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# Gender Transformation at the Grassroots: A Gender and Development Program from the Practitioners' Perspective

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# GENDER TRANSFORMATION AT THE GRASSROOTS: A GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FROM THE PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES

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This thesis explores the 'gender transformative' Men as Partners (MAP) program in the West African nation of Togo, focusing on the nature of practitioner collaboration and program implementation.

# GENDER TRANSFORMATION AT THE GRASSROOTS: A GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FROM THE PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES

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This study investigates the "gender transformative" Men as Partners (MAP) program as implemented in the West African nation of Togo. Using a qualitative research design, the project examines the successes and barriers of implementation, with an emphasis on the relationship of foreign (the American international development agency, the Peace Corps) and native practitioners (Togolese individuals implementing the program at the grassroots level). The study provides an ethnographic perspective of the researcher's work as a MAP practitioner in Togo whose experiences are juxtaposed with seven different interviews from American and native practitioners administering the program on the national, regional, and community levels throughout Togo.

The research reveals that certain cross-culture and administrative barriers exist that hinder program effectiveness. The project also raises critical questions about the utility of male-centered, short-term development programs designed in the West that seek to transform gender relations on the community level in developing nations.

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# GENDER TRANSFORMATION AT THE GRASSROOTS: A GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FROM THE PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVES

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T.A.C.

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

The movement from traditional women's empowerment development programs to more "gender transformative" approaches is well-documented in the research. Women's empowerment approaches, carried out by western non-governmental organizations (NGO) and international development agencies, seek to advance the cause of gender equality through assisting women in improving their social and economic status. However, a shift is occurring where gender-focused programs now target often men, seeking to influence them to embrace the elevation of women's social status and then leveraging their existing power to promote the message of gender equality in their communities.

Although these male-focused 'gender transformative' approaches have received significant attention in the literature, the perspectives of both native and foreign practitioners regarding such approaches have been somewhat neglected. This study investigates one of these "gender transformative" programs, the Men as Partners (MAP) Program, as implemented in the West African nation of Togo.

Using a qualitative research design, the project examines the successes and barriers to implementation along with practitioner motivations and program philosophyand goals. The study provides an ethnographic perspective of the researcher's

work as a MAP practitioner in Togo, whose experience is juxtaposed with interviews from American and Togolese practitioners and with official MAP resources and documents.

## Research Problem

The current trend in HIV/AIDS prevention research is an increased emphasis on altering the behavior of vulnerable populations, thereby limiting their predisposition to infection (Aggleton et al 2011; Bertrand et al 2006; Dworkin et al. 2011; Gupta 2000). These "behavior change" programs are founded on the philosophy of transforming problematic conceptions of masculinity. Research has repeatedly shown that women bear a disproportionate risk of contracting HIV, and socially-constructed norms regarding masculinity are believed to have a profound impact on the risk disparity between men and women (Aggleton et al. 2011; Bastien 2005; Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin 2005; Peacock 2003).

Current initiatives among development agencies are increasingly focused on targeting men with the goal of "transforming" gendered norms and behaviors (Dworkin and Ehrhardt 2007; Gupta 2000; Varga 2001; White et al 2003). While previous interventions focused on "women's empowerment," primarily concentrating interventions specifically on women, development agencies are now increasingly targeting men. These "gender-transformative" approaches leverage men's existing power to promote the message of gender equity and encourage gender-equitable behavior change in their communities (Dworkin and Ehrhardt 2007).

It is beyond the scope of this research to study the efficacy of the gender-transformative approach. However, this research project does explore one particular

gender-transformative program, the Men as Partners (MAP) program, as implemented in a West African context.

This research project addresses both the successes and cross-cultural barriers of design and implementation of the MAP program and explores how the program and its goals are perceived by native and non-native practitioners in the West African nation of Togo. The project explores what motivates program actors to participate in the program and how they negotiate their roles as practitioners to effectively carry out program goals. Therefore, the grassroots level of program implementation is given priority, while the history and administrative aspects of the program are included to understand official program goals, philosophy, and structure. The multiplicity of data sources utilized offer a glimpse into how the on-the-ground implementation of the MAP program harmonizes and/or conflicts with these stated features of the program.

By examining the inner-workings of the program on both national and local levels and the perspectives of Togolese and American MAP actors, the study seeks to illuminate the successes and challenges of program implementation while providing preliminary recommendations for improvement. The research reveals both the promising and potentially troubling qualities of Western-developed gender programs in the developing world. The institutional and bureaucratic aspects of the program serve to streamline and standardize training logistics, yet also lead to an imposed project framework that excludes native practitioners. Despite efforts to gear projects toward cultural realities and to include native practitioners in project design and implementation, the international administrative structure of gender and development projects often excludes native populations.

This research project contributes to pre-existing literature concerning development programs focused on gender, by examining the "gender transformative" approach in action, through the perspectives of both native and foreign actors. The project also contributes to views of social change cross-culturally. What emerge from the study are very different conceptualizations of change and socio-cultural progress between Togolese and American practitioners. The insights that these divergences provide serve to bolster the case for a need to see social change through the lens of the populations being 'served' by programs like MAP, allowing for a more refined and acculturated understanding of social progress. Moreover, the research project contributes to cross-cultural analyses of communication and collaboration, exploring the on-the-ground struggles of program actors in working across cultural and lingual boundaries.

# CHAPTER II

# REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study explores the implementation of a development program established in the West with the goal of promoting gender equality as an HIV/AIDS reduction strategy. Drawing upon a robust and rich body of research on inter-cultural communication and gender and development research, the study examines the structural and interpersonal dimensions of implementation of the Men as Partners (MAP) program initiated in the West African nation of Togo.

## The Vulnerability Paradigm

The vulnerability paradigm, which informs development research and practice, suggests that women are placed at an elevated risk of HIV infection due to their male partners' risky sexual behaviors (Higgins, Hoffman and Dworkin 2010). The paradigm, although concerned with reducing the risk of HIV infection, has been expanded to other arenas, focusing on the ways in which problematic ideas concerning masculinity negatively affect both men and women.

In response to this paradigm, interventions have been primarily concerned with increasing women's social status and giving them a voice within the public sphere. Therefore, one of the primary arenas of contemporary gender initiatives is education. These 'Women in Development' (WID) programs seek to increase the education level of

women in order to afford women more economic opportunities, increase the education level of their children, and allow them negotiating power in the home (Domatob and Musa 2010; UNFPA).

Researchers and practitioners have questioned the general assumptions and theoretical premises of WID initiatives. As Bastien argues, many of these programs assume a power dynamic between men and women that is overly one-sided, with women viewed as "mere pawns subject to the control of men" who lack personal agency in their lives (2005:22). Moreover, this female-centered paradigm has been challenged because it disproportionately places the blame for HIV/AIDS squarely on the shoulders of men, while simultaneously excluding them from prevention efforts (Varga 2003). Many professionals and researchers alike have argued that the increased focus on female-specific intervention strategies has neglected men and their unique positions of influence within the social hierarchy, thereby missing a key opportunity to effectuate change in gender relations (Varga 2011; White et al 2003; Promoting Men's Involvement 2010).

## Gender Transformative Approach and African Masculinity/Femininity

In response to some of these criticisms a new discourse 'gender transformative' discourse has emerged. As Chege notes, 'gender transformative' interventions are still a relatively new phenomenon, and it is only within the past two decades that the link between gender norms and reproductive health outcomes has been emphasized (2005).

These programs recognize the influence of socialization and its centrality in the understanding of "how ideas, attitudes and beliefs are formulated in boys" and thus influence their behavior (Bastien 2005:28). In order to understand the rationale behind

gender transformative programs, one must understand the nature of African masculinities. Particularly relevant for this research project, there is the perception of African men as having insatiable sexual desire and engaging in many multiple partner sexual relationships (2005). This idea is embedded within the social fabric, where "masculinity is expressed as sexual conquest and prowess," and this sexual prowess is seen as a mark of fertility throughout the continent (Baker and Ricardo 2005:17).

However, in noting these problematic conceptualizations of masculinity, one must avoid painting African men as a singular group with converging histories, attitudes, beliefs, and experiences. Although researchers are apt to make such broad generalizations, much of the lives of African men in particular societies remain unknown. Although programs like MAP target the distribution of labor and interpersonal relationships within the home, the domestic lives of African men as fathers and partners have often been left unexamined (2005). Furthermore, more research is needed to examine how masculinities have emerged within the context "of social change, urbanization, and political upheaval" in our to understand the fluid, dynamic nature of what it means to be a man in certain African cultures (Baker and Ricardo 2005:14).

## Indigenous Knowledge and Culture and MAP

Many social theorists and development practitioners have questioned Western-initiated interventions carried out in developing nations (Rasmussen 2008) (Connell 2011). As many researchers point out, concepts such as 'women's empowerment' and 'gender equity' are colonial importations, which address many aspects of gender relations which were established during the colonial period, such as the hyper-masculinity used by

European males to assert white supremacy and demasculinize natives peoples (Connell 2011) (Gutmann 1997).

The devaluation of indigenous culture and knowledge has led to much of the gendered inequality that exists on the continent. Allen chronicles the effect of British colonization on Igbo social institutions in Nigeria, noting that the diffuse political power that existed was overturned under British colonialism; and the power that women held in their market networks and kinship groups was significantly weakened (Grainker and Steiner1997). However, despite colonial attempts to deconstruct indigenous knowledge systems, these efforts were never completely successful, as "indigenous knowledge systems existed before colonial conquest, and persisted under colonialism" and African cultures have always been amenable to change and plurality (Connell 2011).

Too often the experiences of African men and African women have been reduced to singular units of analysis. An analysis of gender equality programming must attempt to place these women, and men, within these contexts and not create a universal "plight of the African." Mohanty notes the problematic image of the "average Third World woman" who

> leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being 'Third World' (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.) (Mohanty 2004:22).

This view of women in developing nations, according to Mohanty, contrasts with the self-projected view of Western women as educated, enlightened, 'modern', and, perhaps most importantly for this research project, "as having control over their own bodies and sexualities and the freedom to make their own decisions" (Mohanty 2004:22). The agency of women in developing nations is diminished, or viewed as non-existent,

suppressed by nefarious men.

Any analysis of gender systems in the sub-Saharan African context must move beyond such simplistic definitions and critiques. These critiques presents a reductive, binary view of power, with men holding power and women lacking access to it; with men exploiting and women being exploited (Mohanty 2004). Such critiques are not useful in devising interventions to combat problematic gender relations and conceptualizations of masculinity, and, it can be argued, serve to reinforce a naturalized view of women's inferiority.

The MAP program seeks to move beyond such analyses, understanding that gender inequalities are rooted in socialization of both genders and are inherently fluid and interactional. This research project explores how social location affects the experiences of practitioners implementing the project, and delves into how Togolese and American culture affect the perspectives and experiences of practitioners, emphasizing both convergences and divergences.

## Theoretical Frameworks

### Hegemonic Masculinity

Contemporary interventions that target men seek to address what is seen as a problematic framing of masculinity, or what Raewyn Connell termed 'hegemonic masculinity.' Hegemonic masculinity represents the idealized vision of manhood, or the cross-cultural masculine archetype. According to this theoretical framework, the idealized form of manhood has become so engrained that it is believed to be the natural predisposition of 'man' and that anything outside of this conception is unnatural, and

therefore deviant. The continued mythology of 'man' is reinforced and naturalized through a variety of social institutions, where the successful, charismatic, powerful, heroic image of man is celebrated (Donaldson 1993).

This male archetype consisting of the attributes of "aggression, [sic] competitiveness, political power, hierarchy, [and] promiscuity," is believed to be the natural tendency of man, something biologically rather than socially determined (Gutmann 1997:394). However, paradoxically, at the same time there is a deep-seated belief that while women are born, men must be made (Gutmann 1997). Therefore, men must constantly engage in a jockeying of power, in a constant effort to prove themselves to one another. It is this global hegemonic masculinity that the Men as Partners Program seeks to deconstruct through behavioral change. The program's goal is to impart men with "the social and self-regulatory skills and self-beliefs necessary to practice safer behaviors" in order that they may internalize a different notion of what it means to be a man (Fisher and Fisher 2000:24).

## Cross-Cultural Communication Theory

There is a rich body of cross-disciplinary research on the process of communication across cultural boundaries, and the challenges of this 'intercultural communication' in a rapidly globalizing world. For this study I was interested in the process of adaptation to a foreign culture and the cultural biases and assumptions that influence effective communication cross-culturally. As collaboration with Togolese counterparts is crucial to the effectiveness of the program, I examine how these divergent biases and assumptions affect both the collaboration of PCVs with Togolese MAP

practitioners and how they affect the transmission of MAP concepts to target Togolese populations.

Peace Corps Volunteers are American citizens, the majority of whom are American-born, and therefore are raised in a culture vastly different than that of Togo, where they live and work for a two-year term. Volunteers receive an intensive training before their service where potential cross-cultural challenges are discussed. The trainings stress the fact that adaptation is an on-going and highly individualized process. As Taylor points out, this process manifests itself through the development of certain "affective, behavioral, and cognitive abilities" which include "empathy, adaptive motivation, perspective taking, behavioral flexibility, and person-centered communication" (Taylor 1994:157). It is these sorts of abilities and fashions of thinking and behaving that the Peace Corps seeks to instill in its Volunteers to ensure effective integration into host communities.

Volunteer 'integration' into the community is essential for establishing the collaborative connections and social capital needed to effectively carry out development projects. Diallo and Thuillier (2004) note that research indicates the importance of interpersonal relationships and communication between stakeholders for project success in a foreign, independent of factors like "specific knowledge, skills and competencies required" (238). Their study also found that trust between project managers is one of the most critical factors in determining project effectiveness. Such trust cannot be gained without measures taken to promote cooperation and team-building, a point that Peace Corps Togo administration tries to instill in its Volunteers.

‘The Stranger’

Wiseman provides an analysis of the concept of the ‘stranger’ that is particularly salient in a discussion of PCV interactions with Togolese natives. As Wiseman (1995) notes, the stranger can only be judged in terms of those “social norms, communication rules, scripts, and strangers’ personal characteristics” of which the dominant social group is aware (30). Peace Corps Volunteers are ‘strangers’ in most interactions while serving overseas.

This position of stranger is something that many Volunteers have never experienced before. Thus, Volunteers must learn to adapt their attitudes and behaviors according to local mores. This change can be very difficult, and Volunteers may be unwilling to meet the expectations of host community member. They may experience an intense feeling of a loss of self through “temporary personality disintegration, or even breakdown in some cases” (Wiseman 1995:177, 30). In a sense Volunteers must create a ‘dual self,’ learning to reconcile their home and overseas lives into a new cross-cultural identity (Wiseman 1995). Understanding this on-going process is important as it shapes how Volunteers perceive their roles in the community and how Volunteers go about their work.

Viewed in this vein, it is easy to see how Volunteer and Togolese collaboration on MAP projects can be problematic. It can be difficult for both Volunteers and Togolese to understand one another’s beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors; regardless of how much exposure they have to one another. Nevertheless, Volunteers often leave Togo having come to appreciate aspects of Togolese culture that previously frustrated them, and Togolese come to appreciate the perspectives and lifestyles of Volunteers. The time

immersed in another culture is the most element of ensuring effective, mutually-beneficial collaboration (Kim).

Individualism/Collectivism and Cross-Cultural Communication

When immersed in Togolese society, what Volunteers will quickly observe is how the collectivism of Togolese society differs from American culture. Togolese society, as is true of many traditional societies, has a much greater sense of inter-group solidarity, than does American society. Individuals from individualistic and collectivistic societies differ in their degrees of emphasis on role relationships, the importance of 'saving face', politeness, and the usage of formal language (Wiseman 1995). Volunteers often find it difficult to navigate these cultural expectations and social systems that they often times may not agree with or quite understand.

