



Office of Inspector General

Office
202.692.2900
[Website](#)
[OIG Reports](#)

Hotline
202.692.2915 | 800.233.5874
[Online Reporting Tool](#)
OIG@peacecorpsig.gov

To: Jody Olsen, Director
Jeannette Windon, Regional Director, EMA
Gene Nixon, Country Director, Thailand
Anne Hughes, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

Date: June 10, 2019

Subject: Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand (IG-19-02-E)

Transmitted for your information is our final report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand.

Management concurred with all 6 recommendations, which remain open. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. OIG will review and consider closing recommendations 1-5 when the documentation reflected in the agency's response to the preliminary report is received. For recommendation 6, additional documentation is required. This recommendation will remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in our analysis below is received.

We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the agency has taken these actions or that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities. However, when we feel it is warranted, we may conduct a follow-up review to confirm that action has been taken and to evaluate the impact.

Our comments, which are in the report as Appendix F, address these matters. Please respond with documentation to close the remaining open recommendations within 90 days of the receipt of this memorandum.

You may address questions regarding follow-up or documentation to Assistant Inspector General for Evaluation Jeremy Black at 202.692.2912.

Please accept our thanks for your cooperation and assistance in our review.

cc: Michelle Brooks, Chief of Staff
Matthew McKinney, Deputy Chief of Staff/White House Liaison
Maura Fulton, Senior Advisor to the Director
Carl Sosebee, Senior Advisor to the Director

Robert Shanks, General Counsel
Patrick Young, Associate Director, Office of Global Operations
Shawn Bardwell, Associate Director, Office of Safety and Security
Karen Becker, Associate Director, Office of Health Services
Stephanie Rust, Director, Overseas Programming & Training Support
Mark Vander Vort, Chief of Operations, EMA
Anna Hoffman, Chief of Programming and Training, EMA
Dana Abro, Regional Security Advisor, EMA
Douglas Warnecke, Chief Administrative Officer, EMA
Mikel Herrington, Operations Expert, EMA
Angela Kissel, Compliance Officer
Kathryn Goldman, Director of Programming and Training, Thailand
Thailand Country Desk



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*A Peace Corps/Thailand Volunteer and her students.
Artwork by Senior Evaluator Kris Hoffer.*

Final Country Program Evaluation

Peace Corps/Thailand

IG-19-02-E

June 2019



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand (hereafter referred to as “the post”) from September 10 to September 28, 2018. At that time, 117 Volunteers were serving in two projects: Teacher Empowerment for Student Success (TESS) and Youth in Development (YinD). OIG last evaluated the post in 2002 and last audited the post in 2007.

WHAT WE FOUND

We found overall that the post was well-run and meeting its mission goals effectively and efficiently. The post’s programming was closely aligned with the country’s development priorities, and Volunteers were serving in the poorest areas of the country. Volunteers were making progress towards their project objectives. The post effectively trained Volunteers in the areas of language, safety and security, and technical skills. Sites, housing, and work assignments met established criteria, and staff effectively prepared host families and counterparts for Volunteers.

Volunteers were satisfied with safety and security support, and Volunteers had successfully integrated into their communities. The post’s medical officers had been struggling with high workloads, but the post had taken steps to address the issues by the time we conducted fieldwork. The administrative unit provided sufficient support to Volunteers. Staff were generally satisfied with intra-office communications, and staff and Volunteers reported that the Volunteer Advisory Committee was active and useful. Post staff and ministry officials were very satisfied with their level of engagement and communication. Post staff and U.S. Embassy staff also reported good relations. The post was sufficiently staffed, and staff were adequately trained.

We identified two best practices related to site management. Staff conducted longer site visits in order to evaluate the effectiveness of training at preparing Volunteers for their life and work at site. We also found that staff had developed robust site selection practices that facilitated Volunteers’ progress towards project objectives and satisfaction with their sites. These included developing detailed programmatic criteria and requesting detailed 2-year plans from potential counterparts.

We found several issues and challenges that required management attention. Site history files contained inappropriate information about serious crime incidents, which could jeopardize Volunteer privacy. We also determined that the post was not sufficiently prepared to respond to emergency flooding at Volunteers’ sites or to consolidate Volunteers during periods of crisis.

Volunteers were dissatisfied with mental health support due to agency procedures not meeting their expectations. The post had not developed a regional medical action plan or assessed local medical providers as required by agency guidelines. Although staff enjoyed very good relations with host country partners, staff had not adequately documented partner input and feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

Our report contains six recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen post operations and correct the deficiencies detailed in the accompanying report.

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HOST COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Kingdom of Thailand is a country in Southeast Asia approximately three times the size of Florida. It is the only country in the region that has never been colonized by a European power. In 1932, Thailand became a constitutional monarchy. The country's parliamentary system consists of an elected House of Representatives and a partially-elected Senate.

Thailand has a well-developed infrastructure and free-enterprise economy that is highly dependent on international trade. The United Nations Development Programme categorized Thailand as a high human development country in 2017 and ranked Thailand 83 out of 189 countries and territories.¹ In 2013, the Thai Government instituted a nationwide daily minimum wage policy to reduce poverty. In 2015, Thailand estimated that seven percent of the population lived below the poverty line. Despite this progress, Thailand has experienced significant development challenges due to unequal access to resources and opportunities, including quality education and meaningful employment.



Figure 1: Map of Thailand.

¹ The United Nations Development Programme has five development categories: Very High, High, Medium, and Low.

PEACE CORPS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Since it first opened in 1962, more than 5,400 Volunteers have served in Thailand. As of July 2018, Peace Corps/Thailand had 117 Volunteers and 34 full-time staff. Thailand hosted a regional medical and safety and security hub for the Peace Corps that included an additional six staff members, though these costs were budgeted separately. The post's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 budget was approximately \$2.64 million.²

The post receives one input of Volunteers annually. At the time of fieldwork, the post had two projects: Teacher Empowerment for Student Success and Youth in Development.³

- **Teacher Empowerment for Student Success:** The TESS project, which supports the Ministry of Education's English language priority, seeks to build Thai English teachers' capacity through collaborative planning, co-teaching, and occasional teacher trainings. Volunteers typically work in primary schools alongside one to three Thai teachers, often in medium to small towns or villages. In addition, TESS Volunteers are encouraged to initiate community development projects requested by students and community members. TESS Volunteers earn a Peace Corps Teaching English as a Foreign Language Certificate, which is validated by the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC.⁴
- **Youth in Development:** The YinD project seeks to engage Thai youth (ages 9 to 15) in activities that help prepare them to be productive adults who contribute to society. The main goals of the YinD project are to improve youth life skills and community leadership and to encourage youth to have a healthy lifestyle. YinD Volunteers are typically assigned to local government offices in rural areas but spend a significant amount of time working in primary and secondary schools.

