

A young boy is the central figure, captured in motion as he dribbles a bright yellow soccer ball on a dry, reddish-brown dirt field. He is wearing a black soccer jersey with red accents on the sleeves and white shorts. His expression is one of focus and joy. In the background, several other children and adults are visible, some standing and others in motion, suggesting a group activity or training session. The sky is clear and blue, indicating a sunny day. The overall scene conveys a sense of active participation and community engagement.

A Global Collaboration:

Peace Corps and Grassroot Soccer

5-Year Report

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FOREWORD

Grassroot Soccer began working with Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) informally in 2005. A small number of PCVs heard about Grassroot Soccer and reached out to explore delivering Grassroot Soccer programs in their communities. Grassroot Soccer mailed copies of curriculum to volunteers and invited others to attend trainings with various partner organizations whenever possible. The partnership continued in this unofficial and small-scale way for several years until the partnership was formalized through a global memorandum of understanding (MOU) in November 2011.

From the starting point, the dedication to this partnership from both Peace Corps and Grassroot Soccer has led to tremendous impact at scale, with significantly more growth expected in the future. This report summarizes the impact, reach, and findings from the first five years of the partnership, and includes insights into the future.

THE GLOBAL MOU BETWEEN GRASSROOT SOCCER AND PEACE CORPS HAD SIX MAIN AREAS OF COLLABORATION:

- 1 Develop a Peace Corps SKILLZ Curriculum and trainings to facilitate PCV's implementation of Grassroot Soccer HIV and AIDS prevention education programs
- 2 Collaborate with Peace Corps to pilot, test, and improve Grassroot Soccer programs
- 3 Provide trainings for PCVs, their Counterparts, and Peace Corps staff on Grassroot Soccer programs
- 4 Develop curricula and training materials specific to regions, countries, and programmatic areas in which Peace Corps works
- 5 Develop curricula that could be used in pre-service and/or in-service trainings
- 6 Work to provide skills exchange between PCVs, Grassroot Soccer staff, and host country nationals, including providing placement opportunities for 3rd year extension and Peace Corps Response Volunteers



ABOUT



Grassroot Soccer is an adolescent health organization that leverages the power of soccer to educate, inspire, and mobilize youth to overcome their greatest health challenges, live healthier, more productive lives, and be agents for change in their communities.

Grassroot Soccer delivers comprehensive adolescent health programs in Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa and works as a technical assistance provider and long-term partner with organizations in over 20 countries.



The Peace Corps is a volunteer program run by the United States government. The Peace Corps is an independent agency within the executive branch of the United States Government created by the Peace Corps Act. The program was established by President John F. Kennedy on March 1, 1961.

The mission of Peace Corps is to promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals:

- To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
- To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
- To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grassroot Soccer is grateful to the numerous people who contributed to the production of this report and to the work carried out through this partnership. We would like to extend our gratitude to the Peace Corps and Grassroot Soccer staff, volunteers, educators, and young people who made this work possible.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

CBO Community-Based Organization

FY Fiscal Year

GBV Gender-Based Violence

GLOW Girls Leading Our World

GRS Grassroot Soccer

HTC HIV Testing and Counseling

HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus

HQ Headquarters

IPV Intimate Partner Violence

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

SRH Sexual and Reproductive Health

VRF Volunteer Report Form

PCV Peace Corps Volunteer

TOC Training of Coaches

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

OVC Orphans and Vulnerable Children

Abbreviations of Peace Corps regions

EMA Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia

IAP Inter-America and Pacific

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



HIGHLIGHTS:

- Grassroot Soccer trained and supported 2,564 PCVs and 2,758 Counterparts and conducted 109 Training of Coaches (TOC) workshops
- Nearly 50,000 young people participated in evidence informed HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and malaria programs as a result of this partnership.
- 54% of young people who participated in Grassroot Soccer's sport-based programs were females.
- Participants in these programs showed consistent and large knowledge gains, improved communication on health issues, and reported healthier and more equal attitudes about relationships and gender.
- All Peace Corps regions were involved (48 posts) in the partnership but most work was PEPFAR focused and took place in Peace Corps' Africa Region.
- Grassroot Soccer's monitoring and evaluation emerged as a high value-add to Peace Corps and tracked the health and performance of the partnership.
- Grassroot Soccer curricula were translated into 10 languages. Peace Corps and Grassroot Soccer also developed or modified five curricula, which are now widely available within Peace Corps.
- The decentralized structure of Peace Corps enabled Grassroot Soccer to work flexibly with posts to respond to their unique training and program needs.
- Grassroot Soccer training evaluations found that PCVs and their Counterparts consistently rated Grassroot Soccer trainings and programs as the best secondary project available to them.



1. PARTNERSHIP AT A GLANCE

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1.1 OVERVIEW OF PARTNERSHIP COMPONENTS

Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in November 2011. Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps committed to collaborate on a number of areas related to training and programming for PCVs and their Counterparts, and the youth they work with in their communities. The creativity and passion of Peace Corps staff, PCVs, and Counterparts led to a wide range of capacity strengthening, learning, and sharing across the organizations and between individuals.

From November 1, 2011 to October 31, 2016 Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps reached nearly **50,000** youth in **48** countries. Grassroot Soccer trained and supported **2,564** PCVs and **2,758** Counterparts, conducting **109** Training of Coaches (TOC) workshops. Many unanticipated and incredible opportunities emerged as a result of this global MOU. Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps joined consortium that worked on large national HIV prevention programs, partnered with local government departments to make Grassroot Soccer programs more sustainable, and developed programs to address malaria, gender, sexual and reproductive health, and financial education.

Grassroot Soccer routinely monitored the impact of its programs on participants' HIV knowledge and attitudes, malaria knowledge, sexual and reproductive health knowledge, and gender attitudes using pre and post intervention questionnaires. Results showed consistent gains in knowledge and improved attitudes across all programs and locations, with the following average

improvements from pre and post questionnaire results:

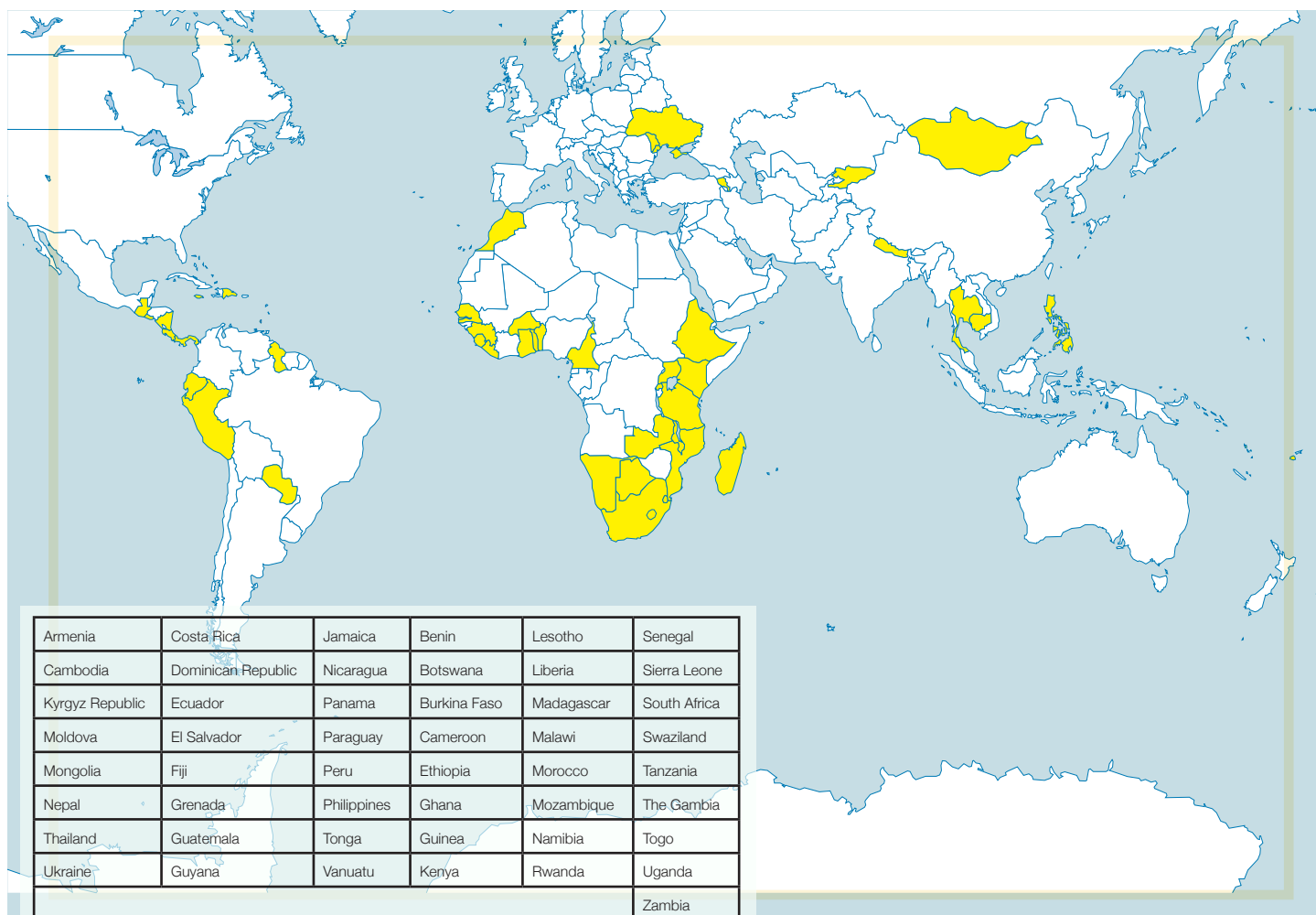
- Mixed-sex HIV prevention program (n=16,252) **21%** improvement
- Malaria prevention program (n=3,813) **11%** improvement
- HIV and SRH program for adolescent girls (n=1,143) **14%** improvement

To understand how and why the partnership was working, Grassroot Soccer conducted multiple process evaluations exploring training, ongoing support, and curriculum delivery.

Peace Corps was instrumental in identifying and strengthening the work of local civil society organizations through this MOU. In Tanzania, Dominican Republic, Zambia, Malawi, and Ethiopia, local NGOs played large roles in training and supporting PCVs and their counterparts. And **local government** has also been an important partner in many countries.

The creativity and passion of Peace Corps staff and Volunteers has resulted in both innovations and sustainable programs, with many in-country staff contributing to curriculum and training development, and in some cases leading their own trainings on Grassroot Soccer programs. Grassroot Soccer has had Volunteers in all sectors deliver Grassroot Soccer programs during their service, with most from *Health* (42%) and *Education* (29%). In this report, Grassroot Soccer also highlights stories and innovations from Volunteers that have helped shape the partnership and bring fresh and new ideas to Grassroot Soccer's work.