Asante points to the South-African concept of *Ubuntu*, a concept which he affirms binds all African societies, describing it as "is a multidimensional concept which represents the core values of African ontologies," of whose tenets are respect, human dignity, "sharedness, obedience, humility, solidarity, caring, hospitality, interdependence, communalism" (Asante, Miike, and Yin 2008:114). The spirit of *Ubuntu* permeates African social life, and can be found in abundance in Togo. Although the tenets of *Ubuntu* may seem honorable and very positive, at times their manifestation can clash with American norms, values, and beliefs, and can be a source of frustration for Volunteers.

One such manifestation in Togo is in the use of language. Americans' emphasis on linguistic efficiency, precision, frankness and the elimination of ambiguity can often stand in contrast to Togolese communication. Togolese speech emphasizes interesting

and descriptive narrative and story and repetition, and oftentimes imprecision and ambiguity as well. Although a strong generalization, Richmond and Gestin contention that "Africans speak naturally, with eloquence…but their language is often imprecise and their numbers inexact" is nevertheless true for most Togolese individuals (1998:85). This can often be frustrating for Americans collaborating with Togolese on projects, as they prefer exactitude and efficiency in their speech, especially in the workplace. The individualist/collectivist cultural divide is just one way in which culture can affect collaboration between Togolese and American MAP practitioners, and cultural challenges are elaborate in the research findings.

Volunteer Impact and Interaction between PCVs and Host Country Natives

The Peace Corps as an organization and the experience of Peace Corps Volunteers has been researched extensively. The body of literature on Peace Corps Volunteers includes rich data and narratives regarding PCVs' process of adjustment, successes and challenges of their work, and appreciation of and frustration with host country cultures. However, this body of literature has often neglected the views of native peoples with whom Volunteers work. What little research that does exist from the perspectives of natives presents a much more balanced view of the agency's impact and Volunteer work and cultural adaptation than one finds in official Peace Corps literature. Official Peace Corps literature tends to romanticize the Peace Corps experience and exaggerate Volunteer work and cultural integration successes while exoticizing Volunteer work and host country culture (Amin 1992; Maugh 2012).

Julius A. Amin's The Peace Corps in Cameroon (1992) chronicles the history of

the Peace Corps' work in Cameroon during the 1960's. Amin argues that although Volunteers were indispensable development agents at the time, their effectiveness in certain professional capacities was questionable. Amin notes that the Volunteers' work was fraught with challenges, including lack of discipline in their classes, failures at improving agricultural practices, and an inability to communicate effectively in the health sector (Amin 1992; Hartmann 1992). Amin also remarks on Volunteers' difficulty in cultural integration, noting that they often carried "unfair Western-biased judgments about aspects of Cameroon life such as sex, marriage, time, work ethic, hospitality, and discipline" which damaged their reputation among community members (Hartmann 1992:126-127; Amin 1992).

del Mar (2011) also examines local views of education Volunteers in Ghana, with locals criticizing for the Volunteers for espousing "an educational philosophy that seemed to invite anarchy" (352). Moreover, Ghanaian Volunteers were critical of the rote teaching methods and classroom management of the Ghanaians, yet were unable a viable alternative to this pedagogy. The local population often viewed the Volunteers as inexperienced and lacking in cultural integration.

Nevertheless, Amin touts the Volunteers' ability to adapt quickly, their overall open-minded and professional demeanor, and their work at improving the Cameroonian educational system. While the cultural integration of PCVs may often "fall considerably short of the claim sometimes made on the Peace Corps' behalf", Cohen and Wood (1978) contend that it was nevertheless far greater than that of other aid personnel, and this cultural proficiency significantly "enhances their job performance" (171). This issue of Volunteers' reputation in host communities is critically important, as it is greatly

influences the implementation of Volunteer projects and their collaboration with local practitioners.

## Criticisms of Gender Development Programs

Although implicating men is seen as an essential strategy in reproductive health interventions, researchers have posed serious questions about these programs. These questions include the efficacy of "involving men in areas that have traditionally been considered the preserve of women, such as childcare, pregnancy and fertility control" and if the targeting of men as community health leaders actually serves to reinforce existing power differentials between men and women (Sternberg and Hubley 2004:390). A further unexplored issue is how men who have taken part in these initiatives are perceived in the community, especially by their spouses, when they display their changed attitudes and behaviors (Sternberg and Hubley 2004). Moreover, the ability of these programs to actually convince men to give up their social status and power has been called into question (Cornwall 1997).

The larger global implications of such interventions have also been called into question. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have touted the benefits of gender programs in the developing world, arguing that they have elevated the status of women considerably. However, researchers such Jaggar (2001) contend that these programs have created dependencies on funding from foreign development agents that have actually undermined governmental social programs which are "accountable to local people" (309). Therefore, according to Jaggar, although these programs seek to serve the interests of women, their very organizational structure often undermines the political voices of

women and further disenfranchises the poor (Jaggar 2001). These programs may be benevolent in their goals, but their implementation by Western organizations and de facto lack of local control and leadership may undermine those very objectives. Thus, although practitioners have endorsed gender transformative approaches as promising initiatives, they should not be viewed as a panacea for patriarchal gender systems (Cornwall 2003). These issues are important to consider for this research project, as they inform the data analysis, utilizing the perspectives of Togolese and American practitioners on the administrative and grassroots levels of implementation to examine critical questions regarding the nature and efficacy of gender transformative programs implemented in a West African context.

## Summary

The MAP program is a rapidly growing gender-based development initiative that is part of the 'gender transformative', couched within the larger Gender and Development (GAD) discourse. Its primary goal is to challenge hegemonic conceptualizations of masculinity which place women and men at heightened risk for negative health consequences, including HIV infection. The program is an important and unique gender equality initiative in its almost exclusive focus on the transformation of male attitudes and behaviors. This emphasis of the program represents a departure from female-centered initiatives which seek to elevate women's social status, yet do not implicate men in gender transformation.

This review of relevant literature has provided the theoretical backdrop for the research project, exploring the salient concepts of hegemonic masculinity and cross-

cultural communication. Hegemonic masculinity informs many gender interventions. It is this view of a widespread, dominant, and problematic conceptualization of what constitutes manhood that programs like MAP seek to address. Cross-cultural communication theory provides a framework in which to understand the interaction of Togolese and American practitioners and the challenges they face through collaborating on MAP program implementation in Togolese communities.

Finally, the critiques of Volunteer work and gender transformative programs included in the literature review provide the background for further critiques which emerged from respondent interviews in the data analysis, creating the linkages of project data with larger institutional criticisms of Western-led gender initiatives carried out in the developing world.

# CHAPTER III

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

## Background on Togo

Togo is a small country of nearly 7 million people on the coast of northwest Africa, bordering the Gulf of Benin and the nations of Burkina Faso to the north, Ghana to the west, and Benin to the east. Since gaining independence in 1960, it has been ruled almost exclusively by Eyadema Gnassingbe and his son, Faure Gnassingbe. Since the military's installation of Faure upon his father's death, democratic gains have led to Togo "finally being re-welcomed into the international community" culminating in its assumption to the seat of non-permanent UN Security Council member in January 2012 (CIA World Factbook 2013).

The climate of the country varies considerably, from highly tropical in the south to savanna in the north, as the Sahel region runs through the north. Deforestation due to slash-and-burn agriculture and wood for fuel, along with significant water pollution are environmental issues faced throughout the country, affecting the ecological, economic, and physical health of the country and its people (CIA World Factbook 2013).

French is the official language of the nation, as Togo was most recently a French holding. Ewe and Mina are the two primary tribal languages in the south, while Kabiye, Kotokoli, and Moba are spoken in the north. In all, Togo has around 39 different unique

and 19 languages (http://www.ethnologue.com/country/TG). Christianity and Islam comprise about half of the religious makeup of Togolese people, while indigenous beliefs comprise the other half, all three having a significant influence on the cultural beliefs and values of Togolese people.

The life expectancy in Togo is 63.17 years, and the average age is very young, at 19.4 years. The population growth rate is 2.7% and the infant mortality rate is around 50 deaths per 1,000 live births (CIA World Factbook 2013). Food and waterborne illnesses plague the country, along with high rates of malaria and yellow fever (CIA World Factbook 2013). Literacy rates are low, with only just over 60 percent of persons ages 15 and over able to read and write (CIA World Factbook 2013). The economy is small, with stagnant growth; consisting mainly of subsistence farming, with 40 percent of exports coming from the cocoa, coffee, and cotton industries; and the country is one of the world's largest producers of phosphates.

## MAP and the Peace Corps

In Togo, and in many African nations, the MAP Program is administered by the Peace Corps, an American development agency working in developing nations around the globe. The Peace Corps agency was founded in 1961 by the late President John F. Kennedy and currently boasts 8,073 Volunteers and Trainees serving two-year terms in 76 countries. There are three primary goals of the Peace Corps that constitute the agency's overall mission:

1. Helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.

2. Helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
3. Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

However, there is a still a significant need for more Volunteer, and, especially, native practitioner, perspectives in research. The Peace Corps Volunteer experience has been written about extensively in Returned Volunteer biographies, Peace Corps promotional literature, and in various journalistic and academic outlets. This literature includes rich data and narratives regarding PCVs' process of cultural adjustment and the successes and challenges of their work. However, although stories of Volunteer service abound, literature from a research standpoint is lacking. A few studies have explored subjective and objective measures of Volunteer success (Kerly and Jenkins 2010; Peace Corps Morocco 2011) and others have even delved into Volunteers' interactions with host country people (Cohen and Wood 1985; Kerly and Jenkins 2010). However, there is a still a significant need for more Volunteer, and, especially, native practitioner, perspectives in research.

This study emphasizes the interaction of the actors and how their various social locations and cultural perspectives affect their collaborative work and the meaning they afford to that work. The project provides insight into the nature of implementation of gender transformative programs in general and the Men as Partners (MAP) program specifically.

While the Men as Partners Program is a separate project initiated by the non-governmental organization (NGO) EngenderHealth, the project has been integrated as a

Peace Corps project, and in Togo is one of the primary projects of Volunteers. Volunteer working under the Girls' Education and Empowerment (GEE) sector in particular are highly encouraged to lead formal MAP trainings since their primary role as Volunteers is the promotion of gender equality.

Moreover, the MAP Program utilizes a participatory approach where participants are encouraged to arrive at conclusions through discourse. This stands in contrast to the approach of the Togolese education system, where emphasis is placed on lecture and rote memorization of facts in preparation for national standardized tests. This pedagogy leaves little room for debate or open dialogue, and thereby little room for "exerting change or challenging the status quo" (Bastien 2005:43). The MAP program challenges this pedagogy and encourages participants to think critically about social structures and norms of behavior.

## MAP Resources and Training Format

EngenderHealth, the non-governmental organization (NGO) that developed the MAP program in collaboration with the ACQUIRE Project, has developed many resources to assist MAP practitioners in the field. Their various manuals are geared to several different target groups including: youth, couples, health and social service providers, and faith-based organizations (EngenderHealth). However, the manual used by PCVs in Togo is an educative manual geared towards a general audience entitled: *Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Model* (ACQUIRE Project: 2008). This manual includes resources for generalized MAP training sessions that expose men and boys at all age levels to gender equality concepts.

The manual commences with general information about the MAP manual, a guide to facilitators, and examples of MAP training schedules. Following the more generalized information, the manual is divided topically according to the following session subjects:

1. Gender and Power
2. Sexuality
3. Men and Health
4. Drugs
5. Healthy Relationships
6. STI and HIV Prevention
7. Living with AIDS
8. Paternity
9. Violence
10. Effectuate Changes and Act

Session duration is anywhere from 40 to 120 minutes. Most MAP trainings are 2- to 3-day events with 3-6 sessions per day. Although there is some freedom to adapt the sessions, the subject matter and timeframe of the sessions normally remain the same as what is suggested in the manual. Manuals are given to PCV practitioners who can request more should they need them in training design. Participants also typically receive the manual following the MAP training.

## Follow-Up and Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

In order to ensure the long-term impact of one-time MAP training, Volunteers are encouraged to conduct "follow-up" activities with training participants. The Peace Corps has made a strong commitment to encouraging follow-up and the monitoring and

evaluation of project's impact. This emphasis is a response to a general movement in the development community to data-centered projects. Many resources are been recently developed to assist Volunteers in this vein (such as the *Working with Supervisors and Counterparts* Manual, 2009).

PCVs are now required to report their activities twice per year (four times during their two-year terms of service) to Peace Corps headquarters using official Peace Corps reporting software, the Volunteer Reporting Framework, or VRF. Using this software they are required to report how many individuals and organizations they reached with their projects, along with other measures of both quantitative and qualitative success and barriers to success that they encountered. Although tools like the reporting software are being developed and proliferated among the PC community, there is still much work to be done in both strategic project planning and project monitoring and evaluation by PCVs.

Ensuring that staff are properly trained in monitoring, reporting, and evaluation procedures is especially challenging in a PC country like Togo where a good portion of staff, including sector directors are Togolese natives. However, this has become a priority for PC Togo administration, with staff and Volunteers training focusing on such topics as the Behavior Change Framework to measure the impact of interventions aimed at changing the behavior of target populations (Designing for Behavior Change 2008). This strategy has extended its reach to Volunteer counterparts in their community. According to the agency, the advantages of involving counterparts in project monitoring and evaluation include: "more relevant and better quality information, results used by more stakeholders, greater ownership of the project by participants, and participants'

development of M&E skills" (Peace Corps 2009:20).

The ultimate goal of PCV projects is long-term, measurable results. With the MAP program those results come through ensuring that training participants continue to carry out MAP training sessions in their villages and that participants change their attitudes and behavior. Therefore, follow-up activities often include regular meetings with training participants to monitor their on-going activities in the community, and house visits to observe and encourage training participants. Moreover, past participants who are seen as 'exceptional' are often asked to assist in the design of new MAP trainings and to lead training sessions.

## Gender and the Family in Togo

In order to understand the perceived need for gender-transformative programs in Togo, one must first examine Togolese gender roles and family structure. The family is the predominant social and economic unit in Togolese society. Togolese families are much larger and include a wider extended family than Western nuclear families, with multiple generations tending to live together in the same household. Polygamy, although diminishing in frequency due to Western influence, is still quite common. Togolese families are also quite young, as just under half of the Togolese population is under 15 years of age (The Kaiser Foundation).

Togolese kinship networks are also typically very large, fluid, and informal. Togolese will often refer to one another as 'brother', 'sister', 'aunt' or 'uncle' despite the lack of a direct blood relation to the person. The sense of communalism is strong in Togolese society. Children are not seen as belonging to only their biological parents, but

are also “under the authority and control of any adult in the community” (Asante, Miike, and Yin 2008:115).

To an outsider, gender relations in Togo may appear very patriarchal, with men typically seen as the heads of household and their spouses in a subordinate position to them. Women are generally charged with unpaid household and field labor like cooking, fetching water, fetching firewood, taking care of the children, and tending the crops. Men are charged with paid labor and working in the fields as well.

However, there is a growing awareness in Togo of the need to encourage women’s empowerment. While women are seen increasingly more in professional positions, and have witnessed a rise in their income and social status, they still bear a disproportionate burden for agricultural work, food production, child care, and family health care (Blackden and Wodon 2006). Moreover, while playing all these different roles, they are also often denied access to decision-making institutions and subjected to gender-based violence. It is with the express goal of stemming some of these trends and creating more equitable gender relations, especially in smaller, isolated, and more traditional villages, that many NGOs are implementing programs like MAP.

# CHAPTER IV

# METHODOLOGY

## Overview of Methodology

In order to capture the complexity of practitioner perspectives working on both the administrative and grassroots levels of program implementation, this research project draws from a multiplicity of sources. Interviews with Togolese and American MAP practitioners and my own observations as a MAP practitioner and researcher constitute the core sources of data. In addition, I utilize archival data such as training manuals, training schedules, and session plans to provide a holistic view of the MAP program as implemented in Togo.