² This amount does not include the salaries, benefits, and related cost of U.S. direct hires assigned to post and other costs the agency has determined should be centrally-budgeted.

³ The post reworked the project framework for the Teacher Collaboration and Community Service (TCCS) project in 2017. The project was renamed Teacher Empowerment for Student Success (TESS) and accepted the first cohort of Volunteers under the new framework in 2018. OIG refers to all Volunteers in this project as TESS Volunteers unless otherwise noted.

⁴ Training group 130, which arrived in January 2018, was not eligible to receive the TEFL certificate.

EVALUATION RESULTS

PROGRAMMING

In our evaluation, we assessed programming using the following researchable questions to guide our work:

Is the program focused on the country's development priorities, in the poorest areas of the country? Are Volunteers achieving project objectives?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Programming was closely aligned with the country's development priorities. Staff and ministry officials agreed that the YinD project aligned with national development priorities, including an initiative from the prime minister, implemented in 2017, to mobilize the youth culture. Staff and ministry officials were in agreement that the TESS project was well-aligned with Thailand's development priorities.

Volunteers were serving in the poorest areas of the country. The post's site development manual included guidance for staff to select sites in rural areas because they "have greater need for a Volunteer." An OIG survey of Thailand Volunteers indicated that 96 percent of respondents agreed that their work focused on meeting the needs of people in a poor area of the country, or a poor neighborhood.⁵

Volunteers generally made progress towards their project goals. Project data reported by TESS Volunteers in FY 2017 indicated that Volunteers exceeded targets in three of the seven project objectives and made acceptable progress towards two other project objectives. The two TESS objectives that Volunteers struggled to achieve targeted activities outside of the classroom. These two areas of underperformance were addressed in revisions to the project framework in 2017, and OIG had no concerns about TESS objectives. Project data reported by YinD Volunteers in FY 2017 indicated that Volunteers made acceptable progress in four of six YinD project objectives. A staff annual review from 2017 noted that the two areas of underperformance indicated a lack of interest in those topics from counterparts and youth at some sites. Staff was not concerned because Volunteers were able to focus on other areas. Volunteers reported to OIG that one of the objectives was challenging for Volunteers just starting out in their communities because it involved topics that are sensitive within the Thai culture and require advanced language skills. However, Volunteers did not indicate that any

⁵ OIG conducted a survey of Volunteers at the post through SurveyMonkey prior to fieldwork. Seventy Volunteers completed the survey. Volunteers were asked to rate many items on a four-point scale (1 = not effective, 4 = very effective)." The percentage of Volunteers who gave a favorable rating includes those who gave ratings of "3" or "4".

project objectives were unsuitable or in need of revision, and OIG had no concerns about YinD objectives.

We reviewed other areas of programming and found that staff and Volunteers felt they were making a difference in their communities, that Volunteers conducted community needs assessments, and that staff met Volunteers' programmatic support needs.

TRAINING

In our evaluation, we assessed training using the following researchable question to guide our work:

Do trainings prepare Volunteers for service?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Language training was effective. We determined that the post effectively trained Volunteers in the local language, and Volunteers were able to communicate in the language required to conduct their work. Ninety-one percent of Volunteers who responded to the OIG survey reported that the language training effectively prepared them to communicate at their site. Language test scores we reviewed indicated that almost all Volunteers had met the post's minimal language proficiency swearing-in requirement by the end of pre-service training. Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) data from FY 2017 showed that 87 percent of Volunteers reported that they were effectively trained to use the language needed in their work/community, and this increased to 92 percent in the FY 2018 AVS data.

Staff provided additional training and resources for local dialects. Volunteers were trained in one language, Central Thai, though some Volunteers were placed in communities that speak an additional local dialect. Some Volunteers reported to OIG that they struggled to learn the local dialect, which made community integration more challenging for them. Language training staff were not concerned because all Volunteers' counterparts spoke Central Thai. Staff said they used to provide dialect training during pre-service training (PST) in addition to Central Thai, but trainees complained that learning two languages was too challenging and stressful. Following PST, staff provided additional language training and resources to Volunteers who lived in these communities. OIG did not have any significant concerns about language training due to the availability of additional training and resources and because we found that Volunteers were well-integrated in their communities.

Safety and security training was effective. We determined that the post successfully prepared Volunteers to maintain their safety and security. Eighty six percent of Volunteers who responded to an OIG survey reported that the safety and security training effectively prepared them to live

and work safely at their site. According to AVS data from FY 2017 and FY 2018, the percentage of Volunteers in Thailand that felt training helped them maintain their personal safety and security was similar to the global average.

Technical training was effective. We determined that the post successfully trained Volunteers in both the TESS and YinD projects to conduct their work activities. OIG surveyed staff in Thailand and 87 percent of respondents agreed that Volunteers had the technical skills to do their jobs.⁶ Ninety percent of the TESS Volunteers who responded to our survey indicated that technical training effectively prepared them to perform their primary assignments, and 97 percent agreed that they had the technical competence needed to perform their primary/sector assignments. AVS data indicated significant improvement in TESS technical training for the group that arrived in 2016 over the previous group. Staff attributed the improvements in technical training to staff training and curriculum enhancements. Eighty-one percent of the YinD Volunteers who responded to our survey reported that their technical training effectively prepared them to perform their primary/sector assignments, and 89 percent agreed that they had the technical competence needed to perform their primary/sector assignments. AVS data also showed that YinD technical training ratings increased from FY 2017 to FY 2018 in seven of the eight technical training questions. Headquarters staff reported to OIG that technical training improvements were the result of effort by the director of programming and training (DPT) to accurately link training to Volunteer work activities.

