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From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

Date: August 27, 2019

Subject: Final Report on the Follow-Up Review of Peace Corps/Nepal (IG-19-06-E)

Transmitted for your information is our final report on the Follow-Up Review of Peace Corps/Nepal.

Management concurred with both recommendations, which will remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation identified in management's response has been received. 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 the two recommendations when the documentation reflected in the agency's response to the preliminary report 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.

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
Robert Shanks, General Counsel
Mark Vander Vort, Chief of Operations, Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia
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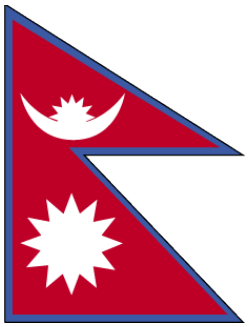

Final Follow-Up Review

Peace Corps/Nepal

IG-19-06-E

August 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a follow up evaluation of issues identified in the Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Nepal (IG-15-05-E). We chose to follow up on three findings from the report that were significant areas of concern. The findings discussed in more detail in the report are:

- Ineffective site development, lack of counterpart support, and inadequate training impeded Volunteers' ability to contribute to the food security project goals.
- Site visits to the Volunteer did not happen consistently or meet Volunteers' programmatic support needs.
- Volunteer leave policies were complex, ineffective, and cumbersome for staff to manage.

WHAT WE FOUND

We found that, overall, Peace Corps/Nepal (hereafter referred to as "the post") had improved regarding all three findings selected for review. Although staff still reported challenges identifying Volunteers' counterparts during the site identification and selection process, OIG found that most Volunteers in Nepal had counterparts with whom they could work on food security activities. In addition, since the 2015 evaluation, the post had updated its host family selection criteria to allow programming staff to identify sites that also met their programmatic criteria. We also determined that post staff were conducting site visits more consistently with a clear purpose and design to address Volunteers' support needs.

We found several issues and challenges that required management attention. Despite improvements in site management, the post's site selection criteria for the food security project did not support staff's efforts to identify programmatically viable Volunteer sites. While policy changes had made tracking whereabouts less cumbersome, the post still struggled to separate whereabouts tracking from annual leave tracking.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary i

Background 1

Summary of Results 2

Site Management 2

Volunteer Support 6

List of Recommendations 11

Appendix A: Relevant Findings and Recommendations from OIG's 2015 Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Nepal 12

Appendix B: Objective, Scope, and Methodology 14

Appendix C: Interviews Conducted 16

Appendix D: List of Acronyms 18

Appendix E: Agency Response to the Preliminary Report 19

Appendix F: OIG Comments 22

Appendix G: Follow-Up Review Completion and OIG Contact 23

BACKGROUND

The Peace Corps re-entered Nepal in 2012, after a 7-year hiatus in operations, with partial funding through a 5-year agreement with the United States Agency for International Development mission in Nepal.[1] In December 2015, the Office of the Inspector General issued the Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Nepal (IG-15-05-E). The report made 13 recommendations which, if implemented, were expected to strengthen the post's programming and training capacity and correct the deficiencies detailed in the report. The agency's management concurred with all 13 recommendations, and all of them were closed based on a review of corrective actions and supporting documentation.

OIG's 2015 report noted that post staff did an excellent job of selecting and preparing host families, and Volunteers generally rated their host family experience positively. Volunteers mostly felt safe in Nepal and enjoyed a low serious crime rate. Volunteers expressed a high regard for staff and commented that staff had worked hard to improve previously strained relations. However, the report identified some areas of concern requiring management attention.

This limited scope review is a follow-up to our 2015 country program evaluation of Peace Corps/Nepal. We followed up on three findings from the report that were significant areas of concern. The findings discussed in more detail in the report are:

- Ineffective site development, lack of counterpart support, and inadequate training impeded Volunteers' ability to contribute to the food security project goals.
- Site visits to the Volunteers did not happen consistently or meet Volunteers' programmatic support needs.
- Volunteer leave policies were complex, ineffective, and cumbersome for staff to manage.

At the time of this follow-up, there were two active projects in Nepal: English education and food security. Sixty-seven Volunteers served at the post at the start of the review, in March 2019. This evaluation focused on Volunteers in the food security project because the first class of education Volunteers had not yet sworn into service when the review began.