Figure 1.1 Map of Peace Corps countries involved with Grassroot Soccer. The partnership is mostly focused in Peace Corps' Africa Region but countries in all regions implemented Grassroot Soccer programs from 2012 to 2016.



GRASSROOT SOCCER APPROACH AND EVIDENCE

Sports-based HIV prevention programs are recognized as effective means of empowering young people, increasing knowledge, promoting communication, and improving negotiation skills, self-efficacy and leadership. In Grassroot Soccer programs, the use of soccer language makes concepts such as HIV, sex, and gender awareness accessible, fun and non-threatening. The pairing of the participants with a Coach, who is in their peer group, although slightly older, has proven to be powerful as it opens up safe spaces for the participants to talk about sex, sexuality, gender, pregnancy, and HIV. Within Grassroot Soccer's SKILLZ Curriculum, soccer is used as the vehicle to more effectively communicate the curriculum through metaphor and engage the learners in dynamic activities.

Grassroot Soccer has conducted 19 research studies in 8 countries, including multi-year randomized control trials, that have proven Grassroot Soccer interventions are highly effective at building participants' knowledge and ability to avoid high-risk behaviors, changing harmful attitudes, and increasing uptake of health and psychosocial support services. Grassroot Soccer's work with adolescent girls has yielded particularly strong results with regard to girls' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors around key SRHR issues and HIV-related risk factors. Independent evaluations have demonstrated that Grassroot Soccer's girls programming improves self-efficacy and increases willingness to talk about problems they face with peers, mentors and family. Girls in Grassroot Soccer programs are more capable of identifying harmful gender norms and demonstrate lower acceptability of physical and intimate partner violence than their peers.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Grassroot Soccer launched the Peace Corps SKILLZ curriculum in November 2011 and created new curricula as different opportunities and needs emerged. The timeline below shows when new curricula - SKILLZ

Malaria, SKILLZ Girl, Ragball, and SKILLZ Boy - were added to the partnership. There were also many country specific adaptations and translations not included here.

Figure 1.2 Timeline of Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps curricula. Grassroot Soccer developed and rolled out different curricula for Peace Corps. New curricula were developed in response to Peace Corps demand and in relation to Grassroot Soccer's areas of expertise.



Table 1.1. Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps curricula overview. Breakdown of the 5 Grassroot Soccer curricula widely available at Peace Corps.

	PC SKILLZ	SKILLZ Malaria	SKILLZ Girl	Ragball	SKILLZ Boy
Sessions	11	4	12	15	12
Session length (mins)	60	45	90	60	90
Curriculum duration (hrs)	8	3	18	15	18
Sex	Mixed	Mixed	Female	Mixed	Male
Main themes	HIV	Malaria	SRHR Gender HIV	Financial literacy	SRHR Gender HIV
Supplements	7 Sessions	Program Planning	7 Sessions		TBD

1.2 CURRICULA DESCRIPTIONS

PEACE CORPS SKILLZ

Peace Corps SKILLZ is an **11-session** HIV prevention curriculum that covers the foundation of HIV prevention: **HIV basics** such as what it is and how it works in the body; the difference between HIV and AIDS, and how testing and treatment work. The curriculum then covers **HIV transmission** and **prevention techniques** as well as explaining the benefits of **HIV testing and treatment**. At different points the curriculum addresses social drivers of HIV such as stigma and gender, which a skilled mentor (coach) brings to life by creating a safe space for honest and open conversations among participants and by sharing their own experiences with HIV.

Peace Corps SKILLZ also includes a **Coach's Resource Guide** and **Holiday Camp Toolkit**. These tools provide practical information and instructions to help PCVs and Counterparts plan and implement Peace Corps SKILLZ in different settings.

HIV & SRH PROGRAM FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS: SKILLZ GIRL

SKILLZ Girl is a **girls-only** 12-session sexual reproductive health curriculum with a strong emphasis on HIV prevention and gender inequality. Each session is structured in two parts: (1) educational activity and discussion; and (2) soccer drills and play. The curriculum starts by building a foundation of knowledge around puberty and reproduction, including contraceptives and pregnancy. From the

onset, Coaches use techniques (along with curriculum sessions like *I am beautiful*) such as praise and active listening to help strengthen girls' self-confidence, which is critical during a time when they experience many biological and social changes. Once girls feel more confident and comfortable in the program, the curriculum looks deeper at gender roles, power and relationships and HIV risk, and promotes collective action towards claiming their right to healthy and safe relationships and access to sexual and reproductive health services.

SKILLZ Girl also includes a **SKILLZ Diary** for participants. The diary is a simple "workbook" with take-home assignments that reinforce messages in the curriculum as well as provide further information

on sexual and reproductive health, such as female anatomy and menstruation. A **Coordinator's Guide** also accompanies SKILLZ Girl and is intended to help PCVs and Counterparts plan and implement the program in their communities.

MALARIA PREVENTION PROGRAM: SKILLZ MALARIA

SKILLZ Malaria is a 4-session curriculum that covers malaria prevention, symptoms, and treatment. SKILLZ Malaria uses fun games to break down important concepts into digestible parts and helps messages stick by giving participants time to reflect on and ask questions about what they learned during curriculum practices.

Kicking out MALARIA with Grassroot Soccer **By Claire C., Peace Corps South Africa Volunteer**

"We get it," she said, smiling. "We always call volunteers. We know many of you can't easily check email every day." Kristin Kennedy is the Partnership Manager for Grassroot Soccer and visited the Stomp Out Malaria Boot Camp last July. She is working to develop the depth and breadth of Grassroot Soccer's partnership with the Peace Corps. Her energy and enthusiasm for GRS and Peace Corps synergy were contagious.

Kristin came to Senegal to introduce a new curriculum – using Grassroot Soccer's original HIV-prevention model, they had developed a program that brings key preventive and curative malaria messages to communities where Peace Corps Volunteers are serving.

After talking with Kristin, I was hooked; I took the curriculum back to my village. I didn't tell the kids "come learn about malaria at my house tomorrow." Rather, I told them we were going to be playing some games and learning about health. I mentioned soccer, showed them a soccer ball, and had an instant audience. One of my favorite activities from the new GRS malaria curriculum requires only one soccer ball and one bed net. Everyone had fun, everyone got the message, and I was happy to see my younger siblings so exhausted by nightfall that they fell asleep before dinner was served!

When I called a fellow Boot Camp graduate, we talked about the potential for the curriculum, but we had a couple of concerns. She and I read through the curriculum and were able to present our feedback directly to Grassroot Soccer.

This is the first time in my Peace Corps experience that an organization has wanted to hear constructive criticism, asked for our input and shown a commitment to our feedback. This is the first time I feel as though an organization truly understands the cultural nuance and sensitivity that volunteers can bring to malaria prevention.

There are an infinite number of peaks and valleys to any volunteer's service. This new partnership with Grassroot Soccer has been a major peak for me.



FEATURE



*Adapted from an article
originally published in the
PC/South Africa Annual
Report (2012-2013).*



2. PROGRAM TRENDS AND RESULTS

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2.1 OVERALL RESULTS

Grassroot Soccer used simple indicators to monitor program delivery. Activities were monitored using attendance forms that captured basic demographic information about the participants as well as their participation in the intervention. A few characteristics about the intervention, including the venue type, were also collected. A sample of PCVs and their Counterparts also administered questionnaires with participants before and after interventions. These data were submitted to Grassroot Soccer through an online form or over email in an MS Excel document.

Figure 2.1 Total number by year of young people reached with Grassroot Soccer programs through Peace Corps. Includes all young people that participated in one of the Grassroot Soccer programs during the fiscal year. All data are recorded only when submitted to Grassroot Soccer's online database, reviewed, and approved by a Grassroot Soccer staff member.

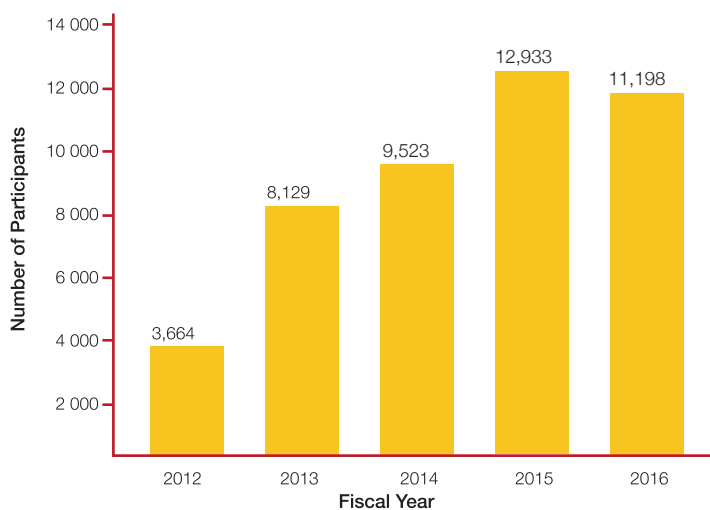


Table 2.1 Peace Corps post engagement, Africa Region. By country the number of Peace Corps Volunteers involved (having received training and/or curriculum materials). Columns show numbers of youth who participated in different Grassroot Soccer programs by country

AFRICA	PCVS	YOUTH REACHED		
		PEACE CORPS SKILLZ	SKILLZ GIRL	SKILLZ MALARIA
Benin	25	189	-	38
Botswana	161	1,848	55	-
Burkina Faso	31	54	-	114
Cameroon	95	509	-	962
Ethiopia	203	2,221	181	248
Ghana	140	1,075	-	290
Guinea	6	-	-	15
Kenya	29	-	-	-
Lesotho	118	2,085	257	-
Liberia	5	-	-	308
Madagascar	24	-	-	177
Malawi	139	2,889	921	1,887
Morocco	48	340	-	-
Mozambique	94	719	52	201
Namibia	90	843	-	-
Rwanda	88	466	52	172
Senegal	48	-	102	583
Sierra Leone	6	-	-	-
South Africa	254	4,277	-	16
Swaziland	52	702	-	-
Tanzania	154	3,324	191	-
The Gambia	19	-	-	626
Togo	17	-	-	124
Uganda	49	55	-	-
Zambia	468	4,250	-	987
TOTAL	2,363	25,845	1,811	6,748

Table 2.2 Peace Corps post engagement, Europe, Middle East and Asia Region. By country the number of Peace Corps Volunteers involved (having received training and/or curriculum materials). Columns show numbers of youth who participated in different Grassroot Soccer programs by country

EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA	PCVS INVOLVED	YOUTH REACHED	
		PEACE CORPS SKILLZ	SKILLZ GIRL
Armenia	2	-	-
Cambodia	2	-	-
Kyrgyz Republic	23	-	92
Moldova	2	-	-
Mongolia	1	-	-
Nepal	2	-	-
Thailand	18	-	-
Ukraine	30	2,438	-
TOTALS	79	2,438	92

