OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

To: Aaron Williams, Director
Helen Lowman, Regional Director, EMA
Daljit Bains, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

Date: May 5, 2011

Subject: Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Cambodia
(IG-11-04-E)

Transmitted for your information is our final report on the program evaluation of Peace Corps/Cambodia.

Management concurred with all 19 recommendations. Based on the documentation provided, we closed 5 recommendations: numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, and 18. 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 region or post 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.

Fourteen recommendations, numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 19, remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in the OIG analysis is received. Our comments, which are in the report as Appendix C, address these matters. Please respond with documentation to close the remaining open recommendations within 60 days of receipt of this memorandum. You may address questions regarding follow-up or documentation to Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations Jim O'Keefe, or to Senior Evaluator Reuben Marshall.

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

Attachments

cc: Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Deputy Director
Stacy Rhodes, Chief of Staff/Chief of Operations
Elisa Montoya, White House Liaison/Senior Advisor to the Director
Bill Rubin, General Counsel
David Burgess, Chief of Operations, EMA

Maura Fulton, Chief of Program and Training, EMA
Edward Hobson, Associate Director, Safety and Security
Esther Benjamin, Associate Director, Global Operations
Steve Miller, Director, Overseas Programming and Training Support
Joseph Hepp, CFO
Bruce Cohen, Manager, ORSS
Jon Darrah, Country Director, Cambodia
Ryan Schreiber, Country Desk Officer, Cambodia

Peace Corps
Office of Inspector General

Bayon Temple, Siem Reap, Cambodia

Final Program Evaluation Report:
Peace Corps/Cambodia
IG-11-04-E

May 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 100 Peace Corps Volunteers have served the people of Cambodia since the program opened in 2006. Programming has focused on English Teacher and Teacher Training and in 2010 Cambodia's fourth input of Volunteers included a new sector, Community Health Education. At the onset of this evaluation, there were 40 education Volunteers serving in Cambodia and 49 trainees in Pre-service Training (PST).

The Peace Corps/Cambodia program, long requested by the government of Cambodia, was launched by experienced staff with regional expertise. They have successfully established a solid base of programmatic operations. The host government, both at national and local levels, has embraced the PC/Cambodia program and is working in partnership with program managers to more firmly establish and extend Volunteer projects. The Volunteers are well-integrated with their communities and accomplishing project goals. Successful community integration has been a keystone to the Volunteers' sense of satisfaction with service and their personal safety.

Beginning in 2009, a prolonged vacancy in the director of programming and training (DPT) position impacted key operations including Volunteer programming support and medical support. The eight month absence of the DPT had a profound impact on the newly established country program, but with the arrival of a permanent DPT in July 2010, the post has been taking steps to address these issues and regain the positive momentum established in its first years of operation. This protracted staff vacancy has not been an isolated incident. A review by the Office of Global Operations determined that systemic problems caused lengthy vacancies and other issues with the recruitment and selection process for DPTs and directors of management and operations (DMOs). Following the review, a decision was made over the summer of 2010 to centralize the recruitment and selection of all DPTs and DMOs in the Office of Overseas Recruitment, Selection and Support (ORSS). ORSS began implementation of these hiring procedures in January 2011.

Many of the areas of PC/Cambodia operations that require attention can be attributed to new staff still learning their roles and responsibilities. The 2009 PST safety and security training was largely ineffective, and Volunteers were dissatisfied with several areas of safety and security support. The 2010 PST safety and security program was improved, and Volunteers report better safety and security support over time. However, some aspects of the Volunteer safety and security program remain weak. OIG recommends that the country director (CD) develop a professional development plan to further improve the safety and security coordinator's (SSC's) quality of safety and security support, and that the content and delivery of PST safety and security sessions be strengthened.

Trainees and Volunteers have felt isolated and unsupported when they have experienced discrimination in Cambodia. They are dissatisfied with the quality of pre- and in-service diversity training and feel there is a lack of awareness and support among staff.   OIG recommends that diversity training occur earlier in the PST training schedule, and that these sessions promote awareness and understanding among both staff and trainees. The Volunteer Assignment Descriptions (VADs) issued to incoming Volunteers failed to set appropriate

expectations and do not fully describe the challenges of working in the Cambodian school system or give details about diversity challenges in Cambodia. OIG recommends VAD revisions to establish more accurate expectations and better describe the reality of living and working in Cambodia.

We made additional recommendations that address Volunteer site development, Small Project Assistance (SPA) grants, the Volunteer Advisory Council, staff meetings, and staff development needs. Our report contains 19 recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen programming operations and correct the deficiencies detailed in the accompanying report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HOST COUNTRY BACKGROUND

Most of Cambodia's 14.5 million people consider themselves to be Khmers, descendents of a once-powerful empire that ruled most of mainland Southeast Asia between the tenth and thirteenth centuries. Wars with neighboring countries (present-day Thailand and Vietnam) precipitated a long period of decline and in 1863 the King of Cambodia placed the country under French protection; it became part of French Indochina in 1887. Cambodia gained full independence from France in 1953.

During the Vietnam War, the Cambodian monarch was ousted in a military coup and subsequently joined forces with the communist Khmer Rouge rebels, a guerilla force operating in Cambodia's remote jungle areas. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge overthrew the government and immediately forced urban dwellers into the countryside and began the systematic destruction of Cambodia's cultural, economic, social, and political structures. Under the Khmer Rouge regime an estimated one to three million Cambodians died from execution, forced hardship, starvation and disease. Hundreds of thousands of refugees fled the country.

