



# The Exchange

MEN AND BOYS  
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## Peace Corps' Women in Development Newsletter

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*BATTER UP: Boys in the Kyrgyz Republic practice teamwork through baseball.*

Peace Corps file photo from the Kyrgyz Republic

## Kyrgyz Republic Holds Boys Leadership Training Camp

*By Ian Hoke and Geof Giacomini/PCVs*

To fill the gap in gender education for boys, Volunteers in the Kyrgyz Republic organized a Boys Leadership Training (BLT) camp. Based on the GLOW (Girls Leading Our World) camp model, Volunteers collaborated with organizations such as the Volunteers' Initiative Center, the Rainbow Center, the Foundation for Tolerance International, and the Rotary Club to provide quality instruction in leadership and gender issues.

The camp brought boys together for one week on Lake Issyk-Kul. Campers broke into teams, each with a university-age counselor, that were the basis for most exercises, sports, and challenges throughout the week. Daily team challenges included naming the team, making a flag, writing a camp oath, and creating skits about gender issues. Boys also participated in a baseball tournament, during

which they learned new skills in a competitive environment, putting their teamwork to the test. Volunteer-led sessions on gender issues focused on the realities of the Kyrgyz Republic and fostered creative thinking about gender. Local organizations led sessions on sexual health, tolerance, education, and the realities for young men in the existing Kyrgyz economy.

Since both the BLT and the GLOW camps shared one location, it was possible to bring girls and boys together and put into action the lessons learned during the week. Campers were divided into geographic groups to focus on plans for continued activism after the camps. Through this experience, leaders of both camps learned that gender education cannot be successful in a vacuum.

*Leadership Training Camp continues on page 3*

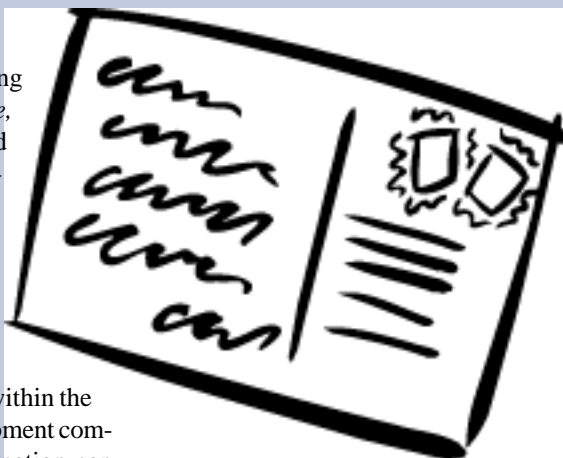
## From the Editors

Dear Readers,

We are very excited to bring you this issue of *The Exchange*, which focuses on men's and boys' roles in gender and development (GAD). There is growing recognition of the need to include men and boys in activities that benefit women and girls as well as activities that address men's and boy's gender roles, both within the Peace Corps and in the development community at large. Their participation can play a valuable role in strengthening activities by ensuring that the needs of all community members are met. As Volunteers approach their communities and their projects from a gender perspective, they are recognizing the similar and differing needs of men, women, boys, and girls and responding to those needs as they work with communities to develop sustainable activities. In response to the increasing number of requests for additional information and resources in this area, we are pleased to highlight their efforts.

In this issue you will find articles from Volunteers about boys camps in Latvia and the Kyrgyz Republic, camps and seminars for boys and girls in Namibia and Panama, gender sensitivity trainings for an NGO in the Philippines, roundtable discussions with NGOs on gender issues in Jamaica, and much more.

The feature articles "Involving Men in Gender-Equitable Development," "Case Study: Using Participatory Analysis for Community Action," and "Domestic Violence Through a Gender Lens" provide contextual information, resources, techniques, and tips, along with examples of the roles of men and boys in GAD. This issue's Building Sustainability column, "Empowering Girls' Mentors," describes



how Volunteers in Benin are working to build local women's capacity to run the Take Our Daughters to Work Day program started by Peace Corps/Benin's GAD Committee.

Thanks to all of you who submitted articles for this issue. We would like to remind readers that *The Exchange* is always seeking articles and photographs from Peace Corps Volunteers and staff around the world. *The Exchange* strives to achieve representation from all posts and, space permitting, will include as many submissions as possible. Remember that articles and photographs can now be submitted electronically to:

[TheExchange@PeaceCorps.gov](mailto:TheExchange@PeaceCorps.gov)

We hope that you enjoy this long-awaited issue, and we look forward to hearing from you in the future!

Lyn Messner  
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# Q&A

*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.

## The (Older) Woman in Development

By Judith Hunger/PCV

What of *mature* or *older* women? While their impact on the future of society may be at the downward end of the spiral, their experience and issues are important to the overall topic of *women* in development.

As a Volunteer in Poland, I was privileged to work with mature Polish women (ages 45 to around 60) who wanted to engage in English conversations to retain their fluency. However, they specifically indicated that we would meet as women: They wanted to discuss women's issues, to know what it is like to be a woman at midlife in America.

We discussed women's health issues, caring for older parents, and the position of women in society. My perspective focused on midlife decisions about hormone replacement therapy; breast and cervical cancer; the cost of postsecondary education; and congregate housing, senior care, and nursing homes.

My new friends enlightened me about the problems of nationalized medicine, the "free" education provided to children who can pass the entrance exams, children forced to return home after college because of low salaries and limited housing, the responsibility of adult children to house and care for aged parents, and a well-established child care system that is available for all.

*The (Older) Woman* continues on page 3

*The (Older) Woman* continued from page 2

Though highly educated, these women had to fulfill traditional roles, which included waiting in daily queues for food and clothing. They may not be “typical” of the women Volunteers meet in more traditional Third World countries, but their issues are definitely as important.

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*Leadership Training Camp* continued from page 1

We are looking forward to planning both camps in conjunction in the future. This will allow us to organize activities in which boys and girls must work together as well as provide time alone for each sex to discover new ways of viewing old roles. In this way, we hope to cement the reality that male and female leaders are 100 percent stronger when they work in concert with peers of the opposite sex.

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## WID Reviews in ICE

**YD032 — *Choose a Future! Issues and Options for Adolescent Boys***  
(CEDPA Publications, 1998). 225 pp.



*Choose a Future! Issues and Options for Adolescent Boys* is a program guide for facilitators and trainers working with boys ages 12 to 20. This book brings together ideas and activities to help adolescent boys develop self-respect and self-esteem; create supportive peer relationships; expand their skills in analysis, decision making, problem solving, and negotiating; and have increased access to resources. In addition, it explores gender-equitable approaches to family life and other sociocultural issues and examines real issues in boys' lives—marriage, health, family relations, conflict resolution, education, work, legal status, and community involvement—and options for dealing with these issues.

*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  
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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.

## Involving Men in Gender-Equitable Development

By Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator

In recent years there has been an ongoing debate in the international “women’s movement” about if, when, and how men should be included in women in development or gender and development activities. In order to better understand why this question is being asked, it is important to understand where we are now in development theory and how we got there.

In the early days of international development, community development focused on working with traditional leaders, who were most often men of elite social classes. As a result, many projects failed because they primarily addressed the needs of the elite and did not take into account the needs of the poor, the majority of whom are women and children.



In the 1970s women in development (WID) approaches emerged in recognition of women’s omission from the development process. WID approaches advocated for women’s inclusion in existing development efforts. In addition, specific projects for women were implemented, focusing primarily on increasing women’s economic status. Many of these projects failed because women were perceived as a homogeneous group, and their multiple roles in society were not taken into account.

Over time, people realized that it was not just women’s lack of participation in the development process but their socially

determined roles that limited their capacity to fully participate in and benefit from development activities. In the 1980s, the gender and development (GAD) approach emerged, taking into consideration women’s social, economic, political, and reproductive roles, as well as the roles of men, girls, and boys.