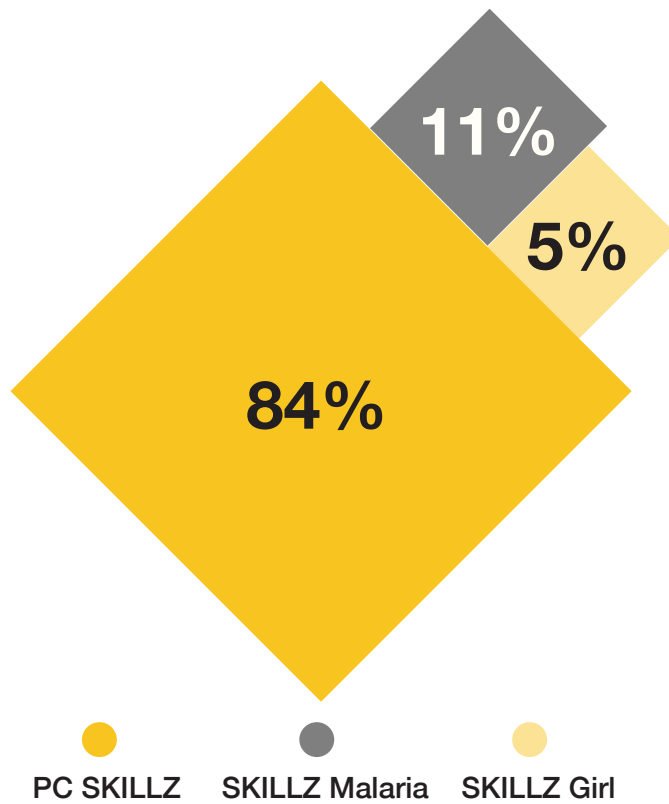
Table 2.3 Peace Corps post engagement, Inter-America and the Pacific Region. By country the number of Peace Corps Volunteers involved (having received training and/or curriculum materials). Columns show numbers of youth who participated in different Grassroot Soccer programs by country

INTER-AMERICA AND THE PACIFIC REGION	PCVS INVOLVED	YOUTH REACHED
		PEACE CORPS SKILLZ
*Dominican Republic	-	6,272
Ecuador	36	701
El Salvador	10	110
Fiji	9	54
Grenada	1	36
Guatemala	2	-
Jamaica	11	147
Nicaragua	2	21
Panama	2	-
Paraguay	29	263
Peru	8	29
Philippines	3	-
Tonga	1	-
Vanuatu	1	48
TOTAL	123	7,727

*reported aggregately without data on PCVs

The growth and reach of the partnership was exciting. The average annual growth rate in the number of young people who participated in a Grassroot Soccer program was 40%. Peace Corps SKILLZ accounted for 84% of programming. SKILLZ Malaria (11%) and SKILLZ Girl (5%) played smaller but increasingly important roles in the partnership.

Figure 2.2 Youth participants by curriculum.



2.2. MIXED-SEX HIV PREVENTION PROGRAM

Peace Corps Volunteers and their counterparts implemented Peace Corps SKILLZ in **30 countries** across EMA, IAP, and Africa regions. Peace Corps SKILLZ was designed to address Peace Corps and PEPFAR HIV prevention priorities. Over **39,000** youth participated in Peace Corps SKILLZ, mostly from PEPFAR priority countries in the Africa region – but the program also had big successes in the Dominican Republic, Ukraine, and Ecuador, for example.

PEACE CORPS SKILLZ PRE-POST QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Peace Corps Volunteers and Counterparts administered 15-item questionnaires before and after Peace Corps SKILLZ. Across all years and programs, the average participants improved their HIV knowledge 21% (n=16,252). The results below summarize a single year of pre-post questionnaire results as small variations in curriculum and questionnaires existed between fiscal years, making it difficult to make direct comparisons across years.

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HIV TRANSMISSION AND PREVENTION

Grassroot Soccer found large knowledge gains in identifying key risk factors for HIV transmission, especially knowledge that **older sexual partners**, **multiple sexual partners**, and **alcohol** all increase the risk of HIV infection. 82% of participants disagreed with the statement “you can tell whether someone has HIV by looking at him or her,” which is a common misperception. Participants increased their knowledge that condoms help prevent HIV infection and that male circumcision is a way to reduce the risk of HIV infection among men. There is, however, an opportunity to strengthen messaging around male circumcision, as 31% of respondents did not fully understand that safe medical circumcision reduces the risk of HIV infection among men.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT HIV

Being able to talk about HIV is an important step in breaking down stigma around the disease, and this is one area where the emphasis on youth-friendly strategies and safe space appears to pay the greatest returns. Most participants finish Peace Corps SKILLZ having talked to either an adult (61% of respondents) or friend (70%) outside the program during the past two months. These represent 65% and 49% increases.

PERCEPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS

Grassroot Soccer found positive changes among respondents on concepts related to self-esteem, self-efficacy to say no to sex, delayed sexual debut, and participants’ belief that they are able to help stop the spread of HIV. 19% of participants, however, still responded that it is ok for a man to hit his girlfriend after participating in the program. This highlights an opportunity to strengthen how we address power, gender, and violence.

Table 2.4 Pre-post results from mixed-sex HIV prevention program (Peace Corps SKILLZ). Participants (n=4,955) completed the 15-item questionnaire before and after completing a Peace Corps SKILLZ intervention. Questionnaires were completed on paper-based forms and were administered by Peace Corps Volunteers and their Counterparts. Data were entered into an MS Excel template and submitted to Grassroot Soccer via email. Data are uploaded, stored, and visualized in Grassroot Soccer's online database.

STATEMENT	% WITH DESIRED RESPONSE		% CHANGE
	PRE	POST	
I have talked about HIV with an adult in the past two months (outside of SKILLZ)	37%	61%	65%
I have talked about HIV with a friend in the past two months (outside of SKILLZ)	47%	70%	49%
Having sex with an older partner increases my risk of getting HIV	63%	87%	38%
It is easier for HIV to enter my body if I have sex without a condom	62%	91%	11%
Having more than one sexual partner over the same period of time increases my risk of getting HIV	77%	86%	12%
I can tell whether someone has HIV by looking at him or her	69%	82%	19%
Drinking alcohol can increase my risk of getting HIV	43%	75%	74%
Male circumcision can reduce a male's risk of getting HIV	54%	69%	28%
I feel good about who I am	87%	91%	05%
I would say no to playing sport with someone who has HIV	70%	79%	13%
I can abstain from sex until I am older, even if it is difficult	72%	83%	15%
I can help stop the spread of HIV in my community	69%	79%	14%
It is okay for a man to hit his girlfriend	72%	81%	13%
I can say no to sex even if my friends pressure me	68%	78%	15%
I am ready to take an HIV test	76%	83%	09%

2.3 HIV & SRH PROGRAM FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS

From 2014 to 2016 **1,903 girls** from **9 countries** participated in SKILLZ Girl. And the program is projected to reach more than 3,000 girls in 2017 alone.

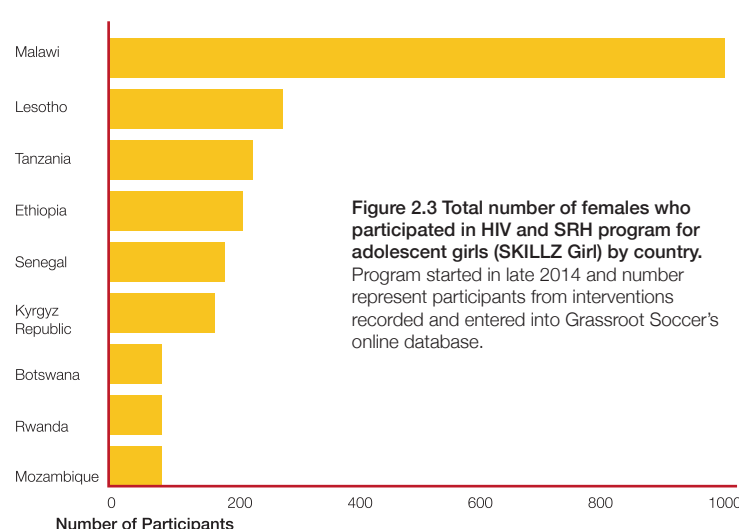


Figure 2.3 Total number of females who participated in HIV and SRH program for adolescent girls (SKILLZ Girl) by country. Program started in late 2014 and number represent participants from interventions recorded and entered into Grassroot Soccer's online database.

SKILLZ GIRL PRE-POST QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Knowledge about HIV transmission and prevention

Grassroot Soccer found large knowledge gains in identifying key risk factors for HIV transmission, especially knowledge about **older sexual partners**, **multiple sexual partners**, and **that girls are at a higher risk for getting HIV than boys/men** (increased susceptibility to HIV discussed in terms of biology and gender in the curriculum).

Knowledge about sexual reproductive health and rights

Grassroot Soccer found increases in knowledge about where to get support and services for pregnancy and also rape. A greater percent (12% increase) of girls reported that they would tell someone if their private parts were touched in a way that made them uncomfortable. Despite improvements, there are opportunities to strengthen SKILLZ Girl activities to better communicate information about menstruation and reinforce messages about sexual and reproductive rights.

Gender and relationships

Gender and relationship are areas where Grassroot Soccer believes opportunities exist for further reflection and perhaps more content and great emphasis in the SKILLZ Girl curriculum. There are limitations to measuring complex concepts like gender with a quantitative instrument, but future SKILLZ Girl programming will aim to bring about more gender equitable views among girls.

Table 2.5 Pre-post results from HIV and SRH program for adolescent girls (SKILLZ Girl). Participants (n=928) completed the 14-item questionnaire before and after completing a SKILLZ Girl intervention. Questionnaires were completed on paper-based forms and were administered by Peace Corps Volunteers and their Counterparts. Data were entered into an MS EXCEL template and submitted to Grassroot Soccer via email. Data are uploaded, stored, and visualized in Grassroot Soccer's online database.

STATEMENT	% WITH DESIRED RESPONSE		% CHANGE
	PRE	POST	
I have talked about HIV with an adult in the past two months (outside of SKILLZ)	38%	60%	58%
I have talked about HIV with a friend in the past two months (outside of SKILLZ)	54%	71%	31%
Having sex with an older partner increases my risk of getting HIV	62%	82%	32%
I know where to get support for an unplanned pregnancy	59%	81%	37%
Having more than one sexual partner over the same period of time increases my risk of getting HIV	82%	89%	09%
I have the right to say no to sex, no matter who asks me	81%	83%	02%
Men have a higher risk of getting HIV than women	64%	79%	23%
I know where to get support for services for rape	78%	91%	11%
If a woman misses her period, this could mean she is pregnant	62%	65%	05%
Before having sex, I would talk with a partner about using a condom	88%	91%	03%
It is the man's responsibility to make decisions in a relationship	74%	76%	03%
Only boys can play soccer	80%	83%	04%
I would tell someone if my private parts were touched in a way that made me feel uncomfortable	67%	75%	12%
I am ready to take an HIV test	87%	89%	02%

Table 2.6 Description of curricula revisions to better align to PEPFAR. Thorough review of curricula practices and objectives to ensure content met PEPFAR requirements.