[1] Reimbursement Agreement between the United States Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps for the Global Health and Food Security in Nepal Program. Award Number: 367-IAA-P-00-12-00001.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

SITE MANAGEMENT

In this follow-up evaluation we attempted to answer the following site management researchable questions:

1. Are programmatic site selection criteria clear, and do staff know how to identify and document the potential of sites using the criteria?

2. Does the site identification and selection process include enough opportunity for staff/Peace Corps Volunteer leaders to assess the availability and interest of counterparts?

3. Does Peace Corps/Nepal's host family selection criteria for the distance between the host family's home and the assigned work site give staff enough flexibility to identify sites that meet their programmatic criteria?

AREAS OF NO CONCERN

The post's site identification and selection process enabled Volunteers to identify effective counterparts with whom they could work together on food security activities.

The Peace Corps' regional guidance requires that, at a minimum, Volunteers are placed in sites where "there is/are available, interested, and committed counterpart(s) willing to work with and provide support to the Volunteer [on their primary work assignment]." The Peace Corps' Programming, Training, and Evaluation Guidance recommended that "Volunteers are usually more productive and effective when they are assigned to (or encouraged to seek) more than one work partner."

In the 2015 evaluation, OIG found that only 8 out of 17 (47 percent) interviewed Volunteers felt that their primary counterparts supported them in meeting their food security project objectives. In addition, we reported that the site assessment process "did not include a useful gauge by which program staff could assess the primary counterpart's interest in or ideas related to collaborating with and supporting a Volunteer."

The 2015 OIG report recommended:

3. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process to include more opportunity for staff and/or Volunteer leaders to assess the availability and interest of both primary counterparts as well as community-based counterparts in collaborating with the Volunteer in support of project goals.

During this follow up review, although staff still reported challenges identifying Volunteers' counterparts during the site identification and selection process, OIG found that most Volunteers

in Nepal had counterparts with whom they could work together on food security activities. In OIG's Volunteer survey, 84 percent of respondents indicated that they had a counterpart. Furthermore, 81 percent of respondents who had a counterpart reported that they worked with their counterpart on food security related activities either "all the time" or "occasionally."

OIG found that post staff worked hard to ensure that counterparts were interested in and had enough time to work with the Volunteers. During the site identification process, staff determined potential partners' motivation to support and work with a Volunteer based on multiple factors, including their initial Volunteer request form, willingness to identify potential host families, and support organizing a community orientation meeting. Staff also aimed to identify five community contacts and then allowed the Volunteer, once at site, to select their official counterpart with whom to work.

Peace Corps/Nepal's host family selection criteria allowed programming staff to identify sites that also met their programmatic criteria.

In the 2015 evaluation, OIG reported that the post often had limited options for Volunteer site selection for two reasons:

1. The Nepali government required Peace Corps to only place Volunteers at either health posts or agriculture service centers, and

2. The post required staff to find Nepali host families within a certain walking distance from the Volunteer's official work site.

The 2015 OIG report recommended:

4. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process so that sites that meet the post's programmatic selection criteria are presented for approval to host government officials, and sites that do not meet the post's selection criteria are not presented as options for Volunteer placement.
5. That the director of programming and training, program manager for food security, and the safety and security manager review the criteria for host family selection and determine if additional flexibility can be applied to the host family location and its distance from the Volunteer's assigned work site (local health post or agriculture office).

During this follow up review, we found that both of those requirements had been removed since our initial evaluation. This provided greater flexibility for programming staff to identify and select sites that met their programmatic criteria. In response to recommendation 5, the post had removed the criteria related to the distance from the host family house to the work site. With respect to recommendation 4, Peace Corps worked with the Nepali government to only consider sites that met the post's programmatic criteria. In addition, the Nepali government stopped requiring the Peace Corps to exclusively place Volunteers at health posts or agriculture service centers.

In our OIG Volunteer survey, 100 percent of respondents reported that their house was either nearby or a reasonable walking distance away from their worksite. Volunteer interview responses implied that Volunteers considered their "worksites" to be flexible, and that Volunteers felt that they had discretion to determine how far away they were willing to work.

AREA THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

The post's site selection criteria for the food security project did not support staff's efforts to identify programmatically viable Volunteer sites.

Peace Corps Manual section (MS) 270 "Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security" states, "The quality of a Volunteer's… work assignment is a critical feature of a safe Volunteer experience." The manual further directs that: "Each post must develop and apply criteria for the selection and approval of sites. Criteria should address work role, …" along with several other key features of Volunteers sites.