While GAD focused on relationships between women and men, and equity within those relationships, it is only within the past decade that the need to include both women and men in efforts toward gender-equitable development became apparent. Gender-equitable development projects involving men are still fairly new as far as development organizations and agencies are concerned because of the difficulty in striking a balance between projects that take into account men’s gender roles and traditional male-only projects, which can undermine the needs of women, girls, and boys. However, it is clear that men’s and women’s lives do not exist in isolation but are interconnected. Therefore, an understanding of gender relations is critical to achieving sustainable development. For example, a Volunteer in Burkina Faso increased women’s attendance at a health clinic by 75 percent by involving men. The Volunteer and her counterpart trained male leaders in villages that used the clinic on the importance of women visiting

the health clinic on a regular basis to maintain and improve maternal and child health. Those leaders in turn trained men in the same villages to support their wives, sisters, and daughters in visiting the clinic.

### Why Men?

While the Peace Corps maintains a strong commitment to improving the status and well-being of women and girls around the world, there are several factors supporting the need to involve men in the process of change toward more gender-equitable development.<sup>1</sup>

- Men’s social position means they can play an important role in helping to bring about change for more equality and equity.
- Men are members of the community, the workplace, and households. They are fathers, spouses, and brothers.



- Men’s and women’s lives are intertwined in a number of areas, and in many cultures both are now facing significant changes in gender roles.
- In some countries (e.g., Mongolia, Jamaica), men are disadvantaged relative to women in the educational or employment spheres.

<sup>1</sup> Greig, A., M. Kimmel, and J. Lang. *Men, Masculinities and Development: Broadening Our Work Towards Gender Equality*. May 2000. (Available at [www.undp.org/gender/programmes/men/UNDP\\_Men\\_and\\_Masculinities.pdf](http://www.undp.org/gender/programmes/men/UNDP_Men_and_Masculinities.pdf))

*Involving Men continued from page 4*

Engaging men as a means to achieving several important development objectives was highlighted at two United Nations conferences: in Cairo (1994) and Beijing (1996). A recent UNICEF report<sup>2</sup> notes that a number of projects have successfully involved men in ways that benefit children and/or women by integrating male-focused strategies and activities into ongoing projects. Examples of this approach in Peace Corps programming include the following:



- Raising men's awareness of women's reproductive health needs in order to increase women's attendance at health clinics in **Burkina Faso** and **Morocco**;
- Conducting workshops for men and boys, and encouraging their participation in awareness-raising activities that support girls education in **Niger**, **Paraguay**, and **Togo**;
- Prevention of HIV/AIDS through life skills and adolescent health trainings with boys and girls in **Burkina Faso**, **Cameroon**, **Costa Rica**, **Côte d'Ivoire**, **Ecuador**, **Nepal**, **Tonga**, **Turkmenistan**, and **Zambia**;
- Increasing understanding of the different challenges faced by men, women, boys, and girls through sessions on gen-

der relations in leadership development activities for boys and girls in **Ghana**, **Guatemala**, **Jamaica**, **Kyrgyz Republic**, **Latvia**, **Namibia**, **Nicaragua**, and **Romania**; and

- Men and women working together to address violence against girls and women in **Belize**, **Dominican Republic**, **Lithuania**, and **Moldova**.

### How the Peace Corps Works With Men and Boys

In 1999, reporting on Volunteer activities reflected the growth in male involvement in gender and development and demonstrated its emergence as an area of focus for Peace Corps Volunteers. Each of the Peace Corps' three regions (Africa; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia; and Inter-America and the Pacific) reported on work Volunteers were doing with men and boys to address gender issues and inequities. Since then, the reported number of Peace Corps activities that involve men and boys has continued to increase. In 2001, Peace Corps Volunteers worked with men and boys by:



- Using gender analysis and PACA (participatory analysis for community action) tools to address men's and boys' needs and to determine when, how, and why to involve them in project activities;

- Building boys' leadership skills, self-esteem, and career options through camps, workshops, and conferences;
- Working with men in transition economies in the areas of alcoholism, domestic violence, and suicide, which often result from lack of job opportunities; and
- Conducting information, education, and communication activities that targeted men who drive transport trucks and taxis, men who work in different communities seasonally, and men who visit sex workers as particularly at risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.



It is important for Volunteers to be aware of how interactions between men and women in host countries influence the level of women's participation in decision-making roles when men are involved in an activity. Therefore, it is crucial that Volunteers work closely with counterparts and host country facilitators to understand local cultural issues in order to appropriately plan separate activities with men and women, joint activities, or a combination of the two. Careful planning on how to best harness men's support helps ensure that outcomes are sustainable and effective.

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF. *Role of Men in the Lives of Children: A Study of How Improving Knowledge About Men in Families Helps Strengthen Programming for Children and Women*. 1997.

*Involving Men continues on page 6*

*Involving Men continued from page 5*

## Men and Reproductive Health

Although there is a need to engage men and boys in most programming areas, reproductive health is an area in which men's gender roles and their impact on the development process have been particularly neglected. Involving men in reproductive health projects is vital for child survival and family health. Men tend to be responsible for household decisions on most matters of reproductive and family health, so there can be only limited improvement in women's reproductive health without men's support and active involvement.



Projects need to be sensitive to meeting the needs of both women who want men to be approached and involved and women who wish to maintain their privacy. Engaging men in reproductive health activities can be difficult because reproductive health is often perceived as women's domain. However, research has shown that men are more interested in sexual and reproductive health than is usually believed. Evaluations of some projects that have directly involved male community members reveal that men's enhanced understanding of reproductive health results in an increase in women's

attendance at clinics. Following are some challenges to increasing male participation in reproductive health services:

- Men are often interested in becoming more involved, especially during pregnancy and in the care of infants, but can suffer pressure to conform to accepted gender roles.
- Health care providers and community outreach workers may require training and support to help men discuss potentially embarrassing reproductive health topics.
- Misconceptions and myths about men's bodies and how their sexual behavior affects their personal health and that of their partners are rarely addressed.<sup>3</sup>
- There is limited information on attitudes, perceptions, needs, and practices of men in the area of reproductive health.
- There may be little communication and joint decision making between men and women about reproductive health issues.
- Decision makers and policymakers are often not aware of the impact of gender inequities and the role of men on decision making in sexuality and reproduction.
- There are no specific standards or regulations to guide the inclusion of men's needs in reproductive health services.<sup>4</sup>
- Power imbalances exist between men and women, and social structures support male dominance and decision making.

To achieve lasting change, reproductive health projects should reach out to men and adolescent boys who are just becoming sexually active. Their life choices will then be

influenced by their understanding that their sexual behavior has consequences for themselves and others, including social stigma, disease, and early pregnancy. Projects should also provide information that will allow young people to make informed decisions about their sexual behavior, obtain services when appropriate, and learn about social roles and responsibilities.



## Conclusion

Involving men should not be considered an add-on to Volunteers' work but a key to reaching project objectives. This does not mean Volunteers should not continue activities that specifically address girls' and women's needs (e.g., leadership or empowerment camps, mentoring), but that work with men and boys should complement such activities (e.g., leadership camps, awareness raising). Activities that enhance gender awareness and sensitivity should focus on the needs of both women and men. Only by recognizing men and women as truly interdependent individuals can one begin to see how men's and boys' needs must be addressed in overall GAD efforts and how men and boys can contribute as active partners to meet the needs of all community members.

For more information on Peace Corps Volunteers' work with men, boys, women, and girls, ask to see the WID/GAD fiscal year 2001 global summaries at your post.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Raju, S., and A. Leonard (eds.). *Men as Supportive Partners in Reproductive Health: Moving From Rhetoric to Reality*. Population Council, South and East Asia Regional Office. 2000. (Available at [www.popcouncil.org/ppdb/men.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/ppdb/men.html))

<sup>4</sup> Pan American Health Organization. *Men and Gender Equity in Sexual and Reproductive Health* (Fact Sheet of the Program on Women, Health and Development, Division of Health and Human Development, Issue No. 18). Washington, D.C.: 2000.

<sup>5</sup> The Center for Field Assistance and Applied Research. *2001 Project and Training Status Reports: Global Summary and Promising Practices* (pp. 107-114). Washington, D.C.: Peace Corps, 2000.