PRACTICE IN PEACE CORPS SKILLZ	CHANGE TO ADDRESS PEPFAR GUIDANCE AND INDICATORS
All practices	MicroMoves (homework) are directed towards family members or adults in the community to address PEPFAR requirement for adult to child communication
Practice 1	Pre/post questions 4 and 9 address Tuberculosis (TB) treatment and condom negotiation respectively
Practice 6	Added step in activity on HIV and human biology to increase awareness of TB testing and treatment, as well the importance of accessing these services
Practice 7	Updated instructions in Sexual Network plus new diagrams to help clarify each step in the activity and specify when and how to stop the transmission during the game
Practice 8	Added condom demo plus discussion prompts about negotiating for safe sex, adapted voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC) activity, and new coach's story to address specific VMMC requirements, including "condom promotion, condom skills training, and negotiation skills"
Supplement 5	New practice on TB to align with PEPFAR emphasis on TB testing and treatment
Supplement 6	New practice on HIV testing to address PEPFAR emphasis "to increase awareness, uptake and acceptability of youth-friendly clinical services such as...HIV care and treatment."
Supplement 7	Tutorial on planning and executing an HCT event to address PEPFAR emphasis to provide "informational sessions on HIV testing and counseling with active referrals to or provision of youth-friendly HTC services."

CURRICULUM UPDATES TO BETTER ALIGN WITH PEPFAR

In 2015, Peace Corps SKILLZ and SKILLZ Girl were modified to better address PEPFAR focus areas, including new content on:

- HIV testing and counseling
- Voluntary medical male circumcision
- Tuberculosis and HIV

This was a significant and important change as we reviewed every curriculum practice to ensure our programs met PEPFAR indicator definitions. The following table summarizes these changes:

PRACTICE IN SKILLZ GIRL	CHANGE
All practices	MicroMoves (homework) are directed towards family members or adults in the community to address PEPFAR requirement for adult to child communication
Practice 1	Pre/post question 10 to assess condom negotiation attitude
Practice 2	Added activity early in curriculum to provide clear information on PEPFAR base knowledge of HIV to "correctly identify HIV prevention methods, reject misconceptions about HIV transmission and increase perception of risk for HIV infection."

2.4 MALARIA PREVENTION PROGRAM

SKILLZ Malaria was unique in that it was designed to integrate into the Stomping Out Malaria (STOMP) Bootcamp, an existing Peace Corps initiative. The SKILLZ Malaria curriculum took off quickly in the Africa region.

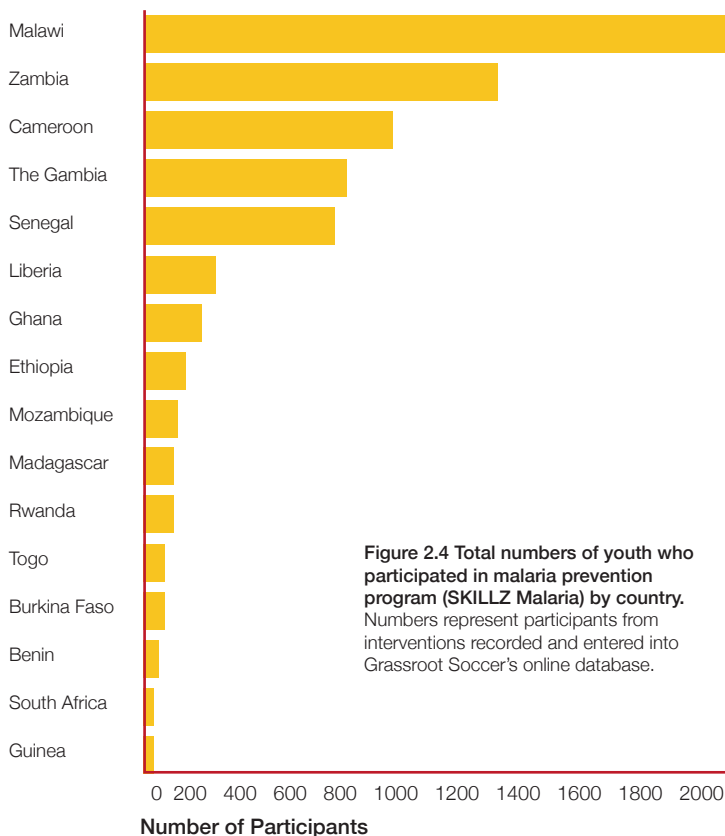


Figure 2.4 Total numbers of youth who participated in malaria prevention program (SKILLZ Malaria) by country. Numbers represent participants from interventions recorded and entered into Grassroot Soccer's online database.

SKILLZ MALARIA PRE-POST QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Grassroot Soccer found consistent improvements on knowledge of key malaria prevention and treatment facts and strategies among respondents. On five of the nine statements, **90%** or more of participants completed SKILLZ Malaria with correct knowledge. One gap in knowledge that the curriculum will look to better address was around transmission of malaria from one person to another and risk perception, as **22%** of participants left the program still believing that pregnant women and children under five were the only people who needed to sleep under bed nets. Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps plan to add new activities to the SKILLZ Malaria curriculum in 2017.

Table 2.7 Pre-post results from malaria prevention program (SKILLZ Malaria). Participants (n=4,252) completed the 9-item questionnaire before and after completing a SKILLZ Malaria intervention. Questionnaires were completed on paper-based forms and were administered by Peace Corps Volunteers and their Counterparts. Data were entered into an MS EXCEL template and submitted to Grassroot Soccer via email. Data are uploaded, stored, and visualized in Grassroot Soccer's online database.

STATEMENT	% WITH DESIRED RESPONSE		% CHANGE
	PRE	POST	
Sleeping under a treated bed net (LLIN) every night can help protect me from malaria	93%	98%	05%
When I have a fever, it is ok to wait a few days before getting tested for malaria	77%	86%	12%
A traditional healer can give me medicine that can cure malaria	71%	84%	18%
If I have malaria and don't get it treated, I can give malaria to someone else	48%	53%	10%
Only pregnant women and children under 5 need to sleep under a bed net	68%	78%	15%
Without treatment, it is possible to die from malaria	85%	92%	08%
Fever is a sign of malaria	85%	92%	08%
I know where I can get treated for malaria in my community	85%	92%	08%
I can protect myself from malaria	79%	89%	13%

2.5 EMERGING PROGRAM AREAS

There was demand among Peace Corps posts and PCVs to apply Grassroot Soccer's approach to working with youth and using play in learning to different topics. In 2016, demand for a financial education curriculum and HIV prevention, sexual and reproductive health, and gender equality curriculum for boys both emerged as valuable curricula offerings.

The curriculum development process with Peace Corps involved field-testing (piloting) curricula at a small scale in multiple settings and receiving immediate feedback from PCVs. This process was an effective approach to product development as Grassroot Soccer either had evidence-based curriculum or developed incorporated insights and lessons from field testing into the curriculum.

RAGBALL

Ragball is a 15-session financial education curriculum that teaches adolescents the importance of saving, budgeting, and goal setting while giving participants an opportunity to use available resources in their own

communities to make something of value (e.g. soccer ball from recycled materials).

Pilot (late 2015): Having previously been implemented in South Africa and Djibouti by Grassroot Soccer, Ragball activities were field tested with youth by 11 Peace Corps Volunteers in Burkina Faso, Benin, Lesotho and the Kyrgyz Republic. The purpose of the pilot was to test the viability of the curriculum in Peace Corps settings and to identify any necessary revisions.

Pilot findings: PCVs thought the curriculum was engaging and beneficial. Almost every practice was deemed relevant to the PCVs' group and community, regardless of community type (ie. rural vs. urban). Almost every PCV, however, also mentioned that their groups struggled with some messages, activities, and scenarios from the curriculum. In some cases, such as Kyrgyz Republic and Benin, differences in culture and local context made certain aspects, like using recycled materials to make soccer balls, irrelevant. Despite these challenges, PCVs widely agreed that the themes and messages were important and relevant to youth in their communities.

Next steps: Grassroot Soccer is working with Peace Corps post to find ways to offer Ragball to interested PCVs. Grassroot Soccer is modifying the curriculum based on feedback from the pilot and working with Peace Corps to ensure any Ragball activities get recorded and reported appropriately.

SKILLZ BOY

SKILLZ Boy is a curriculum being developed in response to strong demand from Peace Corps posts for a program to address the unique sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescent boys, particularly related to HIV prevention. The curriculum will also respond to an urgent need to promote gender equality among boys. Gender equitable men are happier, feel more connected, have better relationships with their partners and families, and are less likely to use violence. Men are also less likely to use health services, and young men with inequitable gender beliefs are more likely to have early sex, unsafe sex, STIs, and their relationships are more likely to involve intimate partner violence.

SKILLZ Boy will be an 11-session or 12-session curriculum with supplemental sessions. SKILLZ Boy will use soccer to promote positive values, self-efficacy, and gender-equitable norms. The curriculum will be piloted in the Africa region in mid 2017. The core curriculum will address key themes related to sexual and reproductive health such as:

- Personal and group commitments
- Rights and responsibilities
- Masculinity and gender norms
- Gender equality
- Our changing bodies (SRH basics)
- Violence prevention
- Communication strategies
- Alcohol self-evaluation
- Consent
- Taking action to promote gender equality

ADAPTED AND TRANSLATED CURRICULA

At regional and country levels, the partnership also modified curricula to better address local contexts. One important factor to the success of the partnership has been the translation of materials into national languages in different countries. The table below provides a list of the languages each curriculum has been translated into.

Table 2.8 Translations of Grassroot Soccer curricula. Translations were made by a combination of Peace Corps staff and external translators.