In the 2015 OIG evaluation, the post acknowledged that they needed to improve the site selection process to incorporate an assessment of the programmatic needs of each site.

> ***The 2015 OIG report recommended:***
> 2. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process so that programmatic site selection criteria are clarified and staff knows how to identify and document the characteristics of a potential site according to the selection criteria."

The purpose of programmatic criteria is to ensure that staff select sites that provide opportunities for Volunteers to engage in meaningful work that both meets the needs of the community and contributes towards the post's project goals. Programmatic criteria should be based on a list of the minimum standards and conditions staff have identified as necessary for a Volunteer to be successful in a site. Additionally, staff must be able to reasonably answer whether or not a site meets the programmatic criteria during a site visit. That criteria should provide the evidence necessary for staff to answer critical questions, such as 'Is there a need for a food security Volunteer?', 'Does the community have an interest in the Volunteer?', and 'Is there evidence that the Volunteer's work will be sustainable after the Volunteer leaves?'

In this follow up evaluation, OIG found that, while the post had identified programmatic criteria in their Site Identification and Monitoring Manual, the criteria was not useful for assessing whether sites offered practical conditions for Volunteers to work on food security projects.

Peace Corps Best Practice: Developing Programmatic Site Selection Criteria in Thailand
In OIG's Evaluation of Peace Corps/ Thailand, we found that the post had developed excellent programmatic criteria for their Teacher Empowerment for Student Success project. Their criteria 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.

The criteria the post used was generic and had not been tailored to the post's food security project. While the post's programmatic criteria for its food security project asked staff to determine if there was a need for a Volunteer (staff must sign off on whether "There are significant opportunities for skills transfer between the [Volunteer] and host agency/community"), it did not identify what conditions would indicate a need (for example, whether the communities exhibited signs of food insecurity such as malnutrition or undernutrition). Furthermore, the programmatic criteria did not address the question of sustainability. For work to be meaningful, behavior changes Volunteers promote should be sustainable after the Volunteer departs. In an agriculture context, this includes criteria that considers a timeline of multiple generations of Volunteers. The post's site assessment did not strategically consider how many generations of Volunteers have been at a site when assessing programmatic viability.

Post leadership reported that staff generally relied on their own experience and intuition to determine whether a site would be a good fit for a Volunteer, and would report their observations in the comments section of the site assessment form. One post staff member mentioned that they considered relevant programmatic factors such as the level of food insecurity in the community and the presence of lactating mothers, however such factors were not included among the programmatic criteria on the post's site assessment form. While site identification is an already time-intensive process, one staff member acknowledged that specific criteria would help staff explain how they selected sites to the potential host communities and what they looked for during their visits.

Without a thorough assessment of a site's potential to offer Volunteers meaningful work related to their food security project, many Volunteers continued to find themselves in sites with limited sustainable project-related work opportunities. Despite the post's efforts to address this concern in response to our initial 2015 evaluation, Volunteer satisfaction with the amount of work they have at site, as well as their opinion on whether their work directly relates to their communities' needs, has decreased (see Figure 1).

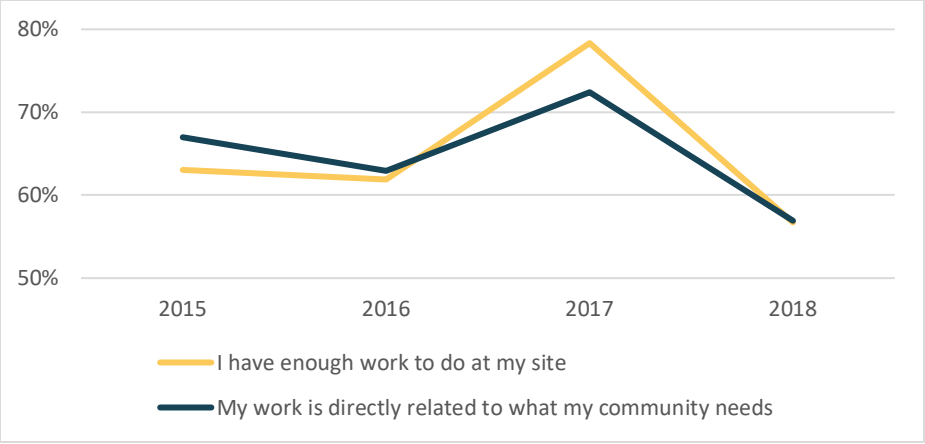

Figure 1: Percentage of Annual Volunteer Survey Respondents in Agreement with Statements. *Source: The Peace Corps 2015-2018 Annual Volunteer Surveys.**
*Note: Percentages were not given when the number of respondents was less than five, so some responses were combined.