In 1978, the Vietnamese army invaded Cambodia and forced the Khmer Rouge into the countryside, where they waged civil war for 13 more years. A peace accord was signed in 1991 mandating democratic elections and a ceasefire, and the United Nations sponsored Cambodia's first democratic elections in 1993. The last elements of the Khmer Rouge surrendered in 1999. The most recent national elections held in 2008 were relatively peaceful.

Reconstruction efforts have begun in recent years with the return of some political stability but Cambodia's development needs remain vast. The Khmer Rouge destroyed the country's infrastructure and wiped out an entire generation of teachers, doctors, lawyers, civil servants, and business persons. The 2010 United Nations *Human Development Report* ranks Cambodia 124 out of 169 countries. Corruption hampers reconstruction efforts and Transparency International ranked Cambodia 154 out of 178 countries in the 2010 *Corruption Perceptions Index*.

PEACE CORPS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Royal Government of Cambodia first invited the Peace Corps to open a program in Cambodia in November 1992. Assessment teams in 1994 and 1996 determined that Cambodia was not suitable for Peace Corps due to political instability and safety concerns. A third assessment in 2005 recommended that Peace Corps enter Cambodia. The post opened in July 2006 and the first group of 30 education Volunteers arrived in February 2007. The fourth training input of 54 trainees arrived in July 2010 and included a new health education sector. In addition to the trainees preparing for service at the time of our country program evaluation, the post had 40 Volunteers assigned to the following program sector:

- **English Teacher and Teacher Training**
English is a required subject for students entering the seventh grade but the education system lacks capacity due to a shortage of capable English teachers, poor quality textbooks and professional skills, low teacher salaries and high levels of corruption. Volunteers are placed in secondary schools to improve the quality of English classes and increase the capacity of their co-teachers, both in their English language skills and teaching techniques. Additional goals of the program are to develop English learning materials and resources and train youth in life skills and community development activities.

EVALUATION RESULTS

PROGRAMMING

The evaluation assessed to what extent the post has developed and implemented programs intended to increase the capacity of host country communities to meet their own technical needs. To determine this, we analyzed the following:

- The coordination between the Peace Corps and the host country in determining development priorities and Peace Corps program areas;
- Whether post is meeting its project objectives;
- Counterpart selection and quality of counterpart relationships with Volunteers;
- Site development policies and practices.

In a review of the post's relationships with host country partners and the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia, and Volunteer/counterpart relationships, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would warrant action by post. The post has gained strong support from host country partners and programming staff were working to establish Project Advisory Committees (PACs) to ensure active participation among project stakeholders.

Education Volunteers are paired with school teachers as counterparts. All but two of the 24 Volunteers in the OIG sample[1] worked with at least one counterpart and most Volunteers worked with multiple counterparts. Ninety-one percent of the Volunteers responded favorably that their counterparts supported their work activities (4.0 response average) and community integration (3.9 response average).

Cambodia experiences widespread dysfunction with school teachers due to low salaries, poor English skills, lack of motivation, and corruption. Volunteers who were dissatisfied with their counterparts selected alternate counterparts. The post has provided support to Volunteers when issues with counterparts arise by preparing them during training to work with more than one teacher and assigning them to schools with at least three English teachers.

The Peace Corps program in Cambodia has been effectively launched.

The Peace Corps post in Cambodia opened in July 2006, and in the ensuing years of hard work by staff and Volunteers, post operations and Volunteers' projects have been effectively established. We determined that the factors that led to the effective program launch include: (1) broad host country buy-in and support to the program; (2) programming alignment with development needs; and (3) Volunteer success and satisfaction with work activities and community integration. According to region managers and staff at post, the post's successful opening can also be attributed to the depth of experience and regional expertise of the post's leadership. The CD who opened the post had prior Peace Corps and regional experience, having served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in neighboring Thailand. He was replaced by one of Peace Corps's most experienced CDs who also gained much of that experience in Southeast Asia. A director of management operations (DMO) with Peace Corps experience in Southeast Asia and a seasoned DPT also provided additional support and leadership during the post's start-up phase.

1. **Peace Corps has gained broad host country cooperation and support.**
   The *Peace Corps New Country Entry Guide* affirms the importance of developing host country relationships. The guide states:

   > The country director (CD) and associate Peace Corps director (APCD) of programming and training . . . must begin building strong and lasting relationships with both the government and with those who will sponsor Volunteers. Success in these efforts lays a foundation essential to an effective post.

   According to staff at post involved with the post's opening, managers made a conscious effort to include the host government as a partner and establish essential buy-in from the Ministry of Education. Staff reported:

   > —We go through all the proper channels – it's really important in this country to follow the protocols. Peace Corps is extremely well accepted in this country, we've really made a name for ourselves and in part because protocols were followed."

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[1] The OIG interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 24 currently serving Volunteers (60%) based on their length of service, site location, project focus, gender, age, and ethnicity. Volunteers were asked to rate many items on a five-point scale (ex. 1 = not familiar, 5 = very familiar). For the purposes of the data analysis, Volunteer ratings of —3" and above are considered favorable.