Peace Corps SKILLZ	SKILLZ Malaria	SKILLZ Girl
Amharic (Ethiopia)	Amharic (Ethiopia)	Amharic (Ethiopia)
Chichewa (Malawi)	Chichewa (Malawi)	Chichewa (Malawi)
Chitumbuka (Malawi)	Chitumbuka (Malawi)	English
English	English	French
French	French	Malagasy (Madagascar)
Portuguese	Malagasy (Madagascar)	Portuguese (in progress)
Spanish	Portuguese	Setswana (Botswana)
Sesotho (Lesotho)	Swahili (Tanzania)	Swahili (Tanzania)
Setswana (Botswana)		
Swahili (Tanzania)		

Grassroot Soccer also had region and country specific modifications to Peace Corps SKILLZ:

- Deportes Para La Vida (Dominican Republic)
- Zinduka (Tanzania)
- Free Kick (Ukraine)

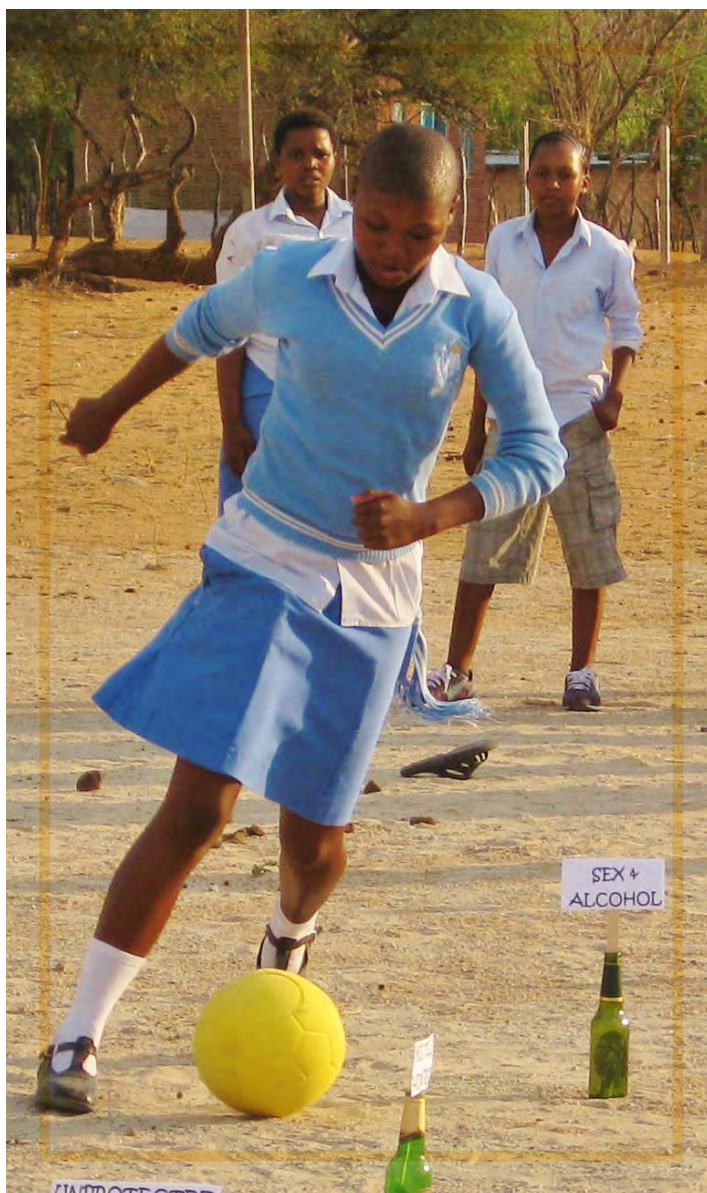


3. CAPACITY BUILDING

3. CAPACITY BUILDING

3.1 TRAINING OF COACHES: MODELS AND DESCRIPTION

“ The training has improved my facilitation a lot because I am no longer that shy, nervous girl who cannot stand and facilitate in front of people. Trust me when I say I am now good at facilitation. ”
(Counterpart, Cameroon)



In-person trainings are the most effective way to bring Grassroot Soccer to Peace Corps sites. The MOU enabled posts to incorporate Grassroot Soccer trainings into their annual budgeting process and engage Grassroot Soccer through fixed-price contracts. Grassroot Soccer also used a variety of training models to bring Grassroot Soccer programming to posts.



FEATURE

Featured story By Albina, Counterpart, Kyrgyz Republic

Kyrgyz Republic is a little country. Only recently did our population reach 6 million. We are located in Central Asia, and we are the oldest nation among Turkish people.

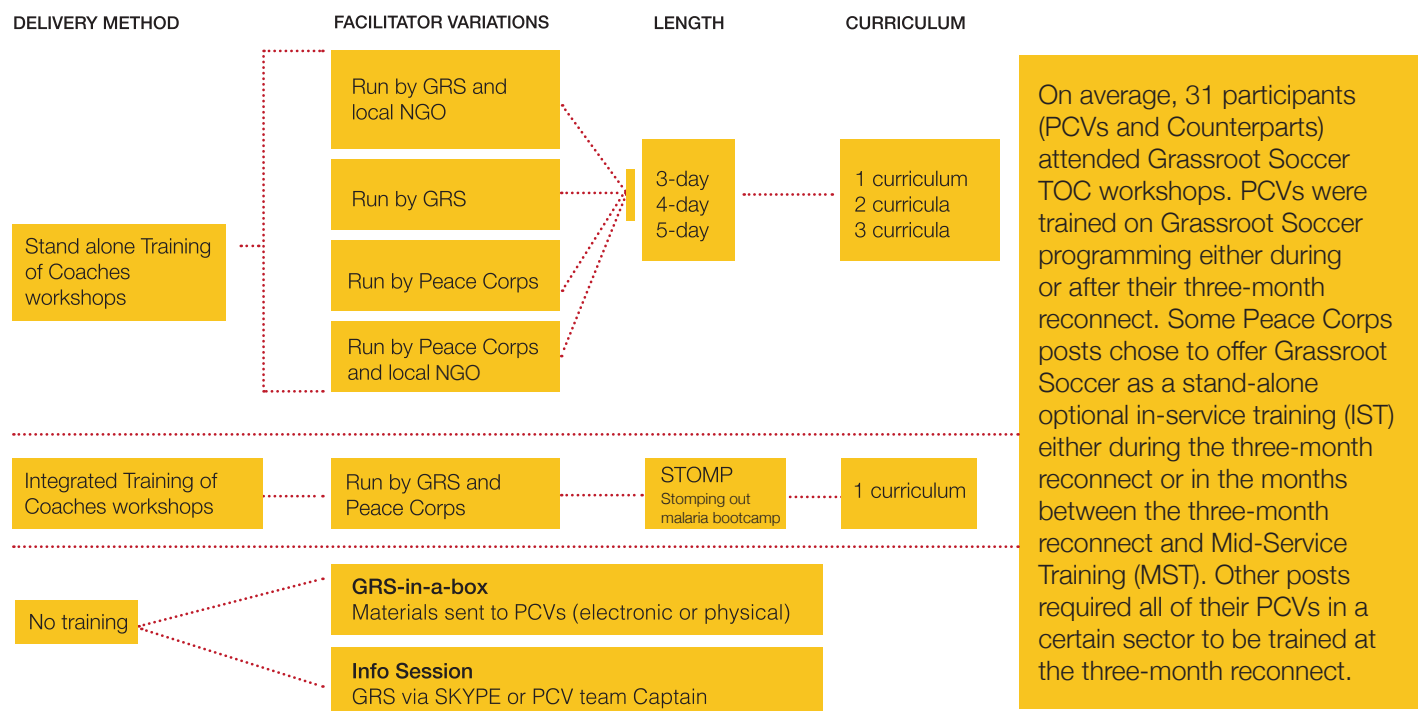
Grassroot Soccer happening was a door of luck for me and for other native girls, too. There were two amazing GRS coaches. Personally, I became more qualified and more lucky by participating in GRS. GRS included many useful topics such as HIV and AIDS stigma and discrimination, soccer, and gender equality.

HIV and AIDS are a global problem. HIV has spread to my country, too. The number of people with HIV is increasing day by day. I am lucky because I participated in GRS. Here I have learned about goals and dreams. I knew them before, but I did not know about short-term and long-term goals. After learning these different types of goals, I became more confident, able to manage my time and more energetic. Now I am studying my last year at school. My short-term goal is to get a high point in testing. Of course I have steps for my goal. I will achieve my goal.

My mom always says that one should always be grateful for things that one has. I just want to say: “Thank you, GRS!” Personally, for me it was the highest gift to participate and be a part of SKILLZ. I hope that in the future I will give ... back to GRS. ... I know that I am taught to be a GRS coach. And I promise that I will teach girls in Kyrgyzstan about gender equality and HIV and AIDS. ... I know that Kyrgyz girls, especially my peers, need it. I can surely say that it will be my long-term goal. I believe I will achieve my goal!

3.1 TRAINING OF COACHES: MODELS AND DESCRIPTION

Figure 3.1 Grassroot Soccer training models with Peace Corps. Different ways in which Peace Corps posts and PCVs engaged with Grassroot Soccer. Training of Coaches workshops were considered stand-alone trainings and were delivered to PCVs and their Counterparts using a combination of Grassroot Soccer staff, local partners, and Peace Corps staff. Stomping Out Malaria was an example of integrating Grassroot Soccer trainings into an existing Peace Corps program. Cases in which no funding for trainings but PCV demand for Grassroot Soccer existed, there were still ways for PCVs to access Grassroot Soccer information and materials.



Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches workshops vary in length and size but all are facilitated by Grassroot Soccer Trainers, who are all either Grassroot Soccer staff or trained staff members from local partner organizations. Trainings of Coaches provide PCVs and Counterparts with facilitation techniques, information on HIV, malaria, and sexual and reproductive health, opportunities to build personal connections in coaching pairs, and a safe atmosphere to reflect on and discuss cultural and social factors that influence the health of youth. Trainings of Coaches also help PCVs and Counterparts plan programs and learn how to monitor and evaluate their work.

TRAINING OF COACHES MODULES

Module One - Background and Theory: The aim of this module is to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the aims and objectives of the intervention.

Module Two - Achieving Excellence as a Coach: The aim of this module is to build the capability and capacity of participants and acknowledge the critical role they play in curriculum delivery and the learning experience and personal development of youth.

Module Three - Essential Techniques and Skills: The aim of this module is to provide the foundation for working effectively with youth. Training participants learn how to give effective praise, build personal connection, facilitate vital conversations, create safe space, and teach key health concepts (together called the Big Five).

Module Four - Understanding the Participants: Building on the Big Five (in particular vital conversations and personal connections) this module seeks to provide participants with a deep understanding of the young people they'll be working with, including common issues affecting adolescents everywhere.

Module Five - Curriculum Demonstrations: This module helps the participants to visualize and experience the practices and activities first hand, thus improving proficiency and fluency in their own delivery. It provides a foundational understanding of the types of discussions, experiences, responses and feelings Grassroot Soccer is hoping to provoke amongst participants. The length and depth of these demonstrations will vary depending on the Coach's familiarity with Grassroot Soccer content.