## Auto-Ethnography

This research project employed an auto-ethnography methodological approach, stemming from a "researcher-as-participant" perspective, as I, as the primary researcher, was also a Peace Corps Volunteer in Togo from September 2010-2012. As a MAP practitioner I had intimate knowledge and personal insight of the MAP program. I am therefore an "active participant" in the research study, and had a natural access to the research environment not afforded to most researchers (Alvesson 2003). As a Togo Peace

Corps Volunteer working with the Girls' Education and Empowerment Program (GEE)[1], I initiated the MAP project under the advice and guidance of the GEE Director in the southern Maritime region of the country with assistance from Togolese professionals. My position can therefore be classified as a blend between "insider" and "outsider," in that I am not Togolese, but I am nonetheless a MAP practitioner with extensive knowledge of the program and of Togolese culture.

The value of auto-ethnography in this study is that it allows for a fuller picture of the structure, design, goals, and implementation of the MAP program from both an institutional and interactional level. Moreover, the ethnographic method emphasizes the constantly changing nature of social reality, with recognition that the researcher's interaction with the study setting is instrumental in the meaning that is parsed from the observations (Preissle and Grant 2004).

Traditionally, ethnography has been a method primarily concerned with the culture, background, and perspectives of the research participants and deemphasizing those of the researcher (Preissle and Grant 2004). With a greater movement towards autoethnography, the perspectives of the researcher and study participants are held in conversation with one another, understanding that understanding social reality is an inherently subjective endeavor. Therefore, the autoethnographic method is useful in that it "suits a postmodern sensitivity" where there is all perspectives are valued and "no right form of knowledge exists" (Duncan 2004:3). The importance of the method is its ability to tell "a story that invites personal connection" rather than simply an analysis of "issues

[1] Since the publishing of this research the GEE sector has been renamed "English and Gender Education (EGE)" and EGE Volunteers are now formal English teachers. Yet, even with this change in the project, the emphasis on female-centered education interventions has remained part of the program's goals.

of personal importance within an explicitly acknowledged social context" (Wall 2008:39).

There are significant limitations of the auto-ethnographic method. For one, the method tends to prioritize the reflections of the researcher and minimizes the voices of native actors. As Wall notes, the personal experiences of the researcher are "are placed on a pedestal and separated from other discourses in their contexts" (Wall, 40). The method has an inherent danger of removing analysis of larger social forces and interactional dynamics between actors, becoming more psychological than sociological in nature. Atkinson describes this danger, arguing that, "A focus on a single, subjective subject lacks genuinely thick description and threatens to substitute a psychotherapeutic for a sociological view of life" (Wall 2006). If not triangulated with other data sources the method may lack traditional quantitative and qualitative qualities of "credibility, dependability, and trustworthiness" (Wall 2008:40). Scholars have criticized more experimental, postmodernist forms of auto-ethnography where "the boundaries of scholarship are merged with artistic expression as a way of challenging the limitations of what is normally accepted as knowledge in academic contexts," viewing these methods as highly personal, emotional, and lacking methodological thoroughness and theoretical grounding (Wall 2006). As auto-ethnography is a relatively new methodology, significant criteria for evaluating the method have yet to be firmly established (Wall 2008:48).

Auto-ethnography is often criticized for the limited amount of data sources utilized in the analysis, and for the highly subjective nature of these sources. Therefore, I draw upon MAP program documents, blog posts, and participant interviews to provide a multiplicity of data sources which allow me to paint a more complete picture of MAP

program implementation in Togo.

In order to improve data credibility I draw upon the informants' particular experience of the MAP program in approximately equal measure to my own. As a MAP practitioner I cannot divorce my personal experience and perspective from the narrative analysis. Therefore, the study provides insider perspectives on the MAP program from Togolese and American practitioners from various levels within the program hierarchy, affording a rich, layered analysis.

The study relies upon structured and unstructured data along with personal reflections and observations. With this 'constructionist' approach, the researcher is constantly held in conversation with study participants, with meaning developed through his/her interaction with the foreign environment, with "meanings developed in social contexts" (Preissle and Grant 2004:174). My personal experience and my interactions with the study setting and informants becomes an integral part of the research, which stands in contrast to objectivist methods, where the social relationships the researcher forms with subjects in the field are deemphasized and obscured. The constructivist approach does not take data at completely face value, but seeks to discover underlying meanings, connections, and motivations, with the understanding that study participants "may cooperate or not, reveal or conceal information, and even allow or refuse to grant the researcher any access at all" (Preissle and Grant 2004:174).

## Data Collection

Several different data sources are used in the research project. Interviews with Togolese were conducted either face-to-face or via Skype internet calls to the participant's cell phone. Three of the interviews with Togolese practitioners were conducted via face-to-face meetings and audio recording and transcription in French and one was conducted via a Skype call in English (interview with the Director of Peace Corps Togo's GEE Program).

The seven informants were chosen based on their experience working with the MAP Program and selected to constitute a mix of Togolese counterparts, Peace Corps staff, and Peace Corps Volunteers. The American interview responses were filled in by the study participants themselves. This allowed the PCVs to give thoughtful responses and to give responses in their own free time. While this allowed for thoughtful responses, it of course diminished the spontaneity of a conversation. Both of the interviews were completed while the PCVs were still serving in Togo. This option was not available for the interviews with Togolese practitioners because of lack of computer access and typing skills to fill in the responses, therefore these interviews were conducted face-to-face before my departure from Togo. The interview with the Peace Corps Togo staff person, who is an American, was conducted in English via a Skype call.

Study participants were asked various questions regarding their involvement in the MAP Program, logistics of how they implemented the program, motivation for participation, and various challenges they faced while implementing the program. Due to the language barrier and other factors, the interviews with PCVs were more in-depth than those with Togolese. Follow-up interviews and requests for clarification were more easily

gathered for the PCVs than for Togolese practitioners.

Another element of the study is my personal reflections regarding the implementation of the MAP Program in his village. Feedback from the participants of the training and various training documents were used to provide a fuller picture of the nature of the training in my village site of Agbélouvé. My training utilized resources from other PCVs' MAP trainings, the logistics and minutiae of the training, and can therefore be considered very similar to a 'typical' MAP training; and thus represents a typical MAP Program on the ground level in Togo. The responses of other PCVs, Peace Corps staff, and Togolese practitioners were juxtaposed with the researcher's personal experience as an American living and working in a Togolese village promoting the MAP Program.

## Data Analysis

After having lived and worked in Agbélouvé for two years, I have a unique perspective as the only Westerner in a Togolese community. The bulk of analyzed data was derived from informant interviews, yet my perspective and personal experiences as a MAP practitioner will be integrated into the analysis as well.

The qualitative data collected was analyzed using an emergent coding system in the vein of grounded theory. Study data was analyzed with the ultimate goal of discovering how differing perspectives and cultures of Togolese and American practitioners effect on-the-ground program implementation. Although this goal guided the research, relevant theoretical categories were not solidified until after interview coding and analysis and instead emerged throughout the duration of the research project (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw; Eshlaghy et al. 2011; Strauss and Corbin 1994).

Grounded theory is particularly useful for this ethnographic project because it recognizes the fluid and highly interactional nature of social phenomena (Strauss and Corbin 1994). Grounded theory methodology is concerned with patterns emerging throughout the data collection and analysis process, thus the importance of a priori theories are minimized which allowed me considerable freedom throughout the research process.

However, in utilizing the grounded theory methodology I did not carry out the project in a completely unstructured manner. Certain program implementation barriers were anticipated, and the research design was shaped by expectations of how differences in cultural beliefs and values and nationality, sex, age, and social class influence program implementation. I also expected the minutiae of program execution- training schedules, session formats and audience, program funding, etc. to provide valuable insights into the nature of MAP program implementation in Togolese communities.

Following each interview I coded the data according to various themes which emerged during the interview. These codes were then further divided thematically and compared for the PCVs, Peace Corps staff, and Togolese practitioners separately. After the group themes had been analyzed larger general themes were parsed for all three of the study groups.

## Limitations

Utilizing an ethnographic approach, in particular autoethnography, presents particular limitations to the research project. For one, ethnography draws upon primarily qualitative data which is narrative in nature. This limits the data's generalizability, validity, and reliability. Moreover, the ethnographic method is about telling the story of a

particular social phenomenon or setting, and is therefore bounded by space and time which limits its explanatory power outside of the phenomenon or setting in question. However, the tradeoff is that ethnography allows for rich detail and analysis that can have significant theoretical implications.

Another challenge inherent in the project design is the use of the interview method. It is impossible for the researcher to 'get into the mind of' the respondent. Therefore the researcher must take care as to not project his/her own assumptions onto the respondent. This creates challenges when attempting to uncover perspectives and motivations. What we have to work with is what the respondent gives us.

Thus, it can be problematic if the subject is not very reflective of his/her experience, or is not willing to share these internal states and goals with the researcher. Moreover, even if the respondents are willing to share, they may find it difficult to verbalize their views, or have difficulty calling to memory particular thoughts, events, or activities (Lahlou 2011). As humans we often act automatically and thus often have difficulty recalling particular activities and states of mind (Lahlou 2011). It can be challenging uncovering participant perspectives, motivations, or behaviors if respondents are not particularly cognizant of them.

Another significant limitation of the interview method in this particular study is the barrier of language. Although I conducted interviews late in my service, when my French was already at an advanced level, I still had some difficulties in understanding the responses of Togolese informants. Likewise, Togolese practitioners had difficulty understanding my French, and I often had to repeat and explain particular questions several times over. The language barrier can be problematic particularly when discussing

abstract and sometimes sensitive issues. Moreover, the language barrier made asking follow-up questions and probing into certain topics more difficult with Togolese respondents compared to Americans; which somewhat biased informant perspectives towards those of the PCV practitioners.

# CHAPTER V

# ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

## Overview of Findings

Respondent interviews and my personal experience as a MAP practitioner reveal rich data about both the larger-scale programmatic qualities of the MAP project, and the interactional processes that take place between American and Togolese practitioners during program implementation. The findings can be loosely defined and divided into the following categories:

1. Togolese and American practitioners alike generally view the overall MAP philosophy and objectives are generally positively, and believe it to be efficacious for Togolese society.
2. Local cultural and organizational barriers significantly impact program implementation and affect how Togolese and American practitioners view program objectives and their particular roles within the program's institutional framework.
    a. Different conceptions of what constitutes project ideals such as gender, gender equality, and gender transformation complicate program implementation for both groups.
    b. Resistance by women in Togolese communities to enactment of MAP principles by participants can make the manifestation of program

ideals in the everyday lives of Togolese men difficult pragmatically.

c. Eagerness of PCV practitioners to bring about gender equality coupled with a combative approach to cultural norms and values can repel Togolese participants from program engagement and receptivity to the MAP message. Volunteer expectations for social change in gender relations can be overly ambitious and unrealistic for the two-year Volunteer term.

d. Togolese practitioners find it difficult to navigate their roles and expectations concerning program design and implementation within the pre-established MAP structure, of which, conversely, PCV practitioners are well-versed.

e. The funding of the program and reimbursement of Togolese practitioners and participants is often a significant point of contention with MAP projects.

3. In order to ensure effectiveness, the program must be further integrated into Togolese institutions with Togolese leaders as more substantial stakeholders. Monitoring and evaluation, impact reporting, sustainability, and follow-up activities are seen as critical for program effectiveness.

## Research Participants

Interviews with Togolese and American practitioners offer perspectives of the MAP program from both the administrative and grassroots levels of design and execution. Practitioner respondents were given pseudonyms in order to protect

confidentiality. Interviews were conducted with the following individuals.

| **Name** | **Sex** | **Nationality** | **Age** | **Region** | **Position** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kevin | Male | American | 26 | Plateau | PCV |
| Kelly | Female | American | 25 | Savannes | PCV |
| Kristin | Female | American | 25 | Plateau | PCV |
| Koffi | Male | Togolese | 40's-50's | Maritime | Inspector of Education |
| Florence | Female | Togolese | 40's-50's | Maritime | Director, Girls' Education and Empowerment (GEE) Program |
| Kathy | Female | American | 40's-50's | Maritime | Director, Peace Corps Togo |
| Kossivi | Female | Togolese | 40's-50's | Maritime | Director, Secondary School |

Kevin, a 26 year old White male, was a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Girls' Education and Empowerment sector. The Peace Corps was Kevin's first professional position following the completion of his undergraduate studies. Kevin served in the Plateau region, the largest region of Togo, and the second-most southerly region in the country.

Kristin, a 25 year old White female was a GEE Volunteer who also served in the Plateau region, and was the closest PCV neighbor to Kevin. Kristin's village, Kpalime, was one of the most heavily populated by foreign development works, volunteers, and tourists. Due to its location in one of the most pristine areas of the country and its cocoa plantations, Kpalime was a popular outpost for the German, English, and French colonists throughout Togo's colonialist history.

Kelly, a 25 year old White female was a GEE Volunteer in the Savannes region, the northernmost region of the country. The Savannes region is the most isolated region

of the country, the furthest region from the capital of Lome. Subsequently, it is the most rural and underdeveloped region. Kelly worked with a fellow female GEE Volunteer in her region to institute the first ever Men as Partners training in Savannes.

Koffi, a middle-aged Togolese male, is a Regional Inspector of Secondary Education for the Maritime region, and is thus responsible for overseeing all middle school and high school teachers in the region. He was responsible for creating subject curriculum, teacher placement, and the allocation of resources to regional schools. As a collaborator with the Peace Corps for a number of years, he was instrumental in assisting Maritime PCVs with the implementation of trainings and follow-up activities.

As he was trained by the Peace Corps, under the guidance of the GEE Program Director, Koffi was familiar with Peace Corps goals, structures, and constraints. He also assisted in the implementation of the MAP training in Agbelouve and helped to lend legitimacy to the project. His years of service with the MAP program demonstrate his dedication to expanding the program's reach within the Togolese education system.

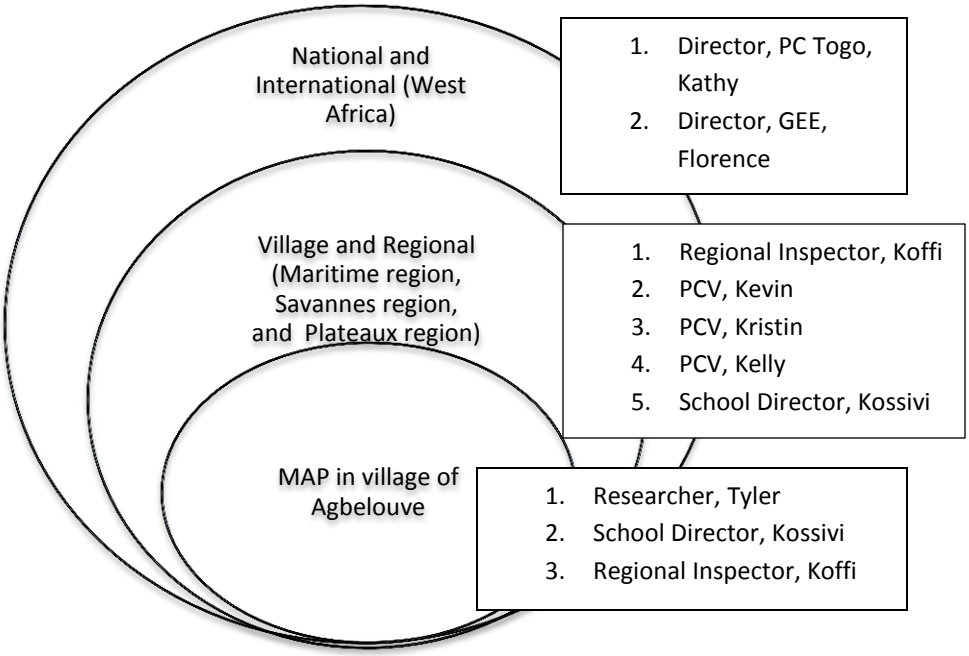
Kossivi, one of two Togolese females interviewed, is a middle-aged educator in the Maritime region. An anomaly for women, she was not only a former middle school teacher, but is currently a middle school director. The school she directs and helped found, is a school whose mission is the advancement of girls' education in the region. Her position with the school was a key reason that she was targeted to become a MAP program leader in the Martime region.