Staff planned to add practicum sessions and language training for YinD Volunteers to build confidence in the classroom. YinD Volunteers frequently began their assignments promoting English language learning in schools. Staff explained that this strategy reached the project's target age group and helped Volunteers develop relationships with the students and determine their potential. Staff informed us that Volunteers were expected to transition away from that role and should not become or be perceived as proper English teachers. OIG had no concerns with this strategy. However, some YinD Volunteers informed us that they had difficulty transitioning away from English teaching due to community expectations, yet they felt unprepared to teach English and manage classrooms. Staff told us that in 2016 they recognized a need for more training in this area, and the following PST they revised classroom training for YinD Volunteers. However, staff expressed concern about providing further technical training in English teaching because they did not want YinD Volunteers to become English teachers. Training staff informed us that the 2019 PST would include a new session for YinD trainees to discuss their classroom practicum experience and build confidence with the project's more communicative approach to the classroom, in addition to more language related to giving instruction in Thai. OIG believes that the focus of these training improvements is appropriate due

⁶ OIG conducted a survey of staff at the post through SurveyMonkey prior to fieldwork. Eighteen staff completed the survey. Staff were asked to rate many items on a four-point scale (1 = not effective, 4 = very effective). The percentage of staff who gave a favorable rating includes those who gave ratings of "3" or "4".

to the project's classroom strategy, and we had no significant concerns about YinD technical training.

We reviewed other areas of training and found that staff properly documented trainees' readiness to serve, that program managers were sufficiently involved in technical training, and that Volunteers had the inter-cultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes they needed to be successful.

Volunteers were satisfied with health training related to their physical care. We found that Volunteers were generally satisfied with their health training as it pertained to physical care. Eighty-four percent of the Volunteers who responded to our survey agreed that the medical training effectively prepared them to maintain their physical health at site. However, we learned from our survey that only 49 percent of Volunteers agreed that the medical training effectively prepared them to maintain their mental health at site. AVS results from FY 2017 indicated that only 36 percent of Volunteers felt that the training effectively helped them to maintain their mental/emotional health (compared to 51 percent of Volunteers regionally and 49 percent globally). AVS results for the same survey question from FY 2018 had a slight increase to 41 percent (compared to 47 percent of Volunteers regionally and 45 percent globally). However, 70 percent of the Volunteers we interviewed said that their needs had been met by training sessions on mental health.⁷ In their comments to us, some Volunteers expressed issues and concerns related to mental health support and we explore those further in the Volunteer Support section of the report.

SITE MANAGEMENT

In our evaluation, we assessed site management using the following researchable question to guide our work:

Are sites, housing, and work assignments appropriate and meeting all established criteria?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Sites, housing, and work assignments met established criteria. OIG selected key programming, safety and security, and medical site selection criteria to review for compliance at the sampled 28 Volunteers' sites.⁸ We reviewed 8 of the 17 programming criteria at 16 TESS

⁷ Volunteer interviews were conducted using a standardized interview questionnaire, and Volunteers were asked to rate many items on a four-point scale (1 = not effective, 4 = very effective). The percentage of Volunteers who gave a favorable rating includes those who gave ratings of "3" or "4".

⁸ We selected a sample of 28 Volunteers and visited their sites. Two of the Volunteers in our sample shared a site and housing but worked in different sectors. Therefore, our sample consisted of only 27 sites, but one site is counted as both a TESS site and a YinD site.

sites and found that 14 sites met all the reviewed criteria. The remaining two TESS sites met six of the eight criteria. We reviewed 7 of the 13 programming criteria at 12 YinD sites and found that the sites met all of the reviewed programming criteria. We reviewed eight key safety and security and medical criteria for 27 sites and found that 25 sites met all the criteria. One site met five of the seven criteria, and one site met six of the seven criteria. Lastly, we inspected 27 of the sampled Volunteers' homes to determine compliance with the post's housing criteria. We found that all 27 houses we inspected met 6 of the post's housing standards, 26 houses met an additional 7 standards, and 25 houses met another 3 standards. Although the reviewed sites were not fully compliant with the selected criteria, OIG did not believe the areas of non-compliance were indicative of inadequacies with procedures or staff performance.

Staff effectively prepared host families and counterparts for Volunteers. Volunteers were placed with host families when they arrived at site, and Volunteers told us they were generally satisfied with their host families. Although only a quarter of the Volunteers we interviewed chose to remain with their host families throughout service (Volunteers were allowed to leave their host families after one month at site), 81 percent told us they maintained positive relationships with their host families. Ninety-six percent of the Volunteers we interviewed said they had at least one motivated and supportive counterpart. Of those, 79 percent said that post staff had identified their counterpart. In interviews, Volunteers most commonly identified counterparts as helpful in their integration.

We reviewed other areas of site management and found that the safety and security manager (SSM) and Peace Corps medical officers (PCMOs) were sufficiently involved in the site development process and the post had developed a sufficient site identification strategy.

AREAS OF SITE MANAGEMENT THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

Site history files contained inappropriate information about serious crime incidents.

To ensure the protection of Volunteer privacy, Safety and Security Instruction (SSI) 401 from the Office of Safety and Security instructs staff to include crime incident reporting system (CIRS) numbers to identify serious crimes in site history files rather than information about the incident. The SSI instructs posts to develop a process to ensure relevant safety and security information is included in the site selection process. The post developed a procedure for the programming team to share a list of potential sites with the SSM. The SSM is expected to check the list against their site history files and inform the programming team if there are any sites that should be excluded or any sites where there should be conditions about who serves in that site.

OIG reviewed a selection of site history files and found that the SSM had included information about serious crime incidents rather than CIRS numbers, which could jeopardize Volunteer privacy. A 3-year Peace Corps safety and security officer (PCSSO) review completed in

November 2018 also identified this area of non-compliance and recommended that the SSM remove serious crime incident information from site history files and develop procedures for including CIRS numbers. OIG agreed that the recommended actions would resolve the identified issue.

We recommend:

- 1. That the safety and security manager address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations from the 2018 Peace Corps safety and security officer report related to site history files.**

BEST PRACTICES

Staff conducted Level Three⁹ site visits. We reviewed programming site visits and recognized an area of best practice. Post staff reported that they visited all Volunteers within 90 days of their arrival at site to help Volunteers address initial challenges and inspect housing. The staff said they selected 20 percent of sites to conduct extended full-day visits with Volunteers, referred to as “Level Three” visits. Staff indicated that they used the additional time to complete a worksheet (See Appendix D) designed to evaluate the effectiveness of PST sessions at preparing Volunteers for their life and work at site. We concluded the Level Three site visits were an effective training evaluation tool.

Post developed robust site selection practices. Ninety-six percent of the Volunteers OIG interviewed said that they were satisfied with their sites. AVS results from FY 2017 indicated that the percentage of Volunteers in both sectors who agreed that they had enough work to do surpassed both regional and global averages. We concluded that sites were appropriately selected, and we believe that robust site selection procedures contributed to this result. OIG recognized two of these as best practices:

- 1) Staff developed detailed programmatic criteria for selecting new sites. For example, the criteria for TESS sites provided details such as the number of students and teachers, the presence of foreign teachers, the skills and interests of co-teachers, and resources available. Staff developed the criteria by studying effective sites, holding focus groups and discussions, and incorporating feedback from Volunteers and the Volunteer Advisory Committee (VAC).