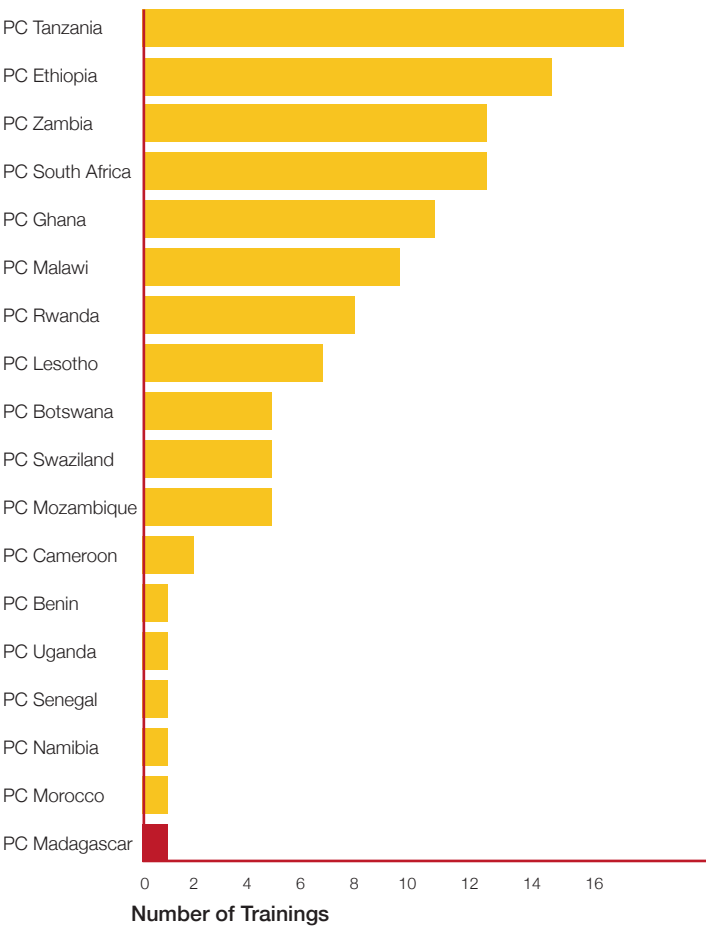
Module Six - Curriculum Teach-backs: This module helps the participants practice and gain fluency in the activities, while also providing an opportunity to identify areas of confusion or misunderstanding. The feedback process for teach-backs also provides an opportunity for self-reflection and constructive comments from peers and Grassroot Soccer Trainers on areas for improvement.

Module Seven - Delivery: This module covers the critical components of implementation and monitoring. Participants develop implementation plans and review monitoring and evaluation for Grassroot Soccer programming, including how to enter activities into the Volunteer Report Form (VRF).

Training of Coaches by region and country

Most Trainings of Coaches took place in the Africa Region, with many Peace Corps posts hosting multiple trainings over time. The following chart shows which countries hosted Grassroot Soccer Trainings of Coaches during the MOU.

Figure 3.2 Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches (TOC) by country, Africa Region.



Note: red represents trainings in new locations that occurred just after the timeframe for the MOU.

Taboo, or not taboo? By Julia S., Peace Corps Volunteer, Ecuador

The acronyms HIV and AIDS may seem like two simple words, but they hold a heavy meaning in the country of Ecuador. HIV and AIDS are widely known here, however the topic is taboo and often left unexplained. There are few people who talk about HIV and AIDS, and there are even fewer people who actually know all about the virus and the illness. This epidemic carries a harsh and cruel stigma in a country where it should be approached with support and understanding.

In April 2015, I partnered with World Vision to introduce the methodology of Grassroot Soccer to Paján. The area had hosted successful brigades, open houses and informational talks about HIV and AIDS, but never before something like GRS that teaches youth to learn and share information about HIV and AIDS in a hands-on environment. With help from my Counterpart, we facilitated a three day Grassroot Soccer camp in April for 28 participants, comprised of the Peace Corps SKILLZ activities. In November 2015, we had our second camp with 39 participants and prepared for a third one in May 2016.



As a team, it gives us great pride to see the accelerated learning in each of these camps and the planning of an open house to share the knowledge they have learned. It is a privilege to be able to be a part of and lead each of these camps. The Peace Corps SKILLZ camps have created a small, closed environment where the youth can confidently give their opinions and questions about HIV and AIDS. Using the Grassroot Soccer program in a camp form has made learning about HIV and AIDS a lot more active and fun for the youth.

3.2 TRENDS AND RESULTS

Table 3.1 Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches (TOC) by country, EMA and IAP Regions

EMA	NUMBER OF TRAININGS	IAP	NUMBER OF TRAININGS
Peace Corps Kyrgyz Republic	1	Peace Corps Ecuador	1
Peace Corps Ukraine	1	Peace Corps El Salvador	1
		Peace Corps Jamaica	1

NOTE: Regional training in San Ignacio, El Salvador in December 2013: Grassroot Soccer held a Regional Training of Coaches for 35 staff, PCVs and Counterparts from El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama. Helmich Castro, Peace Corps HIV Specialist, organized the training, which boosted Grassroot Soccer programming in the region. One important lesson from the Regional Training of Coaches was the need for training of Master Coaches or curriculum development workshops that focus on the abilities of Peace Corps posts to run their own Training of Coaches (TOCs) and ensure that Grassroot Soccer curricula are locally relevant in different regions and sub-regions within Peace Corps.

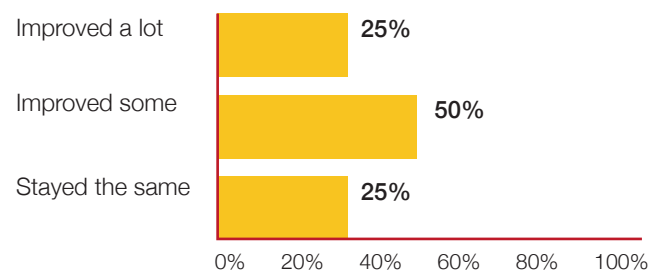
TRAINING RESULTS: FINDINGS FROM A SAMPLE OF 15 TRAINING EVALUATIONS

In 2016, Grassroot Soccer analyzed a purposeful sample of training evaluations (n=15) that covered trainings in different countries and in different SKILLZ curricula. Participants (n=525) completed a 12-item questionnaire with both multiple choice and open-ended questions.

HIV knowledge

Overall most participants report improving their HIV knowledge, with over 80% of Counterparts reporting that their HIV knowledge improved “a lot”.

Figure 3.4 Self-reported changes to HIV knowledge among PCVs. Questionnaires were completed after Training of Coaches workshops. Results from a sample of 15 evaluations. Counterpart (n=261) and PCV (n=226) responses were anonymous.



Over a three-to-five day workshop Grassroot Soccer expects to see changes to the relationships between participants. Grassroot Soccer also designs workshop sessions that focus on the relationship between the coaching pair or group, with one PCV to one or two Counterparts.

Figure 3.5 Perceived changes to relationship between PCV and Counterpart as a result of the Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches, PCVs

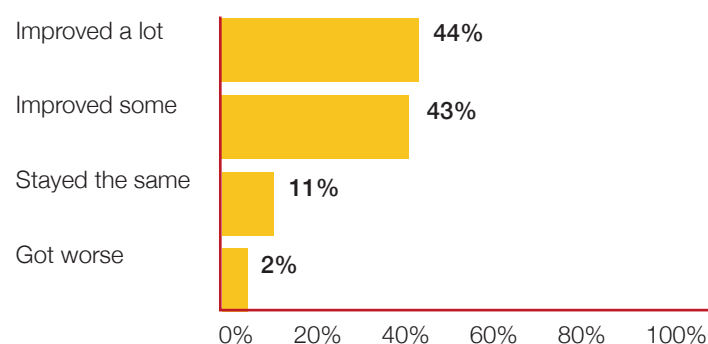


Figure 3.6 Perceived changes to relationship between PCV and Counterpart as a result of the Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches, Counterparts

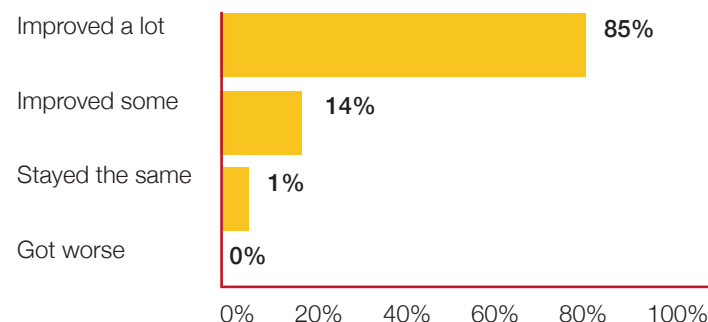
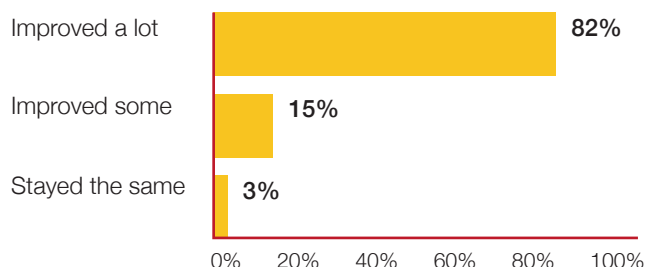


Figure 3.3 Self-reported changes to HIV knowledge among Counterparts. Questionnaires were completed after Training of Coaches workshops. Results from a sample of 15 evaluations. Counterpart (n=261) and PCV (n=226) responses were anonymous.



Grassroot Soccer found that relationships between PCVs and their Counterparts strengthened significantly. **85%** of Counterparts say the relationship with their Volunteer **improved a lot** while 87% of Volunteers state their relationship has improved some or a lot (43% and 44% respectively).

This trend, where Counterparts report much greater improvements or benefits than PCVs, was found throughout the training evaluation.

THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE EVALUATIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP BUILDING:

“We really got to know each other”

Training of Coaches provides different opportunities for PCVs and Counterparts to get to know each other. Telling your story or experiencing SKILLZ activities such as *Supporting 6*, *SKILLZ Cafe*, or *Where do I stand?* are examples of structured ways to help participants build personal connections. There is also some limited unstructured time such as lunch or breaks, which may provide time for, but is not intentional about, building personal connections.

“We deepened our trust and connection”

Many PCV and Counterparts already knew each other before the training. This foundation may allow the PCV and Counterpart to dive deeper into their personal or working relationship. This was often related back to having “conversations we normally couldn’t have.” The idea of **working through challenges also emerged as an important part of** the training. This was related to challenges such as facilitating a practice together but also related to tough conversations or tension, which may be difficult in the moment but ultimately help build understanding, connection, and empathy.