One Volunteer commented in OIG's survey that: "There is work to do but the area is food secure for the most part and that limits what you do." Another expressed frustration in the sustainability of their work: "People have been receptive, but I don't know that it will last. I don't think anything I introduced will last…. I don't think it changes their behavior." A third observed how, while placed in a food insecure site, external conditions prevented that Volunteer from being able to implement the projects that were taught during pre-service training.

We recommend:

1. **That, as part of the project review scheduled for Fiscal Year 2020, the director for programming and training, the deputy program director, and food security program team revise site assessment forms to include specific and observable programmatic site selection criteria.**

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

In this follow up evaluation we attempted to answer the following Volunteer support researchable questions:

1. Are post staff conducting site visits more consistently with a clear purpose and design to address Volunteers' support needs?

2. Have leave policies been simplified to reduce the level of effort for staff tasked with monitoring Volunteer leave balances?

AREA OF NO CONCERN

Post staff were conducting site visits more consistently with a clear purpose and design to address Volunteers' support needs.

According to the region's site management guidance, at a minimum, post staff must conduct a programmatic site visit for every Volunteer twice during their 2-year service, and that at least one of those visits must be performed by a senior program staff member. "Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post" provides additional guidance concerning the purpose and quality of site visits: "On official visits…staff should have clear goals, including carrying out the proper host-supervisor notification, protocol and follow-up, learning, and rendering service to the Volunteer."

In the 2015 evaluation, OIG determined that site visits to the Volunteers were not happening consistently or meeting the Volunteers' programmatic support needs. Very few of the interviewed Volunteers reported that they had received a site visit from their program manager, and only 25 percent of Volunteers who had received a site visit felt that it was helpful in terms of meeting their support needs.

The 2015 OIG report recommended:

8. That the director of programming and training ensure that program staff conduct site visits with a clear purpose and structure, and that site visits are designed and timed to address Volunteers' support needs.

During this follow up evaluation, we found that post staff consistently conducted site visits in a manner designed to effectively support Volunteers. According to the post's site identification and monitoring manual, post staff had adopted the expectation that Volunteers would receive site visits four times during their service and that each visit would last a minimum of 3 hours. To ensure that staff conducted timely site visits, the post had developed and maintained an Excel workbook to track site visits over the course of each Volunteer's service. In OIG's Volunteer survey, all respondents reported that they had received at least one visit from a program specialist or regional manager.

To ensure that site visits met Volunteers' programmatic support needs, for each site visit the post's site identification and monitoring manual outlined clear expectations on how to prepare for the visit; what to do and who to meet with during the visit; what specific indicators to look for to assess the Volunteers' community integration, language acquisition, counterpart relationship, etc.; and what follow up activities, if any, should be performed after the site visit. During interviews, staff reported that they found the guidance useful, particularly for ensuring staff accountability, as well as establishing expectations with Volunteers on how the visits would proceed.

In response to OIG's survey, 89 percent of Volunteer respondents reported that the visits "partially met" or "met all or most" of their work-related support needs. Additionally, 95 percent

of respondents reported that the visit "partially met" or "met all or most" of their needs for support for any issues related to their living arrangements. When we disaggregated responses by cohort, we found consistent improvement (see Figures 2 and 3 below).