## Case Study: Using Participatory Analysis for Community Action in Togo

Activity Summary by Camisha Russell/PCV/Togo

Considerations by Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator, and Tammy Boger/WID/GAD and ICT Assistant

To introduce our counterparts to PACA (participatory analysis for community action), Volunteers in Peace Corps/Togo's Girls Education and Empowerment (GEE) project went into the local school to do the "Daily Activities Schedule." This activity is intended to provide a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of diverse groups in a community. When GEE Volunteers do such exercises in schools, we usually have another agenda: to demonstrate that girls work much harder than boys as a result of the unequal distribution of housework.

We were caught off guard by the boys' claims that they sweep, cook, and fetch water. It so happens that the boys and girls with whom we were working typically come to school from distant villages. The girls are lodged with a family (for whom they perform housework), while most boys rent single rooms and do their own housework. We reacted with great skepticism, pressuring the boys to "admit" the "truth" we had set out to make them uncover—that if their sisters lived with them, it would be those sisters who did the majority of the work.

In doing so, we turned the discussion into a battle of the sexes, failing to forge an atmosphere of understanding between the groups. We also failed to demonstrate to the boys that the development of all of Togo, and therefore the education of their sisters, were in their best interest. Though the exercise was not a failure, perhaps we could have led the discussion in a more positive direction by letting the participants determine that direction themselves.

### Considerations

This case study raises some important questions about the role of Volunteers and the use of PACA tools. One of the roles of Volunteers is to help the communities with



whom they work identify their priorities and develop projects to address those needs. PACA tools are one of the mechanisms available to Volunteers as they seek to increase understanding and better inform activities. This case study highlights some of the potential pitfalls when facilitators have already decided the outcome of an activity and guide the conversation to provide the results that will fulfill their goals or agenda. Participants in effect were forced to reach the predetermined outcome, and because the roles and needs of different community members were not taken into account, realistic, sustainable results were not reached.

In reflecting on the Volunteers in the above example, what were their goals? Was their goal to encourage girls in school? To change boys' roles or attitudes? To lighten girls' workloads? Or to talk about how gender roles impact success in education? To avoid these potential pitfalls, the following are questions to keep in mind when using PACA tools.

- What is the purpose of using PACA tools?

- What are the goals of the activity? Do you have your own agenda or do you want to encourage communication and collaboration among different groups within the community?
- Does the activity help you learn more about the community?
- Will the activity help the community identify its priorities and develop projects to address its needs as it has identified them?
- Is it possible to create realistic, sustainable solutions to problems without really examining and understanding the roles, needs, and resources of those who would be involved in implementing those solutions?

For more information on the PACA approach and tools, see Peace Corps, *Gender and Development Training/Girls' Education Manual* Booklets 3, 5, 6, and 8. This publication is available at Peace Corps posts.

## Domestic Violence Through a Gender Lens

By Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator, and Tammy Boger/WID/GAD and ICT Assistant

Peace Corps Volunteers in over 22 countries work with nongovernmental organizations, youth, police, community groups, batterers, victims of domestic violence, women, men, and children to build local capacity to prevent and address domestic violence. Interventions include services to female victims of domestic violence, awareness-raising events, women's resource centers, training for police officers and community workers, and work with batterers groups.

### Working With Men and Boys

An example of the organizations that Volunteers support is the Leseding Support and Outreach Center in South Africa, which provides a safe place for female victims of violence. With the help of Volunteers, the center has gained greater recognition, increased funding, and has engaged local police as partners. However, working with women and girls addresses only half of the equation. Volunteers must also work with men and boys if they are to help develop long-term, sustainable solutions.

Volunteers can better understand the gender roles and dynamics in a community if they take a gender and development approach. For example, when Volunteers understand the power relations between men and women that lead to domestic violence, they can identify ways to work with both men and women, and girls and boys to address this issue. Volunteer Carmen Crow in Ecuador illustrates this point:



“When we sit in our Peace Corps-approved housing with our makeshift curtains around our Peace Corps windows, hearing the neighbors screaming or remembering Doña Maria’s black eye... maybe we are less helpless than we feel. Supporting the victims seems the obvious approach, educating them on violence, on its effects, on their options, building self-esteem. But at the end of the day, the aggressors will still be there, and eventually the cycle of violence will repeat itself—if not here, then somewhere else. Until the aggression dies, domestic violence will live.

“So why not start [with] our youth? Boys will someday be men. And as much as they try to act aloof and disinterested, they are interested in youth groups and new activities and ideas. If we have excluded boys in the past, we need to stop excluding them now. Break the ice. Let them participate. Give them a space to talk about violence issues. Let them grow up with new perspectives and awareness. Deal with the victims, but give the potential aggressors a chance, too.

“Boys are the men of the future. When we let them in, and introduce the ideas they have never been expected to grasp before, that is when domestic violence may finally begin to shrivel.”

Volunteers work with men and boys in a variety of ways. For example, in Belize Volunteers and officials of the Human Development Department worked with a batterers group through the family court. Sessions included self-esteem, education about domestic violence, effective communication, building support systems, and skills training. Volunteers are working with community members in Ecuador to support the health and stability of local families through activities that help youth and adults build their self-esteem and communication skills while increasing their awareness of one another’s rights and values. A center in

Moldova involved a local Peace Corps Volunteer in its efforts to train local volunteers in facilitating seminars on conflict resolution, anger management, and human rights for schools, community groups, and local organizations.

The number of Peace Corps Volunteers working in the area of domestic violence is increasing. Volunteers are most successful when they work with governmental organizations or local NGOs to set up services (such as hot lines) and training.

### Conclusion

Domestic violence is a complex problem, and as the examples above demonstrate, there are a number of ways that Volunteers, in the context of their assignment—whether it is NGO development, community development, youth development, education, or health—are being asked to assist community groups in their response to the problem. Cultural sensitivity and an awareness of host country priorities and strategies, essential to all aspects of Volunteers’ work, are especially important when approaching topics such as this. By assisting local organizations, Volunteers are helping address this issue within its social context. Neither victims nor batterers exist in isolation, and it is only through close collaboration with local groups and organizations that Volunteers can help communities develop sustainable mechanisms for addressing domestic violence.

The Peace Corps can support Volunteers by helping them identify organizations that work in this area and government commitments that address the problem. The Save the Children Alliance publication *Preventing Family Violence: A Manual for Action*, available through the Peace Corps’ Information Collection and Exchange (ICE #WD141), is a great resource for Volunteers interested in working in this area.



## Setting Gender Precedence in Panama

By Artigas Bonifacio/PCV



*PROUD PARENTS: Panamanian youth learn important parenting skills.*

Photo by Claire Antonelli/PCV

Peace Corps/Panama's first boys and girls "Youth and Gender" seminar focused on promoting gender awareness and working on the personal growth of the adolescents involved.

The seminar began with sessions on building self-esteem and preventing drug and alcohol abuse. These sessions allowed the youth to begin painting pictures of themselves while giving them a valuable chance to get to know one another.

Participants in the Baby Role Play Competition were paired up to take responsibility for an egg that was to be their "baby" for the duration of the seminar. At the end of the seminar, participants who were successful in nurturing their babies were given a reward and asked to share what they had learned. Many of the adolescents remarked on the level of dedication and compromise required to raise a child. For the most part, participants came to understand that child rearing is a serious responsibility and that

serious reflection and communication are vital before taking such a bold step in one's life.

Day two covered stress management, mental well-being, and gender and empowerment. A somber session on familial violence followed, during which the participants let their guard down and engaged in an open dialogue about a very painful, yet all too real, topic.

The presentation on sexual education and STDs gave the youth a chance to find out more about subjects they may have been too shy to discuss in school or with their parents. Next, two teenage mothers delivered riveting speeches that gave participants an understanding of the drastic impact of becoming an adolescent parent.

The day culminated in a talent show in which participants shared a wide variety of cultural traditions and personal talents. The seminar concluded with a decision-making and life skills session led by Volunteers, in

which participants completed contracts containing carefully planned steps to achieve short- and long-term goals.

On the whole, the seminar received rave reviews from the boys and girls. The objective of doing some trailblazing in the area of coed gender awareness was accomplished. The attendees learned some new information and were given the opportunity to grow as human beings.

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## Women and Men in the Philippines Work on Gender Sensitivity

By Jane Lombardo/PCV

The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM), one of the oldest NGOs in the Philippines, is working to integrate gender into all components of its community development work. The aim of PRRM is to help local communities improve their lives through empowerment, organization, and training. This includes forming organizations, developing community action plans, and training local people in leadership, livelihood enhancement, resource management, and gender sensitivity.