⁹ Peace Corps assesses Volunteer learning using a four-level framework developed by Donald Kirkpatrick. The third level of the Kirkpatrick framework measures whether learners are using what they learned in training in their lives or work.

- 2) As part of the application process to host a Volunteer, staff required potential counterparts to complete a 2-year plan that included details such as Volunteer goals, activities, and performance indicators. Staff reviewed the plan to assess levels of interest, motivation, and project viability.

As a result of staff's efforts to select appropriate sites, Volunteers were making progress towards their project goals, as we reported in the Programming section of this report.

VOLUNTEER SAFETY AND SECURITY SUPPORT

In our evaluation, we assessed Volunteer support related to safety and security using the following researchable questions to guide our work:

- Is post sufficiently prepared to respond to emergencies and security incidents?
- Are preventative safety and security measures adequate?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Volunteers were satisfied with safety and security support. Eighty percent of the Volunteers we surveyed were satisfied with the support provided by the SSM. In interviews during fieldwork, several Volunteers expressed dissatisfaction with the SSM's response to Volunteers reporting crime incidents and harassment. The dissatisfied Volunteers arrived in-country when the SSM was new to the job, and the SSM acknowledged to OIG having struggled at first to respond appropriately to Volunteers due to inexperience and not being a native English speaker. By contrast, Volunteers we interviewed from the group that arrived in 2018 provided positive comments about the SSM's approachability and response to incidents. The SSM attributed improvements in performance to agency training and guidance from staff, including senior staff at the post, the PCSSO, and other regional SSMs. Due to her improved performance, we did not have any concerns about the post's response to crimes and harassment.

We reviewed other areas of safety and security support and found that the emergency action plan had been recently updated, tested, and shared with the U.S. Embassy, that Volunteers were reporting crimes to staff, that the post had accurate, up-to-date records of Volunteers' site contact information, and that the transportation policy was adequate. Lastly, we determined that Volunteers were integrated into their communities.

AREAS OF VOLUNTEER SAFETY AND SECURITY SUPPORT THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

The post had not sufficiently planned for the widespread risk of flooding at Volunteers' sites.

Seasonal flooding occurs annually in various regions of Thailand, and staff and Volunteers that we spoke with shared reports of Volunteers unable to leave their sites due to flooding. Both the SSM and the PCSSO informed OIG that a Volunteer must be able to get out of a flooded site should their health or safety be at risk. In the post's emergency action plan, the SSM provided guidance for Volunteers to plan for flooding but had not taken proactive steps to plan for flooding at high risk sites. As a result, Volunteers experiencing flooding in their sites could become trapped in place and unable to leave should their health or safety be at risk. In 2017, the Office of Safety and Security introduced a safety planning resource named MySafety Guide: A Safety and Security Resource. The guide includes a selection of safety planning activities that SSMs could choose to implement, including one that is designed to help Volunteers plan for a natural disaster and identify an alternative route out of their site. Thailand had not conducted this safety planning activity, but due to the widespread risk of flooding in Thailand, OIG believes this activity should be included in the post's Safety and Security program.

We recommend:

- 2. That the safety and security manager require Volunteers to complete the emergency action plan activity from the Office of Safety and Security's MySafety Guide.**

The post was not sufficiently prepared to consolidate Volunteers during periods of crisis.

The Office of Safety and Security's standard operating procedure "Selecting Consolidation Points" requires SSMs to develop a list of minimum standards to evaluate consolidation points. The post's SSM had not developed this list. As a result, the post did not have an effective process to ensure the selection of appropriate consolidation points. OIG found evidence that some consolidation points were not appropriate for the Volunteers assigned to them. Several Volunteers said they could not reach their consolidation points within the acceptable timeframe established by the SSM (6-7 hours), and we learned that some consolidation points were inaccessible when flooding occurred during the rainy season. These issues could impact the ability of staff and Volunteers to respond quickly and effectively to an emergency.

We recommend:

- 3. That the safety and security manager develop minimum standards for consolidation points and ensure current consolidation points meet those standards.**

VOLUNTEER HEALTH SUPPORT

In our evaluation, we assessed Volunteer support related to health care using the following researchable question to guide our work:

Is the health care program meeting Volunteers' needs?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

The post had taken steps to address understaffing and high workloads in the medical unit. OIG reviewed staffing and workloads in the medical unit and learned that the PCMOs had been struggling with their workload and reported feeling “burned out.” To address the issue, regional medical staff worked with the PCMOs to better balance workloads, and staff used the backup provider more. The medical unit also recently selected a candidate to hire as a second medical assistant to address understaffing.¹⁰ The PCMOs were satisfied that workload issues would be resolved once the assistant joined their unit.

We reviewed other areas of Volunteer health support and found that the medical action plan had been updated, reviewed, and tested. An Office of Health Services (OHS) site assessment was conducted in August 2018, 1 month prior to OIG fieldwork. The assessment included eight findings with recommendations, and OIG had no concerns about the nature of the findings. Most Volunteers we interviewed trusted that PCMO interactions would remain private within the medical unit. The medical unit had the capacity to adequately support Volunteers with accommodations.

AREAS OF VOLUNTEER HEALTH SUPPORT THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

The post had not developed a regional medical action plan.

Agency medical technical guidelines require posts to develop a regional medical action plan that provides regional information and covers Volunteer sites, as well as areas frequently visited by Volunteers. We reviewed the post's medical action plan and found that the post had not

¹⁰ At the time of fieldwork, the medical assistant was awaiting clearance of a background check and had not yet started work.

developed a regional medical action plan. OHS provides medical action plan templates that help ensure required elements are included, but the post had not used these. As a result of the missing regional information, the post was not fully equipped to respond to medical emergencies that occurred outside of Volunteers' sites.

We recommend:

- 4. That the post's medical officers develop a regional medical action plan in compliance with Technical Guideline 385.**

The post had not assessed local medical providers.

The agency's medical technical guidelines require PCMOs to assess all local providers that have been selected to provide care to Volunteers at least once every 3 years. We found that 36 percent of the contract hospitals identified in the medical action plan had not been reviewed within the last 3 years. PCMOs acknowledged that they were behind schedule in reviewing the selected sites. Lack of familiarity with local facilities and providers could hamper the post's ability to respond to a medical emergency.