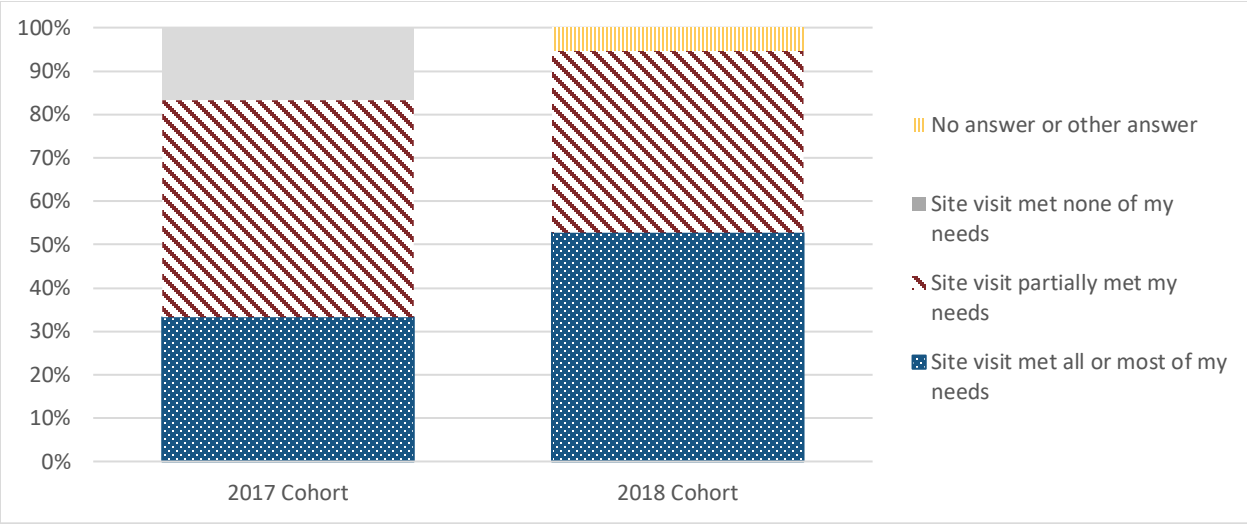

Figure 2: OIG Volunteer Survey Responses to Question: "If you have had a site visit, to what extent did it meet your need for support in your work assignment?" *Source: OIG Volunteer Survey*

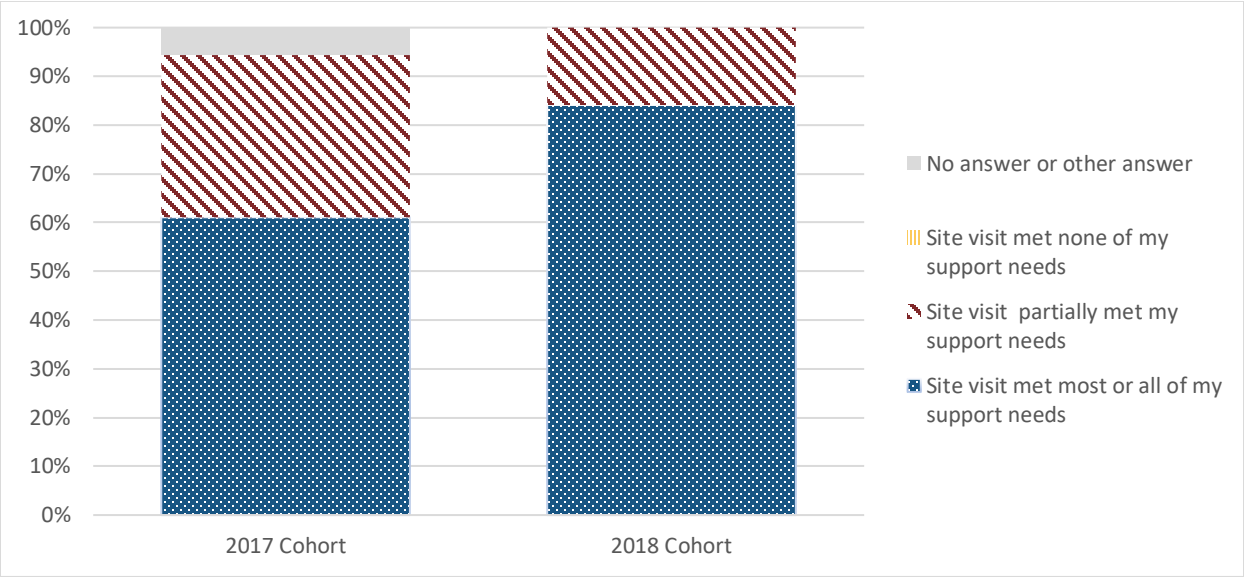

Figure 3: OIG Volunteer Survey Responses to Question: "If you have had a site visit, to what extent did it meet your need for support for issues with your living arrangements?" *Source: OIG Volunteer Survey*

During interviews, Volunteers discussed both positive and negative aspects to site visits. One Volunteer commented, "[Staff member] was very helpful. He has a lot of agriculture knowledge. It was really cool having him at my site. He made a lot of technical observations." Several Volunteers, however, commented that the timing of visits did not always correspond to Volunteer's needs, or were cancelled or shortened. Post staff recognized the continued need to

improve planning in the next year in order to meet their site visit goals, particularly since they would have more Volunteers in more districts, and greater distances to cover.