Gender bias restricts what females and males can do—their potential, their opportunities, and their achievements—and thus limits the development potential of the entire country. A gender and development (GAD) approach advocates developing individual abilities, protecting the rights of all, and removing legal and cultural barriers to full

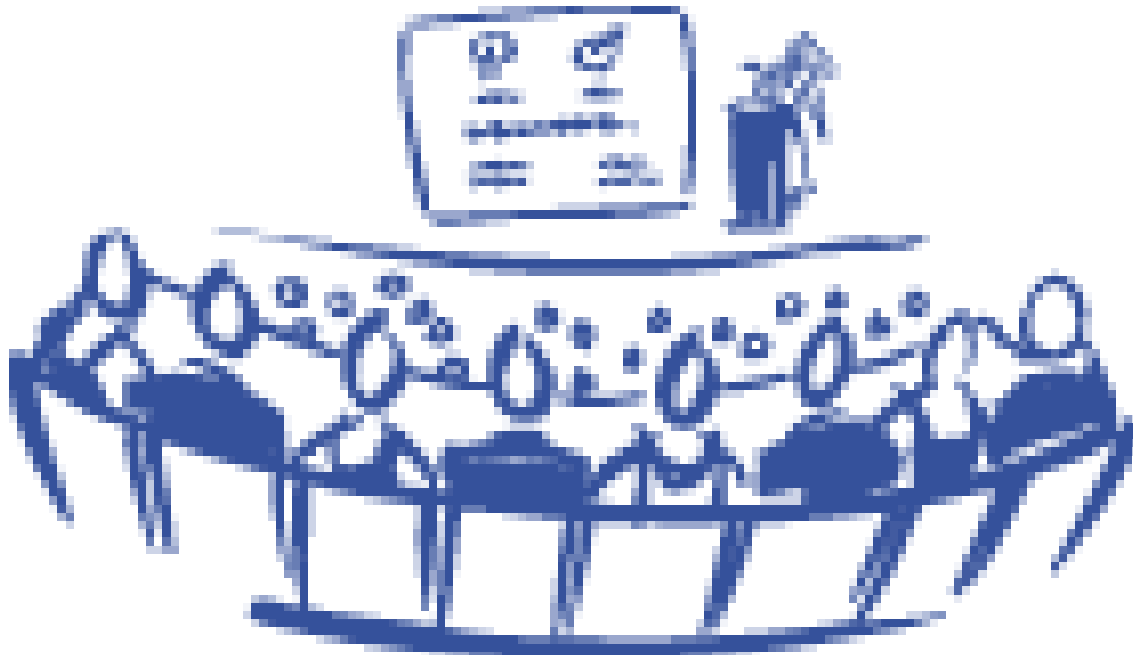
human development. To increase understanding about GAD, PRRM held a gender sensitivity training for staff members and representatives of organizations from different parts of Camiguin.

During the workshop participants explored the distinction between gender, which is culturally determined, and sex, which is biologically determined. This was a new concept for participants, many of whom considered characteristics assigned by culture to be a trait of sex. A discussion of the roles played by each sex in society helped the group identify jobs done by men, women, or both sexes. Women have been excluded from many of the jobs not directly because of their sex but because of their lack of the necessary knowledge. Participants noted women's lack of access to training and came away from the session with a greater understanding of how society values the work

done by men and women differently.

Another exercise asked the men and women to list their daily activities. In every case the men started their days later and ended them earlier than the women. Men engaged in more leisure activities than women, while women carried a greater burden of the household work than men did. Through activities such as these, participants were able to broaden their understanding of gender roles. PRRM will use the feedback from the training to help enhance its gender and development strategy and to identify issues for its future work on the island.

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## Niger Holds Men's Conference

*Submitted by Assalama Sidi Dawalak/GAD Assistant*

The men attending Niger's Men's Conference were responsive to even the most controversial topics: reproductive health and women's rights. The first day of the conference focused exclusively on AIDS awareness as most of the men had little knowledge of the disease. Participants received condoms at a condom demonstration, played games to help them understand the virus, and watched an HIV/AIDS video in local languages. The speakers used local languages and were very effective because they did not talk down to the men.

The second day addressed responsible money management. In the morning, the men were told to pretend they were at a village market and to buy what they would ordinarily. Volunteers and presenters acted as market vendors and bargained with the men on different items. After an hour we brought the men together to discuss their purchases. We asked each man whether he was married, how many children he had, and what his sources of income were. The purpose of this was to make the men think about what they buy and how buying certain things might affect their family's future. The afternoon session presented different methods of small income generation. Hands-on stations

included bread making, natural pesticides, beekeeping, and tree nurseries. There was also time for the men to ask questions about the topics presented.

The next morning's topics were women's rights under Islam and girls' education. Though these topics were controversial, most of the men were extremely responsive to these sessions and had many questions for the female presenters. In the session on women's rights under Islam, the men initially disagreed with the presenters but eventually began to realize that the presenters knew more about the Koran than they did. This fact, along with the strong presence of the women, finally led most of the men to ask questions instead of just objecting to the ideas presented.

The final session was on reproductive and family health. The men were astounded when the presenter explained the female reproductive system and the important health benefits to women of spacing the births of their children. While she made this presentation to one language group, Volunteers discussed family health with the other group. Volunteers conducted skits and demonstrated the use of rehydration solutions. They discussed methods for eliminating conjunc-

tivitis, the benefits of water filtration, and locally available nutritional foods. When it was time to switch the groups, the men in the reproductive health session insisted on more time. We thought this was great because we were not sure, at first, how the men would respond to this session. We gave them extra time and continued to discuss the importance of family health with the other group.

Lastly, all the men broke up into groups based on the area from which they came. They discussed how to best share with others what they had learned. These men are respected in their communities and were selected specifically because of their ability to communicate with others. The men agreed with the conference's stress on the importance of sharing this information and left with a strong motivation to teach their new knowledge to others.

c/o Assalama Sidi Dawalak,  
GAD Assistant  
Peace Corps  
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Niamey  
Niger



## Addressing Reverse Gender Gaps in Jamaica

*By Jeff Mattison/PCV*

Peace Corps/Jamaica's Gender and Development Committee brought together representatives from agencies working on gender-related issues in a roundtable discussion titled "Gender Issues in Jamaica." The objectives of the discussion were to meet representatives from other agencies, learn about their current activities, ask questions, and share experiences.

What started out as a structured discussion quickly turned into an engaging exchange in which issues like sex education, judicial bias against fathers, effective parenting, and marginalization of males were debated with all the zest and emotion of a

West Indian cricket test match.

In Jamaica girls outperform and outlast boys in schools, and women head 88 percent of households. One thing that we learned from the roundtable was to use caution with the word "marginalization." According to a representative from the women's media watch group, marginalization has become a buzzword to describe the plight of boys and men in the academic and domestic realms of society. She added that the concept of marginalization perpetuates itself to fulfillment with males and places the blame on females, suggesting that somebody other than males is responsible for their under-

development.

After 90 minutes of a great exchange of ideas, it was obvious that some impetus for action had surfaced. "Where do we go from here?" was the question in all of our minds, and we decided that the initial step would be to meet again to strengthen our networking and to continue the conversation.

c/o Alicia Smalls, APCD/Youth  
Peace Corps Director  
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Kingston 10  
Jamaica, West Indies

## Girls and Guys Leading Our World in Namibia

By Alyssa Edwards and Anjka Lendvay/PCVs

Volunteers in Namibia organized a three-day workshop for both boys and girls titled “Girls and Guys Leading Our World.” Students representing over 70 schools in Namibia attended the workshop on youth empowerment and gender awareness. The topics included HIV/AIDS, rape, sexual abuse, gender equality, sexuality, and reproduction. Prominent members of society, including members of Parliament, health care workers, and representatives from various NGOs, spoke to participants during the workshop. Besides presentations and discussions, participants enjoyed lively entertainment like dramas and puppet shows, which addressed topics such as rape, child abuse, domestic violence, STDs, and teenage pregnancy.