By contrast, the CD reported that there are many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in Cambodia that do not see the value in working closely with the host government, and they often find ways to cut them out of the planning and consultative process.

OIG interviews and observations confirmed that the post has developed strong and collaborative relationships with Cambodian partners including the head of state, ministry officials, local district officials, host families and community members. The September 2010 swearing-in ceremony of the program's fourth group of Volunteers was attended by Cambodian government's deputy prime minister, who delivered an opening address and spoke positively of Peace Corps's contribution.

Post staff members have also established positive collaborations with local district officials. District officials play an active role in Volunteer site identification and participate in Peace Corps trainings and conferences.

2. **Programming has been aligned with host country development needs.**
   According to the *Peace Corps New Country Entry Guide*:

   > The new country assessment report should have identified the projects most appropriate for initial efforts during new country entry. The country director (CD) and associate Peace Corps director (APCD) of programming and training must confirm with the host country government that these are their priorities.

   A report prepared by the new country entry assessment team identified an acute need for English Teachers from the seventh grade on. Post staff indicated that while Cambodia is crowded with NGOs, there are no NGOs directing programs to high school level English language instruction. We found that the post's programming staff worked closely with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport to select target upper schools and communities that were a good fit for Peace Corps. Staff stated: ―The Education project has worked hand in glove with the Ministry. [They give] input regarding which provinces to place Volunteers, which schools to visit . . . the relationship is close [and has] good communication."

3. **Volunteers have found success with work activities and community integration.**
   Volunteers have experienced high levels of satisfaction with their jobs. Ninety-two percent of the Volunteers interviewed (22 of 24 Volunteers) are familiar with their project goals (3.7 response average). Eighty-eight percent of the Volunteers interviewed (21 of 24 Volunteers) believe they have had success accomplishing their primary project goals and objectives (3.5 response average). According to the 2010 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS), 94 percent of the Volunteers in Cambodia felt their work assignments adequately met the objectives of the project plan, which was higher than the global average of 86 percent. Volunteer comments included:

   > ―Teaching English and working with co-teachers are definitely possible. Students are hungry and anemic, teachers are poorly paid and might not show up, but that's stuff that can be overcome."

   > ―In teacher training, I have seen a lot of improvement and they are accepting new teaching ideas."

"I'm doing well with the students that I have…I have a good relationship with teachers. There's a big impact outside of the classroom as well."

Volunteers also informed OIG that they are satisfied with their site placements and host families. The post expects Volunteers to live with a host family throughout their service, and both staff and Volunteers feel this policy is effective in promoting community integration, building good language ability, and increasing safety and security at site. Ninety-two percent of the Volunteers interviewed (22 of 24 Volunteers) were satisfied with the sites selected for them (4.3 response average). Eighty-three percent of the Volunteers interviewed (19 of 23 Volunteers) were satisfied with their host-family experience (4.0 response average.). Eleven of 23 Volunteers rated their host-family experience "Outstanding."

Volunteer comments included:

"It's my favorite part of my Peace Corps experience. Because of them I am more integrated and know more about the culture. I go to weddings with them, and funerals, and house-warming parties and siblings' activities at school."

"I think that the host family component is really important because so many things here you won't understand without that close family tie. Volunteers should be encouraged to stay with the host family . . . the Volunteers who live on [their] own are less happy."

Post operations were significantly impacted by a prolonged director of programming and training vacancy.

The PC/Cambodia program more than doubled in size from its first training input in 2007 to its third in 2009. This growth occurred with no increase in programming staff, which at program launch included a director of programming and training, a program manager (PM) and a program assistant (PA). At the end of fiscal year 2007 the program supported 27 Volunteers. Planned growth increased the program to 57 Volunteers by the end of fiscal year 2008, and to 72 Volunteers by the end of fiscal year 2009.

Senior managers and programming staff believed they were significantly understaffed by September 2009 when Cambodia's third group of Volunteers was sworn in. The arrival of the third and larger group of Volunteers coincided with the departure of the DPT, who timed-out in November 2009. The DPT position remained vacant until the new DPT arrived in July 2010, a span of eight months.

Programming staff told OIG evaluators that during the DPT vacancy it became difficult to balance their work load, which impacted their stress levels and their work/family/personal life balance. The program manager described his job during this time as "life on the road." He has since moved to another job to bring more balance to his life. Comments from other staff at post included:

"The program staff were insanely overworked."

‖Washington didn't see the need to hire program staff until it was too late. We were burning out the programming staff."

‖We were woefully understaffed."

The programming staff, who are both new hires and still becoming familiar with their job responsibilities, also found their work more challenging without the expertise and guidance of an experienced DPT. Although the former DPT was later re-hired as a part-time consultant during spring/summer 2009, according to the country director this arrangement allowed them to ―put out fires" rather than manage the program effectively. During the eight month period without a permanent DPT lapses began to appear in important programming areas, including Volunteer communications and oversight, host family selection, Volunteer reporting feedback, and Volunteer file documentation.

Medical unit operations and the workload of the Peace Corps medical officer (PCMO) were also impacted by the DPT vacancy. As the only medical provider at post the PCMO was already kept very busy before the DPT departed. Following the DPT's departure, the PCMO began receiving non-medical support requests from Volunteers along with the medical care workload she already carried. According to Volunteers, they turned to the PCMO for additional support for several reasons: (1) the programming staff were often unavailable and had trouble returning messages promptly, if at all; (2) the inexperience of the programming staff reduced the quality of Volunteer support; (3) Volunteers were reassured by the competence and professionalism of the PCMO; (4) the PCMO was the only American female on staff.