The final two respondents are Peace Corps Togo staff members, both of whom are middle-aged women. Kathy is a White American and is the Director of the Peace Corps program in Togo. She has worked with the Peace Corps in the West African region since

2008, and was a Peace Corps Training Officer in Honduras from 2005 to 2007. Kathy was instrumental in bringing the MAP program to Togo and offers an administrative perspective of the program, allowing us to examine the overarching mission and vision of the program within the framework of Peace Corps development goals.

The other Peace Corps staff member interviewed, Florence, has worked as a Peace Corps program director since 1999, having previously worked as a PC language trainer and then program assistant (Peace Corps Togo Staff Biographies). Florence, a Togolese woman from the Maritime region of Togo, is an experienced program manager and very dedicated to the objectives of the GEE program. As a Togolese woman working on both the administrative and grassroots levels, Florence provides a holistic perspective of the MAP program and the unique challenges faced in design and implementation of the program on the village, regional, and national levels. Florence directs GEE Volunteers and leads pre-service and in-service trainings where MAP is frequently discussed due to its centrality within the GEE project.

The aforementioned respondent perspectives together with my own personal perspective as a MAP program practitioner provide a fuller view of the program's implementation. While avoiding projecting my own thoughts and opinions onto the respondents, I will use my own experience and insights into the program to offer an elaborated, and at times conflicted, viewpoint to those of respondents. The following schematic divides the interviews according to the levels of the program the research project addresses.




## Overview of Data Analysis

The findings section will begin with general background information on thecountry of Togo and then proceed to a discussion of the history, goals, philosophy, andpedagogy of the MAP program and its role within Peace Corps programming in Togo. In order to frame the context within which MAP is implemented, I then explore the nature of gender and familial relations in Togo.

Following this more generalized background information is an analysis of respondent interview data. This analysis will begin with informant perspectives regarding MAP philosophy and goals, and respondent understandings of concepts such as "gender equality" and "gender equity." The analysis will then proceed to respondent motivations for program implementation and a discussion of the target groups for MAP trainings. General implementation and collaboration obstacles faced by both Togolese and American practitioners are then discussed followed by an analysis of the ways in which

social location, particularly gender and ethnicity/national origin, affect practitioners' MAP work. Themes related to program impact and continuation are then discussed at length. Finally, the "Respondent Perspectives" section closes with recommendations for program improvement. Each sub-section of this portion of the analysis terminates with several questions raised for future research.

The final sub-section of "Findings" is a discussion of my experience as a MAP practitioner in the village of Agbelouve. After providing an overview of training format and participant composition, I then discuss the challenges that I faced during training follow-up activities, as these activities, in my opinion, presented the greatest program challenges to my MAP project in Agbelouve.

The three categories of findings discussed under "Overview of Findings" are:

1. The positive perception of the program by Togolese and American practitioners,
2. Existent cultural, philosophic, and organizational barriers to program implementation, and
3. The critical nature of on-going follow-up activities, evaluation, and reporting.

These themes are embedded throughout the analysis and serve as the over-arching results that inform each sub-section. Concluding the research findings are a discussion of research limitations and recommendations.

## Respondent Perspectives

### The Beginning of MAP in Togo- Goals and Vision

The Men as Partners program began in Togo in 1999 through the efforts of the current Director of the Girls' Education and Empowerment (GEE) Program. Both

Florence and Kathy attended an African conference held in Mozambique designed to introduce Peace Corps Country Directors in Africa to the MAP curriculum. Following the conference Florence took the lead in integrating MAP into the GEE Project Framework. According to Kathy, since its beginning, MAP has been "an integral part" of "gender equality programming" within Peace Corps Togo.

Volunteers of all Peace Corps sectors have at least a cursory exposure to MAP and are aware of the program's goals and impact. However, MAP is often seen as primarily a GEE project, due to its focus on women's empowerment and gender equality, especially in the area of educational opportunity and attainment.

Although MAP targets men, Florence maintained that her vision for the future of the program is to a greater focus on "the young population to empower sustainable change for future generations" and to train up "gender-conscious" adults. Other respondents also believe that sustainable change in gender relations should be fostered through a focus on youth.

Although the stated goals of MAP are multi-faceted (more equitable distribution of domestic labor, reduction in gender-based violence, girls' education retention, etc.), the primary objective behind all program interventions is the reduction in the rate of HIV/AIDS. Therefore, MAP is seen as a key instrument in tackling the HIV/AIDS epidemic on the continent. In fact, most funded MAP training sessions in Togo are supported through the United States Agency of International Development's (USAID) HIV/AIDS funding stream. In order to receive these funds, applying PCVs must demonstrate that their MAP program will incorporate HIV/AIDS education or prevention strategies. Therefore, MAP not only falls within the Peace Corps' commitment to gender

equality promotion, but also within its commitment to HIV/AIDS prevention.

Peace Corps Togo's long-term goal is the continued expansion of the MAP program and its greater integration into the three Peace Corps sectors and into Togolese organizations and structures. One stated goal of Peace Corps administration is the strengthening of the Peace Corps' relationship with the Togolese national youth volunteer corps, the PROVONAT (the Togolese national volunteer corps), and the collaboration of PC with PROVONAT on the design and implementation of MAP.

As one Volunteer informant noted, from the perspectives of several Volunteers, the MAP program is not sufficiently adapted to the Community Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention (CHAP) sector, and especially not to the Environmental Action and Food Security (EAFS) sector. Recognizing that the Peace Corps is moving towards a Volunteer pool of "generalists" rather than sectorial "specialists," it would greatly benefit Peace Corps Togo and Togolese communities if the MAP program worked well across the three sectors, ensuring that Volunteers and their counterparts could integrate the program into the myriad of projects they engage in (Tarnoff 2012).

MAP Philosophy and Goals

The Men as Partners philosophy is based on the idea that men's position of power in society limits the agency of women, and that current gender systems "give men the ability to influence or determine reproductive health choices made by women" (ACQUIRE Project 2008:16). Moreover, the current gender roles negatively impact men's health by encouraging men to "equate a range of risky behaviors with being 'manly,'" and seeing personal healthcare as a sign of weakness (ACQUIRE Project

2008:16). The philosophy of the program is that the current gender system is malleable, and can be changed by influencing individuals. The program purports that even violent men who show little or no respect for their partners can be changed into men who negotiate on equal terms with their partners, sharing the responsibility for "reproductive health, HIV prevention and care" (ACQUIRE Project 2008:16).

There was general agreement on project goals and philosophy among Togolese and American practitioner respondents. The goal of "transformation" of men, through addressing particular "negative behaviors and beliefs" was a recurring theme in interviews. The respondents described the program as targeting the unequal power and labor distribution of men and women in Togolese society. There appeared to be a general consensus regarding the MAP philosophy and its goals.

> I would say that MAP aims to promote gender equality in all spheres of life. I would also say that it promotes healthy relationships and educates on sexual health and HIV/AIDS. (Kristin)

> The Men as Partners program is an initiative directed towards gender transformation. The initiative seeks to change negative behaviors based on negative beliefs based on gender roles. The program recognizes the unequal distribution of power in society between men and women and seeks to address this problem by teaching men of the benefits of an egalitarian social perspective and the consequences of ignoring inequality. (Kevin)

> The MAP program approaches gender equity promotion from the male perspective. The MAP program works with men, who are often opposed to promoting women's rights, by helping men recognize themselves as stakeholders in gender equity development. (Kelly)

One concept that was recurrent in respondent interviews, and is promoted in MAP literature, is the idea that men stand to gain significantly from gender equality. The program maintains that the adoption of positive attitudes and behaviors will lead to a reduction in risky activity that places men at risk for various injuries and illness-particularly HIV/AIDS. MAP is therefore similar to other Gender and Development (GAD) approaches in that there is the understanding that current systems do not benefit all men, and many are actually marginalized by the current norms, values, and power

structures (Sharpe et al. 2003).

Florence elaborated the goals of the MAP program, providing great detail into Togolese gender relations and how the MAP program seeks to alter those relations. She argues that men are "enjoying the current culture, stereotypes, division of housework; but there is a group of person [women] who aren't happy." In her view, it is men who constitute the problem.

> People noticed that the problem is male involvement, that men are the problem. Because men seem to be very violent; because men don't want to be involved in housework, so the work is divided. Therefore the philosophy of MAP is: how can we involve men in gender role transformation? We really need to involve men, so the MAP approach is good because it targets men.

Therefore, within the framework of MAP, men are seen as both the *problem* and a significant *solution* to gender inequality. Moreover, the program asserts that women *and men* stand to gain considerably from creating a more equitable gender system. As Florence explains,

> Lots of men think very conservatively. They believe that the structure of the world should remain the same. When we talk about gender issues, they become very angry- they think if we train their women then their women won't be submissive to them. They think that if they are trying to promote this approach, then they won't have opportunity to have extra-conjugal affairs; adultery and things like that. They are trying to protect the traditional gender roles. However, these men are few and we can use MAP to change their idea.

Kathy, Florence and the PCV respondents, as expected, went into much lengthier detail regarding the MAP goals and philosophy than did the two Togolese respondents. Florence delved into a particular framework of the MAP program represented schematically by concentric circles: Men as Clients, Men as Allies, and Men as Change Agents. Interestingly, this particular framework is not found in the *Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Model* MAP Manual used by Peace Corps Togo. Therefore, many Volunteers are not even aware of its existence.

It may be that most MAP practitioners may subconsciously already approach

program implementation in this particular fashion. However, understanding this particular holistic framework could help MAP practitioners plan and execute trainings in a way that acknowledges all three levels of the framework. As Florence noted, "it is only by reaching out to [men] on these three levels that the MAP Program can be fully affected." As she elaborates, to enhance program effectiveness, men must be seen as clients so as to receive the best possible training and ensuring that their needs are met; as allies so that they can understand that gender equity is to the mutual benefit together; and as change agents so as to understand that their power in society can be leveraged to empower women.

Again, Florence's inclusion of this network was interesting, as it is not an aspect of the program that is emphasized in MAP training materials or in Peace Corps Volunteer trainings. Combined with the "Ecological Model," this framework forms the backbone of the MAP program philosophy, and seemingly should be more prominently displayed and promoted by EngenderHealth and Peace Corps staff.

Although respondent interviews revealed important insights into the MAP philosophy and goals, numerous questions remain. To what extent do Togolese and American practitioners agree or disagree regarding the ideal relationship between men and women? Moreover, how do the particular cultural backgrounds of Togolese and American practitioners influence their approaches to reaching the goals of the project? Finally, to what extent are both groups invested in the philosophy of the program, and if they would adapt the MAP approach, how would they do so?

"Gender Equity" and "Gender Equality"

The MAP program is designed around the idea that men's involvement in female empowerment work is critical to ensuring more equitable gender relations. Through the interviews the distinction between the concepts of "gender equality" and "gender equity" was emphasized. This distinction, although seemingly pedantic, is nevertheless important when framing project philosophy.

The *Engaging Boys and Men in Gender Transformation: The Group Education Model* includes a session describing the differences between "sex" and "gender" and "gender equality" and "gender equity" (Session 1.2 *Learning About Gender*) (ACQUIRE Project 2008). The distinction is important because it highlights the foundational goals of the MAP program. The ultimate objective of the program is the realization of gender equality, or the equal rights and opportunities to men and women, or gender equality, and this equality must come from the strategy of gender equity, or "the process of being fair to men and women" (ACQUIRE Project 2008:66). The MAP manual defines the two terms in the following fashion:

> Gender Equality means that men and women enjoy the same status. They share the same opportunities for realizing their human rights and potential to contribute and benefit from all spheres of society (economic, political, social, cultural).
>
> Gender Equity is the process of being fair to men and women. Gender equity leads to gender equality. For example, an affirmative action policy that promotes increased support to female-owned businesses may be gender equitable because it leads to ensuring equal rights among men and women. (ACQUIRE Project 2008:12).

The manual links the two terms together in the following manner in order to develop praxis for action.

> Working with men to be more gender equitable helps achieve gender equality, which means men and women sharing equal status and opportunity to realize their human rights and contribute to, and benefit from, all spheres of society (economic, political, social, cultural). In this way, gender equity leads to gender equality. For example, an affirmative action policy that promotes increased support to female-owned businesses can be considered gender equitable because it leads to

ensuring equal rights between men and women. (ACQUIRE Project 2008:12).

Target Groups

Although the MAP program is designed specifically for older married men, often the program is adapted to reach other male demographics, including youth. Additionally, specific MAP projects are sometimes targeted towards one particular group while others seek to reach a diverse contingent of men in the community. Therefore, the MAP program is quite malleable and relevant for men and women of many different backgrounds.

Decisions regarding which particular demographics to target are frequently based on existing groups within the community and the perceived community needs by the PCV and Togolese counterparts. Although the ideal MAP projects reach all societal levels as outlined in the "Ecological Model," this can prove to be very difficult. Therefore, Volunteers often determine one particular male social demographic in order to ensure enhanced program impact.

Target groups of informants included couples (teachers and their wives), officials from Community Development Committees (CDCs), and other education professionals and community leaders. Although the GEE sector focuses efforts primarily on the Togolese education system, respondents expressed a desire to reach beyond the education system to have a greater community impact.

Kristin explains the selection of the participants of both her trainings which shed light on Volunteers' motivation and rationales for MAP participant selection. Kristin organized two MAP trainings, one for men and their wives, and one specifically for male community leaders.

> For my first group it was teachers from a school and their wives. Most of the wives ended up not coming back, so it ended up being one wife and a female secretary with the rest male teachers. The second group was participants chosen by the five volunteers in the cluster in their respective sites. It was various community figures, such as teachers, a Red Cross worker, an artist, a social worker, and NGO workers. The first group was selected because my counterpart owns a school and wanted to do it with his teachers. The second group was selected because I wanted for the MAP training to reach different villages. As I did not have the time to scout out participants, I gave full discretion to volunteers.

Although some trainings include women, the majority do not, and the program is designed to be targeted towards men and boys specifically. Many may question the utility of focusing efforts exclusively on men. Although the MAP program recognizes the interactional nature of gender norms which justifies implication of men and women, the program seeks to fill a particular niche- the engagement of men in gender equality initiatives. What is unclear is whether the exclusion of women in MAP is useful; if itactually transforms gendered inequalities.

Participants often suggest that future MAP trainings be carried out with their spouses, and questioned the practicality of only targeting men. In an attempt to be selective and targeted, the program may be breeding the kinds of divisions and resentment between men and women that it seeks to change. Male-focused strategies like MAP would presumably be more effective if they are part of a larger strategy targeting men and women. However, this is pragmatically difficult to carry out within a two-year Volunteer term.

This choice of training participants is not only personal, based on Volunteer preferences, but is also specific to the milieu in which the Volunteer is working. Community politics inevitably play a role in the selection process. As Kelly explains the rapport that some teachers have in their communities influenced her selection of training participants.

> We selected 16 community leaders and 16 education professionals for our target group. We wanted to have an impact in the schools, but since many teachers and directors are not from the region and therefore often negatively perceived in the community, we wanted to also include community leaders.

Moreover, although Kevin expressed a desire to impact the education system in his community, particularly students, his training did not include teachers. As he explained, school teachers and principals are often not originally from the community in which they are posted, and are therefore often negatively perceived by community members. Therefore, like Kelly, this perception by community members was a limiting factor in his selection process.

What was not explored in the research was how the program's focus on men was perceived by community members. Future studies should explore how male-centered gender equality programs are viewed in the community. Are they effective in influencing gender roles and norms in the community, and do community members appreciate the male-exclusive focus? Moreover, does this focus further exclude women, limiting their voices within the community? And finally, when women are included in MAP trainings, what do these trainings look like? Are they effective? What sorts of issues arise in these mixed group trainings, and are they more beneficial than those only targeting men?