The workshop culminated with each learner developing an action plan to take back to his or her school. Plans ranged from starting girls and boys clubs to performing dramas on issues affecting youth. The workshop also fostered the development of friendships between youth across regional boundaries. As one participant left the workshop, he enthusiastically stated, “We youth need to stand up and take action with what we learned here to develop ourselves and our nation.”

c/o Selma Imene, APCD/Education  
Peace Corps Director  
P.O. Box 6862  
Windhoek 9000  
Namibia



*BUILDING EMPOWERMENT: Boys form a pyramid as part of team building activities at a leadership workshop in Namibia.*

Photos by Alyssa Edwards/PCV

## Latvia Holds Self-Empowerment Camp for Boys

By Kristel Harms/PCV

The Peace Corps has focused on helping women identify solutions to their communities’ needs. As a result, men’s needs sometimes are not addressed. In some countries of the former USSR, men’s roles have been affected by sudden changes in community structure. Significant current ideas about decision making, responsibility, problem solving, conflict resolution, health, education, and community involvement often are not communicated to young men living in these countries.

Therefore, Camp Markonkalns, a self-empowerment camp for boys, was designed to combine life skills and fun, and to allow for interaction between young Latvian men who are potentially at risk and positive male role models. Through interactive sessions on self-esteem, self-image, problem solving, goal setting, study skills, and sexual health as well sporting events, survival skills training, daily morning exercises, campfire songs, cooking, and tie-dyeing, boys were able to see their capabilities while at the same time breaking down gender stereotypes.

By helping these young men realize their worth as well as the importance of a good education, this camp has given them important tools for actively participating in society.

c/o Country Desk Officer  
Country Desk Assistant  
Central and Eastern Europe Desk  
EMA Region  
Paul D. Coverdell Peace Corps  
Headquarters  
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## Tanzania National Writing Contest

*Following is a poem written by Sarah Obel. Sarah won a year of school fees with this poem at a Peace Corps organized National Writing Contest held in honor of International Women's Day. She attends Msalato Girls' Secondary School in Dodoma, Tanzania.*

If only girls will be given equal rights  
The world could be a better place.  
Education for girls helps educate the whole society  
Doctors, engineers, pilots, presidents, astronauts  
All because the girls are educated.  
A child will have good moral values, good health,  
Only because its mother is educated.  
No diseases, no marasmus, no kwashiorkor  
Children do not suffer, instead society receives a healthy child.  
Please help yourself by helping the girls.

If only girls get equal rights  
They will be able to air their views  
They will be able to give suggestions,  
Decisions and even solve problems in society  
As long as they get the right to give opinions.  
Father, brother, let your mother and sister give their views.

If only girls get equal rights  
The right to own land  
Our fields will prosper  
Better houses built, good life at the end of the day  
Because joint action builds a better society.

If only girls get equal rights  
Then our culture can't undermine them.  
No genital mutilation, no forced marriages,  
No selling of women into all kinds of enslavement.  
The girls will be able to rise and share the gifts in them.  
The ability to be independent  
The ability to take care of themselves  
That's just what society needs  
"An independent woman with a destiny."

If only our religions could stop enslaving girls.  
We could get better pastors, sheikhs and dalais.  
The God-given gifts in women  
Could help build a better society  
A happy and loving congregation.  
If only girls/women will get equal rights  
If only and OOH! If only  
"Father/brother, give me that right."

c/o Margaret Rugambwa  
Training Manager  
Peace Corps Director  
P.O. Box 9123  
Dar es Salaam  
Tanzania



## Engendering Development

By Lyn Messner/WID/GAD Coordinator, and Tammy Boger/WID/GAD and ICT Assistant

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

The last issue of *The Exchange* (volume 35, September 2001) provided the historical background of the Peace Corps’ Gender and Development Team strategy, which was developed to strengthen Peace Corps staff’s knowledge of and skills in women in development (WID) and gender and development (GAD) approaches. GAD Teams were formed in each region to strengthen projects and better support Volunteer efforts to address the gender needs of men, women, girls, and boys in their communities. This article elaborates on the accomplishments of the three regional GAD Teams and the vital role they play in the integration of GAD into Peace Corps programming and training around the world.

Staff members who are host country nationals were selected as Team members because of their knowledge of each country’s cultural context and to help ensure sustainability. Individual Team members build on their own strengths, and the Team as a whole develops the full complement of skills needed to serve as mentors and trainers for other staff and Volunteers at their posts and in their subregions and regions.

### The Three Phases of the GAD Team Strategy

The three phases of the GAD Team strategy—share, strategize, and implement—were designed to be introduced over a period of three years. Over the course of these phases, Team members are trained in GAD approaches, gender analysis, and PACA (participatory analysis for community action) tools. Phase One identifies Team members and brings them together to share knowledge and experiences, provide basic information, promote exchange, and

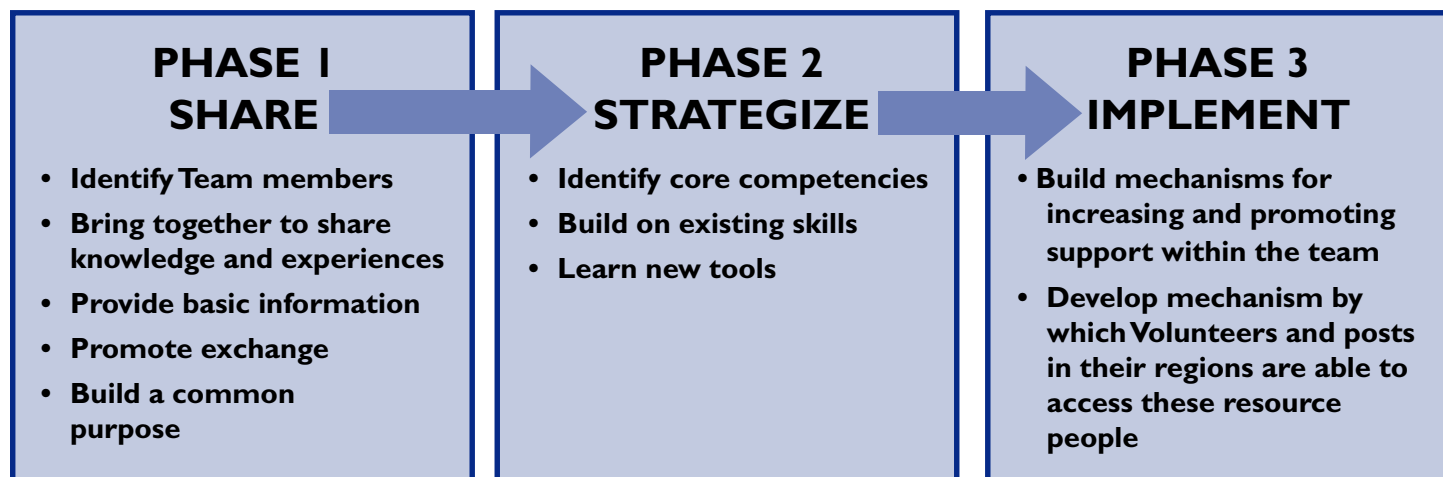
build a common purpose. In Phase Two Team members identify core competencies, build on existing skills, and learn new tools. In Phase Three Team members build mechanisms for increasing and promoting support within the Team and develop the mechanism by which Volunteers and posts in their regions are able to access these resource people. At the end of Phase Three, coordination of the Team is formally transferred from Washington to the field. During each workshop, strategies and action plans are developed to achieve Team goals. In between each phase, Team members continue to build skills, exchange information, and work on activities to reach individual, post, and team goals.