AREA THAT REQUIRED MANAGEMENT ATTENTION

While policy changes had made tracking whereabouts less cumbersome, the post still struggled to separate whereabouts tracking from annual leave tracking.

MS 270 "Volunteer/Trainee Safety and Security" states that "Each post must establish a system to collect [Volunteer/trainee] whereabouts and contact information when [Volunteers/trainees] are away from their communities for personal travel, annual leave, or official reasons. The manual section further states that while a post may review whereabouts reporting information within the collection system to verify Volunteers' compliance with the post's specific whereabouts policy, a post is not authorized to use whereabouts reporting to track Volunteers' annual leave. According to the post's Volunteer Handbook, the whereabouts phone is carried by a rotating team of "administrative staff" during the week and the duty officer on weekends and holidays.

The 2015 evaluation of the post determined that Volunteer leave policies were too complex and cumbersome for staff to manage. Additionally, Volunteers did not consistently report their whereabouts because they did not want their time out of site to be counted against their annual leave or personal time away from site.

The 2015 OIG report made the following recommendations:

9. That the country director simplify or remove the post's personal time away from site policy and stress with Volunteers the importance of being in service to their communities, and the importance of reporting their whereabouts to the Peace Corps.
10. That the country director clarify the post's process for determining that a Volunteer has been spending too much time away from his/her community, and what sort of corrective actions posts will take with Volunteers who have abused the principle of taking infrequent breaks from their community.
11. That the country director and safety and security manager ensure that the post's whereabouts notification system is de-linked from its system for tracking leave balances, and is not used to monitor a Volunteer's leave balance or as an indicator of a Volunteer's performance at his or her site.

During our follow up evaluation, we determined that the post had worked hard to revise its previous whereabouts policy and had made it a priority to improve Volunteer compliance. Since 2015, the post had revised its policy on personal time away from the community, clarified corrective actions that would be taken if the post determined that a Volunteer had abused the personal time away from community policy, and revised its whereabouts notification policies and procedures to track Volunteer whereabouts separately from leave balances.

Post staff reported that the revised policy had reduced the level of effort for staff tasked with monitoring Volunteer leave balances. However, post staff still struggled to separate whereabouts reporting from annual leave tracking. While the post's Volunteer handbook asserted that only

administrative staff carried the whereabouts phone during the week, staff reported that "Everyone shares the phone." Consequently, programming staff, who were responsible for responding to Volunteer leave requests, occasionally had to also carry the whereabouts phone and track Volunteers' leave requests. Interviewed Volunteers reported several instances of staff members who unintentionally docked their accrued annual leave based on whereabouts reporting, creating confusion and resulting in some Volunteers' noncompliance with the whereabouts reporting policy.

We recommend:

2. **That the country director, per the post's policy in the Volunteer handbook, not require staff members who track Volunteers' annual leave requests to also manage Volunteer whereabouts reports at the same time.**

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend:

1. That, as part of the project review scheduled for Fiscal Year 2020, the director for programming and training, the deputy program director, and food security program team revise site assessment forms to include specific and observable programmatic site selection criteria.

2. That the country director, per the post's policy in the Volunteer handbook, not require staff members who track Volunteers' annual leave requests to also manage Volunteer whereabouts reports at the same time.

APPENDIX A: RELEVANT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OIG'S 2015 PROGRAM EVALUATION OF PEACE CORPS/NEPAL

Final Report of Country Program Evaluation of Peace Corps Nepal [IG-15-05-E]

Recommendations relevant to this review:

2. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process so that programmatic site selection criteria are clarified and staff knows how to identify and document the characteristics of a potential site according to the selection criteria.

3. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process to include more opportunity for staff and/or Volunteer leaders to assess the availability and interest of both primary counterparts as well as community-based counterparts in collaborating with the Volunteer in support of project goals.

4. That the director of programming and training and program manager for food security improve the site selection and development process so that sites that meet the post's programmatic selection criteria are presented for approval to host government officials, and sites that do not meet the post's selection criteria are not presented as options for Volunteer placement.