### Motivations for Program Participation

The MAP program is not a compulsory project for Volunteers, but many Volunteers, especially GEE Volunteers, do decide to carry out the program in their villages and regions. Therefore when considering the target populations selected, it is also important to examine the motivations for Volunteers to implement MAP trainings in the first place.

PCV informants noted the following reasons for implementing MAP: a deeply held conviction of the value of gender equality, the observation of problems regarding gender equality in their communities, and early exposure to the MAP Program through Peace Corps Pre-Service Training and observations of other Volunteers carrying out MAP trainings. Early exposure to the program was a primary motivation for two PCV respondents, and was also a motivating factor for my interest in the program, having attended the training of another PCV in my region early on in my service.

> I saw how effective the MAP program was in other regions in Togo, and since there had not yet been a MAP training in Savannes, it seemed like the thing to do. (Kelly)

> I hosted a MAP training because I agree with the principles of the program. A MAP [training] was the first large project I ever went to that was hosted by another Volunteer, so I had a desire to reproduce that type of activity. (Kevin)

Similarly, Togolese practitioners' stated motivation for MAP program participation/implementation was their direct exposure to a training on the program. Moreover, respondents noted seeing an immediate link between program concepts as a positive response to the reality of gender inequality in Togolese society.

> Kossivi- Why I wanted to work with MAP? Because first, me, personally, I was in a school where we did gender promotion. The first time I was invited; I attended a seminar by an NGO on, what do you call it? Not Men as Partners…Life Skills! I saw that with this Life Skills seminar that went together with what I did in the area of gender in my school. And, the second time, I was invited to be trained as a facilitator on MAP. And, frankly, I found that it was an addition on that which I had learned as a professor and at my post, on how to necessitate gender in my school. Therefore, it was even more of a training for me.

As Kossivi alludes to, many Togolese practitioners and participants often see clear linkages between trainings they take part in. Often the distinctions between different 'programs' and 'objectives' that are made for programmatic evaluation purposes by the Peace Corps and other development agencies are somewhat blurred. Peace Corps Volunteers, too, recognize the interconnectedness of many of the projects they engage in, even if they must clearly demarcate the impact of programs according to specific

objectives when reporting their activities to Peace Corps administration.

Florence articulates her view of the value of MAP in many different areas of the lives of Togolese men, women, and families.

> As you know, men have the power here. They are ones who are mostly respected. At school or at the family level, they should be more involved. They should understand that current gender roles put them at risk. If a man here has four to five women they are at risk. In the world now we have HIV/AIDS; and we have less money to provide the family. Talking about the family, MAP should be one of best strategies to promote gender equality, to make men take the lead to promote equality. Now the rate of death for men is very high because of alcoholism and violence and that is because of the gender norms. I think Togo really deserves to have MAP program here. It is something that is needed.

The utility of the information was echoed by Togolese respondents, and they noted how MAP and other "life skills" programs had exposed them to new ways of thinking and living. Kossivi and Koffi mentioned that these programs were their first exposure to the concepts of gender and gender equality and equity. Therefore, such programs seem to provide a way to articulate these concepts in ways in which they perhaps had not previously done so.

> Yes, it was in 2009. In 2009, like I just said, during a seminar that was organized by the Forum of African Women. So, that was the first time I heard the term 'gender.' (Kossivi)

> It was in April 2010. It was a testimony made by a man who went to America for training. Then his wife became pregnant, that wife went to term. A week before she went into labor he left. In principle, he must stay with the wife. That means he had ignored those needs. I noticed also that the man can carry the babies on his back, grind [red peppers], etc. That's the day that I understood well. It's only that man can't become pregnant, but the other activities *are tied to gender, not to sex*. [Emphasis added] (Koffi).

Perhaps the most significant motivation behind respondents' decision to implement MAP was the perception of stark gender inequality and maltreatment of women at their site. Although many Volunteers arrived at their posts already having considered leading a MAP training in their village, many only considered the program after directly perceiving a need for it. As Kristin simply stated when asked why she decided to do MAP, "I decided to do a MAP training because I saw the problems with

gender relations in my site."

This perceived need was the primary factor behind my PCV neighbor's desire to implement the program; as she approached me for assistance in program design and implementation. This was after having heard about, and personally witnessed, several situations in her village that deeply upset her. Kevin provides his perspective of the contrast between women's treatment in the US and in Togo.

> Yet even at its worst, America and Europe seem to still be operating on a higher level than in Africa. At least in America and Europe there is some concept of chivalry. In my experience in Togo, I've seen little to suggest that men possess any notion of treating women with respect as an aspect of proper behavior. (Kevin)

Volunteers are the ultimate decision-makers on whether or not a MAP training will be carried out. Although Togolese practitioners and community members may lobby for project implementation, ultimately it is the Volunteers' decision to actually carry it out. Neither adequate resources nor knowledge exist in Togolese communities to implement a training without Volunteer assistance.

Therefore, the influence of Togolese practitioners is necessarily limited throughout the design, planning, training, and follow-up stages of the project. This raises critical questions that should be tackled in future studies, including: How much influence do Togolese and American practitioners feel they hold in making decisions on program implementation? How do administrative constraints and expectations of the Peace Corps and Togolese institutions influence practitioner motivation to carry out the program? Finally, what influence does social pressure from Peace Corps administration and the Peace Corps community have on Volunteer decisions to implement MAP? These questions are essential to understanding the unstated motivations and rationales behind project implementation for both Togolese and American practitioners.

Togolese and American Practitioner Collaboration

Interviews with Togolese and American MAP practitioners suggest that although both groups are satisfied with their collaboration, in working together significant frustrations and confusion still arise. These points of contention may often come up in unexpected areas, and can make effective program implementation challenging.

Kevin mentioned several difficulties he faced working with Togolese on the program. One such difficulty was that of Togolese facilitators inability to remain "impartial during discussion sessions," situations where he notes "participants are supposed to voice their opinion and the facilitator is supposed to be unbiased and simply facilitate." The retaining of impartiality is an important aspect of MAP session facilitation. According to the MAP participatory approach, the facilitator should not try to force his/her opinions on the participants, but to gently guide them towards the views endorsed by the program.

Related to the issue of impartiality during MAP sessions, Kevin mentioned a particular frustration with the 'playing of devil's advocate' by participants. The playing of devil's advocate is a significant challenge faced by PCVs during trainings. In playing out this role, participants will often voice opinions that are opposite of their own for shock value or to spark controversy or debate.

> One major problem is the desire of participants to play the role of "devil's advocate" during group discussion activities. Participants argue with questions posed by the facilitators just for the sake of arguing. The debate that ensues tends to muddy the point of the exercise and weaken the impact of the information that the activity is trying to deliver to participants.

As Kevin points out, it was often difficult to know whether participants who were playing 'devil's advocate' were "expressing their real beliefs in disguise." Usually the playing of this role is done by participants who are active and positively engaged in

training discussions. Participants tend not to stay in the role for longer than one session, much less the duration of the training. As Kevin says

> I think [the playing of devil's advocate] was a necessary degree of freedom required to flush out the arguments that we were facilitating…I think that most people got into the devil's advocate thing because they were just getting enthusiastic about the process. My feeling is that if they weren't doing it then it would show a lack of enthusiasm for the program…I had trouble telling how serious they were about the arguments they were posing…that is exactly why facilitation is superior to lecture. It lets participants be more honest about their beliefs and honestly examine them. Devil's advocate [could have been] the representation of some of their truer feelings that maybe they were less comfortable really standing behind.

Whether they are voicing their actual beliefs and opinions or simply playing the role for the sake of sparking dialogue and controversy, Volunteers nevertheless often find the 'playing of devil's advocate' frustrating as it hinders honest, open dialogue.

Togolese respondents also voiced several challenges they experience when working with PCVs on MAP. For one, they alluded to a certain pushiness and lack of patience with differing opinions by Volunteer facilitators. They advised Volunteers to be more accepting of the viewpoints of training participants, and to not react harshly to the expression of participant viewpoints that they may disagree with. When discussing advice he would give to Volunteers implementing MAP, Koffi emphasized the theme of acceptance and calm temperament.

> It is necessary that he is…develops the strategies and then…he must accept each person. Because people are afraid. He must not be quick to anger. Accept the ideas, the opinions of people. Now, convince them, develop them. Because, there, he must not impose. Carefully, carefully, keep a lot of patience.

Volunteers are thus faced with the somewhat conflicting roles of challenging patriarchal cultural beliefs, attitudes, and structures while also respecting host country culture and engaging in cultural exchange. When working with the MAP program, this can surely be a delicate and difficult balancing act.

Florence too discussed the need for Volunteers to work from a position of respect

for local customs and beliefs. She underscored this point through the example of discussing the sensitive issue of polygamy in an area where polygamy is highly prevalent.

> Sometimes we need to respect people's culture and try to adapt the MAP philosophy to that culture…You must take into consideration the culture and adapt to the values of the area.

Florence's advice on exercising judgment, constraint, and cultural adaptation harkens back to the official MAP philosophy.

The MAP manual states that the activities outlined are designed to lead men towards making "positive changes in their lives and communities," emphasizing that this process can take considerable time and patience. Therefore, EngenderHealth recommends that the activities outlined in the manual but should be part of a more extended program and not simply be used as singular, one-time sessions (Engender Health 2008:17-18).

The manual further outline's MAP's "positive approach," stating that

> We recognize that men, even those who are sometimes violent or do not show respect toward their partners, have the potential to be respectful and caring partners, to negotiate in their relationships with dialogue and respect, to share responsibilities for reproductive health, HIV prevention and care, and to interact and live in peace and coexistence instead of with violence (EngenderHealth 2008:16).

The utilization of adult learning techniques, which include the principles of "Respect," "Safety," "Support," "Relevance," "Energy," and "By Doing" [Action], is underscored within the manual (Engender Health 2008:26-27; 23). It is these techniques which constitute the MAP pedagogy and are seen as essential for program effectiveness.

Although these challenges exist, Volunteer respondents confirmed that collaboration with Togolese counterparts is crucial for the success of any project, and in particular MAP trainings. According to Kristin, "I enjoy having a Togolese collaborator because he will say what sessions he thinks Togolese will enjoy and when making decisions he will tell me what is and isn't realistic." This theme of open and honest

exchange of ideas and perspectives between PCV and Togolese practitioners was reiterated throughout respondent interviews.

Although PCV respondents generally viewed collaboration with Togolese community members as positive and essential, Kevin argued that there is a limit to how much collaboration is ideal. He noted that during the planning for his MAP training, there were initially too many Togolese counterparts involved in the project. This led to conflicts between the counterparts that "made the entire process much more difficult than it should have been." Therefore, although collaboration is critical for MAP success, it should be noted that, as with any project, it is possible to have too much input. However, the general consensus among respondents was summarized well by Kelly,

> For MAP trainings, just as any other trainings, the more Togolese collaboration and awareness of the project in the community, the better.

Implementation Obstacles

One of the major challenges of the MAP program is the slow pace of change in gender relations. This idea is reiterated throughout Peace Corps trainings, and is a key component of the Behavior Change Framework; a relatively new conceptual framework being promoted by development agencies (CORE Group).

Although behavior change in and of itself is a slow process, part of the obstacle also seems to be differing cultural conceptions regarding time, change, and progress as viewed through the eyes of Togolese and Americans (Williams et.al 2011). Volunteers expressed concerns about the lack of noticeable program impact and participant motivation to disseminate the information. On the other hand, Togolese respondents emphasized the importance of understanding that change is a gradual process and it

takes.time for MAP concepts to bring about change in the community.

Although the participatory approach is generally viewed positively by respondents, it can be a significant barrier to short-term program impact. The "divergences of points of view" and the lack of understanding or outright lack of acceptance of MAP concepts often makes it difficult for the facilitator to manage. Although this approach may be time-consuming, Koffi noted that it is necessary to take this time, as the facilitator must utilize new "manners" of presentation and "associations" related to MAP concepts during the sessions to ensure that the participants have understood the material discussed.

In my conversations with Togolese individuals, a common discussion was the comparison of *"Le temps afrique*" ("Africa time"), or Togolese easy-going and flexible conceptualizations of time, with the fast-paced, busy, regimented schedules of Americans. Therefore, while Volunteers often complained of a lack of perceived impact in their projects, particularly gender programming like MAP, Togolese counterparts often touted the changes they have seen in individuals and communities.

Another barrier to program impact mentioned by Kristin was, what she termed, "the *C'est comme ca chez nous* attitude" ("It's like that here"). She elaborated that this conviction that the status quo in Togo cannot change, is a substantial barrier to MAP's capacity to bring about change in gender relations. She argues that this attitude

> creates a big barrier to change because I feel like people aren't open to changes because they feel like it would be weird or the social norms wouldn't allow it.

In Kristin's view, the impetus for Togolese individuals to change their beliefs, values, and behaviors is blocked by a simple lack of motivation to change and a belief that the status quo will persist because it always has. This resistance to change, what Kristin calls

a sense of "fatalism" was also a frustration faced by other Volunteers throughout the country. Volunteers, coming from a culture that emphasizes "progress" and the continual pursuit of individual and social betterment, found this sentiment held by many Togolese individuals frustrating and unsettling.

The American ethos of "rugged individualism," and the heterogeneity of "systems of thought and experience" that individualism breeds, stands in contrast with the strong group solidarity and norm-forming of family and community networks of the Togolese (Marske 1987:2). A social system of solidarity and norm-forming would presumably produce individuals more resistant to social change than a system preoccupied with individuality and social change and progress. This point of contention between American and Togolese MAP practitioners and Togolese training participants is understandable considering the individualism and collectivism divide is one commonly cited factor in cross-cultural communication (Wiseman 1995).

Sex, Gender, and Family Planning

When asked about the nature of gender relations in Togo, PCV respondents focused on the inequality that the MAP Program seeks to address. Kevin argued that much of inequality is found in "interpersonal relationship" and that initially the problem may seem "imperceptible" on the surface. As he further elaborated, much of inequality is due to "beliefs concerning sexual relations."

Some of the most difficult MAP sessions, according to Kevin, are the sexual harassment and sexual consent sessions. He argues that it is difficult to discuss these issues because many of the concepts presented, such as 'date rape,' "make little or no

sense to Togolese". The idea of consent and where particular boundaries lie are often difficult subjects to breach, eliciting heated discussion by participants.

Kevin notes "the idea that a woman could lay in bed with a man and refuse sex was simply not accepted by participants," adding that, "even some women held this belief." Such notions would be considered nearly unfathomable in contemporary American society. Thus Togolese perspectives concerning sexual consent and harassment are often difficult for Volunteers to comprehend. Kristin too remarked that Togolese will often view PCV male-female relationships in this same vein. She alluded to a sense that what constitutes crossing the line from friendship to a sexual relationship is much more rigid in Togolese society compared to American society. As she explained,

> I lived in a city, so had many male PCV visitors spend the night. In Togo, there is no notion of a platonic relationship between men and women, so it was automatically assumed that I had romantic relations with male PCVs spending the night in transit.

Kevin also discussed this same cultural notion.

> In my personal experience, I've never been able to tell a Togolese friend that I was having a female friend stay in my house without the subject of sex coming up in the conversation. The idea of a platonic relationship between a man and a woman seems abstract to them.

These anecdotes illustrate the challenge of MAP practitioners in trying to lead participants towards "gender-equitable" attitudes and behaviors, highlighting the nuances of cultural mores that are uncovered in MAP discussions. This point is further illustrated in Kelly's blog post below, which chronicles her frustration with participants' responses during one of her sessions. What she had previously considered a clear-cut issue, with a "right" and "wrong" answer, became a question she was forced to try to understand through the lens of the participants.