### Africa GAD Team

The Africa GAD Team held its first workshop in June 2000 and completed the Phase Three workshop in June 2002. Team members developed the following mission statement:

*For the ultimate purpose of achieving gender equity in order to improve the lives of men, women, girls, and boys in the communities we serve, we commit ourselves as resources to:*

1. *Support and advocate for the integration of the gender and development approach across all projects through programming and training;*
2. *Support Volunteers, staff, and counterparts in gender and development activities; and*
3. *Facilitate information dissemination and networking within and among posts in the Africa region as well as with Peace Corps/Washington.*



*Engendering Development continues on page 15*

*Engendering Development* continued from page 14

## Gender and Development Teams

### — Africa GAD Team —

Maria Soumonni, Benin  
 Claude Millogo, Burkina Faso  
 Mohamed Fofana, Guinea  
 Susan Mugwe, Kenya  
 Simon Okoth, Kenya  
 Florina Pheko, Lesotho  
 Dora Mwalwenje, Malawi  
 Mariem Mint el Bechir, Mauritania  
 Custodio Langa, Mozambique  
 Selma Imene, Namibia  
 Assalama Sidi Dawalak, Niger  
 Margaret Rugambwa, Tanzania  
 Yamai Secka-Jack, The Gambia  
 Rose Kpombrekou, Togo

### — IAP GAD Team —

Verolyn Richards, Belize  
 Carla Carvajal, Bolivia  
 Sonia Flores, El Salvador  
 Shený Huerta, Guatemala  
 Yamileth Alguera, Nicaragua  
 Elías Ruiz, Nicaragua  
 Inola Mapp, Panama  
 Josefina Ríos, Paraguay  
 Kilali Alailima, Samoa

### — EMA GAD Team —

Nino Chelidze, Georgia  
 Elvira Nistreanu, Moldova  
 Luvsantseren Otgontugs, Mongolia  
 Amina Fahim, Morocco  
 Ang Dali Sherpa, Nepal  
 Luzviminda Delumen, Philippines  
 Ioana Negrau, Romania  
 Yelena Melekhina, Russia/Far East

This mission statement is further broken down into roles, tasks, challenges, and strategies that are addressed in programming, Volunteer field support, training, and networking and information dissemination.

Africa GAD Team members actively share information learned in each workshop with staff and Volunteers at post. Team members work with GAD committees to develop mission statements, create organizational guidelines, and provide support and encouragement for GAD Committee activities. In an effort to strengthen the integration of GAD concepts and tools into programming and training, Team members work with staff at posts to include GAD in pre-service training (PST), in-service training (IST) and training of trainers and raise these issues in project plan discussions with associate Peace Corps directors at post. For example, Burkina Faso includes specific GAD competencies in PST.

## Inter-America and the Pacific (IAP) GAD Team

The IAP GAD Team held its Phase One workshop in August 1999. The IAP GAD Team then took an active role in the design of the Phase Two workshop in August 2000. Phase Three occurred in the form of a gender analysis practicum in August and September 2002. Following is the purpose statement developed by the IAP GAD Team:

*Peace Corps Volunteers and staff in IAP will use gender analysis and gender and development approaches in programming and training so that women and men are active participants in decisions that affect their lives.*

The Team also developed a planning framework with goals and objectives as well as specific tasks to achieve them. The IAP GAD Team identified a GAD Team coordinator to serve as a point person to coordinate requests for Team members; to serve as a liaison among the GAD Team, other posts, and Peace Corps/Washington; and to promote the sharing of materials among posts in the IAP region.

The IAP GAD Team shares information with colleagues at post and with Volunteers, works to incorporate GAD into training, encourages better reporting of GAD activities, meets with NGOs and government representatives, and supports GAD committees in defining their purpose, writing goals and objectives, and providing encouragement for individual projects. In Guatemala, a PST questionnaire on gender analysis in Guatemalan families was developed for trainees to complete with their host families in preparation for a session on gender and culture.

*Engendering Development* continues on page 16

*Engendering Development* continued from page 15

## Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) GAD Team

The EMA region held its Phase One workshop in September 2000 and its Phase Two workshop in September 2002. The EMA GAD Team's purpose is:

*To collaborate with Peace Corps headquarters, GAD committees, and local resources in order to support Peace Corps Volunteers, counterparts, and all stakeholders in their communities by integrating gender analysis into the Peace Corps' programming and training to improve the Peace Corps' role in community development.*

Several new staff members joined the EMA GAD Team at the Phase Two workshop, where Team members elaborated on their purpose statement to include specific tasks to help the Team fulfill its multiple roles: working with Volunteers, working with staff at their posts and other posts in the region, and working with Peace Corps/Washington. The EMA GAD Team has been very active in sharing information with Volunteers and staff at post, conducting debriefings, and sharing resources. Team members support GAD Committee activities, helping committees reevaluate their purposes and objectives and develop action plans. In an effort to share information and ensure sustainability of GAD activities at their posts, Team members are initiating contacts and building relationships with local and international NGOs. EMA GAD Team members incorporate GAD into PSTs, ISTs, and project design and management workshops.



## How Can GAD Teams Assist Volunteers?

The GAD Teams were formed to serve as resources and mentors for Volunteers and staff, and Volunteers are encouraged to use these valuable resources. There are a number of ways the Teams can assist Volunteers' work. They can:

- ✓ Provide information and best practices from other countries.
- ✓ Share information on successful strategies for addressing obstacles.
- ✓ Access resources and materials on gender analysis, GAD, WID, PACA, and related topics. GAD Team members receive updates from Peace Corps/Washington regarding new resources available through ICE. Volunteers looking for assistance can also ask GAD Team members to suggest resources appropriate to their needs.
- ✓ Provide support to WID/GAD committees in their organization and activities. Whether it is developing a mission statement and goals or planning national or regional conferences, GAD Team members can help committees strengthen their activities and increase awareness of the importance of integrating gender into their Peace Corps work.
- ✓ Offer suggestions on networking or working with NGOs and local government agencies.
- ✓ Assist in designing or facilitating GAD training activities, developing or conducting ISTs, incorporating gender analysis into project plans and assessments, and learning how to use PACA tools.

GAD Team members are eager to work with staff and Volunteers as they identify their needs in integrating gender into Peace Corps programming and training.

For more information on the GAD Teams, contact Lyn Messner, WID/GAD Coordinator, or Tammy Boger, WID/GAD and ICT Assistant at:

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1111 20th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20526



# How To... Celebrate International Women's Day

**March 8 Is International Women's Day**

**Suggestions on how you can celebrate from the Dominican Republic GAD Committee**

- Wear a white ribbon symbolizing women's contribution to world peace and development work.
- Show your appreciation for a woman who is important to you by doing something simple and sweet like baking her a cake or giving her flowers.
- Talk to restaurant or disco owners about the importance of the day and see if they will honor women with free stuff for the day (soda, candy, or entrance fee).
- Make use of women's groups by throwing a party or suggesting a gift exchange.
- Hold a candlelight ceremony in honor of women.
- Honor a woman in your community with an award or certificate in recognition of her work and accomplishments.
- Hold an essay, poster, or poetry contest whose theme is the importance of women.
- Organize a talk pertaining to women's issues, importance, history, or empowerment.



- Remind all community leaders (priests, teachers, mayors, etc.) to inform their groups about International Women's Day. Put up posters about the day.
- Remember to wish everyone "Happy Women's Day!"
- Hold a raffle and have the prize be a gift for the winner's mom.
- Offer to do the dishes or otherwise help women with their work.
- Help kids make gifts for their moms, sisters, grandmothers, aunts, and friends.
- Help parents make gifts for their daughters (their favorite meal, a card, flowers).
- Arrange serenades for special women.
- Organize sports activities for girls and women.
- **SAY THANK YOU!**

c/o Angel Ripol,  
APCD/Agriculture  
Peace Corps Director  
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Santo Domingo  
Dominican Republic

## Empowering Girls' Mentors: Benin Conducts Take Our Daughters to Work Mentor Workshop

*Submitted by Lisa Kays/PCV*

Peace Corps/Benin's experience with Take Our Daughters to Work (TODTW) Day led to the development of a workshop for mentors. The goal of TODTW is to encourage girls' education by providing female role models (mentors) to highlight possibilities beyond what the girls have ever imagined. It did not occur to the program's early organizers that the mentors would be an end in themselves.

The mentors became their own success, acquiring and sharing skills on how to mentor, be a leader, plan activities, and educate youth. On their own initiative they began girls clubs and study groups, went to schools, and vigilantly checked girls' grades and progress. Because of their enthusiasm and courage, support for this work is being institutionalized.

