, establish a garden, and process peanuts, including oil extraction and the production of peanut-brittle candy.

Before the fair ended, the women met to plan a regional follow-up. Participants went home motivated to share what they had

learned and to continue striving to improve the well-being of their families and communities. In the future, Volunteers and participants will work together to organize village visits, regional gatherings, presentations at local markets in order to facilitate the transfer of information to the participants' home communities.

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Bolivian Youth Spread Their Wings

By Susan Discus/PCV

Volunteers, representatives from local organizations, and local professional women organized a gender and development conference titled "Wings of Equality; Flying to the Future." It provided teenage girls and boys the opportunity to explore and analyze the issues and causes of gender inequality in their communities. The conference was also designed to help open their minds to the opportunities available to them in the future.

A total of 26 teenagers participated in the four-day conference. The topics included self-esteem, interpersonal communication, sex and gender, goal setting, careers, educa-

tion, health, domestic violence, and alcoholism. Each participant accompanied a professional woman to work in order to observe, converse, and interact. Both boys and girls had the chance to see a woman doing her job and learn about her life, her education, and her struggles.

To learn about the educational alternatives available, participants visited several technical schools and different departments at universities. During these visits, the teens had the opportunity to learn more about career options, speak with individuals in particular fields, and understand the need to set goals and identify pathways to reach them.

As the conference ended we noticed several changes in the youth. Some appeared more confident; some were enthusiastic about starting to plan for their future. All the teenagers seemed hopeful about the opportunities available to them and eager to share their experiences with others.

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The Sevastopol Women's Empowerment Through Service Project in Ukraine

By Amy Daniels and Alyson Sowers/PCVs

Many women in the Sevastopol region of Ukraine have had little or no training in leadership and teamwork. In addition, while there may be strong community spirit, there are few outlets for women who wish to volunteer and assist other women. Therefore, the Sevastopol Women's Empowerment Through Service Project was developed with the goal of establishing an organization run by young female leaders committed to serving other women in their community. The project's mission is to explore gender issues and community service and to develop leadership and teamwork skills. In doing so, the project promotes the principle that women can affect positive change in the community by establishing a self-sustaining women's organization founded on the idea that "service is empowerment."

The weeklong empowerment seminar that launched the project provided the opportunity for young female leaders to discuss gen-



DRAWING THE FUTURE: Young women draw their ideal leader during a workshop in Ukraine.

Photo by Alyson Sowers/PCV



COMMUNICATING THROUGH ART: Participants display the results of a communication activity during an empowerment seminar.

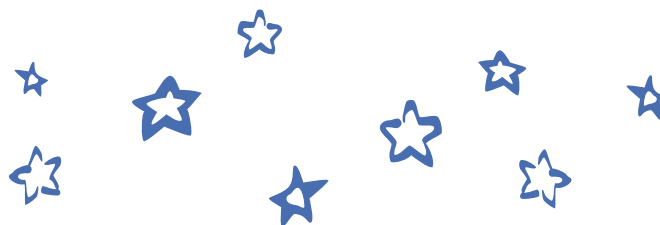
Photo by Alyson Sowers/PCV

der issues, improve their communication skills, foster a sense of teamwork and trust, improve their leadership skills through self-discovery activities, and discuss and promote the idea of service in the community.

Each day of the seminar had a theme. The week began with a discussion of women in society, stereotypes, gender issues, leadership, self-exploration, teamwork, and problem solving. It continued with discussions about forming the service organization. By the end of the seminar, the women had formed a young women's service organization called People and Me. Since then, the women have held follow-up meetings and

have chosen sexual health as the focus of their first project. They were previously trained as trainers for the sexual health education program "Sound Mind, Sound Body," and they will spend the next year visiting area schools and universities to implement the program.

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Camp GLOW in the Kyrgyz Republic

By Leslie Wakulich/PCV

The first Peace Corps/Kyrgyz Republic Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) brought together young Kyrgyz and Russian women ages 12 to 17 for sessions on leadership, team building, and decision making. The girls also learned about women's health from a female Kyrgyz doctor and about women's rights from representatives of the United Nations Development Programme and a Bishkek women's shelter. Female students from a local university escorted the girls to camp and served as counselors. Participants were chosen on the basis of the quality and insight of their essays, the topic of which was problems facing Kyrgyz women and their future in the republic.

The camp's theme, "Shaking the Tree," urged the girls to "shake up the tree of life to get more out of it," PCV Jill Morrison said. She added that the camp was "about changing your life, changing traditions, and



empowering yourself." A life-size paper tree with painted leaves that hung on the wall in the community room served as a forum for the girls to express their feelings and thoughts.