Volunteer comments included:

‖[The PCMO] is phenomenal. She is the person you can always talk to. When [the DPT] left it was early in our service and we were more comfortable talking to American staff. There is a lot of gender stuff in Cambodia so I'd rather talk to [the PCMO]."

‖There was an immediate impact after [the DPT] left. I would call [the PCMO] when I was uncertain of anything. I had language problems and [the PCMO] got me Khmer books from the Embassy."

‖She will just call us sometimes, she's amazing. [She] has been so helpful. She understands a lot of what Volunteers are going through."

The additional Volunteer support needs placed a significant strain on the PCMO. The PCMO was unable to take time off from work and felt like she was burning out. The PCMO's ability to carry out all of her medical responsibilities was also impacted during the PTO vacancy. The PCMO made an effort to visit each Volunteer during the first year at their site. The PCMO said there were about five Volunteers that she had been too busy to visit. The PCMO was also too busy to attend the annual the Office of Medical Services (OMS) continuing medical education conferences. A medical contractor was hired by the post in June 2010 to share the work load and allow medical staff to take leave.

The Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia (EMA) region acknowledged responsibility for the long DPT vacancy. Regional staff members were not proactive in replacing a DPT known to be timing out. The DPT hiring process was unnecessarily delayed when a regional staff member

applied additional qualifying criteria to a large roster of candidates, which excluded all but two candidates. Further delay occurred when a selected candidate ultimately took a position with another agency, which required the region to re-post the DPT position.

The Office of Global Operations has instituted changes in its overseas staff hiring process.

The long duration of the Cambodia DPT vacancy has not been an isolated incident. The Office of Global Operations (OGO) determined that there were systemic problems and other issues that impacted the recruitment and selection process for DPTs and DMOs. During the summer of 2010, the OGO reviewed the process with input from various stakeholders including the EMA, Africa, and Inter-America & the Pacific regions. Agreement was reached to centralize the hiring process in the office of Overseas Recruitment, Selection and Support (ORSS). This office, which manages the country director hiring process, has begun implementation of a DPT and DMO hiring process that should impact the June 2011 Overseas Staff Training (OST).

There are several concrete advantages to centralizing the DPT and DMO hiring process. A central office would provide a more global perspective on staff vacancies and prioritize key vacancies for those posts most in need, such as newer posts composed largely of less experienced staff. Additional benefits of a more centrally managed approach include: maximizing the marketing and recruitment tools developed by ORSS; establishing consistent customer service for candidates; avoiding multiple posts selecting the same candidate; and, improving the management of timing-out data to facilitate proactive hiring activities. In light of the plans already underway to implement centralized overseas staff hiring procedures, OIG is not issuing a recommendation to support this finding.

Programming staff did not conduct effective host family selection.

Nine of the 24 Volunteers in the OIG sample were placed with host families where their living quarters did not meet standards, or where they experienced problems with integration or other suitability issues. The issues were significant enough that staff approved moving the Volunteers to new housing. Three Volunteers related that they did not have access to their own room with a locking door, which is a requirement in the post's site selection criteria. The criteria also require that the host family environment not be unstable due to dysfunction within the family or other social conditions.   Three Volunteers related that their host families were unstable, including one home owned by an alcoholic married man who lived with his mistress and hosted frequent parties. Other Volunteers were placed with host families that met site selection criteria, but after hearing complaints from the Volunteers, Peace Corps staff agreed the host families were unsuitable.

According to staff, insufficient staff resources and the short amount of time spent vetting prospective families contributed to poor host family selection. Staff indicated that comprehensive site identification requires three to four visits by staff with each visit lasting three to four hours to ensure staff have the opportunity to meet everyone in the host family. Additionally, staff felt that three housing options should be selected at each prospective site in the event that a host family cancels plans to host a Volunteer. According to staff it is not unusual for a relative to return home who was not there during site development and cancel plans to host a Volunteer.

We recommend:

1. **That the director of programming and training ensure that programming staff comply with post's Site Identification Procedural Guidance.**

Volunteers were not prepared for the challenges of working in Cambodian schools or the importance of establishing secondary activities.

Volunteers in Cambodia were satisfied with their work assignments, but were not occupied on a full-time basis with their primary projects. The schools and classes that Volunteers were assigned to were frequently closed or canceled. According to the 2009 AVS data, only 35 percent of Volunteers in Cambodia worked more than 20 hours a week on primary assignments compared to a global average of 52 percent. Volunteer comments included:

> "Work gets going, and then stops for long periods because of the schools opening and closing so often and due to teachers not being present."

> "I teach 20 hours a week but it's rare that I have a full week for more than one week at a time."

> "I do have enough to do when there aren't holidays and school is in session. There are usually two chunks of the school year when I'm busy, maybe 4 solid months of school."

Such closings and cancellations are often related to low teacher salaries, poor teacher motivation, frequent national holidays, and corruption. In 2005, the new country assessment team reported:

> Volunteers who must rely on site supervisors and co-workers who are teachers or government employees may experience a higher than normal level of frustration, since most people in these positions, particularly at lower levels must work second or third jobs to survive due to their extremely low wages.