At a Peace Corps-sponsored workshop, mentors from all over Benin gathered for the first time to work as a group. They brought with them six years of experience in sharing stories, building skills, executing activities, mentoring girls, and collaborating with Volunteers. The Peace Corps Volunteers and staff saw that perhaps the strength of the program went beyond the girls, their grades, and avoided pregnancies, extending to these women who became an organized unit with a common purpose. Without being a formal group, they were nonetheless a force with common experience, commitment, and diverse skills.

Over these six years, the mentors changed from being merely participants to becoming proactive players, offering their own initiatives and ideas to shape the program. This led to the development of a mentor workshop designed to give mentors the opportunity to share their experiences and talents as well as acquire new skills to use in their work with girls. The workshop also gave the Peace Corps the chance to evaluate the TODTW program from the mentors' perspectives.

The two-day workshop covered a variety of topics, but focused on improving the TODTW event and building sustainability. The sessions allowed participants to:

- Discuss characteristics of good role models, understand the Peace Corps' formal selection criteria for mentors, and develop their own definition of what it means to be a mentor:

"A mentor is a woman who is well respected in her community and who, by her life and example, helps her girls to succeed in their lives."

- Increase their understanding of the procedures, time frame, and expectations of a TODTW mentor as well as the Peace Corps' vision for the program, including the need to ensure sustainability.
- Discuss their projects in terms of organization, strengths, weaknesses, and future changes, as well as how to begin or continue projects in their villages.
- Focus on their skills and how to use them to support girls in their villages.
- Learn the basics of PACA (participatory analysis for community action) and the importance of determining the needs of the community in doing projects, and using these to make mentors' work more effective.
- Identify ways to improve their work as mentors. Their ideas focused on collaboration with the community, visiting girls in their families, and periodic exchanges among mentors.
- Review the Peace Corps' goals, its procedure for placing Volunteers, and the benefits of understanding cultural differences.



*Empowering Girls' Mentors continues on page 19*

*Empowering Girls' Mentors continued from page 18*



- Prepare a 15-minute presentation on a specific topic using effective public-speaking skills and a participatory style.
- Plan for the next TODTW conference by giving participants an understanding of the planning process from the Volunteer perspective and encouraging feedback regarding their involvement in that process.

During discussions in which Volunteer conference planners and mentors were grouped together by region, the women seemed somewhat confused by how exactly they could help, but many also seemed willing and interested. Mentors completed questionnaires that detailed their abilities and experiences and indicated whether they would be willing to help plan future conferences. Those with interest and ability were identified to work with Volunteers on conference planning, some in a “shadow” capacity to enhance their skills while tapping their enthusiasm. One mentor pointed out that working with Volunteers helps improve their own organizing and planning skills.

The final discussion was a step toward a joint organizational effort by Peace Corps staff, Volunteers, and mentors to work on the logistical and substantive aspects of the program. Such a collaboration will take time, but it is now evident that it is possible. Perhaps

in a few years the mentor sessions will not be on public speaking, but on fundraising, and the women will design an action plan for funding TODTW as the Peace Corps phases out its involvement.

Perhaps by that time former TODTW girls will be old enough to be mentors, and a program capable of utilizing their discipline and experience as students will be created. As the change of roles for the Peace Corps and the TODTW participants occurs, there will no doubt be increased potential and energy for other projects.

The Peace Corps staff and Volunteers will continue to diminish their role in a program that has meant so much to them personally, and the mentors will contend with the challenges of leadership and responsibility inherent in keeping such a program a reality. The success of the women is reflected in the success of their girls. Our success as a development agency will be the elimination of their need for us.

*A mentor is a woman who is well respected in her community and who, by her life and example, helps her girls to succeed in their lives.*

c/o Maria Soumonni  
APCD/Education  
Peace Corps Director  
B.P. 971  
Cotonou  
Benin

**How have you worked to build sustainability in your activities?**

**Please send your articles to:**

**[TheExchange@peacecorps.gov](mailto:TheExchange@peacecorps.gov)**

# WHAT'S GOING ON...

## Ghana Holds Youth Conferences

*Introduction by Aba Sey/APCD/Forestry and Environment*

After the second nationwide Girls' Education Conference, Volunteers decided that future conferences would be held on a regional basis to give more girls across Ghana the opportunity to participate. Volunteers also decided to expand participation to include boys. While each region selects its own theme for the conference, the common thread running through all is the promotion of gender equity and youth empowerment.



### Gender Equality in Computer Information Technology

*By Joel Parthemore, Sarah Danniger, and Erin Tims/PCVs*

To build girls' confidence in their ability to use computers and to promote interest in information technology, Volunteers designed a computer workshop to introduce teenage girls to basic computer skills. The conference took place at the Wenchi Secondary School computer lab, and was facilitated by PCV Joel Parthemore and two computer technicians, former Wenchi students.

The girls had a wide range of computer experience—from never having seen one before to being able to type 30 words a minute and being familiar with Microsoft Windows. Participants learned about computer parts, basic operations, and computer lab rules and etiquette. The girls learned how

to log in to the local network and look at the files in their directories after receiving a user name and password. Using the newer computers in the lab, the girls viewed the Wenchi Secondary School website, along with other interesting programs and applications.

Playing simple games such as Nibbles and Tetris provided a great way to break up the sessions and to provide practice using the keyboard. The first lesson of typing skills taught the girls the correct way to position their hands, which they soon abandoned for the "hunt and peck" method.

### Volta Youth Retreat

*By Dan Reichardt and Farrell Davis/PCVs*

Twenty youth ages 13 to 16 united to participate in a four-day retreat focused on "Celebrating and Developing the Potential of Ghana's Youth." The retreat concentrated on issues such as HIV/AIDS, nutrition, planning for the future, study skills, time management, gender issues, and child rights.

On the opening day, the youth made daily planners in order to encourage and support later sessions on time management and goal setting. Icebreakers and games between and after sessions helped maintain enthusiasm. A scavenger hunt provided a learning experience and gave the participants a chance to explore in small, informal groups. The extended weekend concluded with a visit to the regional radio station to present a public service announcement regarding HIV/AIDS. Each student was able to contribute a message over the radio.

### Eastern Regional Conference

*By Kari Windbiel and Gala Wagner/PCVs*

Forty-two students, both girls and boys, participated in the Eastern Regional Conference, whose theme was "Looking to the

Future." The conference focused on life skills and leadership.

The students first established ground rules and discussed their hopes and fears for the conference. Students then participated in sessions concerning gender roles, leadership, decision making, goal setting, and teamwork. The students also engaged in trust- and team-building activities. A representative from the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana discussed HIV/AIDS and the consequences of teenage pregnancy, and a 17-year-old mother of two sets of twins told her story.

The next day students took a field trip to a local dam and later discussed environmental issues. On another morning students spent time at a professional's workplace and attended sessions presented by some of the professional women.

Before the students departed, they discussed how to take back the information they had learned to their schools and communities.



*Youth Conferences continues on page 21*

## WID Scholarship Fund in China

By Katherine Lan Ho/PCV



*WINNING SMILES: PC/China scholarship winners Kimberly Luo (far left) and Wendy Zhang (far right) celebrate their receipt of PC/China's first scholarships.*

Photo by Zhang Qiao Ju/student

The women in development committee in China established a women's scholarship fund for eight teachers colleges in Sichuan Province in the southwest. With the support of the Sichuan Education Association for International Exchange, Volunteers from eight schools made education a lighter burden for

12 female students who are primarily from the impoverished countryside, where education for girls is still viewed as futile and wasteful. Each scholarship provides one academic year of tuition and, at some colleges, employment in a work-study program to help ease the cost of daily living.

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Chengdu, Sichuan 610064  
China (PRC)

*Youth Conferences continued from page 20*

### Central Region Gender and Youth Development Conference

By Aimee Fregeau and Jeff Barrett/PCVs

The Central Region Gender and Youth Development Conference included the boys and girls who attended the previous year's conference. The goal was to reinforce the information learned there and to share that information with new participants.

While the primary focus was HIV/AIDS, sessions also included topics such as personal hygiene, water-related disease, teenage pregnancy, gender issues, and nutrition.

An HIV-positive man visited the conference and gave a session on living with HIV/AIDS and how to care for people with AIDS.

