

A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers

# Introduction



## INTRODUCTION

This guide was developed specifically to show Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) why and how community economic development (CED) is used to improve individuals' and families' economic well-being. As you do the activities in this guide and read the text, you will discover the potential of CED in expanding communities' economies and building the capacity of citizens to take responsibility for their own economic future. The guide is based on the experiences of CED groups that first became active in the United States in the 1960s, the efforts of international development organizations, and experiences of Peace Corps Volunteers.

*A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers* is presented in five modules.

- Module 1** Promotes an understanding of CED by contrasting its unique approach to a more traditional economic development approach. Core CED activities are explained to afford a fuller understanding of CED concepts.
- Module 2** Stresses the participation of citizens in CED and presents techniques to increase and maintain participation.
- Module 3** Discusses practical methods—gathering community information and decision-making techniques—for planning a CED strategic agenda
- Module 4** Discusses implementing a CED strategic agenda.
- Module 5** Provides an overview of participatory monitoring and evaluation and discusses its importance in building community capacity and in gathering information for project stakeholders and to improve the CED project.

CED is a process by which communities enhance the quality of life of their residents by creating new community and business wealth and building the capacity of residents to take control of their own economic future. It is the second goal of CED, building residents' capacity to take control of their own economic future, that makes CED a unique economic development strategy.

CED's capacity-building strategy is consistent with the following Peace Corps programming criteria:

1. Increases local capacity.
2. Strives to address expressed needs of those who have limited access to resources and opportunities.
3. Seeks sustainable results that complement other development efforts.
4. Enlists local participants as partners in developing, implementing, and assessing the project.

5. Considers gender relationships and promotes women’s participation to increase their status and opportunities.
6. Places Volunteers at the local level where needs arise.

As you approach your work with CED, whether you walk into a community that has never thought about how it can be proactive in improving its economic situation or a functioning CED group, you will be surprised at how many of the skills you already possess are useful in working in CED efforts.

Each module in the series is similar to a travel guide. It provides an itinerary that leads you from one CED site to the next. These self-directed modules allow flexibility in both the time spent and the opportunities to explore areas that interest you. Experiential activities, included in each module, are structured to encourage adapting what you know and topics discussed in the modules to the local community’s economic environment. To maximize learning, you are encouraged to share your observations, experiences, and conclusions with your fellow travelers—other training participants, Peace Corps trainers, and staff.

Travel guides often include sections on the local culture and some useful phrases of the local language. In *A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers*, key terms are defined and space is provided to write the local language translation. Questions highlighting cross-cultural issues are incorporated into the experiential activities.

How much you learn during your visit to the world of CED is up to you. If you observe carefully, interact with the local people, and are open to new experiences, you will have a rewarding experience. PCVs want to learn about their host countries and to work with the citizens to improve the lives of individuals and families. As you journey through these CED training materials, it is useful to have a journal to record your observations, experiences, and thoughts; a camera; and an open mind.

---

*A mind is like a parachute—only useful if it is open.*

---

## HOW TO USE *A CED TRAINING GUIDE FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS*

Learning is not a spectator sport! To learn you must be actively involved. Your host community is a place for discovery, a place for observing, experiencing, processing, and implementing your learnings. Even “what you think you know” needs to be reevaluated in your new cultural environment.

Throughout these five modules are activities to promote community interaction. Adults learn best through experience—the most relevant experiences are in communities similar to those where you will live during your Peace Corps

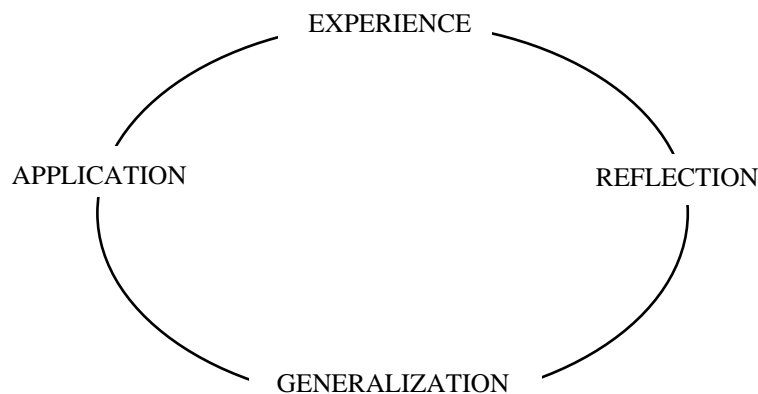
service. Many activities include community observation, information gathering, and/or involvement.

