



SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Partnering with the Peace Corps to address community priorities and boost local capacity.

The Small Project Assistance (SPA) Program is a collaboration between USAID and the Peace Corps to support grassroots community development projects. SPA harnesses the unique capabilities of both Agencies: Peace Corps' network of trained Volunteers, who are living and working in remote communities often outside the reach of traditional development assistance, with USAID's funding and technical expertise. SPA enhances the overall development impact of both Agencies.

Since 1983, SPA has used more than \$76 million in USAID funding for programs in 115 countries around the world – reaching a total of more than 30 million local community members.

ADVANCING THE JOURNEY TO SELF-RELIANCE

While SPA operates in every sector, each SPA Program has a shared goal: to build the capacity of local communities, so they can address their own development challenges. Small grants for community-led activities are the main component of the SPA Program and highlight how SPA supports self-reliance. To qualify for a SPA grant, a project must: be community initiated and directed; meet a determined community need; promote sustainability and capacity building; and include a contribution from the community towards the total project cost. SPA provides a unique opportunity for USAID, the Peace Corps, and local communities to partner and co-invest in development projects.

PEACE CORPS/NORTH MACEDONIA

PROGRAM DETAILS

The SPA Program provides support to Peace Corps Volunteers and their community counterparts in the following ways:

- **Grants:** Small grants are the main component of the program. Averaging \$2,500, this funding, paired with a minimum 25% match from the community, supports community-identified development projects aimed at building capacity for community led development.
- **Technical Training:** Through the SPA Program, Peace Corps Posts provide technical training for Peace Corps Volunteers and their community counterparts, allowing for more specialized work and a broader reach of USAID development activities.
- **Program Support:** The SPA Program enables Peace Corps Posts and USAID Missions to support, invest in, and learn from the work being done by Volunteers and their communities.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: LIBERIA

In Liberia, six teachers and a Peace Corps Volunteer teamed up to promote the use of interactive science experiments in the classroom. With funding from a SPA small grant, coupled with the investment by the local community, the teachers created a workbook, as well as training, to show other teachers how to construct and use scientific equipment with only locally available materials. The project has led to the establishment of science clubs in schools throughout the area – and more teachers are supporting hands-on science learning that is uniquely adapted to the local context.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: KOSOVO

In Kosovo, a Youth Development Workshop convened 25 community members, along with 25 Peace Corps Volunteers, to learn about the best ways and strategies to engage local youth populations. The training introduced participants to Peace Corps resources and other evidence-based resources. From effective clubs and camps to service learning, the workshop - which was highly rated by participants - paved the way for more effective community-led programming moving forward.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

SPA has shown the impact of community led development projects. An evaluation of 2013 – 2017 grants found that:

- **96%** of SPA projects were completed
- **67%** of SPA projects were completed and meaningfully sustained by the community
- **28%** of SPA projects were completed, sustained, and expanded upon by the community