Most Volunteers were participating in secondary activities to supplement their sporadic primary work schedule, but some Volunteers said they struggled to establish activities outside of their schools. Programming staff confirmed that some of the K3[2] Volunteers were "blindsided" by the teacher or staff absences and school closings during their initial months at their sites, indicating inadequate communications from programming staff regarding the challenges and realities of working in Cambodia's schools. The Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD), which is issued to prospective Volunteers in invitation kits, is a key communication tool for establishing work expectations. Volunteers thought that the VAD did not sufficiently emphasize the importance of initiating secondary activities. The VAD set the expectation that Volunteers should not anticipate initiating secondary activities "until you have comfortably integrated into your community and settled into your primary work assignment."

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[2] PC/Cambodia's third group of Volunteers.

In discussions, the DPT acknowledged a need for Volunteers to be ready to engage in secondary projects earlier in service and when schools are closed for long summer or holiday breaks. The DPT emphasized the importance of establishing secondary projects during the K4[3] PST, and sessions focusing on secondary activities were added to the K4 In-service Training (IST) agenda. The DPT also will begin to monitor secondary project reporting requirements on the Volunteer Reporting Form (VRF). The DPT planned to visit all K3 Volunteers to develop work plans with Volunteers who have not established secondary projects. OIG supports post efforts, to date, to increase Volunteer readiness to engage in secondary activities. Reaching out to the Volunteers to determine what type of support they require is a good first step to develop a plan of action to address this issue.

We recommend:

2. **That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Teacher Training Volunteer Assignment Description to more fully describe the challenges of working in the Cambodian school system and to emphasize the importance of secondary activities.**

3. **That the training manager review pre- and in-service training programs to ensure that they adequately address and prepare Volunteers to carry-out secondary activities.**

Youth Development Volunteer Assignment Descriptions were not aligned with programming.

Four Volunteers in the OIG sample said that they were recruited and invited to serve as Youth Development Volunteers but, after entering service, were surprised and frustrated by the lack of youth development training and programming. Youth development is identified as one of several objectives within the English Teacher and Teacher Training (ETTT) project plan. However, we found that since the inception of the project, programming and site development has been more focused on education than youth development. Only one of the Youth Development Volunteers in the OIG sample was able to initiate activities with a youth-related organization at their site.

However, the post continues to request new Volunteers from the Youth Development applicant pool. A review of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) data showed that the post requested seven Youth Development Volunteers as part of the 2009 K3 training class. These applicants were invited to serve in Cambodia with the job title of English Teacher and Youth Development Advisor. The VAD stated, ―As a Youth Development Volunteer, you will split your time between teaching English at your high school and supporting a local NGO [non-governmental organization] or informal youth organization focusing on programs for youth in your area.‖

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[3] PC/Cambodia's fourth group of Volunteers.

The Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS) for FY 2011-2013 indicated plans to broaden the youth development component of the project, which increases the need for programming to align with expectation setting.

We recommend:

   4. **That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Youth Development Advisor Volunteer Assignment Description to establish more accurate expectations.**

Small Project Assistance (SPA) grants were under-utilized by Volunteers.

The IPBS for FY 2011-2013 reported $22,900 was available for SPA grants in FY 2011. Of that total, $14,400 was carried over from FY 2010. Many of the Volunteers in the OIG sample said they lacked interest in conducting SPA funded projects. Poor staff support and guidance of SPA projects could have contributed to lack of interest in utilizing the available funding. The OIG Volunteer sample included eight[4] Volunteers who developed SPA projects. Six of those Volunteers experienced delays and frustrations they attributed to unclear guidance from staff. Volunteer comments included:

> ―I don't mind my time being eaten up but this was frustrating for [the project partners] and it looked like I was incompetent. It's wasting everyone's time. I don't want to do more SPA work as a result."

> ―[There was] very little communication about how to write the grant, how to get the proposal to Peace Corps in the first place . . . once I turned it in it was a black hole. People would call me from time to time and say we need [additional information]. It took 3-4 months to get the funds."

The DMO said that SPA oversight was disrupted by the departure of the DPT in November 2009. The coordination of SPA activities shifted to the DMO, who was unfamiliar with the SPA process and required back and forth communications with the Partnership Development Unit at headquarters while processing SPA proposals. The current DPT, who has professional grant management experience, acknowledged that the SPA process had not been effective and related plans for improvements. The DPT felt that streamlining the SPA process and raising Volunteer and staff awareness will increase the number of SPA proposals and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of SPA projects.

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[4] Not including multiple Volunteers working on the same SPA project.

We recommend:

> **5. That the director of programming and training review the Small Project Assistance (SPA) process and re-design SPA training so that Volunteers know how to apply for funding and manage the program.**

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Our country program evaluation attempts to answer the question, ―Has post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers?" To determine this, we assessed numerous factors, including: staff-Volunteer communications; project and status report feedback; medical support; safety and security support, including staff visits to Volunteer work sites, the Emergency Action Plan (EAP), the handling of crime incidents; and, the adequacy of the Volunteer living allowance.

In our review of Volunteer administrative support, the Emergency Action Plan, and medical support, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would warrant action by the post.

The Volunteers are supported by a high performing medical officer and staff.