“ I loved seeing her play soccer and enjoy it as a game she never played or knew much about before. ”

(PCV, Kyrgyz Republic)

“We learned about our strengths and weaknesses and how to work together in our community”

In addition to stronger personal relationships, Grassroot Soccer received a lot of feedback about working

relationships. Teach-backs and program planning help coaching pairs set goals, define their roles and work styles, practice working together, and discuss possible barriers and opportunities to implementing SKILLZ in their communities.

“ We already knew each other but this helped us talk about taboo issues. ”

(PCV, Malawi)

THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE EVALUATIONS ABOUT THE **MOST VALUABLE** COMPONENTS OF THE TRAINING OF COACHES AND GRASSROOT SOCCER CURRICULUM

Feedback on trainings converged around four main concepts:

- Experiencing and then practicing the curriculum
- Gaining new facilitation skills
- Safe space for real discussions
- Having PCVs and Counterparts there together

Gaining new facilitation skills

Feedback was sometimes general– “I learned new facilitation techniques”– but was often about specific concepts and skills. Specific techniques were often recalled – “I now have strategies for creating safe space with my participants”– and often the simple but fun rituals and games Grassroot Soccer uses to help keep young people engaged (“**energizers**”) and focus their attention were mentioned a lot – “now I have fun energizers to keep kids engaged and excited.”

“ We got to have deep sensitive conversations in a safe space. ”

“ The teach-backs were a great opportunity to practice an actual Grassroot Soccer activity and get feedback. It was also helpful to observe other teach-backs and pick up useful techniques. It was also great to try out a lesson with my Counterpart so that we are better prepared to do these lessons at site. ”

(PCV, Uganda)

Having PCVs and Counterparts there together

“ I liked a lot about the training. The most useful part was doing all this alongside Counterparts. ”

(PCV, Malawi)



FEATURE

Soccer and pancakes

By Anastasia B., Peace Corps Volunteer, Ghana

Living in rural Ghana is not easy, even if you claim to be a “tough” Peace Corps Volunteer. It’s hot, humid, and buggy. ... You have to learn several different dialects and have enough brain power to use them appropriately. When it comes to meaningful projects, it seems that most of them would go out of the window even before the initial meeting (except for one time when I made pancakes to teach Ghanaians about an American breakfast – they were eaten immediately). But when I conducted a Grassroot Soccer program with local JHS students, it went surprisingly smoothly.

First, my Counterparts – teachers who assisted me in translating key messages and taking attendance – did a great job. They really struck a fine balance between a disciplined yet fun practice. And while I was still learning students’ names, my counterparts already knew all of them and could manage the participants really well.

Second, the majority of students were motivated to attend most of our practices. Yes, I told them that they would get a soccer ball at the end of the program. Yes, they were super excited to receive bright certificates. But at the same time, it seemed as though they really liked to come to our practices after school, learn some Kilo! and spend some time with a funny looking woman who talked with a weird accent and jumped around like a kid. In short, they had fun and so did I! We’ve had a particularly great time coming up with new kilos – one of them involved moves from a popular local “Azonto” dance. We also did some yoga poses for warmups, and later some students took the initiative to lead warm up stretches for the group.

So far Grassroot Soccer has been my most successful project in Ghana (besides the infamous pancake-making campaign, of course).

Figure 3.7 Comfort with facilitation as a result of the Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches, Counterparts

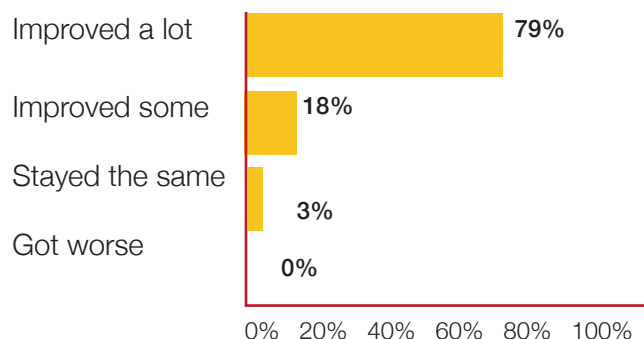
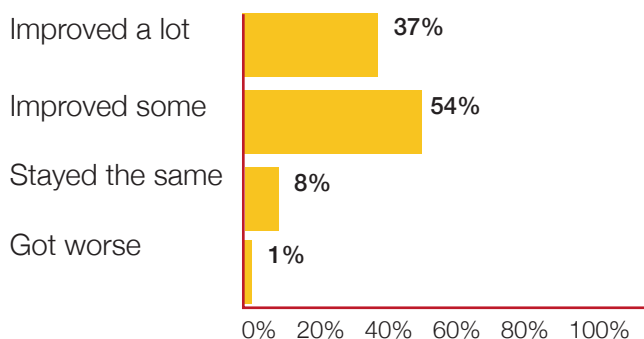


Figure 3.8 Comfort with facilitation as a result of the Grassroot Soccer Training of Coaches, PCVs



Safe space for discussions

Ultimately values, norms, gender, and power have greater influence over people’s decisions about sex and relationships than SRH knowledge. Creating safe space is difficult but critical to our training model. Feedback about safe space was sometimes general, such as “we got to talk about sensitive issues” or have “deep conversations.” Being able to talk about culture and norms around HIV and SRH and gender came out strongly.



4. CASE STUDIES

4. CASE STUDIES

Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps worked closely with other partners to strengthen their joint work with young people. Other strategic partners provided opportunities for learning and growth, including placements for PCVs. The partnership between Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps also attracted funding and led to exciting innovations and adaptations to Grassroot Soccer programming.

PCV or Response Volunteer placement with local partner organizations

- IDYDC (Tanzania)
- DREAM (Dominican Republic)
- Baylor College of Medicine - Children's Foundation Malawi (Malawi)
- Concern Worldwide (Malawi)
- YASPO and Waterberg Welfare Society (South Africa)
- Grassroot Soccer Zambia (Zambia)
- Kick for Life (Lesotho)

PCV placement with Grassroot Soccer

During the MOU, four 3rd years were placed with Grassroot Soccer Africa HQ in Cape Town

Team Captains (2nd or 3rd year PCVs who coordinate Grassroot Soccer activities)

PCVs from 9 posts have taken leadership roles in coordinating Grassroot Soccer work in their posts



CASE 1

South Africa Public-Private Partnership

In January 2015, Grassroot Soccer signed a Public-Private Partnership with USAID, Anglo American, and the MAC AIDS Fund, working with Peace Corps South Africa under the agreement to identify and strengthen the capacity of CBOs to deliver effective HIV prevention programs. PCVs were placed at the CBOs and worked alongside Grassroot Soccer staff to help implement Grassroot Soccer programs in their communities. The PPP in South Africa has reached nearly 10,000 youth through CBOs. 80 Coaches have been trained in Grassroot Soccer methods and Grassroot Soccer created a modified version of PC SKILLZ called SKILLZ Athande. PCVs at Youth Ambassador Sports Outreach Program (YASPO) and Waterberg Welfare Society (WWS) have been closely involved in Grassroot Soccer programming, especially work with OVCs.

The award, which runs until January 2018, will continue to support these CBOs to expand and strengthen their programming, including training new groups of Coaches as well as providing further professional development to Coaches.



CASE 2

Insights: 2015 Qualitative Assessment of PCV and Counterpart Implementation Success Factors

Method: 30 – 60 minute interviews with the highest performing PCVs (n=32) to determine what made each individual most successful.

Grassroot Soccer hoped to find common traits, personality types, background experiences, and other similarities that it could use to identify PCVs in the future, but ultimately found that these 32 PCVs came in all shapes and sizes. Successful PCVs did not share similar personalities or backgrounds, but rather they used similar methods of implementation that allowed them to thrive.

Key Findings

Counterparts. The study showed that Counterparts are by far the greatest factor in a successful Grassroot Soccer intervention. Firstly, Counterparts make the program sustainable. Engaged Counterparts continued implementing Grassroot Soccer curriculum even after PCVs finished their service. Creating a community leader surrounding topics like HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, and malaria has an impact that goes beyond the Grassroot Soccer intervention. Further, Counterparts are able to connect deeply with participants. The Grassroot Soccer curriculum can be extremely powerful and culturally relevant when it comes from a local individual who is able to quickly break down barriers surrounding sensitive topics covered by the curriculum. Counterparts also have the ability to convey subtle nuances as native speakers. An overwhelming number of “successful Counterparts” were **well respected** teachers or coaches who already commanded the attention of their youth. Interview after interview, PCVs pointed to their amazing Counterpart as the main driver of their program.

Implementation Method. The method in which PCVs implemented their Grassroot Soccer program was exceptionally important. Many of the Volunteers

that were interviewed initially failed to implement a successful program for reasons such as: inability to secure a consistent facility to hold practice; lack of access to youth; and inconsistent attendance from their participants. PCVs who worked through schools already had access to a class of youth as well as a classroom and a soccer pitch. Additionally, being able to implement during the school day ensures a high level of attendance. PCVs who tried to hold practice after school or during school holidays lost youth to household chores, work, or other clubs or teams. Simple logistical failures derailed many interventions, but working through a school solved these issues. This does not mean that the Volunteer has to be an Education Volunteer; they just need to be able to access school facilities. A PCV in Ethiopia said that being able to hold interventions during the school day made it easy for him to focus on implementing a quality intervention because he was not concerned with logistics. This motivated him to implement multiple times and since he was at the school frequently, students came to trust him and were willing to open up to him. As he put it, word of Grassroot Soccer “spread like wildfire” and at one point there was a waiting list for students interested in participating in an intervention.

Student Empowerment. Grassroot Soccer designed its curricula to facilitate active learning. However, student participation can go beyond attending each practice and taking the pre/post. For example a PCV in Ethiopia identified a primary school student who really engaged with the material and wanted to play a more active role in the intervention. Acting as a peer educator, this student attended nearly every practice during the PCV’s 3 interventions and GLOW camp. Sometimes, when his Counterpart was absent, the student stepped up and led the practices himself. A PCV in Malawi came up with a particularly creative way to engage her participants. At the graduation for one of her interventions, she had a group of students perform the role-play from the practice “Red Card” practice in front of their parents, local health workers

(continued)

(continued) Insights: 2015 Qualitative Assessment of PCV and Counterpart Implementation Success Factors

and other important people in the village. Later, the students read the role-play for a local radio station whose broadcasts reach 90% of Malawi. This was an incredible way for the students to take ownership of the intervention and to advertise Grassroot Soccer to millions of people across the country. PCVs who creatively engaged participants often had tremendous success.