We recommend:

- 5. That the post's medical officers assess local medical facilities that have not been reviewed according to requirements in the agency's medical technical guidelines.**

Mental health support did not meet Volunteers' expectations.

We reviewed the post's procedures for providing mental health support and found them in compliance with Office of Health Service Technical Guidelines. When Volunteers requested mental health support, PCMOs conducted a standard needs assessment. In compliance with agency policy, PCMOs worked with Volunteers to provide support and assess their needs before referring them to a provider. PCMOs offered short-term supportive counseling or stress management for Volunteers who did not qualify for counseling, i.e. Volunteers experiencing "common adjustment problems." The PCMOs reported that they were adequately trained and felt comfortable providing this level of mental health support, and regional medical staff indicated the care provided by PCMOs was competent. The PCMOs said they provided an orientation to the mental health support process in PST and repeated the information at VAC meetings and in-service trainings. OIG believed that mental health support had been adequately provided by PCMOs in accordance with agency policies and procedures.

However, OIG learned that Volunteers were not satisfied with mental health care. We conducted a survey prior to fieldwork and found that only 65 percent of responding Volunteers were satisfied with mental health care. Our review of mental health training also revealed some underlying concerns related to mental health support.¹¹ In interviews, Volunteers told us that they were reluctant to work with PCMOs to address mental health issues. Volunteers said they felt more comfortable working with outside trained providers. We also found that some Volunteers were misinformed or confused about the process for accessing mental health support.

Despite the post's compliance with agency policies and procedures regarding mental health support, we had concerns that some Volunteers sought counseling but were not provided a referral and were not comfortable working with a PCMO to resolve their issues. Volunteers who desired to meet with a mental health provider told us that they felt discouraged and unsupported when their request was denied. Staff believed that Volunteers struggled to accept the agency's mental health support model due to generational differences and the wide availability of mental health providers for college students.

Following our fieldwork, staff took additional steps to increase awareness and acceptance of the mental health support available to Volunteers. Staff added a mental health services flowchart to the 2019 PCV handbook and an integration handbook provided to new Volunteers. The flowchart was also posted to the post's Peer Support and Diversity Network website. Staff told us they planned to add the flowchart to the medical handbook distributed at PST.

Staff felt that it would benefit Volunteers in Thailand if the agency began to establish expectations about the availability of mental health providers sooner than PST. The agency established a performance goal in the FY 2018-2022 strategic plan to establish realistic expectations of service during the application process. OIG agrees that expectation setting with applicants and invitees regarding the agency's mental health support model would be beneficial. However, we did not review agency efforts to address the performance goal as it fell outside the scope of this review. OIG is satisfied that the post has taken appropriate actions to increase Volunteer satisfaction with mental health support, so we are not issuing a recommendation on this matter.

VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

In our evaluation, we assessed Volunteer support related to administrative support using the following researchable question to guide our work:

¹¹ See Volunteers were satisfied with health training related to their physical care, p.6.

Does the administrative unit provide sufficient support to Volunteers, including allowances and reimbursements?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Volunteers were satisfied with administrative support. In response to an OIG survey conducted prior to fieldwork, 89 percent of Volunteers reported that the director of management and operations (DMO) was either ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ supportive. Our survey also revealed that 83 percent of responding Volunteers were satisfied with their living allowance, and 72 percent were satisfied with their settling-in allowance. The post conducted allowance surveys for Volunteers in 2017, but the Volunteer response rate was too low for the agency to consider increasing allowances. Due to the low survey completion rates and positive support and interactions reported to OIG by Volunteers, we found that the administrative unit provided sufficient support to Volunteers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: COLLABORATION

In our evaluation, we assessed the effectiveness of the post’s communication and collaboration using the following researchable question to guide our work:

Do staff effectively communicate and collaborate with each other, Volunteers, and stakeholders?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

Staff were generally satisfied with intra-office communication. We learned from staff in interviews that there were occasionally miscommunications and misunderstandings within and between units, which staff attributed to recent turnover, busy schedules, and different personalities. However, staff did not report any disruptions or significant impact on the functioning of the office. OIG conducted a survey of staff prior to fieldwork and the results showed that staff collaborated and communicated well with staff from other units. The post could enhance the effectiveness of intra-office communication with additional team-building activities, but we had no significant concerns about the quality of staff collaboration and communication.

The VAC was active and useful. Staff reported to OIG that the VAC met quarterly and those meetings created a useful dialogue with Volunteers. VAC members we met with were very satisfied with staff support and responsiveness. Most of the Volunteers we interviewed responded favorably when asked about the VAC’s effectiveness at representing their concerns to

staff. We concluded that the VAC was an active, useful mechanism for communication between staff and Volunteers.

Post staff and U.S. Embassy staff had good relations. OIG reviewed the post's relationship with the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok and learned that staff participated in Embassy meetings and met regularly with Embassy staff. Staff reported that the Embassy was supportive of the Peace Corps mission and Embassy officials informed us that the post was a highlight of U.S.-Thai relations. We had no concerns about the relationship between staff and Embassy officials.

Post staff and ministry officials were very satisfied with their level of engagement and communication. Both of the post's projects had effective mechanisms for including host country partners in the project. We reviewed written agreements between the post and the host government (called Letters of Exchange) that were completed in 2017. The Letters of Exchange accurately reflected project objectives and the current focus of programming and training. We had no concerns about the effectiveness of staff and host partner collaboration.

We reviewed other areas of communication and collaboration and found that there was open communication with headquarters offices and sufficient consultation and understanding between headquarters and the post about operational priorities.

AREAS OF COLLABORATION THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

Staff did not document partner input and feedback.

Agency programming and training guidance highlights the importance of obtaining partner input and feedback for project monitoring and evaluation. We requested documentation of the post's collaborations with host partners and learned that staff did not record meeting minutes or document the results of meetings with partners. The accurate preservation of partner input would benefit new staff who are unfamiliar with the post and responsible for important decision-making.¹²

We recommend:

- 6. That the director of programming and training ensure records are kept of key meetings with partners.**

¹² At the time of our fieldwork, the DMO's departure was planned for December 2018, and the DPT's departure was anticipated in 2019. The CD had arrived at the post only the previous month.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: STAFFING RESOURCES

In our evaluation, we assessed the post's management of staffing resources using the following researchable question to guide our work:

Has leadership effectively managed staffing and staff capacity?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

The post was sufficiently staffed, and staff were adequately trained. We reviewed the sufficiency of staffing at the post and found no clear need for more staffing. We also checked training records and determined that all staff had completed the agency's required sexual assault risk reduction and response training. In addition, we reviewed staff roles and responsibilities and staff training needs and found that leadership had effectively managed staffing and staff capacity.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend:

1. That the safety and security manager address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations from the 2018 Peace Corps safety and security officer report related to site history files.
2. That the safety and security manager require Volunteers to complete the emergency action plan activity from the Office of Safety and Security's MySafety Guide.
3. That the safety and security manager develop minimum standards for consolidation points and ensure current consolidation points meet those standards.
4. That the post's medical officers develop a regional medical action plan in compliance with Technical Guideline 385.
5. That the post's medical officers assess local medical facilities that have not been reviewed according to requirements in the agency's medical technical guidelines.
6. That the director of programming and training ensure records are kept of key meetings with partners.

APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

In 1989, OIG was established under the Inspector General Act of 1978 and is an independent entity within the Peace Corps. The purpose of OIG is to prevent and detect fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement and to promote economy, effectiveness, and efficiency in government. The Inspector General is under the general supervision of the Peace Corps Director and reports both to the Director and Congress.

The Evaluation Unit provides senior management with independent evaluations of all management and operations of the Peace Corps, including overseas posts and domestic offices. OIG evaluators identify best practices and recommend program improvements to comply with Peace Corps policies.

The Evaluation Unit announced its intent to conduct an evaluation of the post on July 10, 2018. For post evaluations, we use the following researchable questions to guide our work:

A. Programming:

- Is the program focused on the country's development priorities, in the poorest areas of the country?
- Are Volunteers achieving project objectives?

B. Training:

- Do trainings prepare Volunteers for service?

C. Site Management:

- Are sites, housing, and work assignments appropriate and meeting all established criteria?

D. Volunteer Safety and Security Support:

- Is post sufficiently prepared to respond to emergencies and security incidents?
- Are preventative safety and security measures adequate?

E. Volunteer Health Support:

- Is the health care program meeting Volunteers' needs?

F. Volunteer Administrative Support:

- Does the administrative unit provide sufficient support to Volunteers, including allowances and reimbursements?

G. Collaboration:

- Does staff effectively communicate and collaborate with each other, Volunteers, and other stakeholders?

H. Staffing Resources:

- Has leadership effectively managed staffing and staff capacity?

The evaluation team conducted the preliminary research portion of the evaluation between July 10 and September 6, 2018. This research included a review of agency and post documents provided by headquarters and post staff; interviews with headquarters staff from the Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) Region, the Office of Health Services, Overseas Programming and Training Support, and the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; and inquiries to the Office of Victim Advocacy. We also conducted an online survey that was completed by 70 Volunteers and 18 staff at the post.

In-country fieldwork occurred from September 10 to September 28, 2018 and included interviews with post leadership and staff in programming, training, and support roles. At the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, we met with the deputy chief of mission, the deputy regional security officer, and assistant regional security officer. We spoke with six Thai ministry officials. In addition, we interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 28 Volunteers (24 percent of Volunteers serving at the time of our visit) and inspected 27 Volunteer homes. The scope of the evaluation encompassed 3 years, from 2015 to 2018, to include the 27-month span in-country of most Volunteers (which includes 3 months of training) and additional time for Volunteers that extended their service beyond 2 years.

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. The evidence, findings, and recommendations provided in this report have been reviewed by agency stakeholders affected by this review.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this post evaluation, interviews were conducted with 28 Volunteers. We also held focus group meetings with Volunteer members of the Peer Support and Diversity Network and the VAC. We interviewed 20 staff in-country; and 27 key stakeholders, including Peace Corps headquarters staff, officials with the U.S. Embassy in Thailand, and Thai ministry officials.

The following table provides demographic information for the entire Volunteer population in Thailand. The Volunteer sample was developed to be representative of these demographics in addition to length of service, site location, and ethnicity.

Table 1: Volunteer Demographic Data

Project	Percentage of Volunteers
YinD	50
TESS	49
Gender	Percentage of Volunteers
Female	62
Male	38
Age	Percentage of Volunteers
25 or younger	49
26-29	35
30-49	10
50 and over	6

Source: Volunteer Information Database Application. Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

At the time of our field visit, the post had 33 permanent staff positions and hosted six regional staff positions. The post periodically employed temporary staff to assist with PST, though these positions were not staffed at the time of our visit. We interviewed 15 post staff, four regional staff, and one former staff.

Table 2: Interviews Conducted with Staff in Thailand

Position	Status	Interviewed
Administrative Assistant	PSC	
Cashier	PSC	
Country Director	USDH	X
Director of Management and Operations	USDH	X
Director of Programming and Training	USDH	X
Driver (4)	PSC	
Executive and Communications Assistant	PSC	
Financial Assistant	PSC	
Former Country Director	USDH	X
General Service Officer	PSC	
General Services Assistant (2)	PSC	
IT Specialist	PSC	
Janitor (2)	PSC	
Language and Cross-Cultural Coordinator	PSC	X
M&E Specialist	PSC	
Maintenance Clerk	PSC	
Medical Secretary	PSC	
Peace Corps Medical Officer (2)	PSC	X
Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer	USDH**	X
Program Assistant (2)	PSC	X
Program Manager (2)	PSC	X
Programming and Training Specialist (2)	PSC	X
Regional IT Specialist	PSC**	
Regional Medevac Clinical Coordinator	PSC**	
Regional Medical Officer (2)	PSC**	X
Regional Mental Health Officer	USDH**	X
Safety and Security Manager	PSC	X
TEFL Specialist	PSC	X
Training and Resources Assistant	PSC	
Training Manager	PSC	X

Data as of July 2018. PSC refers to personal services contractor.

**Regional staff

Twenty-three additional interviews were conducted with key stakeholders during the preliminary research phase of the evaluation and in-country fieldwork.

Table 3: Interviews Conducted with Key Stakeholders

Position	Organization
Department of Local Administration Director General	Thailand Department of Local Administration
Department of Local Administration Planning and Policy Analyst	Thailand Department of Local Administration
Foreign Relations Officer	Thailand Office of the Basic Education Commission
Development Cooperation Officer	Thailand International Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Director of Countries Partnership Branch (Bilateral and Trilateral)	Thailand International Cooperation Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Assistant Regional Security Officer	U.S. Embassy/Thailand
Deputy Chief of Mission	U.S. Embassy/Thailand
Deputy Regional Security Officer	U.S. Embassy/Thailand
Acting Regional Director	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Chief Administrative Officer	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Chief of Programming and Training	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Country Desk Officer	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Regional Security Advisor	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Supervisory Country Desk Officer	PC Headquarters/Europe, Mediterranean and Asia
Acting Associate Director	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Acting Director of the Counseling and Outreach Unit	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Chief of Quality Improvement, Education, and Training	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Director of the Office of Medical Services	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Director of the Office of Medical Services	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Volunteer Placement and Assessment Specialist	PC Headquarters/Office of Volunteers Recruitment and Selection
Education Specialist	PC Headquarters/Overseas Programming and Training Support
Youth in Development Specialist	PC Headquarters/Overseas Programming and Training Support

Data as of September 2018.