We found that Volunteer medical support was a particularly strong aspect of post operations. One-hundred percent of the Volunteers we interviewed (24 of 24 Volunteers) rated medical support favorably (4.9 response average). This confirmed data from the 2010 Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS), in which the post ranked significantly higher than global averages, and an assessment of post medical operations performed by the Office of Medical Services. A 2009 site evaluation by OMS' chief of quality improvement determined that Cambodia is a high performing medical post and described the PCMO as an ―extremely skilled, dedicated, and experienced PCMO. She maintains an outstanding rapport with Volunteers and staff." Volunteers also gave the medical office assistant high marks for responsiveness and quality of care. Based on the overwhelmingly positive comments made by Volunteers during the interviews conducted, we fully concur with this assessment.

Volunteers were dissatisfied with safety and security support.

SSC support received a lower rating from Volunteers than other support areas at the post (see Table X).

Table 1: Level of Support Provided by Staff

Area of Support	Percent Favorable (3,4,5)	Average Response Rating
Staff Overall	88%	3.5
Country Director	80%	3.3
DPT (former)	87%	4.0
Programming Staff	95%	3.9
Safety and Security	71%	2.9
Medical	100%	4.9
Administrative	86%	3.8

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews, 2010

OIG interviews confirmed data from the 2010 AVS in which the post ranked lower than global averages for safety and security support. In interview comments, Volunteers identified several areas of dissatisfaction, which include inappropriate or insufficient responses to the security concerns they raised and the SSC's poor communication skills. Volunteers also related that the SSC seemed to be uncomfortable in front of groups and her English was often hard to understand, which impacted her effectiveness during training. Volunteer comments included:

> "I borrowed a bicycle at the office and it was stolen from the guest house where I stayed. [The SSC] was mad about it and very unprofessional. The bike was locked up but she made it seem like it was my fault."

> "Things we consider are a problem [the SSC] does not. When a female is harassed she down plays it. Maybe it's a cultural gap there."

> "I had a purse stolen but didn't report it because I'd just get a lecture. I feel a lack of support from [the SSC]."

> "If you lose a phone you get interrogated so why would someone go to her if they were sexually assaulted?"

The SSC did not have safety and security work experience prior to joining the post staff in April 2007. In fact, the SSC was initially interviewed for a programming position due to her background but was offered the SSC position. Since arrival, her training consisted of six visits from the Bangkok-based Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer (PCSSO) and a two-week SSC Training Program provided by the office of Safety and Security in August 2010. In addition to her lack of prior professional experience, the SSC had a difficult time communicating and building rapport with the K3 group during PST and many Volunteers developed an unfavorable impression of her professional abilities.

Despite early difficulties with the K3 group, the SSC made an effort to provide effective support and in interviews Volunteers noted improvements during the course of their service. Volunteers related positive one-on-one interactions with the SSC and improvements to her English. Volunteer comments included:

> "In training there were times she'd come to talk to us and she'd admonish us for stuff we didn't know about . . . she seems to be more approachable and collected for the new PST. I think maybe the lack of staff was affecting her, and too many duties."

―I think she means well and I've seen improvement there."

―She had issues during training [but] she will help you solve problems if you go to her."

Other staff at post noted that the SSC showed significant improvement during the K4 PST. In an interview, the PCSSO expressed confidence with the SSC's professional development and is committed to ongoing support and training through two annual visits to Cambodia. In interviews with OIG, the SSC spoke positively about her professional development and noted that she has become more confident presenting in front of a group. To further improve the SSC's quality of safety and security support the post could pursue additional professional development in the areas of training development, presentation skills, English language and communication skills, and cross-cultural development for a better grounding in American attitudes and cultural norms.

We recommend:

6. **That the country director, in consultation with the Peace Corps safety and security Officer, develop a professional development plan for the safety and security coordinator and monitor progress towards those skill development goals.**

Programming staff were not effectively communicating with Volunteers.

The importance of effective communications between programming staff and Volunteers is illustrated in Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide*. The guide states:

> [Programming staff] must maintain solid and effective communications systems with the Volunteers in the field, in order to know the conditions, needs, performance, problems, and desires of the Volunteer population they are supposed to be guiding, supporting, and overseeing.

Volunteers stated that programming staff in Cambodia were often unavailable or unresponsive to their phone calls, emails, and text messages. Volunteer comments included:

―[The PM] knows his job, and has the answers for me. But he is so overworked he often did not call back right away."

―[The PM] seemed so overwhelmed he was not always available to me."

―The problem was getting hold of [the PM]. He was taking care of too many things."

Programming staff acknowledged being overwhelmed by Volunteer support and communication needs following the arrival at site of Cambodia's third group of Volunteers in September 2009. This input more than doubled the size of the program in a span of two years. Program staff

support to Volunteers was further impacted by the November 2009 departure of the DPT and a span of 10 months when this position was unfilled. These factors contributed to a breakdown in regular, supportive communications with Volunteers in the field.

The staffing shortage in the programming unit has been addressed. The DPT position was filled in July 2010 and the staff size has increased to three Program Managers and two Program Assistants. The DPT plans to improve all levels of Volunteer communications including phone calls, emails, texts, postal mail, and reporting feedback. The DPT expects that the new staffing level will be sufficient to significantly improve the communications systems. Programming staff were very supportive of more regular and proactive communications with Volunteers.

