THE ROLE OF HOST NATIONALS IN THE PEACE CORPS: COUNTERPARTS, TRAINERS, AND PROGRAMMERS
Group #2, July 10

Recommendation #1:

In each host country, establish a national consultation council on Peace Corps programs, with structure and participation organized appropriately for each host country. Emphasis should be placed on the participation of key individuals from indigenous non-governmental organizations. Broadly speaking, these councils would provide information and insight for programming purposes; would provide a major channel of communication with organizations, constituencies, and leadership groups; and, with the public
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Recommendation #2:

Rotate HCN staff to assignments at PC/Washington

The purpose of this recommendation is:

1. to provide H.C. perspectives in operations and decision making of PC/HQ, and

2. to provide HCN staff opportunities for professional growth and development of new skills, and

3. to provide opportunity for Peace Corps HQ to model the pursuit of goals #2 and #3 through interaction with HCN's on Washington staff.
Recommendation # 3

We recommend that the Peace Corps administrative and professional staff in-country be at least one-half host country nationals and that pay equity be established as a firm and central goal.

Recommendation # 4

We recommend that qualified host country nationals with substantial Peace Corps experience be considered for appointment as country directors either in their own or other countries.

Recommendation # 5

We recommend the formalization and institutionalization of partnerships and associations between volunteers and counterparts in order to better achieve goals #2 and #3 of the Peace Corps Mandate. Ideally, counterparts would work one-on-one w/ volunteers from the start of their terms. The selection of counterparts should begin at the same time that the volunteer is selected if they are not already in place. If this is not possible counterparts should be actively sought after with the assistance of the above mentioned "advisory-consultative committee" the volunteer, appropriate staff persons and associated non-government organisations within the first year of a volunteer's time.
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Recommendation # 5

Introduce a program for volunteers from host countries in the United States. While we recognize that budgetary limitations will restrict numbers, we firmly believe that the time has come to act on the responsibility of youth and adults for Peace Corps to demonstrate the principle of mutual aid. We suggest that this program begin with at least one hundred nationals from host countries. We foresee a dual function for these volunteers: (1) working with sharing their skills and insights with targeted American groups and organizations and (2) contributing to the development education of American hosting, as resources for the development education of American Communities.
25th ANNIVERSARY NATIONAL SEMINAR ON
FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE PEACE CORPS

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COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY
FORT COLLINS, COLORADO

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The role of Host Country Nationals in the Peace Corps: Counterparts, Trainers and Programmers.

First and foremost, let me express my deepest gratitude on behalf of my country, Fiji, and its people to PC for the many countless contributions coupled with deep sense of commitment and sacrifices which volunteers have made for twenty years. Last year our Prime Minister, Rau Sir Kamises Mara made a special tribute to President Reagan and the director of Peace Corps, Ms. Loret Miller Ruppe because of the unique role Peace Corps have made in the development of our country.

Consequently, Ms. Ruppe has coined a new title for our Prime Minister as "the Patron Saint of the Peace Corps" to which we are all very proud.

This paper is based on my personal experiences as a co-worker with varied volunteers whom I had worked with for fifteen years in a small remote island of Fiji, as an observer of Peace Corps before joining the Peace Corps Staff and as my role as Peace Corps Associate Director for Education for over two years.

It was by coincidence however, that I happened to be in Washington attending the Peace Corps Staff Training that I was volunteered to attend this conference and give this paper. Telepathy must have also been in operation when I was volunteered to represent the Host Country National Staff in this conference because I am the Co-ordinator of the Peace Corps 25th Anniversary Celebration Committee in Fiji. In spite of all the coincidences, I am humbly proud to be part of this conference and perhaps represent some common experiences, views and hopes of other Host Country Nationals in the Peace Corps World on the Future Directions of Peace Corps.

Some Broad Definitions
1. Host Country Nationals
To me, HCNs are all those people in a country whose lives, aspirations and hope of the present and the future have been and will be addressed directly or indirectly by Peace Corps. These include all facets of community, namely, government leaders, urban and rural communities, remote islands, rural and urban villages, commercial and subsistence farmers, unemployed youth, parents, students, rich and poor, literate and illiterate, the healthy and the sick. Another unique category of HCNs to the
Peace Corps are those of us who are Peace Corps employees. These include Associate Directors, Medical Officers, Secretaries, trained and other support staff. Our main role is to direct support for Peace Corps programs and volunteers. Simultaneously we develop programs with host agencies to fulfill and meet all the three goals of PC.

