



DREAMING Big: A qualitative look at how Peace Corps volunteers contribute to DREAMS



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Introduction

- The U.S. Peace Corps is a U.S. agency with volunteers in over 60 countries working in health, education, agriculture, community economic development, environment, and youth and development sectors.
- DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) is a public-private partnership that aims to reduce HIV risk in adolescent girls and young women.

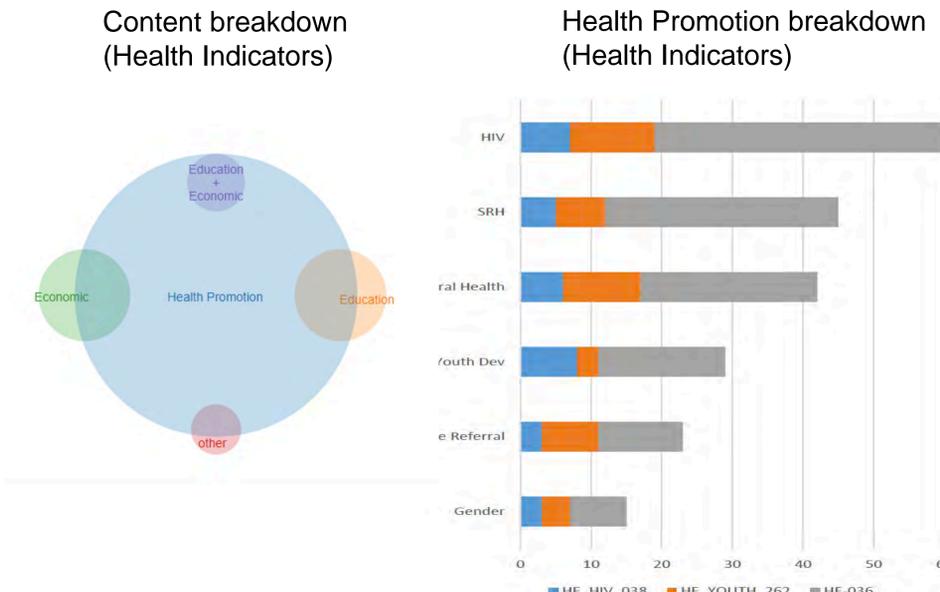
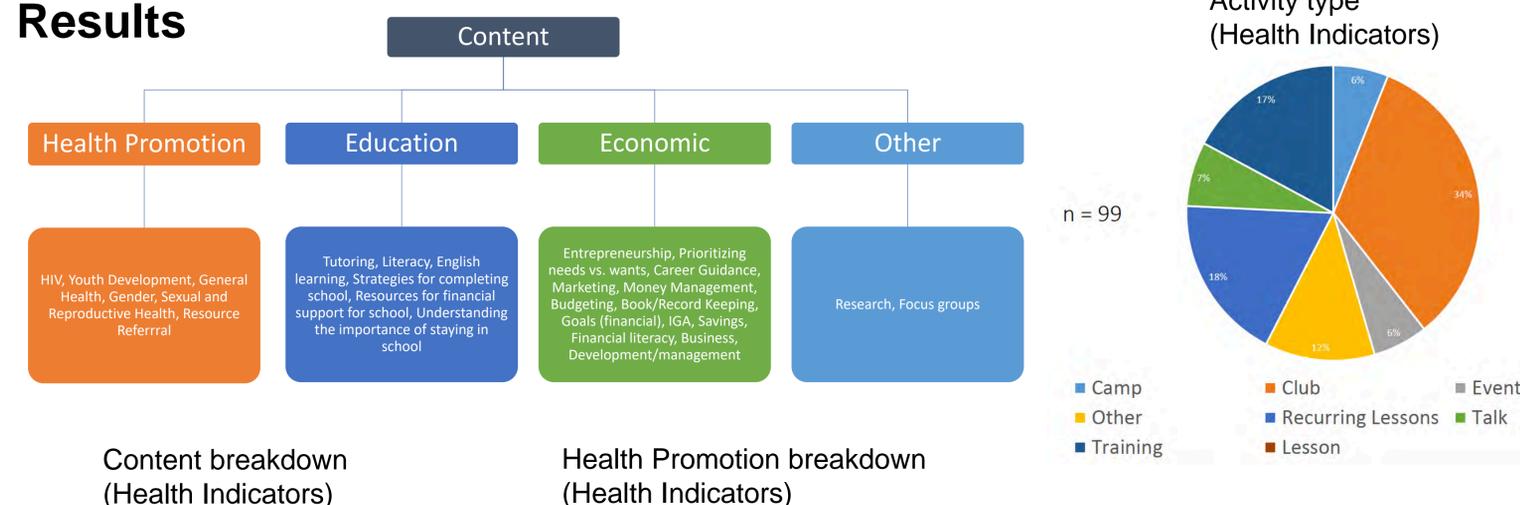
Objective of Internship

I was hoping to gain exposure to the field of global health and develop qualitative research skills.

Work profile

- The U.S. Peace Corps (PC) Office of Global Health and HIV (OGHH) oversees, develops, and evaluates PC programs relating to Health and HIV.
- Aside from regular engagement in office meetings and community of practice calls, my main contributions came in the form of reviewing PC indicators and designing surveys to track and evaluate PC programming and through a qualitative analysis of health sector volunteer activity reports.

Results



- Through this analysis I looked at activity reports from Peace Corps volunteers under these indicators and coded them based on their **content, beneficiaries, curriculum used**, and general alignment with the DREAMS framework.
- Activities reported under these indicators were generally **clubs, trainings or recurring lessons** relating to health promotion topics. Of the health promotion activities **HIV and sexual and reproductive health** were the topics most frequently covered.
- Activities also generally had beneficiaries who were **youth**.

Reflection

- Because DREAMS focuses on HIV risk reduction in adolescent girls and young women and aims to have recurring contacts with beneficiaries, this analysis shows PC volunteers are involved in activities that align with the DREAMS program.
- This analysis will be used by the office as they work with their in-country post teams to further develop the DREAMS program in that country and determine where Peace Corps Volunteers can contribute.
- Through this project and other tasks I completed during the internship I feel much more comfortable with qualitative analysis as well as working with teams in an office setting.

Looking ahead

This internship solidified my interest in continuing on to work or pursue further studies in the field of public health.

Questions

- How can we better take into account the personal perspectives and wants of those being target with global health programs and initiatives?
- What can we learn about improving access to health care and ARTs from the way in which COVID-19 and lock-downs has effected health care?

Conclusion

I feel that I have a much better understanding of how the Peace Corps along with other government agencies function. I also feel like I have a better understanding of work in the field of global health.

Acknowledgements

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