Participants discussed gender issues throughout the week, and daily craft projects and social events, such as a talent show and group skit performances, encouraged the campers to explore their individuality. Many of the shy campers were less hesitant by the time the camp ended, demonstrating an increase in confidence.

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Girls Conference in El Salvador

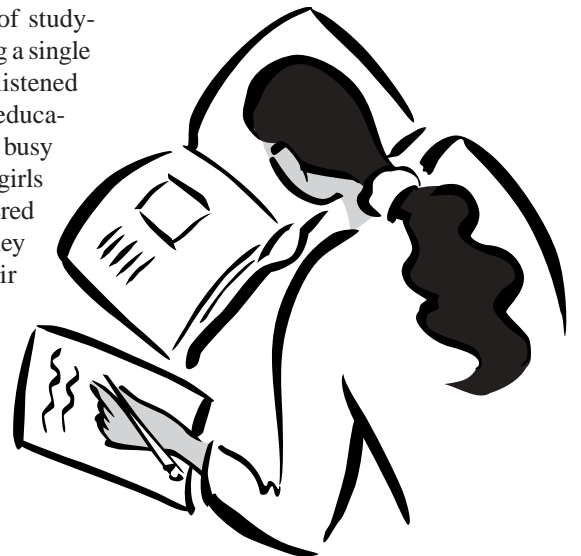
By Samantha Mora Reinhart/PCV

Volunteers in El Salvador held a motivational seminar for 20 promising young women ranging in age from 14 to 22. The first night, the young women engaged in ice-breakers and prepared for the professional women's exchange the following day by developing interview questions and selecting the careers that most interested them. The girls spent the next day at work with two professional women, one in the morning, the other in the afternoon. That night the girls shared their experiences in a processing workshop. They were impressed by the openness of the professional women and the support and encouragement they offered.

On the second day, participants toured three public, private, and technical universities in the capital. The girls received information about academics, admissions, student life, and scholarships. During a round-table

exchange on the final day, professional women shared their experiences of studying, working, and, in one case, being a single parent at the same time. The girls listened to the women's stories about their education and careers and then kept them busy with questions. The majority of the girls said that their outlook had been altered as a result of the seminar and that they realized they could achieve their goals through hard work and determination.

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Young Women in Tonga Learn How to Be Leaders

By Kiran Dhillon/PCV

Twenty-three blindfolded girls weaved across the wide lawn. Secured together by one length of rope, they bumped into one another as they tried to negotiate their way around the grass. Two more young ladies circled the group, whistling intermittently. As they whistled, the girls hushed their confused deliberations and cocked their heads, listening intently. When the whistle faded, several girls led the group into different directions. The "human blob" seethed; girls pressed against the group's borders, following the whistle's beckon. Casting off their blindfolds and untying the rope, they gathered with their "captors" and discussed which girls had emerged as leaders in the confusion and how those leaders had gained the confidence of the others.

The Human Blob leadership game was one of many hands-on activities during Camp GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) in Tonga. This weeklong event was designed to provide an educational and inspirational forum for girls ages 17 to 26 to share experiences, gain knowledge and fresh perspectives, and explore available resources in Tonga. Camp GLOW presented information

on decision making, changing cultural expectations, building self-esteem, health and nutrition, environmental awareness, sex education, life planning, and educational and career opportunities.

Three Tongan youth who had attended a previous workshop on life skills conducted sessions on decision-making and critical-thinking skills. Other sessions featured speakers from local businesses and the hospital. And a youth drama group presented lively and informative skits on HIV/AIDS and environmental hazards.

The girls spent evenings playing netball, hiking to the peak of the islands' highest mountain, or participating in a scavenger hunt, movie night, talent show, and beach picnic. The girls were also able to spend a Sunday attending church with members of their extended families, with whom they did not normally have the opportunity to visit. Now armed with new information and knowledge of opportunities, the participants will become the facilitators of their own Camp GLOW when they return to their respective islands.

At the close of the camp, the girls received certificates at a formal presentation. Local youth groups were invited to help celebrate at a barbecue afterward. In the evening, when the last well-wisher had gone, the girls gathered together one last time. With lights doused and arms linked, the GLOW girls passed a candle around. As each girl held the candle, she described how the camp had affected her. Camp GLOW had undoubtedly touched each girl deeply. One hopes the relationships and knowledge they gained from the experience will continue to guide future decisions.

Editor's note: For more information on conducting Camp GLOW, consult the Camp GLOW Handbook for Volunteers, now available through Information Collection and Exchange.

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GLOWING WITH ENTHUSIASM: Campers prepare for one of the many hands-on activities designed to build leadership and self-esteem.