> All sessions are based on questions and interactive activities which help the male participants think through and challenge preconceived ideas of gender in their society and come to their own conclusions about what needs to change, and how. Some of the activities were hard to watch, like

> "Sharing our attitudes about gender." This is the very first activity of the training, and is intended to get participants used to sharing their ideas and hearing others' with respect. That said, some of the perspectives are less than enlightened.
>
> In the activity, multiple statements are read and participants decide if they 'Agree,' 'Disagree,' 'Totally Agree,' or 'Totally Disagree' with the statement. For example: "Men are more intelligent than women." Most participants were 'Disagree' with this one, thank goodness. So it seemed we were on the right track.
>
> But then, "If a woman dresses in "sexy" (skirt hem above the knees, etc.) clothes, she deserves to be raped." Almost all of our participants were 'Totally Agree.' Throughout the training, Christy and I tried to stay out of the discussion as much as possible. We had a really capable team of Togolese facilitators and pretty much left session management up to them. But on this one I couldn't help myself… *deserved* to be *raped*?? Come on, guys! So I 'shared my attitude' that no one can deserve a crime, and that I think men are strong enough to resist these girls, and they all laughed.
>
> I think part of it is the cultural expectation of dressing correctly. Here, you dress UP for things. Going out of your house is an event. Even if you are the farmeriest farmer, you put on your best clothes for the [market] or a bush taxi ride. So not dressing properly is seen as intentional and a major faux pas. Also, people kind of do believe that you can deserve a crime by not taking proper precautions against it. Locking doors, closing windows (very small windows, so people can't go in or out of them), not leaving anything of value out in plain sight, it's a national obsession.
>
> But anyways, I digress. The point is, it was very interesting hearing people's views on gender issues in such a candid way, and then watching how they changed throughout the course of the three days.

The participants' agreement with the statement, which initially disgusted her, eventually became something she could comprehend from their perspective. In the end, although she still does not agree with their viewpoint, through understanding she can approach the issue in a manner that respects Togolese culture.

According to Florence, maintaining a respect for Togolese culture is critically important for Volunteers. As she argues, Volunteers must not impose their own cultural beliefs and stereotypes onto Togolese participants, and should rely heavily on the counsel of Togolese counterparts. Using the example of tackling polygamy in a Muslim community, Florence maintains that the facilitator must adapt the sessions so as to not come off as culturally insensitive.

> If you put them together and say 'men who have more than one wife are not respected' people will be offended. They will say that you are trying to break the culture; they will say that polygamy has

> advantages in the society. You must take into consideration the culture and adapt to the values of the area.

According to Florence, one of the key affirmations of the program is that, in an attempt to fulfill social expectations of what it means to be a man, men deliberately place themselves at risk for negative health consequences. Florence sees MAP as a useful tool in tackling the question of Togolese gender relations because it confronts the roles and expectations of men and women in a variety of arenas.

> In the world now we have HIV/AIDS; and we have less money to provide the family. Talking about the family, MAP should be one of best strategies to promote gender equality, to make men take the lead to promote equality. Now the rate of death for men is very high because of alcoholism and violence and that is because of the gender norms. I think Togo really deserves to have MAP program here. It is something that is needed (Florence).

Some of the most sensitive sessions, as perhaps can be expected, were those regarding sexual relations and family planning. These sessions, which included discussion of STDs, contraception methods, and sexual harassment often confused or upset MAP participants. Challenging participant views and misconceptions about sexual health and reproduction, family planning, and male/female relationships was often a delicate undertaking and could not be tackled without the assistance of at least one Togolese counterpart who "bought into" the MAP program. Many participants believed that loose morals, infidelity, and the weakening of traditional values were the principal reasons that problems like HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy exist. Therefore, to speak so openly about sexual matters and to challenge tradition, to some participants represented an affront to their traditions that was unnerving and potentially dangerous. Therefore, to tackle these issues in such a direct way was one of the major challenges that both American and Togolese practitioners faced in their work.

## Social Location and MAP Work

### Gender

Respondent interviews provide insights into how social location, including gender, age, race, national origin, and social status influence MAP work in Togolese communities.

When asked about how her status as a foreigner affects her MAP work, Kelly retorted, "Not as much as being a woman, but yes. Ideally, Togolese men would run the whole MAP program," suggesting that one's sex takes priority over other identity markers when implementing the program. She expressed frustration that "many of [her] opinions were dismissed as being defensive or self-serving." However, Kristin noted that her status as a "young woman" may "make them take me less seriously," yet she minimized the influence of her sex on the receptivity of MAP participants to the training. She added that generally she did not receive "extremely negative reactions" from participants.

The setting in which Kristin and Kelly are implementing the program may help to explain their divergent responses. Kristin is working in a larger town with significant NGO presence, with a substantial portion of the town's population comprised of foreign expatriates. However, Kelly carried out the program in the isolated, northernmost region of the country, an area without such foreign presence, and with a more traditional, less 'cosmopolitan' population.

Florence discussed at length how practitioners' gender affects their MAP work. She explains that it is particularly important for women to ensure that they do not execute the program from a position of animosity, but instead approach tread carefully and

patiently.

> If you use a non-violent way to raise awareness and give them knowledge of the negative aspect of their behavior then they realize, "Oh, what we are doing is not good" and they change the behavior. When they are unhappy; and sometimes it's not just training but also in conversations with them; I will let people know nicely and with respect, because that's what men want, to be respected, I will let him know that he needs to understand we are non-violent and that he is the agent we need to make changes. They might be violent in the beginning but at end you will be happy that you have given them a chance to hear certain issues they had not considered before.

She further argues that it is in fact preferable to have a male facilitate the sessions to lend greater legitimacy to the ideas not only because of their elevated position in Togolese society but because their efforts will not be viewed as simply self-serving.

> If men see a man promoting gender equality they are more likely to respect him than when you have a woman at front. If it is a woman promoting it, they will say, 'That's women doing their *emancipation de la femme* [women's emancipation] thing.' They will say, 'It's not men's work.' If it is done that way we will only have a few men who will support the program.

> The way society is divided, the power that men have in the culture leads to men being more respected than women. We should try to get together with them so that we [men and women] can be together at the top.

The view that the program is more effective when implemented by male practitioners was echoed by other respondents as well. Kevin states that "men are much more likely to respect and accept ideas presented to them from a man than a woman." However, he also concedes that including male and female facilitators has value in that it's a direct demonstration of the salience of MAP concepts of equality and mutual cooperation between men and women.

> I think that having men and women presenting together is an excellent way of reinforcing the message that MAP is trying to convey. By having men and women actively sharing management of the session, the principles encouraged by MAP are being demonstrated in real time. (Kevin)

Although having a mixed facilitation team can be advantageous to program implementation, there are certain challenges that exist with male/female practitioner collaboration. My counterpart, who engages in gender projects on both a local and national level, explained to me several times that male Togolese practitioners prefer to

work with PCV men rather than women. The reason for this, he stated, was not that they believe women to incapable, but because they want to remove themselves from any accusations of sexual harassment. As my counterpart noted, American women are "very sensitive to anything that seems like harassment. I don't want people to say 'he committed harassment.' I am not that kind of person who would do that." I heard this same sentiment echoed by other Togolese male leaders as well.

While female Volunteers are faced with very real and upsetting harassmentalmost daily in Togo, this heightened sensitivity is of course understandable. However, in a culture where personal boundaries are much looser, Togolese male practitioners may find it difficult to navigate these boundaries, thus leading them to prefer working with male PCVs, especially on gender equality programs.

Ethnicity/National Origin

PCV respondents suggested that their foreignness was both paradoxically an asset and a barrier to program implementation. Kristin noted that as a foreigner she could effectively counteract what she termed a 'fatalistic' attitude, or the "*C'est en comme ca en Afrique*" ("It's just like that in Africa") attitude, through providing counterarguments based on her own cultural experiences. Kevin noted that his status as a foreigner, an outsider, in his village presents an opportunity to draw a greater number of people into his sessions because of the attention he receives as a village novelty.

However, Kevin also expressed certain barriers that he faced as an outsider implementing the program. He explains that "not being a part of the host culture can significantly inhibit true understand[ing] of the cultural issues that motivate the behaviors

that we seek to change." It can also be argued that foreigners directing behavior change initiatives can turn participants off to the message. In my conversations with Togolese, although often affirming that we are very open minded and adaptive as Volunteers, they expressed frustration at Americans' sometimes arrogant attempts to impose their own culture and way of life onto the Togolese. During a conversation I once held with a Togolese counterpart, he stated, "Americans, you are very good at adapting to life here in Togo. But, I can say that you often think your way is right and everyone should be like Americans. We have much to learn from you but you have much to learn from us too."

This issue is of course not unique to PCVs in Togo. Amin, a Cameroonian native discusses how, although Volunteers in Cameroon tried to remain open-minded and culturally sensitive, they still often carried "unfair Western-biased judgments about aspects of Cameroon life such as sex, marriage, time, work ethic, hospitality, and discipline" that upset the local population (Hartmann 1992:127).

Moreover, although a critique of larger development agency policy and programming, Mohanty illuminates the potentially injurious nature of highly prevalent ethnocentric assumptions concerning "Third World women" and patriarchy in developing countries. Mohanty contests the presumptions in Cutrufelli's 1983 work Women of Africa: Roots of Oppression by imploring the following:

> Today, is it possible to imagine writing a book entitled *Women of Europe: Roots of Oppression*? I am not objecting to the use of universal grouping for descriptive purposes. Women form the continent of Africa can be descriptively characterized as 'women of Africa.' It is when 'women of Africa' becomes a homogeneous sociological grouping characterized by common dependencies or powerlessness (or even strengths) that problems arise- we say too little and too much at the same time" (2004:25).

In working with MAP and confronting delicate issues that are often not addressed in public settings, the propensity of Volunteers to project their personal biases and

stereotypes about Togolese culture and lifestyle can be particularly problematic. This underscores the importance that respondents, both American and Togolese alike, gave to implicating more Togolese leaders within the organizational structure of the program. Not only is their integration within the program seen as critical for cultural knowledge and awareness, but also for the assurance of project continuation, or "sustainability," following the Volunteer's departure.

The cultural biases of non-native practitioners must be further explored. In terms of gender, future research should examine how native participants who are not accustomed to female leaders perceive both American and Togolese female MAP practitioners. This research project lacked the viewpoints of those implicated in the program as participants, who often had not been exposed to MAP concepts previously. Examining the viewpoints of native participants, who had not been previously exposed the program could provide useful insight to help shape gender transformative development program design in the future.

### 'Sustainability' and 'Behavior Change'

The issue of "sustainability" of the program was a major theme addressed in informant interviews and reiterated by Peace Corps staff. All interview respondents praised the potential of the MAP program in bringing about long-term, sustainable change. Kevin went as far to call the MAP program, "one of the rare forms of truly sustainable development that exists." He elaborated that, once the "transformation" has occurred, and men have internalized the beliefs and attitudes the MAP program promotes, these beliefs and attitudes will then "permeate every decision that they make."

However, there was disagreement among informants as to the extent of the potential impact. When asked whether she thought follow-up activities were effective, Kristin answered simply, "No." She added,

> We did some follow-up, and it did not encourage participants to share the trainings. I have found that it is too much of a headache to try to force participants to do MAP training.

She elaborates that only "motivated participants" will spread the message to community members on their own. Kevin agreed that "exposure to the ideas presented by MAP is a step in the right direction," but contended there is no guarantee that participants have adopted healthy behaviors. In his view this change can only come about through continued exposure to MAP concepts.

Indeed, one of the major challenges according to Kevin and Kristin is even "knowing if participants are changing their beliefs and are understanding what is being said." Kevin mentions the difficulty of ensuring participant comprehension, explaining, "At the beginning, everyone was confused. The theories presented by MAP are abstract and so there was some difficulty with comprehension."

The Peace Corps seeks to address this issue of program sustainability through the training of Togolese leaders to carry out MAP projects following the Volunteers' departure. However, informants expressed skepticism about the possibility of Togolese practitioners implementing the project. Kevin contended that although some motivated participants "might be willing to incorporate MAP activities into meetings or classes," MAP trainings themselves will likely always be initiated by Volunteers.

Regardless of whether or not they believed the project could be run by Togolese leaders in the future, both Togolese and American respondents affirmed that greater buy-in was needed from high-level, influential Togolese institutions like the Ministry of

Education and the Regional Inspections of Education.

> Work it directly into the CEG [middle school] curriculum; maybe a PCVL could organize a training with the department of education to train Regional Inspectors, who could then train CEG directors. I think the inspectors, directors, teachers, and students could all benefit from MAP. (Kelly)

> I know that the Minister of Development, the more that we can sell things to her, I know that she is uh, relatively progressive, that if we can get her buy-in by training her people, that that will really add to the success. So it's really key for Volunteers to be connected to not only counterparts but to have Inspectors, like Inspector GOTAR, people who have power… (Kathy)

> We must plan many activities during breaks, during vacations, so as to not only have [the MAP] program during the school year. (Koffi)

The linkage of organizational demands to ensure project impact with Volunteer attitudes towards their work should be further explored. Does the emphasis of the Peace Corps Togo administration affect the way Volunteers design and carry out projects? Does this emphasis make Volunteers too ambitious to bring about "sustainable and measurable" change in their communities?

These questions are especially salient when considering programs like MAP that seek social change through meeting 'soft objectives,' such as transforming individual and cultural beliefs and attitudes. There are significant organizational constraints for programs like MAP, in a day and age where the development mantra is "impact, impact, impact." This may be especially problematic for PCVs who are only in their communities for two-year terms, possibly enough time to lay the groundwork, but not enough to see any real change in gender relations.

Volunteers, wanting to make an impact in host country communities, can become understandably frustrated at the slow pace of change while working on MAP, and their eagerness for results may cause them to try to work too quickly, and thus not carry out the program in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner.

The Funding Dilemma

One of the most difficult issues for Togolese and American practitioners to navigate is the issue of funding for MAP trainings. Program funding challenges include the provision of food, lodging, and materials cost for the training itself and the travel reimbursement, per-diem, and honorariums to Togolese practitioners and participants. As Kathy argues on the administrative end,

> I think that the expectation is that there will always be some sort of funding to cover food, to cover materials and she argues that trainings are difficult to hold without some sort of funding;" that there is very little infrastructure in place to hold trainings without funding.

Adequate funding has become an essential ingredient to a successful MAP training, yet there are very real constraints to that funding.

Perhaps one of the biggest challenges is a regulation instituted by the Peace Corps that Volunteers cannot manage two funded projects under their name at the same time. A project account must be closed before another one is opened. With all of the projects that Volunteers often juggle at one time, this obstacle can sometimes be tricky for Volunteers. Moreover, Peace Corps funds are limited according to USAID funding availability and prerequisites, and all MAP projects must contain some element of HIV/AIDS awareness or prevention. If a Volunteer is unable to secure USAID funding for a MAP project it is unlikely that the project will funded, as there is virtually no funding available through alternative channels.

Another concern of Volunteers is that providing participants with per-diem/honorariums and adequate food and lodging for the training incentivizes participation and can minimize actual motivation. Kristin primarily attributed the increase in participation from her first to second training on the provision of food and lodging, and

the inability of participants to leave the training site.

> We had only 11 of 20 participants stay the whole time. For the second, we had 17/20 come. I think the second was more successful because we gave them free food and lodging. Also because many of the participants were not from Kpalime, so they could not just go home whenever they wanted to.

Kevin also noted that although the participants at his training were prompt and actively engaged, some participants still "seemed to only be present to draw their per-diem." Kelly too expressed frustration at the "'they should pay us for this' comments from participants."

Volunteers are repeatedly faced with the per-diem issue during MAP trainings and with other projects as well. As Richmond and Gestin (1998) explain, the issue of per diem is encountered by most Western development agencies working in sub-Saharan African. The provision of per diem, being a "creation of donor organizations," was initiated to give an incentive for individuals to attend workshops they otherwise had no interest in attending. However, the authors argue that there is now "back-pedaling" on per-diem and that some agencies are even asking for participants to pay fees. Yet, the participants "realize that they are on to something and are reluctant to relent" (Richmond and Gestin 1998: 216).

This sort of "back-pedaling" certainly plays out within Peace Corps Togo. From the perspective of Volunteers, per-diem should simply be compensation for travel, lodging, and food costs of the participants. However, Togolese counterparts and other participants argue that per-diem should not only cover these expenses but should also include reimbursement for lost time at work and should be a demonstration of appreciation for their sacrifice of time, energy, and lost wages.