Your technical expertise is nearly useless until you adapt and apply what you know to fit the local culture and you can share your knowledge and skills in the local language.

At the beginning of each module is a list of objectives regarding: knowledge, skills, and attitude. These learning objectives point you in the right direction. After completing each module you should review the learning objectives to determine if you have understood the module contents and if you have mastered the knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In each module, you are reminded to analyze what you know and what you are learning in the context of local conditions. Technical training is not complete without the integration of language and culture.

*A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers* is designed for the self-directed adult learner. Self-directed does not mean you have to learn on your own, but rather that you take responsibility for mastering the knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Activities, case studies, and hands-on exercises in these modules are based on experiential learning methodology.

### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE



An experience that activates the experiential learning cycle may come from your past, an activity in your host community, a simulation game, or a written case study in a module.

Reflection is a special kind of thinking—it is both active and controlled. You are only reflecting as long as you stick to the problem or task at hand. Reflection is the kind of thinking that looks for the reasons for believing one thing rather than another, the kind of thinking that asks questions. It aims at making sense out of an experience. Practice reflecting on your experience, imagine the possibilities, and consider alternative meanings.

Many Volunteers find that keeping a journal encourages reflective thinking. Try writing in a journal every day for two or three weeks to determine if this works for you.

---

*Socrates believed that it is through this kind of thinking [critical thinking, reflective thinking] that people shape their lives.*

*He felt people need to think about what they do and why they do it, about what they believe and why they believe it. He said that a day should never pass without such questions and that a life without such questions is not worth living.*

— reprinted with permission from Boostrom, Robert.

*Developing Creative and Critical Thinking: an Integrated Approach.* National Textbook Company, Lincolnwood, IL, USA. p. 4.

---

During generalization, you expand on what you learned to fit new and different situations. Generalization is an especially relevant step in the experiential learning cycle for a PCV operating in a new and different country and culture.

The last step of the cycle, application, requires that you use what you have learned. As you apply your learnings, you generate new experiences and the experiential learning cycle begins again.

---

---

As a self-directed learner, you are responsible for:

- Thoughtfully reading the modules;
  - Actively participating in the suggested activities;
  - Engaging with community residents to learn about microenterprises in the local context;
  - Integrating cultural and language learnings to understand the technical subject matter in the local context;
  - Provocatively seeking additional information to understand the microenterprise topics;
  - Keeping an open mind to different ideas and ways of doing things; and
  - Assuring that learning objectives are achieved.
- 
- 

Enjoy your  
community economic development  
journey!

\* \* \* \* \*

## TRAINER'S NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

**The role of the trainer:** The trainer is responsible for facilitating the learners' understanding of community economic development (CED) by:

- Identifying opportunities and materials to enable learners to experience, observe, and gather information related to the activities and topics;
- Helping learners contextualize their experiences and observations based on the trainer's understanding of the local environment and culture;
- Encouraging learners to take an appreciative approach, looking for resources and strengths rather than problems and needs in their journey of discovery, and
- Facilitating the processes of reflection, generalization, planning, and application, using the trainer's technical, cross-cultural, and country-specific expertise.

**How to use *A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers*:** The modules are written for Peace Corps trainees and/or Volunteers (PCVs) who expect to work in CED through their primary assignment or in community outreach activities. These materials also should be useful for Peace Corps staff in understanding the development possibilities associated with CED. *A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers* can be adapted for community partners and local development workers.

*A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers* will be used most often during Pre-Service Training (PST) and In-Service Training (IST). Because the modules are designed for the self-directed learner, they can be adapted to a center-based, community-based, or hybrid training model. Also, Volunteers can use them for self-study anytime during their Peace Corps service, some sections can be used in CED Counterpart trainings.