Photo submitted by Elenoa Kauvaka/Language Coordinator

Peace Corps Celebrates International Women's Day

Compiled by Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator

International Women's Day has its origins in a march held by immigrant workers. In 1908 they marched in New York to demand higher wages, better working conditions, and the right to vote. This inspired women during a 1910 socialist conference in Europe to declare March 8 International Women's Day in recognition of the immigrants' struggle. Though not widely celebrated in the United States in the 1950s and 1960s, International Women's Day is now celebrated throughout America and around the globe.¹ Highlighted below are some examples of how Volunteers and their communities worked to empower women and girls as part of International Women's Day celebrations in the countries where they serve.

Armenia

The Peace Corps/Armenia gender and development committee organized an essay contest in eight of Armenia's 10 regions that ran from International Women's Day (March 8) to Motherhood and Beauty Day (April 7). The top three winners from each region came to the capital to compete in a final round.



CIRCLE OF TRUST:
Young women support each other.
File photo from Peace Corps/Cameroon

Cape Verde

A women's rights conference in Santo Antao included singing and dancing contests for women as part of an evening activity sponsored by a local women's association.

Costa Rica

Volunteers in Costa Rica held the third annual girls' conference for 80 young women from all over the country. The event continues to be popular because of its positive impact on personal development and the improved leadership skills that participants bring back to their communities.



The Gambia

Peace Corps/The Gambia and the Ministry of Education organized a Take Our Daughters to Work Day on March 8 in Basse, Upper River Division (URD). Thirty girls from grades 7 to 9 accompanied professional role models to work. The event exposed the girls to career options, celebrated the accomplishments of the role models, and provided the opportunity to discuss obstacles to pursuing careers such as early pregnancy, early marriage, and HIV/AIDS. Because of the limited number of female professionals in the rural communities of the URD, many girls are not aware of their career options. By meeting the many professional women found in Basse, the girls learned that jobs are available near their homes, not just in the capital city.

¹ Davis, Sue. "How International Women's Day Began." Workers World News Service, March 16, 2000.

International Women's Day continued from page 21

Ghana

Volunteers facilitated a national Take Your Daughter to Work activity that introduced girls to careers, encouraged women to reach out to girls as mentors, and attempted to dispel the myth that opportunities exist only in urban areas. Volunteers identified women to act as mentors, and each girl shadowed a woman at work for a day.

Guinea

One of Guinea's regional girls' conferences featured a poet who was a role model for many of the girls. She read her poems, spoke to the girls about violence against women, and encouraged them to speak up for their rights. The four-day seminar also included sessions on reproductive health, study skills, life skills, leadership, and self-esteem.



Paraguay

Volunteers and youth from their communities attended a half-day celebration that began with a welcome by a successful Paraguayan woman who has dedicated her life to promoting women's rights. Other activities included a presentation on the history and current status of women's rights in Paraguay; a presentation by a girls' soccer team on how to organize soccer tournaments; a presentation by two young women on how they started their jewelry business from scratch; and a health trivia game.

Romania

In conjunction with local NGOs, Volunteers and community members in 14 towns throughout Romania held candlelight vigils to draw attention to the issue of domestic violence. The candlelight vigils coincided with the opening of women's shelters in these communities.