PCV's support for each other. PCVs can offer support to their site-mates (or other volunteers nearby) who are also implementing Grassroot Soccer. Nearly half of the 32 PCVs that were interviewed collaborate in some way with another PCV. For example, two PCVs in Botswana split up their duties according to their respective strengths. One focused on building relationships with school administrators and helped lead the practices, while the other handled the technical aspects such as M&E and the logistics of each practice. In other

cases, site-mates were able to cover for each other if one could not make a practice. At a GLOW camp in Ethiopia, one PCV led SKILLZ Malaria practices while another PCV led practices from the PC SKILLZ curriculum. These collaborations can keep PCVs from getting discouraged and expand the reach of Grassroot Soccer in a given region or country.

Training style and level of support from Grassroot Soccer. Nearly every PCV that was interviewed attended a Grassroot Soccer training, rather than simply receiving a kit in the mail or attending a Grassroot Soccer information session. PCVs who are trained by Grassroot Soccer are more likely to buy into the program and go on to implement. Additionally, there was a "Counterpart only" training in Malawi that appeared to be extremely successful, as many of the Counterparts present at that training went on to implement SKILLZ programming.



CASE 3

Peace Corps Ukraine: Free Kick

In 2013, Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps Ukraine launched “Free Kick,” a soccer-based life skills and HIV prevention program designed to implement with Ukrainian youth aged 14-18. The Free Kick program consists of three parts:

- 7-session curriculum training that is delivered during a 2-day or 3-day camp, involving approximately 40-80 participants
- Soccer tournament
- HIV counselling and testing for participants and community members

From May 2013 to July 2014, 2,184 youth participated in Ukraine’s Free Kick program; 84.3% of participants were between the ages of 14-18; and 20% of participants were juvenile detainees. 28 Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs) and 24 Ukrainian “Counterparts” were trained to deliver interventions. Additionally over 2,400 community members were tested for HIV and linked to appropriate referral and treatment services as necessary, through the HIV counselling and testing soccer tournaments.

A mixed-methods study was conducted on Free Kick to assess the effects of the program on youth reached through Grassroot Soccer’s partner, Peace Corps Ukraine.

Methods: Attendance data were collected; pre- and post-questionnaires were administered to 2,111 youth participants; three focus group discussions were conducted with

community members participating in Free Kick events; 15 in-depth interviews were conducted with Counterparts, youth leaders, and partner organizations; and structured participant observation took place at two Free Kick events in 2014.

Key findings:

- Questionnaire data demonstrated positive increases in HIV-related knowledge among all participants; positive changes were also observed in HIV-related attitudes and communication, although percent change was lower among juvenile detainees than among all participants.
- Participants showed high acceptability for the Grassroot Soccer sport-based methodology and felt the HIV testing services were easy to access and confidential; after completing the HIV test, the majority reported encouraging their friends and community members to take the test.
- Participants used words like ‘tolerance’ and ‘loyalty’ when describing their attitude towards the disease and infected persons.

“ I have become more tolerant and knowledgeable about these issues and I have understood how the information can be presented to other people, the ones who are afraid even to think about it and run away from it. ”

(Youth participant in Free Kick, Ukraine)



CASE 4

One World Play Project

Grassroot Soccer partnered with One World Play Project to distribute One World Futbols to PCVs all over world. In a village setting where soccer balls are easily damaged, One World Futbols were the perfect solution for playing on rocky terrain, being virtually indestructible. The balls directly support Volunteers to deliver Grassroot Soccer programs and often played an important role in attracting and keeping young people involved in the program.

One Volunteer in Senegal said of the program, “The girls loved playing soccer! We did several drills as were laid out in the Grassroot Soccer manual, but for the most part, we split them into two teams and played the game. I was very happy to see some passing going on, especially after several passing drills that we had done previously.”



CASE 5

Grassroot Soccer, Peace Corps Ecuador, and the Ministry of Health: Making a Difference in Yaruqui

Peace Corps Ecuador has run Grassroot Soccer trainings since 2014. Rebecca Carofilis, Program Manager for Community Health Programs, has been instrumental in institutionalizing Grassroot Soccer programming within Peace Corps Ecuador. In 2016, Peace Corps Ecuador started to work with the Ministry of Public Health in Pichincha District to train 27 health promoters in the district to implement PC SKILLZ as well as train other health promoters in the methodology.





5. PROGRAM MONITORING

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Effective program monitoring and learning is a cornerstone of the partnership and many important lessons emerged during the MOU about how to use dual but synchronized monitoring systems for Grassroot Soccer activities within Peace Corps.

5.1 INDICATORS AND TOOLS

Aligning program monitoring started at the curriculum design phase, ensuring monitoring was linked to activities and that activities contributed to desired Peace Corps objectives. This meant that it was critical to align Grassroot Soccer programming and monitoring to Peace Corps standard sector indicators and PEPFAR indicators. These indicators changed over the course of the MOU but activities under this partnership may address one or multiple current indicators, with Peace Corps SKILLZ aligned to PP_PREV and SKILLZ Girl aligned to PP_PREV and HE-183.

PCVs and Counterparts monitored their Grassroot Soccer activities using three forms:

- (1) an attendance registrar
- (2) a pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaire that was administered with participants
- (3) 5 open-ended questions about their experience implementing the program

Monitoring data was first captured on paper forms and then entered into the online system. Grassroot Soccer also conducted quarterly check-in calls with all PCVs who attended Grassroot Soccer training. These calls provided an opportunity to troubleshoot any challenges PCVs faced implementing the program but also was important in helping PCVs feel supported by Grassroot Soccer.

Table 5.1 Current Indicators that Grassroot Soccer Programs Report Against. Grassroot Soccer advises Peace Corps SKILLZ and Peace Corps SKILLZ Girl to report against HE-140 and HE-183.

STANDARD INDICATOR CODE	INDICATOR	PEPFAR CODE
HE-140-PEPFAR	Priority Population HIV Prevention	PP_PREV
HE-142-PEPFAR	Key Populations HIV Prevention	KP_PREV
HE-183-PEPFAR	Gender	[formerly GEND-NORM]
HE-184-PEPFAR	HIV-Infected Individuals Receiving Care and Support Services	[formerly CARE_COMM]
HE-185-PEPFAR	OVC Served	OVC_SERV

Data, once reviewed by Grassroot Soccer, would sync with Dashboards that visualized monitoring data and are sent based on the needs of posts. Dashboards are sent to PCVs and posts to create a valuable feedback loop for Grassroot Soccer activities.

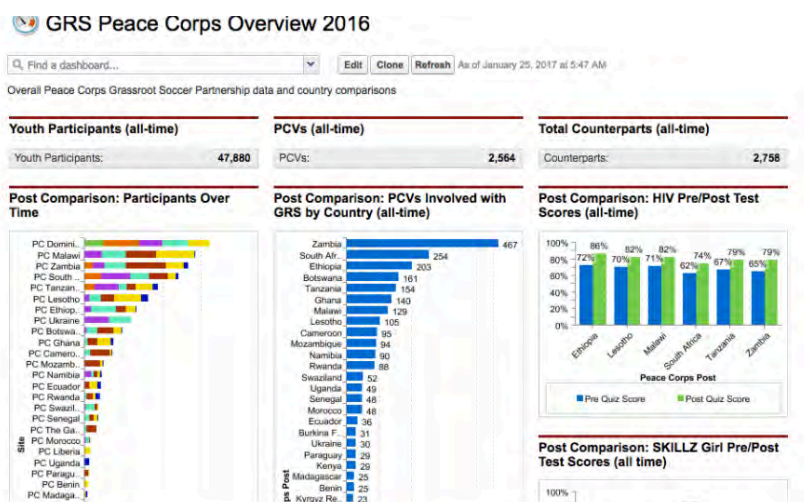


Figure 5.1 Example of Peace Corps “Dashboard” from Grassroot Soccer’s online database. Program data submitted by PCVs are visualized and shared back to Peace Corps via email.

5.2 WORKING WITH TWO MONITORING SYSTEMS

Process and principles guiding Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps monitoring systems

- **Volunteer Report Form (VRF) guidance at post level:** good communication early on guiding Volunteers on how to report on Grassroot Soccer activities within VRF.
- **Encourage reporting under post-specific indicators:** reinforcing the importance of linking any Grassroot Soccer work to post frameworks.
- **Setting targets for beneficiaries:** making sure upfront that Grassroot Soccer and the post have an estimate of the scale of the work and how it will contribute to post targets.
- **Dashboard customization:** data should serve a purpose, and Grassroot Soccer worked with posts to customize their dashboards in response to how they wanted to see their data.
- **Data sharing/triangulation:** making sure Grassroot Soccer always share dashboards, stories, or other important information back to posts, which allowed Grassroot Soccer to cross-check VRF and Grassroot Soccer’s systems.
- **Reporting:** Grassroot Soccer always sought to understand Peace Corps reporting needs to see how our data and insights could contribute to Peace Corps’s reporting requirements.

Grassroot Soccer also acknowledges that two reporting systems are not ideal. It creates duplication and more work for PCVs and Counterparts. But **two data systems also fostered collaboration.**

- Grassroot Soccer M&E system allows Grassroot Soccer to align and adapt PCV curricula to changing policies and programming initiatives
 - ⦿ PEPFAR contact hour requirements, attendance by topic at each session
 - ⦿ Potential for region-specific adaptations based off of collaborative data
 - ⦿ Data-driven programmatic and curriculum adjustments
- Grassroot Soccer can advise Peace Corps posts on in-country Volunteer/Counterpart trends
- Collaborate to capture missing data: quarterly/annual comparison of data in each partner’s system
- External reporting potential
 - ⦿ Peace Corps posts can use Grassroot Soccer data to report back to PCVs, the agency, stakeholders, and host country governments
 - ⦿ Explicit connection between Grassroot Soccer M&E and the VRF

CONCLUSION



The MOU between Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps fostered a period of innovation and collaboration between the two organizations. The scale, reach, and effectiveness of this partnership exceeded expectations. Many important lessons emerged about balancing standardized programming with flexibility – Peace Corps works in diverse communities with very different needs but also needs structured and consistent ways to work across the agency.

Looking ahead, the partnership will build on the successes of the MOU by expanding programs such as SKILLZ Girl. Effective sexual and reproductive health (SRH) programs are critical for adolescent girls everywhere, and SKILLZ Girl has been proven to enhance the health and wellbeing of girls during this critical stage of development. Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps also look forward to launching an all-boys curriculum in 2017 to address an urgent need for SRH and gender programs for adolescent boys.

To build on the foundation established over the past five years, the partnership will take on a new form under a three-year Cooperative Agreement. The Cooperative Agreement will ensure Peace Corps has access to effective HIV prevention and other youth-friendly curricula and materials, while also ensuring that Grassroot Soccer strengthens the capacity of Peace Corps to continue this work on its own. This is an exciting challenge and opportunity as Grassroot Soccer and Peace Corps will work to integrate Grassroot Soccer's training methodology and curricula into Peace Corps' structures.







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