> **We recommend:**
>
> 7. **That the director of programming and training establish guidelines to ensure that programming staff communicate regularly with Volunteers.**

Volunteer performance reporting feedback has been inconsistent.

Volunteers are required to submit a quarterly report using the Volunteer Reporting Form (VRF). According to the *PC/Cambodia Volunteer Handbook*, programming staff will read reports submitted by Volunteers and send comments or suggestions back to the Volunteers. However, only 35 percent of the Volunteers interviewed by OIG indicated that they received reporting feedback ―always" or ―most of the time." Staff acknowledged that they did not always read the reports and provide feedback, which may be a cause for lackluster reporting. In interview comments, Volunteers said that they do not always complete the VRF or take the reporting requirement seriously.

Volunteer performance reports are necessary to meet agency reporting requirements and, if used effectively, they can also play an important role in ensuring good staff communication, support, and timely responsiveness to problems experienced by Volunteers. According to *Peace Corps Programming and Training Guidance: Management and Implementation*:

> Volunteers are motivated when their APCD/PM has high expectations of them and follows-up on issues they face. Some examples of how are . . . Read and provide timely feedback to Volunteer Report Forms (VRFs).

Since arriving in July 2010, the DPT has made an effort to provide reporting feedback to each Volunteer, and several Volunteers informed OIG that they received and appreciated this feedback from the DPT. To increase the quality of Volunteer reporting the DPT should ensure that Volunteer performance reporting feedback is timely and consistent.

We recommend:

> **8. That the director of programming and training ensure that Volunteers receive timely feedback to Volunteer Reporting Forms.**

The Volunteer Advisory Council was not functioning as an active advisory group.

Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide* identifies the Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) as one of the best mechanisms to gather, analyze, and funnel Volunteer concerns and suggestions to staff. The *PC/Cambodia Volunteer Handbook* identified the VAC as ―an important tool for communication between Volunteers and staff." In practice, the VAC in Cambodia has not functioned as an effective communication tool. The VAC met only once since the K3 Volunteers entered service in September 2009. Eighty-three percent of the Volunteers we interviewed rated the effectiveness of the VAC below average (1.8 response average) and most Volunteers were unable to identify VAC activities or accomplishments. Volunteers would like to see more from the VAC. Volunteer comments included:

> ―I think it should be used since some Volunteers might not be comfortable going to staff and would rather go to a VAC [representative] who would go to staff."

> ―It should be a way to communicate safety and security concerns to the staff."

> ―I think it would be good for [VAC representatives] to speak on behalf of their region . . . the VAC could be a go-between that can address issues we are all having."

Many of the staff we interviewed expressed support for a more fully functioning VAC. The CD related a few concerns based on experiences at other posts: VAC activities take Volunteers away from their work and VACs have the potential to take on a negative character. However, these same concerns are identified in Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide*, and the guide offers suggestions to alleviate these concerns. The VAC structure is in place and VAC representatives have been elected. To re-energize and focus the activities of the VAC senior post staff will need to actively support and nurture its re-organization.

> **We recommend:**

> **9. That the country director and director of programming and training work with Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) representatives to improve the effectiveness of the VAC as a tool for communication between Volunteers and staff.**

Site Locator Forms were missing key information.

According to the post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP), ―it is essential that Volunteers ensure that their Site Locator Form (SLF) is accurate and up-to-date at all times." The Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide states*:

> Components of the (emergency) action plans should include:
> *Accessible updated emergency information forms* (or emergency site locator forms) for each Volunteer and site.

OIG evaluators requested site locator forms for the 24 sampled Volunteers in order to test their accuracy when they traveled to Volunteers' sites. Two SLFs did not exist or had been misfiled. Of the 14 SLFs that could be verified for accuracy ,[5] only eight were sufficiently accurate to locate the Volunteers. Maps typically were missing compass bearings, accurate distance indications, intersections, and landmarks. The lack of such details renders the maps useless when staff or others coming to assist them in an emergency situation are unfamiliar with the Volunteers' host communities. An additional analysis of 20[6] SLFs from the Volunteer sample revealed multiple occurrences of missing data.

Table 2: Missing Data from Site Locator Forms

Missing Item	Number of SLFs with Missing Item	Percentage of SLFs with Missing Item
Landline Contact Number	10	50%
Contact information for nearest medical facility	9	45%
Contact information for consolidation point	9	45%
Contact information for local taxi/neighbor with car	6	30%
Contact information for nearest medical facility	5	25%

The SSC confirmed that currently there is no process in place to verify the accuracy of the SLFs, their existence in the appropriate file, or to ensure completion of missing information, and there is no mention of SLFs in the post's *Site Visit Procedural Guide*. There are a number of strategies that could address this problem: programming staff could be tasked with verifying the SLF data during their first visit to Volunteer sites; staff could give Volunteers explicit instructions regarding map construction; and, general service clerks/drivers could verify the accuracy of the maps when they are conducting business in the area.

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[5] Evaluators were unable to verify 8 SLFs because seven Volunteers were interviewed at locations away from their sites, and a married couple shared the same SLF, which was counted only once for this exercise.
[6] Evaluators were unable to verify data for four SLFs because two SLFs were missing and the two married couples in the sample shared one SLF.

We recommend:

> **10. That the safety and security coordinator develop guidance for staff and Volunteers to ensure Site Locator Forms are complete, accurate, filed correctly, and that maps are verified for accuracy after Volunteers submit them.**

Some of the Volunteer housing criteria is impractical and requires revision.