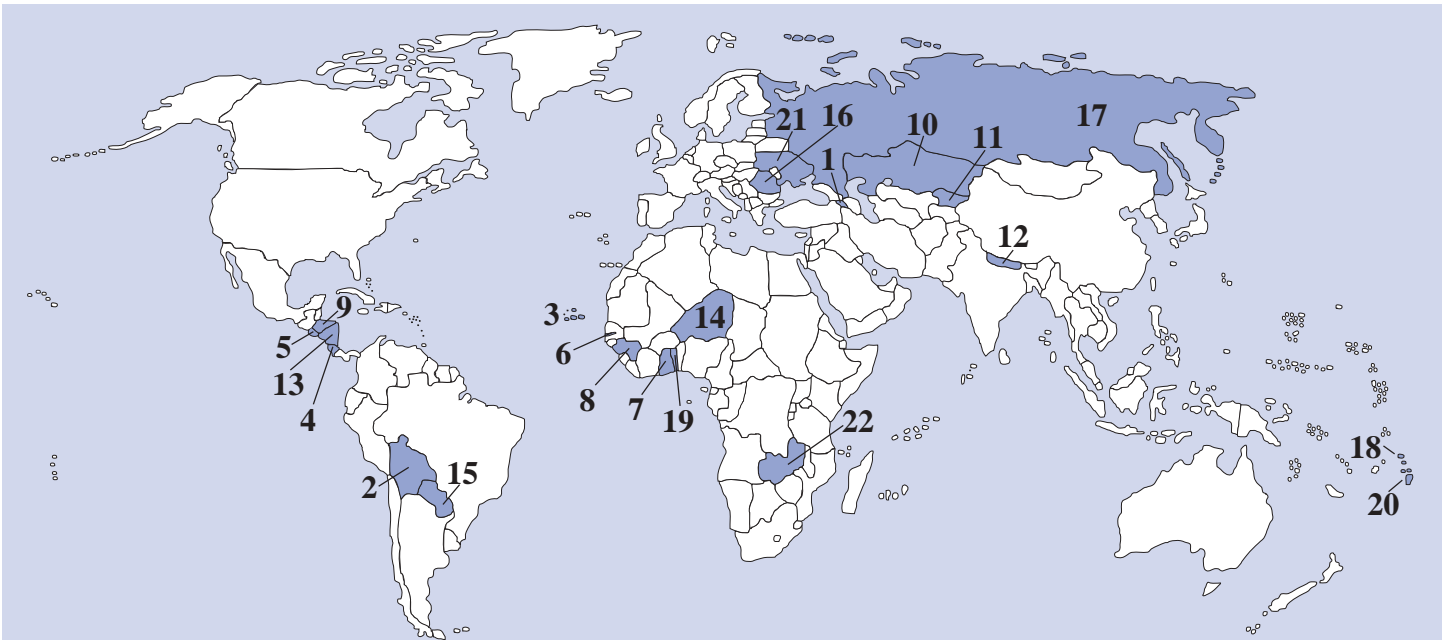


Samoa

Peace Corps/Samoa held a seminar on domestic violence for Volunteers and their counterparts. It featured speakers from the Women's Affairs Office, local organizations, and the United Nations. On March 8 a local organization and the Peace Corps held a candlelight vigil in memory of victims and survivors of domestic violence.

Tonga

Peace Corps/Tonga staffed a booth at a women's fair on March 7 to highlight women in development publications available locally in the Peace Corps' resource center. Peace Corps/Tonga hopes this effort will encourage women's groups to turn to the Peace Corps for resources.



Articles in *The Exchange*, Gender, Agriculture, and the Environment • August 2003, Were Submitted From...

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|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. Armenia | 7. Ghana | 13. Nicaragua | 19. Togo |
| 2. Bolivia | 8. Guinea | 14. Niger | 20. Tonga |
| 3. Cape Verde | 9. Honduras | 15. Paraguay | 21. Ukraine |
| 4. Costa Rica | 10. Kazakhstan | 16. Romania | 22. Zambia |
| 5. El Salvador | 11. Kyrgyz Republic | 17. Russia Far East | |
| 6. The Gambia | 12. Nepal | 18. Samoa | |

Upcoming Issues

- The next issue of *The Exchange* (Volume 38) will focus on gender and youth development.
- Volume 39 of *The Exchange* will focus on gender, water, and sanitation. Articles for this volume are currently being accepted.

Editor's note: All submissions are welcome, and topics are not limited to the theme of the issue. Feel free to submit letters to the editor, items for the "How To" or "Building Sustainability" columns, or pieces on any activity that involves gender and development.

Upcoming Opportunities

- September 16: International Day of Peace
- October 16: World Food Day
- November 20: UN Children's Day
- November 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women



Girls Making Dolls in Nicaragua

By Nancy Collins/PCV

After being in Nicaragua for three months and seeing young girls with blond dolls that looked nothing like them, I solicited my friends and family back home for supplies to make “Nica” dolls. I realized doll making was a perfect opportunity for the seven-to-10-year-old girls in my community to learn new skills and gain a sense of accomplishment.

A total of 36 girls attended four doll-making parties. I supplied the decorative materials, and the girls supplied the empty soda containers. I was surprised at the lack of self-confidence in many of the girls. Some were not even able to choose dress fabrics or hair ribbons on their own,



NEW ARTISTS: Nicaraguan girls create dolls in their own image.

Photo by Nancy Collins/PCV

looking to others for help or choosing the same fabric or ribbons as others had. Yet it was touching to watch their pride in threading a needle, sewing a dress, or drawing a mouth.

Despite loose knots, unevenly drawn mouths, and lopsided hair, every doll was adorable. And every girl, regardless of how much she participated in the construction, was extremely proud of her doll.

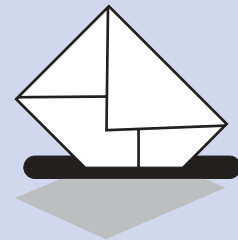
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Express Yourself

Tell us what is happening with WID or GAD in your country that you would like to share with others. Tell us your success stories. What works? What does not? When you tell us about your project, please give a location and an address. Photos should include the names of the key individuals in the picture, a brief description, the location, and the name of the photographer. Send contributions, comments, suggestions, and requests to:

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