Students practiced facilitation skills and later visited a Catholic girls school to facilitate discussions on the various topics they had discussed. One student even did a condom demonstration.

Participants also had fun on a nature hike during an educational field trip to Kakum National Park. In the evenings, students did art projects or watched movies about teenage pregnancy. A final highlight was a visit to a regional radio station, where participants were interviewed live.

It was a great experience for all, and many of the students are passing on the information through newly formed health clubs in their schools and communities.

c/o Sam Danquah,  
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Peace Corps Director  
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Ghana

## Moldovan Day to Combat Breast Cancer

By Stephanie Arthur and T. Mona Deprey/PCVs

Working closely with doctors from the Association of Mammologists and with university students, Volunteers organized the first Moldovan Day to Combat Breast Cancer to increase awareness about breast cancer among women in Moldova. Women attending the program learned about breast self-exams and the necessity of early baseline mammograms. Informational brochures explained how and when to do a self-exam, when it is necessary to get mammograms, and statistics and risk factors for breast cancer in Moldova.

After an opening run/walk, five doctors from the association spoke about the problem of breast cancer and answered questions from members of the public. Twenty-five mammograms or sonograms were raffled off to those who attended, and participants in the run/walk donated money to purchase eight more mammograms.

Breast cancer in Moldovan women is on the rise, especially in women under 50, which is indicative of underlying ecological or genetic causes. Although the risks are increasing, most women do not get examined because of fear, a lack of awareness, or the costs involved. One of the free mammograms detected a large, cancerous tumor in a 19-year-old woman, who is now undergoing treatment. Because of the great interest in this project, Peace Corps Volunteers intend to continue working closely with Moldovan doctors and students on future breast cancer awareness projects.

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Chisinau 2001  
Republic of Moldova



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## Workshop for Female Leaders in El Salvador

By Heidi Mihm/PCV

Female leaders and Volunteers in El Salvador gathered for the first ever Workshop for Women in Development sponsored by the GAD Committee. The workshop brought together women who had formally or informally demonstrated leadership skills to provide them with tangible tools for community development. Many of the participants had never had the opportunity to attend training of any kind, so the workshop was geared toward these women.

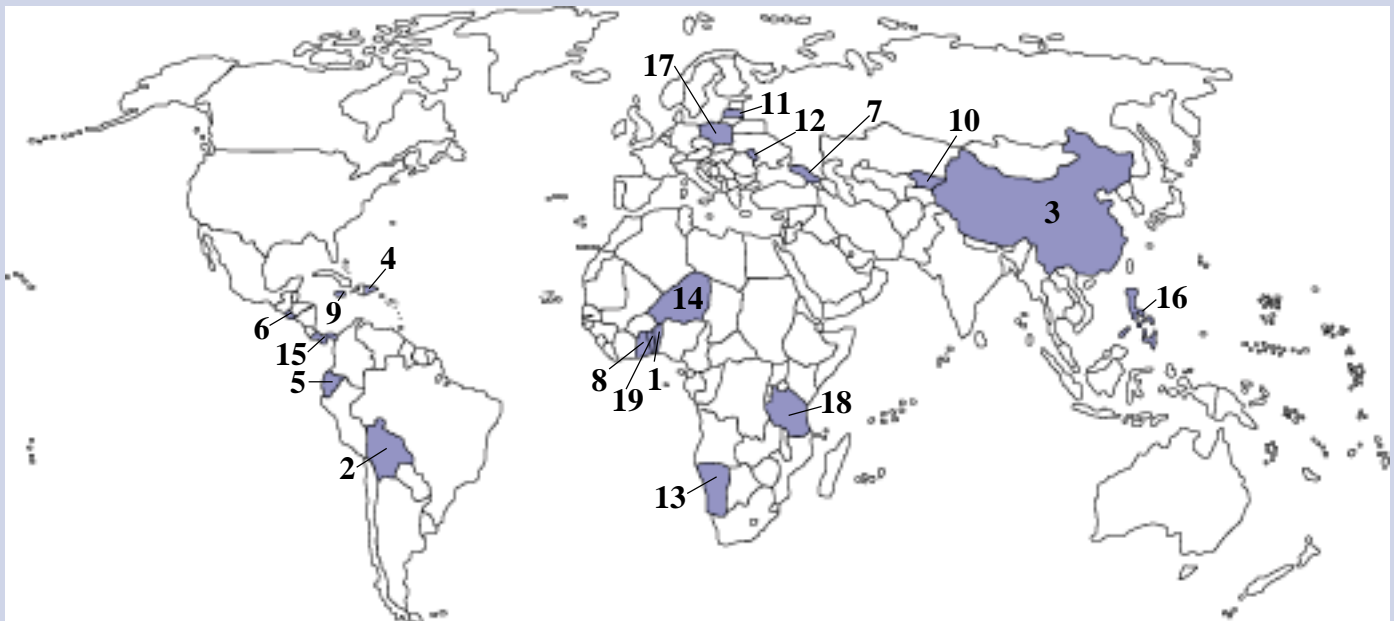
Representatives from Salvadoran NGOs that deal with issues related to women made presentations on several topics. The workshop began with a session that introduced

the concept of gender, the difference between gender and sex, and a view of work as divided into three categories: productive, reproductive, and community. The second day centered on self-esteem and leadership, and the final day focused on project design and management, with an emphasis on gender roles. Evening activities included s'mores, movie night, and a demonstration of how to make all-natural facial masks. The workshop concluded with a ceremony to present certificates and T-shirts.

Gender inequity in El Salvador starts at birth, and the participants were enthusiastic about changing attitudes in their communi-

ties, beginning in their own homes. They left the workshop with an awareness of the important role of women in community development. They also took home basic knowledge of project design and management and strategies to consider gender issues in the process.

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Articles in *The Exchange*, Men, Boys, and Gender • February 2003, Were Submitted From...

- |                       |                     |             |                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1. Benin              | 6. El Salvador      | 11. Latvia  | 16. Philippines |
| 2. Bolivia            | 7. Georgia          | 12. Moldova | 17. Poland      |
| 3. China              | 8. Ghana            | 13. Namibia | 18. Tanzania    |
| 4. Dominican Republic | 9. Jamaica          | 14. Niger   | 19. Togo        |
| 5. Ecuador            | 10. Kyrgyz Republic | 15. Panama  |                 |

## Upcoming Issues

- The next issue of *The Exchange* (Volume 37) will focus on gender roles, agriculture, and the environment.
- Volume 38 of *The Exchange* will focus on gender and water and sanitation.
- Volume 39 of *The Exchange* will focus on youth. Articles for this volume are currently being accepted.

*Editor's note: All submissions are welcome—letters to the editor, articles for the How To column, articles on sustainable development, or articles on any activity that involves gender and development.*

## Upcoming Opportunities

- March 20: International Women's Day
- April 22: Earth Day



# Peace Corps Volunteers Inspire Learning in Georgia

By David Kurdadze/English student

Everything began this time last year. Two foreigners appeared in our school and attended the English lessons. Then we were told about the American Peace Corps and its aim. At first our teacher was a very pretty girl—Tamara Shi. She gave her lessons with her charming smile and shining eyes and we didn't want her lessons to be over. We each did our best so her lessons would be successful. Learning activities were something new during our English lessons and we liked them very much. Then the school year was over and David Kubacki came to be with us for two years.

David began his job in summer. A lot of students used to come to David's lessons in summer—my sister and I as well. The lessons were very interesting, easy to remember, and very fruitful. We became friends, sang songs, went on an excursion, played, and celebrated his birthday. David as a teacher is quite strict, but is like an older friend. He demands that we have to do the lessons well and gives good, excellent marks we deserve.

But the main thing is that we have American acquaintances, and we found that they are generous, lively, very communicative, kindhearted, amusing people. They can live among us without any light, gas, or water, and work in the cold classrooms. David is a full member of our school and our society. Everybody knows him and respects him.

c/o Nino Chelidze,  
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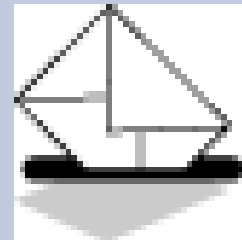


## Express Yourself

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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