This tension of differing conceptions of per-diem was a substantial barrier to

effective implementation of follow-up activities to my MAP training in Agbélouvé, and is an obstacle and source of frustration for many Volunteers. When asked about particular challenges that she sees Volunteers facing in their MAP work, Kathy noted three challenges in particular: the language barrier, pinpointing capable and dedicated Togolese counterparts, and, significantly, the issue of funding.

> So I think that the other obstacle would be, just that there's very little infrastructure to do trainings without money…I think that the expectation is that there will always be some sort of funding to cover food, to cover materials, so it's not like the Togolese government is gonna make that available.

According to Kathy, PCVs are often viewed as much wealthier than Togolese community members and thus struggle to break that perception. She explains that this leads to many MAP participants simply seeking financial gain from their participation in training.

> 'How much are you going to pay to attend this training?' So that, you're a foreigner, you're viewed as a cash cow, and that rather than, 'This is just really good stuff. This is gonna be great for me'; that the expectation that I'm going to get financial benefit out of it, out of this. So that people being, people lacking motivation and working jaded.

However, Koffi sees the funding issue from a different perspective. He argued that most people do not want to receive financial rewards for their participation in the program, but simply want to be recognized for their sacrifice in some fashion. Moreover, he expressed the importance of funding for essential project materials.

> Several obstacles I can say are that sometimes there is not the material time because of our activities at the Inspection, and also the means, the availability. When I speak of the means, ok, the resources can be financial, so that one can be more at ease to promote this gender equity…I spoke a little of the difficulties. There are materials that one uses; here you can't always pay for flip-chart paper, or for markers. There are financial difficulties. I will say that we know that when Volunteers you arrive here it is to help us. It's not the manner of giving me a salary, but maybe honorariums, encouragement so that can be more active. That aspect, that encourages throughout.

From the perspectives of Togolese practitioners, per diems and honorariums may not necessarily be a form of payment for program participation, but are often seen as displays of appreciation and reimbursement for time and travel expenditures, and their

provision can be a significant motivation for participation which creates a better atmosphere of more motivated, dedicated participants. In order to improve the MAP program, the differing perspectives of American and Togolese practitioners regarding funding should be examined further in order that the two groups may understand the perspectives and constraints of the other group and develop strategies to approach the funding issue.

Program Challenges and Recommendations for Improvement

Although all respondents had great praise for the MAP program, several of them had very concrete recommendations for improvement. Several of the recommendations dealt with the structuring and content of the sessions in the MAP manual itself. Although all informants thought that the program is well-adapted to Togolese culture and lifestyle, there were several criticisms of the MAP manual.

Two respondents, Kevin and Koffi, remarked that there needs to be more clarification of the intended audience for MAP sessions. Kevin commented that the sessions should be categorized according to intended audience educational level. He argues that the way in which the sessions are currently constructed (including language and content) makes them only "accessible to people that have made it through *lycee* [(high school)]." He further adds that the language used in the sessions is "too collegiate," barring comprehension from those who "need the program the most." Koffi remarked that although there are age categories listed before each session, these categories are not that useful and are unrealistic.

> It does not really limit by a real age. Certain teachings are appropriate for older person, certain are appropriate for young ages. It must be well targeted according to the category of the person.

This issue was a repeated concern by program practitioners. The Togolese counterparts and participants with whom we worked seemed to have a difficult time understanding the sessions as they are written in the manual. Even educated Togolese practitioners often had difficulty understanding the manual language, suggesting that it might not only be too collegiate, but the French used might be too "Americanized."

Therefore, changes in the age limits of sessions along with making the language and content of the sessions more accessible to a wider audience should be considered to improve overall program effectiveness. As Kevin argued, simple clarifications of the session instructions, along with rewording of session discussion questions could

> streamline a lot of sessions and make them more informative and useful for participants. Most of the revisions needed are minor, but doing a revised edition of the manual could have substantial benefits on the program's capacity to encourage gender transformation.

Moreover, Kristin notes that the baseline survey should be "more prominently displayed and emphasized." This survey is intended to be used to "gauge participants' prior knowledge on the subject." Considering that PC Togo trainings are now moving in the direction of monitoring and reporting specific project impacts, without an understanding of participants' prior knowledge of a subject monitoring their change in knowledge, attitude, and behavior following a training is rendered impossible.

Additionally, the nature of gender relations in Togo presents interesting challenges for facilitators in presenting MAP material and to the participants who seek to enact the attitudes and behaviors MAP promotes. For one, due to the very gender norms that MAP seeks to address, females are taught to be shy and reserved, and are especially timid in large mixed (male/female) groups. Therefore, Kevin notes, the participation of women in these settings is minimal, as he repeatedly observed women's and girls' lack of

"willingness to speak in multiple [trainings]." Moreover, when females do speak, theirresponses often illicit the ridicule of their peers and their parents, further reinforcing their perception that they should not speak because they have nothing of value to say. The problem is therefore self-perpetuating and difficult to overcome.

Another challenge of the program is the reaction to how MAP training participants, *les hommes transformes* are perceived by their family and by community members. Anecdotal evidence from men who have been influenced by MAP trainings and have tried to enact change behaviors, especially sharing household labor with their wives, suggest that these men receive pushback and ridicule from other community members.

Koffi observed some initial resistance from his wife when he tried to be more engaged in the household. He explained that when he tried to share in cleaning the home his wife did not want to accept the help, shouting "'No! Go rest! Go rest!'" Koffi expressed being conflicted about whether to listen to his wife's expressed desire to be left alone, or to insist that he help. Therefore, he was torn between going along with his wife's stated desires and following the lessons he learned through MAP and other gender equality trainings and activities. As he explains, this is not an issue unique to his own experience.

> Because we are used to that, that the man stays in the living room and the woman [works around the house]…But me, I was conflicted, so I just did it…You know, that's what I'm saying. We're born different, and certain people keep their positions…They keep their positions to always be in charge. I don't know if it's because I'm always working with you, but I've always worked with you so I understand [the importance of gender equality].

The resistance from their wives and the ridicule of community members who may see them as "less than a man" can be discouraging for MAP training participants trying to

enact MAP principles.

Women's resistance to the attitudes and behaviors of the 'transformed men' of MAP trainings underscores the need of understanding how women's interests are often intricately linked with the interests of family members, and the pride they may take in providing for their family in the domestic realm (Sharpe et al. 2003). More importantly, women in many societies may not see their "own interests as something separate from the family unit" (Sharpe et al. 2003:293). In developing gender transformative programs, the current roles of men and women and the ways in which women currently exert power must be better understood (Sharpe et al. 2003).

Finally, respondents noted other Peace Corps institutional constraints of the program. Kristin expressed a complaint she had heard from Volunteers of other sectors that the program as currently designed is not sufficiently broad in scope, and is "only tailored for CHAP (Health) and GEE programs." This perceived lack of cross-sectorial relevancy may explain why the majority of Volunteers who initiated the program during the time of the study were from the CHAP and GEE sectors, and not from the EAFS and (the now defunct) Small Enterprise Development (SED) sectors. Kristin sees this lack of focus on the other sector(s) as a problematic shortcoming of the MAP program. She contends that if it were more applicable to these sectors it could be used to better demonstrate "what a negative impact unequal gender equity has on all facets of life."

Despite their particular concerns with the program, both Togolese and American informants maintained that the program must be expanded. This expansion, they argued, must come via both an increase in the number of sessions during trainings and follow-up meetings, and an increase in the number of Volunteers leading the program. Koffi and

Kossivi argued that expansion of the program is important to ensure participants' internalization of the concepts. Perhaps more importantly, they maintain that the program must be expanded to ensure that more Togolese individuals and communities are exposed to the transforming message of the MAP program.

> …Volunteers are at an advantage because you can cover a maximum of…of the population. A single Volunteer for all of a zone, or better yet, all a village; many villages need that. Especially new villages. We must multiply the Volunteers (Koffi).

> We have not yet arrived at a level that is needed. But as we multiply the trainings, and that will…I believe that that will help us continue in this sense. So, that there is the domain of education with men; they will continue to help us in the work of this program of gender equity (Kossivi).

I include the following information regarding the implementation of a MAP training and follow-up activities in my village of Agbelouve to provide a more detailed picture of what program design and execution looks like on the ground level.

## The MAP Project in Agbélouvé

My MAP project in Agbelouve was launched in August 2011 as a 2-day formal training. The initiative was a collaborative project between myself and several Togolese teachers in Agbelouve. Two of the teachers, who were my primary work counterparts, were instrumental in the design and implementation of the training. One of these counterparts has served as a PCV counterpart for a number of years, and is currently the co-director of the national youth empowerment camp- Camp UNITE. Therefore, although the training was treading new ground for both the training participants and the program implementers, there was still a solid support structure already in place for training implementation and follow-up activities.

Our target group was male teachers from Agbelouve and surrounding villages. The rationale behind the target group selection in Agbelouve was that implicating

teachers would allow the project to have a lasting impact on students in Agbelouve and surrounding communities, and thus would be reaching the primary target group of the GEE sector.

Composition of Participants

The participants in the August 2011 training were 9 male teachers from different schools in Agbélouvé and surrounding villages. The teachers were primarily middle-aged and older, with considerable teaching experience. Since Togo has a national education system, the majority of teachers in the country, thus the majority of the teachers who attended the training, originated from villages throughout the country. Because they had been placed in Agbélouvé to teach by the Ministry of Education, the participants comprised a mix of ethnic groups, although most were of the Ewe ethnic group of the south and all spoke fluent French and Ewe. At this point in my service my French was novice. My limited level of French presented challenges in communicating the abstract, and at times sensitive, material of the MAP program.

Although the majority of the 9 teachers selected as participants for the August 2011 training had attended similar Life Skills trainings previously, many of the concepts presented in the training were nevertheless new to them.

Training Format

We designed the training format with the understanding that the training participants were older, educated men. The goals of the training were not only to expose the men to the MAP program but also to provide them with the tools and practice they

needed to effectively implement the program to their schools and communities. We looked to provide a standard MAP training format that did not over-emphasize content that the men had likely heard before, such as the male and female reproductive systems. I utilized a standard training format used by another Volunteer in my region and slightly adapted it in order to fit within a two-day training. Therefore, we decided upon the following schedule:

**Training of Agbelouve and Neighboring Villages**

**Leaders on the Concept of MAP**

**Date:** August 11-12, 2011

| Time | Activities |
|---|---|
| **DAY 1** | |
| 7h-7h30 | ***Arrival, welcome and registration of participants and guests*** |
| 7h30-9h00 | ***Opening Ceremony***<br><br>Words of Welcome and Presentation of Distinguished Guests<br><br>Presentation of the MAP Philosophy, MAP Manual, and Training Objectives<br><br>Opening Words |
| 9h00-9h30 | ***Break (Icebreaker)*** |
| 9h30-9h40 | Rules and Expectations |
| 9h40-10h30 | $A_1$ : Examine Our Attitudes |
| 10h30-11h30 | $A_2$ : What Is Gender ? |
| 11h30-13h00 | ***Lunch (Free)*** |
| 13h00-13h15 | ***Icebreaker*** |
| 13h15-14h15 | $A_3$ : "Act Like A Man" |
| 14h15-15h15 | $A_4$ : Sexual Harassment |
| 15h15-16h15 | $A_5$ : Questions and Advice for Practice Sessions |

| Time | Activities |
|---|---|
| **DAY 2** | |
| 7h15-7h45 | Icebreaker<br>Adoption of Day 1 Report |
| 7h45-9h15 | $A_6$ : Take Risks/Face Risks |
| 9h15-9h45 | ***Break*** |
| 9h45-11h30 | $A_7$ : Preparation for Practice MAP sessions |
| 11h30-13h30 | ***Lunch (Free)*** |
| 13h30-15h30 | MAP Presentations in Class |
| 15h30-16h00 | $A_8$ : Sharing/Feedback of Practice Sessions |
| 16h00-16h20 | Evaluations |
| 16h20-16h35 | Certificates and Photos |
| 16h35 | ***Departure*** |

Interactions with Program Participants

My age differential with the training participants, although not a noticeable barrier to the work, was still significant. Most of the men were twice my age; and as young and single and a White American, I often felt unqualified to speak to how Togolese men should behave and how they should address the challenges of gender relations in the village. I found myself walking a fine line between carrying out my mission of promoting gender equality through education, and not overly criticizing a culture I did not yet fully understand or appreciate.

In my haste to make a positive impact in my community and to meet the considerable motivation and expectations of my various counterparts, I was the first

Volunteer from my cohort to carry out a MAP training. I believe that I should have allowed more time to adjust to Togolese life and culture and develop a greater understanding of and rapport within my community.

Therefore, I was fortunate to have a group of Togolese counterparts with whom to collaborate, counterparts who understood the message of MAP and were committed to its promotion in the village. My primary counterpart was a teacher who had worked with several other Volunteers while teaching in a nearby village. Moreover, he was a director of the national life skills camp, Camp UNITE, and was experienced at presenting material gender material. His assistance and that of another experienced Togolese counterpart, two Regional Inspectors of Education and GEE Program Director Florence, aided the facilitation of the sessions and allowed me to focus more on the logistical side of the training.

As previously discussed, respondents repeatedly mentioned the importance of having buy-in from community members and collaboration with Togolese counterparts. Although PCVs are crucial to ensuring that the program is effectively implemented and distributed throughout the country, respondents argued that the project's impact is much greater when Togolese practitioners are in leading positions in project design and management and session facilitation. My experience corroborates respondent support for male counterpart implication, as the efficacious inclusion of male Togolese practitioners in all areas of program administration was a critical component of the success of the MAP project in Agbelouve.

Follow-Up Challenges

An aspect of the MAP Program that Peace Corps Togo emphasizes is the continuation of the program through the implementation of "follow-up" activities. My follow-up with the participants from the August 2011 training consisted of semi-regular meetings with the participants. During these meetings we updated one another on our activities since the previous meeting, and also provided on-going feedback and support for participant-led training sessions in the community.

From the beginning these meetings were riddled with problems and in the end we did not meet nearly as often as any of us would have liked. While the participants had the motivation to meet together, they expected to some kind of compensation for their work; funding for which is not available through Peace Corps' USAID funding streams. Moreover, having been instilled with the idea that requests for compensation meant a lack of true motivation, I steadfastly refused the participant requests.

My ignorance to the way the Togolese typically handle grievances exacerbated the problem**.** To address issues oftentimes Togolese will employ an intermediary rather than confronting the person with whom they have a grievance directly. One of my Togolese counterparts suggested several times that I offer something to the MAP participants for their work in the community. The fact that my counterpart had brought the issue up several times demonstrated that the participants were becoming quite upset at requests to participate in the meetings without a demonstration of appreciation for that participation. Therefore my steadfastness and inability to understand the participants' points of view along with funding constraints significantly impeded project momentum.

Another aspect of the follow-up that was challenging was the format of the

meetings. Therefore, the formats of the meetings changed from meeting to meeting. They began simply as presentations of MAP sessions that were not done during the August 2011 training, yet eventually evolved into strategic planning sessions where participants provided updates on their activities in the community and provided advice to one another. It was the latter format that proved most useful to the participants. The participants saw the initial meetings as boring and a waste of time, as they already understood the concepts in the manual and could read the MAP sessions themselves.

Most of the issues with training follow-up concerned meeting logistics. For one, it was difficult to arrange meetings that fit with everyone's schedule. Moreover, when meetings could be arranged it was difficult to communicate meeting time and place because of lack of communication infrastructure and transportation challenges. Miscommunication was also a recurring problem, as confusion regarding who should come to the meetings, meeting times and locations, and reimbursement for travel expenses continually made the meetings difficult to arrange.