5. That the director of programming and training, program manager for food security, and the safety and security manager review the criteria for host family selection and determine if additional flexibility can be applied to the host family location and its distance from the Volunteer's assigned work site (local health post or agriculture office).

8. That the director of programming and training ensure that program staff conduct site visits with a clear purpose and structure, and that site visits are designed and timed to address Volunteers' support needs.

9. That the country director simplify or remove the post's personal time away from site policy and stress with Volunteers the importance of being in service to their communities, and the importance of reporting their whereabouts to the Peace Corps.

10. That the country director clarify the post's process for determining that a Volunteer has been spending too much time away from his/her community, and what sort of corrective actions

posts will take with Volunteers who have abused the principle of taking infrequent breaks from their community.

11. That the country director and safety and security manager ensure that the post's whereabouts notification system is de-linked from its system for tracking leave balances, and is not used to monitor a Volunteer's leave balance or as an indicator of a Volunteer's performance at his or her site.

APPENDIX B: 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 a follow up review of issues identified in the 2015 evaluation of Peace Corps/Nepal on March 6, 2019. The objective of this limited scope follow up review was to determine if the agreed-on corrective actions taken in response to the 2015 report's recommendations were fully implemented and had the intended effects. We used the following researchable questions to guide our work:

A. Site Management:

- Are programmatic site selection criteria clear, and do staff know how to identify and document the potential of sites using the criteria?
- Does the site identification and selection process include enough opportunity for staff/Volunteer leaders to assess the availability and interest of counterparts?
- Does Peace Corps/Nepal's host family selection criteria for the distance between the host family and the assigned work site give staff enough flexibility to identify sites that meet their programmatic criteria?

B. Volunteer Support:

- Are post staff conducting site visits more consistently with a clear purpose and design to address Volunteers' support needs?
- Have leave policies been simplified to reduce the level of effort for staff tasked with monitoring Volunteer leave balances?

This review was conducted from Peace Corps headquarters without travel to the post. The evaluator reviewed agency documents provided by headquarters and post staff. The evaluator conducted interviews in-person with headquarters staff and by phone with Peace Corps/Nepal

staff. The evaluator also conducted an online survey that was completed by 57 percent (38 out of 67) of Volunteers. Finally, the evaluator selected a representative sample of 10 Peace Corps/Nepal Volunteers with whom to conduct telephone interviews. A total of 5 Volunteers were interviewed out of the sample of 10, representing a response rate of 50 percent.

This review 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 C: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this post evaluation, interviews were conducted with 5 Volunteers, 8 staff in-country, and 4 Peace Corps headquarters staff.

At the time of our review, the post had 29 filled permanent staff positions. We interviewed 8 staff with responsibilities related to the scope of this review.

Table 1: Interviews Conducted with Post Staff

Position	Status	Interviewed
Administrative Assistant- Reception	PSC	
Administrative Assistant- Travel/ Human Relations	PSC	
Cashier	PSC	
Country Director	USDH	X
Deputy Program Director	PSC	X
Director of Management and Operations	USDH	
Director of Programming and Training	USDH	X
Driver (5)	PSC	
Executive Assistant	PSC	
Financial Specialist	PSC	
General Services Assistant	PSC	
General Services Manager	PSC	
Grants and Resource Coordinator	PSC	
IT Specialist	PSC	
Medical Assistant	PSC	
Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation Specialist	PSC	
Peace Corps Medical Officer (2)[2]	PSC	X
Program Manager- Food Security	PSC	X
Program Manager-Education	PSC	
Program Specialist- Education	PSC	
Program Specialist- Food Security	PSC	X
Safety and Security Manager	PSC	X
Training Coordinator	PSC	
Training Manager	PSC	

Data as of March 2019. *PSC is personal services contractor.

[2] OIG corresponded with the Peace Corps medical officers via email.

Four additional interviews were conducted with headquarters staff.

Table 2: Interviews Conducted with Headquarters Staff

Position	Office
Agricultural Specialist	Overseas Programming and Training Support
Chief of Programming and Training	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations
Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer	Office of Safety and Security
Regional Security Advisor	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Operations

Data as of April 2019.

