Peace Corps

Agribusiness Advisor

- **Apply By** July 1, 2016
- **Know By** September 1, 2016
- **Depart By** February 28, 2017

**Project Description**

The Community Economic Development (CED) project targets two areas of community economic development:

**Goal 1: Entrepreneurial Development**
Individuals will acquire business skills and create new business opportunities.

**Goal 2: Business Management and Organizational Strengthening**
Community based business groups and organizations will strengthen their organizational and business management capacity.

The purpose of the program is to help Dominican communities increase sustainable economic development opportunities. Volunteers are generally requested and placed with a community based agribusiness organization. Volunteers’ primary assignment is to help this organization realize and work towards their business goals. More specifically, Volunteers will provide business management assistance in marketing, product and service development, and customer service. They will help organizations increase capacity in governance, planning, internal management, and financial management. Volunteers will instruct individuals on how to conduct a market and feasibility study, develop and present a business plan, set up and manage businesses using appropriate funding options, including microfinance, as well as determine their profitability. Volunteers also have the opportunity to work outside of the assigned organization with the community in general, supporting entrepreneurship and income generation, as well as one on one business consulting with interested community members. This may include teaching basic personal money management skills such as budgeting, savings, keeping business/personal accounts separate and other related topics.

**Required Skills**

Competitive candidates will have one or more of the following criteria:
- Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture Economics or a degree combining agriculture and management, including agribusiness, agricultural management, farm management
- At least 3 years of experience in farm management and/or agribusiness
- Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science degree in any business or economics discipline with 1 year experience in farming or agribusiness

**Desired Skills**

- Experience working with entrepreneurship
- Experience in one or more of the following areas: sales and marketing, bookkeeping, management or administration
**Required Language Skills**

Candidates must meet one or more of the language requirements below in order to be considered for this position.

A. Completed 4 years of high school Spanish coursework within the past 8 years
B. Completed minimum 2 semesters of Spanish college-level coursework within the past 6 years
C. Native/fluent speaker of Spanish

Candidates who do not meet the language proficiency levels above can take the language placement exams to demonstrate their level of proficiency. Competitive applicants typically attain a score of 50 on the Spanish College Level Examination Program CLEP exam or a score of Novice-High on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL OPI).

**Additional Language Information**

Competitive candidates will have conversational Spanish skills. Peace Corps provides intensive language training during the 10 weeks of pre-service training. At the end of training, Peace Corps Dominican Republic requires an oral proficiency of Intermediate-Mid on the ACTFL scale. (For a better understanding of language levels, see http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/ACTFLProficiencyGuidelines2012-Speaking.pdf.) Trainees that arrive with conversational Spanish skills are likely to reach this level. Peace Corps encourages applicants/invitees to continue their language learning while awaiting departure.

**Living Conditions**

Volunteers will live with two families during the 10 week pre-service training (one family in Santo Domingo and the other in a smaller community during community-based training). Volunteers will live with a third host family for the first 4-6 months of service in their assigned community to facilitate language acquisition and community integration. Although most Volunteers are able to move out on their own after an obligatory 4-6 month homestay (in addition to the training homestays), there is no guarantee that independent housing will be available.

Volunteers are assigned to both rural and suburban communities. Living conditions and transportation problems can be physically demanding. You will have to use the available transportation existing in your community (in most cases this includes regular or semi-regular service by pick-up trucks, vans, collective taxis, and motorcycle taxis). In some cases you may have to walk long distances to work engagements. Houses usually have corrugated steel roofs, walls of wood or cement block, and cement floors. They may or may not have amenities such as running water, electricity, or reliable phone service. Most communities have phone service within the community, although there are situations where Volunteers have to travel up to an hour to access service. Although some communities have electricity, a great many do not, and in all cases, power outages are common. Many of these communities are located along the Dominican-Haitian border, with more challenging living conditions.

Personal appearance is important for Volunteers representing the Peace Corps and Dominican partner agencies. Dominicans consider personal appearance to be an important indicator about a person, and a PCV’s appearance will influence his/her relationship with the community. Volunteers are expected to dress to Dominican
standards for development professionals.

Black/African American Volunteers may face unique challenges serving in the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic has a large Haitian immigrant population and is currently experiencing changes in citizenship laws. Black/African American PCVs are sometimes mistaken for Haitians, which can cause some uncomfortable situations, such as having their citizenship questioned. Despite these challenges, Volunteers of diverse racial backgrounds have served successfully in the Dominican Republic. Peace Corps’ pre-service training will address related concerns to prepare you for service and Peace Corps staff and fellow Volunteers provide a network of support.

Medical Considerations in Dominican Republic

- Volunteers whose health is maintained with access to care related to any of the following conditions or sub-specialties may not be able to serve: hematology.
- The following medication(s) are not permitted for legal or cultural reasons: none identified.
- Volunteers who should avoid the following food(s) may not be able to serve: peanuts.
- After arrival in Dominican Republic, Peace Corps provides and applicants are required to have an annual flu shot, to take daily or weekly medication to prevent malaria, and to receive mandatory immunizations.

Learn more about Peace Corps medical requirements ›

Learn more about what it's like to serve in Dominican Republic.

Visit Peace Corps Dominican Republic's website.