One such instance that I chronicled in my blog caused a great deal of confusion and frustration for everyone involved (Blogger 2012). As I explain in the blog post,

> We had planned a Men As Partners Program meeting with the teachers that I trained back in August on gender equity and what male leaders can do to promote it. The scheduled meeting was supposed to be a follow-up meeting to see how their work on promoting it in the community was going. We had invited one of the Regional Inspectors of Education to come to share some of his expertise and to give advice and support to the teachers.
>
> Long story short, we had to cancel the meeting. I called the Chief Inspector and told him about the change before informing all the teachers. "OK, I'll let the other Inspectors know" he told me. I thought all was good and we had everything straightened out.
>
> That is until I get the call today that one of the Inspectors had arrived to find no one at the school where we were supposed to have the meeting. I hopped on a motto and headed over to inform him about the change and apologize. When I arrived the school director was standing and chatting with the Inspector. The director was upset that he was not informed about the meeting in the first place.
>
> I apologized to them both. I felt terrible at the lack of communication and that the Inspector had

made the trip all the way to my village just to find out that the meeting was cancelled. He also informed me that he had to cut other work short to arrive on time.
Initially, I thought, "I can't believe the lack of communication in this country!" "It should not have been me who informed the director about the meeting at his school, that's my counterpart's responsibility! Why does he even care that we're having this meeting at his school?! He's on such a power trip!" "I can't believe the Chief Inspector dropped the ball on this! Why does it have to be me who does everything!?"

Frustration at the lack of communication. Disappointment at yet another meeting cancelled. Ashamed that the Inspector had made the trip per my request. Confusion about why the school director was upset. Sick of all the politicking and formalities.

In general, ready to just give up this stupid follow-up altogether.

I forced myself to take a step back though. The Chief Inspector may be one of the busiest professionals in the entire region. Period. To be in charge of the secondary school system for an entire region is no easy task, especially given the lack of resources and support he's working with. Expecting him to remember to inform the other Inspectors of the change is probably expecting a little too much. Or a lot too much.

Expecting my counterpart, who teaches all day, does several odd jobs on the side to make ends meet, manages our Peer Educator and Girls' Science Clubs, is organizing a national camp this year, and has a family to take care of, to inform the school director that the meeting will be held at his school, especially when I hadn't even asked him to do so, is probably asking a bit too much. Or a lot too much.

It's not as if these moments aren't few and far between. Work here is hard, and these are the kinds of challenges we as Volunteers face. But, today I realized that there are still things which I don't quite understand, or don't quite agree with, and I need a bigger dose of perspective and humility to deal with them…

I made the choice to come here. I am benefiting not only professionally, but personally as well. You cannot pay for a more exciting, enriching experience as the Peace Corps.

I have at times caught myself thinking "I'm sacrificing a lot just to be here and people here should be willing to sacrifice too!" The thing is, they are. Especially those teachers who had come to my Men As Partners training. They sacrificed, and are continuing to sacrifice their time and money…in order to make their community a better place.

… in the end, [Peace Corps service has] taught me that it helps to have a little perspective; a little humility; and to try to see things from someone else's perspective, no matter how hard that may be.
(May 24, 2012)

My ignorance of the importance of informing school administrators of events in their school had caused the Regional Inspector to waste his time and money to travel to the school, and also caused the principal to feel slighted. The need to follow established protocol and bureaucracy, which oftentimes is difficult for foreigners to fully understand, is certainly an obstacle that Volunteers face in their work.

Perhaps the larger issue is the sort of ad-hoc nature of much of Peace Corps' work. MAP projects are not carried out within a particular organizational structure, and teams of facilitators and strategies for follow-up initiatives are developed somewhat on the fly. Moreover, although PCVs often know what to expect with MAP trainings, including: how they will be structured, how they will be funded, and who will participate, Togolese practitioners are often left in the dark without access to this "inside knowledge."

Therefore, in order to improve collaboration, Togolese practitioners must be better versed in the administrative aspects of the program. The organizational logistics of program implementation must not be hidden to native practitioners. As the program expands to include more authorities within the national and regional educational systems, there will likely be greater understanding and transparency of the administrative side of the MAP program serving to demystify how the program is designed and carried out.

## Limitations of Research

The study is limited in that interviews with actual participants of a MAP training were not conducted. Due to logistical issues such as time constraints, language barriers, and lack of telecommunications infrastructure these interviews were not able to take place before my departure.

The issue of language was also a significant constraint in this study. Both the Peace Corps Volunteers and the Togolese practitioners are both communicating in a second language, French, which can often make designing and carrying out the MAP program difficult and frustrating for both parties. The language difficulties go both ways,

as Togolese practitioners have difficulty understanding PCV practitioners stumbling through the French language and PCVs have trouble simply expressing themselves. The language led to a few misunderstandings of questions by informants and I at times had difficulty understanding Togolese respondents.

Moreover, there appeared to be a social desirability bias in the interviews. Especially, in interviews with Togolese, there was a lack of criticism of the program and of PCV development work in the country. Future studies should build more upon native practitioner perspectives, which could be facilitated by having greater integration of native practitioners in the entire research process.

Because I was an American PCV MAP practitioner, the study was inherently biased towards the perspectives of the Peace Corps community. The viewpoints of community members, particularly those of female members, were also lacking in the research. Although the research project sought to present the perspectives of both Togolese and American practitioners, in the end the perspectives of Americans were somewhat given priority.

There were also limitations that arose during data collection and analysis, including recording malfunctions. One interview that was held via a tape recording device was not included in the thesis because the audio from the recording was lost. Moreover, interviews were conducted in a variety of ways, including via laptop audio recording of face-to-face interviews, laptop audio recording of Skype calls, and typed answers sent via email. For future studies, the method of interview data collection should be standardized for all interviews conducted, and detailed logs of observations should be kept and follow-up interviews should be conducted.

# CHAPTER VI

# CONCLUSION: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Summary of the Research Problem, Methods, and Findings

This research project explored the 'gender transformative' Men as Partners program as implemented in the West African nation of Togo. The study explored how cultural and organizational constraints affect the implementation of the program on both a grassroots and administrative level.

The interactions between American Peace Corps Volunteers and Togolese practitioners when collaborating to carry out the program were examined from the perspectives of the practitioners themselves through respondent interview data. This data was compared to my experience and perspective as a PCV practitioner implementing the project on the village level. Archival data included official MAP documents released by the NGO EngenderHealth, MAP training schedules, feedback from MAP trainings, and blog posts written by myself and other PCV practitioners. These data and respondent interviews allowed for a complete picture of the MAP program through the eyes of native and foreign MAP practitioners on the local, national, and international levels. Data was analyzed using a grounded theory approach, with patterns emerging throughout the data collection and analysis process.

## Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations for Future Research

This research project contributes to pre-existing literature concerning development programs focused on gender, by examining the "gender transformative" approach in action, through the perspectives of both native and foreign actors. The project contributes to cross-cultural analyses of communication and collaboration, exploring the on-the-ground struggles of program actors in working across cultural and lingual boundaries. The research provides valuable insights into the nature of development work geared towards women's empowerment on a grassroots level and, in particular, "gender transformative" interventions targeting men.

What is clear from the research is that there is considerable agreement from Togolese and American practitioners on the philosophy and goals of the MAP program, yet cultural challenges can significantly impact Togolese and American practitioner collaboration. American and Togolese practitioners must come to a fuller understanding of one another's beliefs, attitudes, behaviors and cultural biases in order to collaborate effectively. Social location, especially gender and national origin, have a profound effect on how the program is received by target communities and how practitioners collaborate with one another.

With the proliferation of new tools and resources to measure and report impact and behavior change, the framework has already been developed to continue improving the program. Greater integration of the program with the Togolese education system and Togolese PROVONAT volunteer corps are measures that should significantly improve program impact and sustainability in the future. Unequivocally respondents contended that the MAP project is not possible without Togolese practitioners as significant

stakeholders. Therefore, if development agents are serious about increasing native stake-holding in their programs, the perspectives of these practitioners should continue to be primary point of analysis in the literature.

With the continually expanding influence of international development organizations, gender programs like MAP will continue to proliferate on a global scale. While these initiatives may be benign in their goals, their very existence will be challenged as tools of cultural and social oppression as they seek to alter existing social relations and structures. Moreover, with the continued increase in bureaucratic complexity and imposition of institutional mandates, these programs risk disengaging native populations who are being 'served' and excluding them from project implementation and benefits. For these reasons, native practitioners must be given greater agency in developing programs within their own social and institutional structures. Integration of the program into the Togolese education system and increasing the leadership roles of Togolese practitioners are steps in the right direction. Such efforts must continue to expand and native practitioners must play a greater role in project design in the future.

MAP efforts must respect Togolese culture and institutions and recognize the fluid, changing nature of gender relations in sub-Saharan African societies. As globalization continues to lead to the fragmentation of the 'traditional' African life, the MAP program must not be designed with a narrowly construed vision of gender dynamics within target nations. The playing out of gender stratification within the sessions themselves demonstrates that the program's transformative potential is currently limited. The program must move beyond its present framework to transcend gender

dynamics. This can only be achieved by responding to participant feedback, such as to the desire for greater inclusion of women in the program.

Gender transformation cannot be achieved without continually seeking to improve the program through further exploration and response to practitioners' criticisms. As this research project has demonstrated, we must continue to transform the way we 'do gender' before we can expect real gender transformation at the grassroots.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT: PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

**MAP and Gender Equity**

1. How would you describe the MAP program in terms of its goals and its philosophy?
2. How would you define gender equity?
3. Why do you believe that it is important?

**Gender and Togo/Gender and America**

4. What is your perception of gender relations in Togo?
5. What is your perception of gender relations in the States?
6. How do you think Togolese view gender relations among PCVs?

**Motivation and Purpose of MAP Training**

7. Why did you decide to do a MAP training?
8. What was your target group for the training? Why did you select this group?
9. What were the steps you went through in recruiting this group?

**MAP Training Participants Reaction**

10. Did you find a general willingness among the participants to attend the training?
11. Were the participants involved during the training?
12. How do you think the participants perceived MAP?

**Collaboration with Togolese Individuals**

13. Do you think it is something sustainable in the long term? Do you think it can be initiated and managed by Togolese themselves?
14. How much collaboration did you have with Togolese in designing and implementing the training? How much do you anticipate having during the follow-up?
15. What is your opinion of this collaboration?

**Challenges Associated with Program Implementation**

16. What challenges have you faced in your MAP work?
17. What are some of the cross-cultural barriers you have encountered?

**Cross-Cultural/Social Location Barriers**

18. How do you think being a foreigner affects your MAP work?
19. How do you think being a man affects your MAP work? Being young?
20. What do you think about living and working in the community and how that affects your MAP work?
21. You had young women help you with your training (Kate and Alex, right?). How do you think this affected the training overall, especially regarding the relationship between the organizers and the participants?

**Evaluation of the Program as Implemented**

22. Do you think that the follow-up will lead to a change in behaviors and more gender equity in the community?
23. If you had to rate the overall experience of the MAP training, how would you rate it?

1-Very Negative 2- Negative 3- Somewhat Negative

4- Neutral 5-Somewhat Positive 6-Postive 7-Very Positive

**Criticisms and Recommendations for the Program**

24. What criticisms have you heard about the MAP Program?

25. What would be your recommendations for improving the program? Is there anything that you think the program is missing?

26. Any other comments/suggestions/questions/clarifications?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT: DIRECTOR OF PEACE CORPS TOGO'S GIRLS' EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (FLORENCE)

**Gender Equity**

1. How did you first get involved in gender equity activities?
2. Carolina mentioned that you and Brownie helped start up GEE-type programs in other West African countries as well, can you tell me a little bit about that?
3. How is the MAP Program different in Togo as compared to other countries?

**The MAP Program**

4. How would you describe the general philosophy of MAP and what are its overarching goals?
5. Do you think that the MAP Program is lacking in any way? If so, how is it lacking? Speaking specifically of the design/format of the program.

**Gender Relations- (in Togo, among PCVs, etc.)**

6. What are gender relations like in Togo? And how do they compare to those you have observed between Americans over the years?
7. In an ideal Togo, what would gender relations be like?
8. What are some of the advantages of working with PCVs on MAP? Some of the obstacles?

9. What are some of the challenges/frustrations that you have witnessed from Togolese in regards to working with Americans?
10. And for Americans working with Togolese?

**MAP in Togo- Benefits and Barriers**

11. Have you been able to observe real change among any of the men you have encountered who have been through a MAP training?
12. How do you think these 'changed' men are viewed in the community? Among their families, especially their spouses?
13. Do you think that the ultimate goals of MAP can be realized in Togo? Why or why not?
14. Does MAP call for any changes in attitudes/behaviors that you believe are not desirable in Togolese society?
15. What aspects of the MAP program do you find to be inappropriate culturally for Togo?
16. Considering that the program was initiated by a Western NGO, do you see this as a significant issue? Does the program being 'foreign' affect the way it is received by participants? Have you seen any resistance from Togolese to accept/implement the program for this reason?
17. Does being a Togolese woman affect your work in promoting MAP (or gender equality in general) in any way? If so, how?

**MAP Trainings**

18. Has there been a MAP training that you have experienced that you would say was not successful? Why?

19. What would you say are the characteristics of a successful MAP training?
20. What do you envision as the future of the MAP Program in Togo?
21. What do you think about the follow-up to MAP trainings? What would you like to see done differently/improved upon in regards to follow-up?
22. Any questions/comments/suggestions/clarifications?

## APPENDIX C

## INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT: TOGOLESE PRACTITIONERS

1. Why do you do the work that you do (in regards to gender equity activities)?
2. How did you first begin becoming involved in gender equity activities?
3. What was the first time you had heard the concept of gender equity? Please describe.
4. How would you define gender equity?
5. Why do you believe it is important?
6. Have you had a good experience working with Americans to promote gender equity? Why or why not?
7. What are the difficulties you have faced working with Americans?
8. What are the difficulties you have faced working with other Togolese?
9. What are the difficulties in general you have faced in your work promoting the MAP Program?
10. Do you think that the MAP Program is well-adapted for Togo? Why or why not?
11. What do you think is the ideal relationship between a husband and wife?
12. What do you think about the sessions outlined in the MAP Manual?
13. If you could change one aspect of the MAP Program, what would it be?
14. What advice would you give to Togolese individuals hoping to implement the MAP Program in their communities? What advice would you give to the Americans with

whom the Togolese will work?

15. Have you tried to promote MAP with women? How did the women react?
16. Do you believe that PCVs are well-placed to implement MAP in Togo? Why or why not?
17. Is there a difference between how older and younger individuals react to the MAP Program?
18. Have you seen a difference between how the poor and the well-off react to MAP?
19. What about between professionals and normal citizens?
20. If you could change one aspect related to gender relations in Togo, what would you change?
21. Other comments/questions/suggestions:

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT: DIRECTOR OF PEACE COPRS TOGO (KATHY)

**Gender Equity**

1. Why are gender equity activities such an integral part of Peace Corps Togo programming?
2. What is your particular role in Peace Corps Togo's Men as Partners initiative?

**The MAP Program**

3. What particular criticisms do you have of the program in general? If you could change the program in any way, what would you change?
4. What criticism do you have concerning how the program is implemented in Togo? If you could change the way in which it is implemented in Togo, what would you change?
5. Do you think that the MAP program can bring sustainable development or change to Togo? If so, in what ways?
6. What obstacles have you faced in promoting the MAP program in PC Togo?
7. How does the MAP program's implementation in Togo differ from its implementation in other PC countries?
8. What challenges do you perceive Volunteers facing when implementing the MAP program?
9. What challenges do Peace Corps Togo staff members face when implementing the

program?

**MAP in Togo- Benefits and Barriers**

10. Do you think that the ultimate goals of the MAP program can be realized in Togo? Why or why not?
11. Does the MAP Program call for any changes in attitudes/behaviors that you believe are not particularly desirable in Togolese society?
12. What advice would you give to PCVs who are, or who are thinking about, implementing MAP in their villages?
13. What advice would you give to Togolese MAP practitioners who wish to collaborate with PCVs to implement the MAP program?
14. What is your vision for the future of the MAP program in Togo? (short-term)