Although a training participant benefits from individual study, working with a small group is often more interesting, and sharing ideas deepens understanding. Interaction of a knowledgeable skilled technical trainer is not essential, but highly desirable.

Continued

Trainer's Notes, continued

Writing training materials to fit every Peace Corps post and training situation is not possible. These modules are furnished electronically to facilitate making changes to better fit the local conditions, culture, and training model. We urge you to invest the time and effort to adapt *A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers*. Work with the post's programming and training staff to:

- Rewrite sections not applicable to local conditions;
- Add country-specific examples and graphics; and
- Adjust activities to your training situation.

**Trainer's notes** are found at the end of each module. They include the following:

- **Overview** of the topics covered in the module/activities to explain the reason for including the topics.
- **Time** to complete the module/activities. You may need to adjust times to fit the training schedule.
- **Materials** that should be on hand before starting the module/activities.
- **Preparation** that should take place before beginning the module/activities.
- **Hints for debriefing and processing the learnings** of the module/activities to assist trainers in guiding training participants through the reflection, generalization, and application steps of the experiential learning cycle. Through debriefing and processing the experience(s), a skilled trainer adds value to self-directed learning.

At the beginning of the reader's section of each module are knowledge, skills, and attitude objectives. The learning objectives are stated in behavioral terms and stress the application of learnings developed during the module. Application is the final step in the experiential learning cycle. Key terms, listed at the end of each module, include significant words and phrases defined as they are used in the module. Space is provided for the local language translation of each key term. Encourage training participants to seek help from the language staff in translating and learning the key terms.

Listed at the end of each module are resources from the Peace Corps Information Collection and Exchange (ICE) Catalog and from select Internet sites. These readily available materials allow trainees and trainers to acquire additional information on topics covered in the module.

Continued



Trainer's Notes, continued

The following training books, available from ICE, are recommended for *A CED Training Guide for Peace Corps Volunteers* trainers.

*The Art of Facilitation: How to Create Group Synergy.* Dale Hunter, Anne Bailey, and Bill Taylor. (Fisher Books) 1995. 241 pp. (ICE No. TR114)

[Distribution to Peace Corps In-Country Resource Centers Only]

Provides an in-depth examination of the art of intervention and cooperative beliefs and values underlying facilitation for creating group synergy. The toolkit includes facilitative designs for workshops, meetings, projects, and evaluations. In addition, experienced facilitators offer a personal perspective on facilitation.

*101 Ways to Make Training Active.* Mel Silberman. (Jossey-Bass Pfeiffer) 1995. 303 pp. (ICE No. TR116)

Presents both fun and serious individual and group exercises to enlighten and deepen learning and retention in training sessions. Contains strategies and techniques to get active participation from the start and how to teach information, skills, and attitudes actively.

*Methods for Development Work and Research: A Guide for Practitioners.* Britha Mikkelsen. (Sage Publications) 1995. 269 pp. (ICE No. TR074)

Describes and analyzes different development research models, devoting special attention to the participatory approach, but also considering conventional and quantitative research methods that can complement this approach. Discusses the development issues that are being researched, with a separate chapter on poverty and gender analysis. Offers detailed information that can be useful in training field workers to do research.

Continued

Trainer's Notes, continued

Training Trainers for Development—Conducting A Workshop on Participatory Training Techniques. The CEDPA Training Manual Series Volume I, 1999. 92 pp. (ICE No. TR111)

[Distribution to Peace Corps In-Country Resource Centers Only]

Compilation of training activities that CEDPA has used in many programs to strengthen the training capacity of health, family planning, and other types of development organizations. Manual prepares managers and trainers to conduct interactive, learner-centered training of trainers.

*The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*. Sue Annis Hammond. (Kodiak Consulting) 1996. 61 pp. (ICE No. TR110)

Simple, practical explanation of Appreciative Inquiry and how to use it. Also includes useful information on project planning and nongovernmental organization development.