APPENDIX C: LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVS	Annual Volunteer Survey
CIRS	Crime Incident Reporting System
DMO	Director of Management and Operations
DPT	Director of Programming and Training
EMA	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region
FY	Fiscal Year
OHS	Office of Health Services
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PCMO	Peace Corps Medical Officer
PCSSO	Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer
PSC	Personal Services Contractor
PST	Pre-Service Training
SSI	Safety and Security Instruction
SSM	Safety and Security Manager
TESS	Teacher Empowerment for Student Success
USDH	United States Direct Hire
VAC	Volunteer Advisory Committee
YinD	Youth in Development

APPENDIX D: LEVEL 3 EVALUATION FORM

Level 3 Evaluation Form

PEACE CORPS THAILAND

Level 3 Evaluation for PST 128

Date of Visit: _____

Volunteer Name: _____

Project: ☐ YInD ☐ TCCS

Staff Member(s) conducting survey: _____

Introduction: The first three months at site are very important for a Peace Corps Volunteer's acceptance and integration into his or her community. Peace Corps Programming & Training staff would like to know what skills and information you found most useful during PST to prepare you for entry into your community. During the visit, we would like to hear your feedback on the following components: Technical, Cross Cultural, Safety and Security, Housing, Medical, Language and Peace Corps Policies and Information.

We will be asking you three questions for each component:

1. Now that you have moved to site and started your service, what information and skills did you learn during PST that you have found useful and relevant to your service? Why and how did you apply these skills?
2. What information and skills did you learn during PST that were not relevant for your first 3 months of service? What should be taught later during Reconnect or MSC?
3. What other information and/or skills do you wish you had known or learned during PST that would have been useful when you started working in school? Can you name three additional things that you wish would have been covered?
4. Being able to apply Thai language in your daily life at site, in which topics you feel that you need to know more during PST?

PEACE CORPS OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Level 3 Evaluation Form

PART I. TECHNICAL

1. How do you use the PACA tools at site? What kind of barriers of using PACA?
2. On a scale of 1-5, how effective have you been in lesson planning with your co-teachers or field counterpart (s)? Please briefly explain.
3. On a scale of 1-5, how confident are you able to facilitate camps on Life Skills or English Camps or Teacher Training?
4. **YinD-** During the 1st month at site, what potential project that you can begin working with youth?

YinD- How often have you been able to work with your counterpart (s) regarding youth program? If not, what is the challenge?

TCCS – How often have you been able to work with your co-teacher(s) regarding teaching English/ Lesson Planning ? If not, what is the challenge?

TCCS – Having the TEFL certification was working as an incentive to increase your motivation and skills acquisition or whether it was daunting and possibly discouraging?

PART II. CROSS-CULTURAL

1. What strategies do you use to understand and deal with a confusing cultural situation?
2. How is this culture different from what you experienced in PST? Did you have the skills to observe and understand the culture based on what you had learned?

PEACE CORPS OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Level 3 Evaluation Form

PART III. SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. How effectively do you feel the safety & security sessions were in preparing you for the safety & security realities at your site? (1-5 scale)
2. How could the safety & security sessions be improved?
3. Please identify 3 un-safe places/locations at site? (at least one)

PART V. MEDICAL:

1. How effectively do you feel the medical sessions were in preparing you for taking care of yourself at site? (1-5 scale)
2. How do you manage your stress and emotional issues?

PART VI. LANGUAGE

1. In Thai, how well can you: (scale of 1-5):
 - a. Talk to your host family
 - b. Negotiate with the landlord
 - c. Introduce yourself to communities
 - d. Order food or make purchases in the market
 - e. Converse with co-workers
 - f. Plan work with your counterpart
 - g. Deliver remarks to a group when asked to do so
 - h. Give a training
 - i. Read and write Thai
2. Was the flow of lessons and vocabulary taught logical and applicable? Do you have any suggestions?
3. How do you continue learning language at site?
 - a. Tutoring
 - b. SDL (Specify activities)

PEACE CORPS OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Level 3 Evaluation Form

4. Language materials: What kind of materials that you have been using since PST?
 - a. Books – Learning Thai Book, Basic Reading Preview, etc.
 - b. Technical vocabulary electronic files

PART VII. PEACE CORPS POLICIES AND INFORMATION

1. How do you understand the essential rules and expectations of a PCV? Give the one that you still remember?
2. How effectively do you feel the admin sessions were in preparing you for living on your own? (1-5 scale)

PART VIII. OTHER COMMENTS:

(Please discuss about the up-coming training; Reconnect. Is there any particular topics that PCV would like to learn?)

For staff to review

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Housing Checklist (Provided by K. Phanuthat)<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer's House and Site Photos<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the Volunteer's Physical and Emotional Well-being<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the Volunteer's Adjustment in the community<input type="checkbox"/> Explore the Volunteer's Relationship with Counterparts and Community members<input type="checkbox"/> Market basket Survey |
|--|

Level 3 Evaluation Form

PART IX. COUNTERPART AND COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

1. What information during the Counterpart Conference did you find most informative about working with an American Peace Corps Volunteers and why?
(ผู้ซึ่งถูกถามให้ป้อนข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับสิ่งที่ได้เรียนรู้จากงานประชุมซึ่งผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ได้ให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับงานที่อาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันทำใน)
2. Now that you are working with a Peace Corps Volunteer, what additional information do you wish you would have been provided during the Counterpart Conference?
(ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ได้รับข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับอาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันในขณะนี้
ส่วนที่ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ได้คิดค้นขึ้นเกี่ยวกับอาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันโดยอิงจากงานประชุม) (ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์)
3. From your observation, how has the Volunteer integrated into his or her work place and colleagues?
(ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ได้สังเกตอาสาสมัครที่ได้รับมอบหมายให้ทำงานร่วมกับอาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันใน)
4. From your observations of the Volunteer, how has he/she integrated into the community and become part of it?
(ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ได้สังเกตอาสาสมัครที่ได้รับมอบหมายให้ทำงานร่วมกับอาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันใน)
5. What else can the Volunteer do to become more accepted into his or her work?
(ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์สามารถทำอะไรได้บ้างในการที่อาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันสามารถทำงานได้ดียิ่งขึ้น)
6. What would you suggest he or she do to become more connected to the community?
(ผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์สามารถทำอะไรได้บ้างในการที่อาสาสมัครชาวอเมริกันสามารถทำงานได้ดียิ่งขึ้น)