2. Counterparts
To meet the three goals of Peace Corps the notion of counterparts need to be re-examined to be more embracing and include a broader meaning that what is generally known to the Peace Corps now. In my experience, counterparts are all those whom volunteers encounter during training and the two years of service of being volunteers. The host families who assist volunteers during their training in culture and language and in almost all cases continue to develop a close family relationship during the two years and even when volunteers return to the United States. Counterparts could also be defined in terms of a volunteer working with a community project whereby the volunteer's skills are transferred during the process. The volunteer similarly learns from the community some community values and cultural skills. Moreover, a volunteer who teaches a class of Math or Science is providing the subject skills to the students. The notion of one volunteer-one counterpart in order to transfer the professional skills is only part of the overall goals of Peace Corps. There are numerous moving examples of the volunteer-host country national counterparts in the broader terms. A family will almost regard their guest volunteer during and after training as a member of their immediate family and community and will always be included in family functions whenever possible, (e.g. at Christmas, New Year festivals, weddings, birthdays, deaths and even volunteers' parents and friends from the US when visiting and also part of the host families).

Programmers and Contractors
A host country national who is as qualified as an American programmer or contractor has the extra mileage of understanding the hidden rules and agendas of the jungles. Any successful working relationship and achievement of goals have to be made both in professional and personal understanding with certain degrees of trust for both parties. These take many years to develop and culminate.

These skills include language, culture, sensitivity to professional and political issues and the network of communication from the grass root to the highest level of government decision making. The slogan of "Who you know and not what you know" has always been an added asset of HCNs Peace Corps employees. Furthermore, HCNs will always remain important to provide continuity of Peace Corps Programs.

Some Suggestions for the Future

1. Peace Corps needs to give more attention and support to the
HCNs to maximize our input to the overall goals of the Peace Corps. These should include training in the areas of language and culture for Peace Corps trainers by professionals.

2. Volunteers can be made more effective trained of cross cultural and personal professional skills to their host families in addition to their primary assignment. As volunteers are always in constant touch with their families during week-ends and holidays, a design could be developed to make this feasible. I am prepared to follow this up on a trial basis and a proper design could be developed in the process.

3. In order to foster and address self-reliance, it is indeed realistic, practical and cost-effective to consider host country nationals for the positions of Peace Corps Country Directors in Country. Without which, Peace Corps will continue to be heavily perceived by host nationals and others as an American organizations growing as a pot plant in a foreign country.

4. Peace Corps also needs to consider the possibility of incorporating an exchange scheme for HCNs to spend short or long term experiences in the U.S. There to be considered are host family members during training, work counterparts and Peace Corps office support staff. Peace Corps Partnership could explore this possibility for the future. The experiences will help expand the awareness of HCNs about the U.S. and Peace Corps.

5. There is a need to establish Peace Corps advisory groups in all Peace Corps posts. The role of the advisory group is to assist Peace Corps and vice versa in focusing programs to meet all the three goals of the Peace Corps. Representatives of the advisory group should include heads of government, community leaders, private sectors and voluntary organizations. The reason being that the impact of Peace Corps will one or the other influence the lives of all.

Story: Told by my grandfather about thirty years ago.

When God created this world he called all his angels for a seminar like this. He asked each of them to present a paper of their vision and hope of this world. The angel of beauty came up with the suggestion to create this world and fill it with all beautiful people, and beautiful things. There was no ugliness in the dream and hope. God said, "far too ambitious."

The angel of wisdom presented the ?? with his hopes and dreams. It was to be filled with all wise people and there was no place for the ignorant. If all were wise there will be no jobs for University Professors and teachers.

Then came the angel of love and peace. In his hopes he suggested all kinds of opposites to the past of this world - men and women, rich and poor, white and black, sick and healthy, Americans and host country nationals. God was impressed and called all the other angels to see this proposal. All shook their heads and said that the world would be a failure.

The angel of love and peace said it is only in the spirit of love and peace that all the different kinds of people in the
world are able to co-exist.

My hope and dreams is that Peace Corps becomes the dreams and hope of the last angel.