First Do No Harm: Peace Corps Training Package for Sustainable Library Projects

The Peace Corps Sustainable Library Development Training Package was developed and written by Peace Corps/Washington librarians Marcy Carrel and Gail Wadsworth in the Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support (OPATS). Field reviews and input came from a working group that included field staff from the Africa; Europe, Mediterranean and Asia; and Inter-America and Pacific regions and headquarters staff. Special thanks to PC/Albania, PC/Lesotho, PC/Morocco, PC/Paraguay, PC/Philippines, and PC/South Africa for their contributions during the field review phase.

Background on Library Projects in the Peace Corps

8 percent of Volunteers are engaged in library projects as part of their primary work assignments;

16 percent of Volunteers are engaged in library projects as secondary activities*

*Self-reported data from the 2012 Annual Volunteer Survey

Peace Corps Volunteers have been involved in library development throughout most of the 50+ year history of the agency. In the early days, Peace Corps actively recruited professional librarians for library assignments worldwide. Although Peace Corps no longer actively recruits librarians, we know that Volunteers are engaged in library projects of all types. Anecdotally, we regularly read or hear about book drives, library infrastructure, and other library projects and activities that Volunteers undertake with partners in their communities.

While many Peace Corps Volunteers engage in library projects, most are not well-trained in library and information science, nor are they experienced in sustainable library development. This training package is intended to provide Volunteers with standardized training and guidance for library activities and recommendations for other appropriate resources to support library development in their communities.

Although the resources are designed for Peace Corps post staff to train Volunteers, they are also available for Volunteers to adapt and use to train community members, and for any others interested in training for sustainable library development and promoting best practices.
Sessions
There are a total of nine sessions associated with the Training Package. Two are stand-alone, introductory sessions:

- **Session: Peace Corps Resources for Library Projects** (75 min, for Peace Corps trainees)
- **Session: Sustainable Library Development for the Education Sector** (2 hours, required for all Education sector trainees; recommended for all others who are or will be involved in library projects)

The remaining seven sessions build upon each other as a workshop over one or two days:

- **Session: Introduction to Sustainable Library Development**
- **Session: Information Resources for Library Projects (Optional)**
- **Session: Steps for Setting Up a Library**
- **Session: Organization and Classification**
- **Session: Borrowing and Lending**
- **Session: Supplementary Services**
- **Session: Library Field Trip (Optional)**

The sessions are written to meet the Peace Corps’ interactive and learner-focused training style. They are based on the 4MAT lesson planning system designed by Bernice McCarthy and adapted by Peace Corps.

Feedback from users will inform revisions, new sessions, and new supplementary materials. Near-term plans include a companion Library Manual, as well as sessions on Technology in the Library and Digital Literacy.

**Peace Corps Sustainable Library Development Training Package**
(www.peacecorps.gov/library/pubindex/)

Your Feedback is Welcome!
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