List of relevant persons:


1. Supervisor (PESAO staff/ School Director/ Nayok)
2. Counterpart (Co-teacher/Balat)
3. Community or Field Counterpart
4. Landlord
5. Community members/neighbor/friends


APPENDIX E: AGENCY RESPONSE TO THE PRELIMINARY REPORT



MEMORANDUM

To: Kathy Buller, Inspector General

Through: Anne Hughes, Chief Compliance Officer 

From: Jeannette Windon, Regional Director, EMA
Gene Nixon, Country Director, Thailand
Michelle Brooks, Chief of Staff 

Date: May 24, 2019

CC: Jody Olsen, Director
Patrick Young, Associate Director of Global Operations
Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General
Jerry Black, AIG/Evaluations
Mark Vander Vort, Chief of Operations EMA
Kathryn Goldman, Director of Programming and Training, Thailand

Subject: Preliminary Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand (Project No. 18-EVAL-10)

Enclosed please find the agency's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Thailand as outlined in the Preliminary Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand (Project No. 18-EVAL-10) given to the agency on April 10, 2019.

The Region and the Post have concurred with all six recommendations provided by the OIG in its Preliminary Report on the evaluation of Peace Corps/Thailand and have provided documentation for four of the six recommendations. Post will work to address the remaining recommendations by the set target dates.

Recommendation 1

That the safety and security manager address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations from the 2018 Peace Corps safety and security officer report related to site history files.

Concur

Response: All serious crime incident information has been removed from site history files. Management of site history files now includes a procedure for including CIRS numbers and excluding incident specifics.

Documents Submitted:

- Safety and Security SOP procedures regarding the inclusion of CIRS numbers in site history files.
- Email to staff with the Site History Files, SOP

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, April 2019

Recommendation 2

That the safety and security manager require Volunteers to complete the emergency action plan activity from the Office of Safety and Security's MySafety Guide.

Concur

Response: An expanded action plan (EAP) training program was provided during pre-service training for PCTs arriving at Post in 2019. Planning for natural disasters, including flooding is now standard for EAP training for Trainees and Volunteers.

Documents Submitted:

- EAP training syllabus for PST
- EAP Training syllabus for Reconnect (IST)
- Examples of completed EAP activities

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, April 2019

Recommendation 3

That the safety and security manager develop minimum standards for consolidation points and ensure current consolidation points meet those standards.

Concur

Response: Minimum standards have been adopted for consolidation points. In April 2019, Post expanded the number of consolidation points from 6 to 12 to facilitate ease of access and to decrease travel distance from sites.

Documents to be Submitted:

- Consolidation point plan
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Selecting Consolidation Points
- Communication of new consolidation points to Volunteers
- Email to staff on new Consolidation Point, SOP

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, April 2019

Recommendation 4

That the post's medical officers develop a regional medical action plan in compliance with Technical Guideline 385.

Concur

Response: The post regional medical action plan is being complemented with supplemental information as per Technical Guideline 385.

Documents to be Submitted:

- Revised medical action plan
- Email to staff on revised medical action plan

Status and Timeline for Completion: June 2019

Recommendation 5

That the post's medical officers assess local medical facilities that have not been reviewed according to requirements in the agency's medical technical guidelines.

Concur

Response: The high quality medical capacity in Thailand has created a historic abundance of medical facility contracts. PC/Thailand's medical team will review the current file of medical facilities and adjust the number of facilities as reflective of medical need and proximity of Volunteers. Medical facilities reviews will follow agency medical guidelines and will be conducted per the required frequency.

Documents to be Submitted:

- Adjusted list of PC contracted medical facilities in Thailand
- Medical facility review schedule, included completed reviews
- Communication with OHS on the adjusted list of PC contracted medical facilities in Thailand

Status and Timeline for Completion: October 2019

Recommendation 6

That the director of programming and training ensure records are kept of key meetings with partners.

Concur

Response: Documentation of meetings with Royal Thai Government (RTG) and other key partners are recorded and maintained in a common electronic file. Agreement on host country need, PCV placement and program design continues to depend on a participatory partnership between PC/TH and the RTG.

Documents Submitted:

- Meeting record from annual meeting with the Royal Thai Government and other key partners

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, April 2019

APPENDIX F: OIG COMMENTS

Management concurred with all 6 recommendations, which remain open. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the agency has taken these actions or that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities. However, when we feel it is warranted, we may conduct a follow-up review to confirm that action has been taken and to evaluate the impact.

OIG will review and consider closing recommendations 1-5 when the documentation reflected in the agency's response to the preliminary report is received. For recommendation 6, additional documentation is required. This recommendation will remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in our analysis below is received.

Recommendation 6

That the director of programming and training ensure records are kept of key meetings with partners.

Concur

Response: Documentation of meetings with Royal Thai Government (RTG) and other key partners are recorded and maintained in a common electronic file. Agreement on host country need, PCV placement and program design continues to depend on a participatory partnership between PC/TH and the RTG.

Documents Submitted:

- Meeting record from annual meeting with the Royal Thai Government and other key partners

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, April 2019

OIG Analysis: Please ensure that the record provided includes relevant input and feedback from partners and any other important meeting results.

APPENDIX G: PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION

This program evaluation was conducted under the direction of Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations Jerry Black, by Senior Evaluator Reuben Marshall, Senior Evaluator Kristine Hoffer, Senior Evaluator Kaitlyn Large. Additional contributions were made by Senior Evaluator Erin Balch.



OIG CONTACT

Following issuance of the final report, a stakeholder satisfaction survey will be distributed to agency stakeholders. If you wish to comment on the quality or usefulness of this report to help us improve our products, please contact Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations Jerry Black at jblack@peacecorpsig.gov or 202.692.2912.

Help Promote the Integrity, Efficiency, and Effectiveness of the Peace Corps

Anyone knowing of wasteful practices, abuse, mismanagement, fraud, or unlawful activity involving Peace Corps programs or personnel should contact the Office of Inspector General. Reports or complaints can also be made anonymously.

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Mail: Peace Corps Office of Inspector General
1111 20th Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20526

For General Information:

Main Office: 202.692.2900

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