APPENDIX D: LIST OF ACRONYMS

MS	Peace Corps Manual Section
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PSC	Personal Services Contractor
USDH	United States Direct Hire

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 Sherry Russell, Country Director, Nepal
Date:	August 20, 2019
CC:	Jody K. Olsen, Director Michelle K. Brooks, Chief of Staff Patrick Young, Associate Director of Global Operations Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General Jerry Black, AIG/Evaluations Mark Vander Vort, Chief of Operations EMA Matt Tully, Director of Programming and Training, Nepal
Subject:	Preliminary Report on the Follow-Up Review of Peace Corps/Nepal (Project No. 19-EVAL-05)

PC/Nepal is grateful for the support from the Office oflnspector General (OIG), and we concur with both of the recommendations contained in this Evaluation. In short, this Evaluation validates the thoughtful, hard work that PC/Nepal staff have implemented in order to address a wide range of recommendations highlighted in OIG's 2015 Program Evaluation of PC/Nepal while also identifying valuable opportunities for continued improvement.

Enclosed please find the agency's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Nepal as outlined in the Preliminary Report on the Follow-Up Review of Peace Corps/Nepal (Project No. 19-EVAL-05) given to the agency on July 11, 2019. The Region and the Post have addressed and provided supporting documentation for one of the two recommendations provided by the OIG in its Preliminary Evaluation Report: Peace Corps/Nepal. The Post and Region will work to address the remaining recommendation by the set target date.

Recommendation 1

That, as part of the project review scheduled for Fiscal Year 2020, the Director for Programming and Training, the Deputy Program Director, and food security program team revise site assessment forms to include specific and observable programmatic site selection criteria.

Concur

Post agrees that developing more specific site selection criteria is both necessary and important, and Post has described some remaining action steps towards that end below.

Post has reviewed PC/Thailand's Site Development and Monitoring Manual and Post is currently finalizing ways to adapt the materials for use with our Food Security project in Nepal. Post is currently fine-tuning the tools and methods to engage target communities most effectively. While local government officials and supervisors tend to easily navigate written applications and other documents, Post recognizes that such tools can sometimes present unintended barriers to those with limited literacy or ability to deliver completed documents. Post is excited to see how PC/Thailand has adopted both written applications and phone screening checklists, and Post seeks to leverage these different assessment activities and tools to best suit the context of PC/Nepal.

PC/Nepal will provide EMA Region with updated site assessment forms and Site Identification and Monitoring Manual. These documents will demonstrate specific and observable programmatic site selection criteria, tools, and processes that fit the context of our Food Security program in Nepal.

Documents Submitted:

- Site Assessment Form
- Site Identification and Monitoring Manual (including appendixes)

Status and Timeline for Completion: September 2019

Recommendation 2

That the Country Director, per the post's policy in the Volunteer handbook, not require staff members who track Volunteers' annual leave requests to also manage Volunteer whereabouts reports at the same time.

Concur

We have developed a leave and whereabouts policy and reporting procedure which is articulated in the PCV Handbook, which requires a 24/7 tracking system for staff to carry out. In order for the 24/7 tracking duty not to be too burdensome, we developed a rotation of administrative staff, who are usually in the office and not travelling, to serve as whereabouts officers during the work week and have used the Duty Officers to carry the whereabouts phone during weekends and holidays. As has become apparent, the issue with this system is that Program Staff, who track PCVs' leave, also serve as Duty Officers. We therefore needed to develop a whereabouts monitoring system that will not involve staff who also track Volunteer leave. To this end, we will continue to use a rotating roster of administrative staff to monitor the whereabouts phone during the work week and also create a separate roster of staff to carry the whereabouts phone on weekends and holidays. These staff will be a subset of the Duty Officers, but none of them will be staff who also approve Volunteer leave. These staff are: the DPT, the DMO, the GSM, the Deputy Program Director (DPD), the Financial Specialist, the IT Specialist, the MRE Specialist, the TM and the TC. Each will carry the whereabouts phone approximately once every six weekends/holidays.

Documents Submitted:

- Duty Officer, Whereabouts Officer and Weekend and Holiday Whereabouts Officer Schedule for Next Three Months

Status and Timeline for Completion: August 2019

APPENDIX F: OIG COMMENTS

Management concurred with both 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 and 2 when the documentation reflected in the agency's response to the preliminary report 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.

APPENDIX G: FOLLOW-UP REVIEW COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION

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

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 Jeremy Black at jblack@peacecorpsoig.gov or 202-692-2912.

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