OIG evaluators visited Volunteers in 16 sites and checked the living conditions of 11 Volunteers using post-defined site selection criteria. Post -specific housing criteria were not met in two areas: seven houses (64 percent) did not have screens in bedroom windows and, in four houses (36 percent), the food preparation areas were not protected from household animals. These two criteria may be impractical or impossible to fully comply with due to local housing conditions and host family lifestyles. Due to the tropical climate, Cambodian houses are built in an open-air style that is difficult and expensive to enclose with screens. Kitchens also are open-air and easily accessed by various household animals. Neither criteria is likely to be met while Volunteers live and eat with their host families in typical Cambodian houses.

Staff acknowledged that it is impractical for many Volunteers to install screens in bedroom windows and the post distributes mosquito nets that Volunteers install over their beds as a more practical strategy for avoiding mosquito bites while they sleep. Post staff should revise the site selection criteria to reflect this strategy. Post staff should also consider revising the criterion that food preparation areas be protected from household animals. The need to review and update housing criteria has also been raised in other agency reviews of post operations. In 2009, the PCSSO issued the following recommendation, which remains open:

> Update standards for acceptable T/V housing options, document the site selection procedures, and train staff on the process and how to use the criteria when conducting site assessments and housing checks. Post does an exceptional job getting various staff (PM, GSCDs, PA, AA, ITS, SSC) involved in site selection, so ensuring they all know the procedures and criteria will make for a more efficient process.

We recommend:

> **11. That the country director: (1) address the 2009 Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendation to update the Volunteer site and housing criteria; (2) train staff to use the criteria; and (3) systematically inspect housing to ensure it meets the criteria.**

Another objective of the post evaluation is to answer the question, ―Does training prepare Volunteers for Peace Corps service?" To answer this question we considered such factors as:

- Training adequacy;
- Planning and development of the training life cycle;
- Staffing and related budget.

Ninety-six percent of the Volunteers in our sample were satisfied with their Pre-Service Training (PST) host family experience (4.2 response average). Ninety-six percent of the Volunteers in our sample were also satisfied with PST language training (4.1 response average). This confirms 2009 AVS data which showed Volunteers in Cambodia are more satisfied with language learning support and their local language communication skills than global averages. All 49[7] of the K4 trainees who entered service on September 23, 2010 passed the language tests required to complete PST.

Training staff evaluate and track trainees' progress in core and sector competencies and learning objectives. The training manager believes he has the financial and staff resources needed to deliver effective trainings.

Pre-service Training was strengthened by current and former Volunteers.

Prior to the K4 PST, which was conducted from July 22 to September 23, 2010, the post approved service extensions for two K2 Volunteers to provide support roles throughout training. These two Volunteers helped to significantly improve the safety and security training, which is described in more detail later in this report. The K4 PST also included more currently serving Volunteers than the previous training program.

The OIG interview sample included several K3 Volunteers who served in training support roles in the K4 PST, and they all agreed that PST had been strengthened. Volunteer comments included:

> ―The K4 training had improvements that we had suggested. Getting the K2s to help run the training was great, and greater Volunteer participation was very helpful. We had recommended that."

> ―[The K4] training is far and above better than the K3 training. It's far more cognizant of American culture. It felt different and I think because the K2 [Volunteers] were there and working in partnership. We really talked about developing the sessions together as a team."

> ―[The K4] training is running more smoothly than ours did. They have a lot more staff now and what's key is they used two Volunteers to be the facilitators in the training."

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[7] Not including five trainees who resigned during PST.

An OIG evaluator visited the K4 training site and met with a group of trainees shortly before their swearing-in ceremony. The K4 trainees felt adequately prepared for service and were satisfied with their training.

Post staff also provided positive feedback regarding the participation of Volunteers in PST and the Training Manager told the OIG that he plans to continue to use extension Volunteers to support future trainings.

The 2009 PST safety and security training was ineffective, but was improved for the 2010 PST program.

Peace Corps's policy on safety and security training is stated in *Peace Corps Manual Section 270*, ―To enhance safety overseas, all V/Ts should have a clear understanding of safety and security issues at their posts, should be provided relevant safety training ....''

The K3 PST safety and security training delivered in July-August 2009 received the lowest effectiveness rating from the Volunteers in our sample (see Table X).

Table 4: How Effective Was PST Training?[8]

Training Area	Percent Favorable (3,4,5)	Average Response Rating
Language	96%	4.1
Culture	71%	3.1
Safety & Security	65%	2.9
Medical	100%	4.8
Technical	83%	3.2

Volunteers felt that the safety and security training sessions were poorly presented, redundant, and lacked relevance to their work sites and living situations in rural Cambodia. Volunteer comments included:

> ―When they were doing travel safety the SSC just told us to always ride in a safe taxi – though my site only has one – and she said to look at the tires and seat belts. These people live in the big city and have lots of transportation. There's a rift between the world they lived in and the world we were going to.''

> ―Training was not done well, the scenarios were . . . common sense stuff like should we get in a car that is not working . . . we weren't given much useful information.''

> ―There were points that were belabored that were common sense – watch your things, lock your door – basic things we didn't need repeated. I think it was too repetitive.''

Volunteers related that certain safety and security issues that concerned them were not adequately addressed, such as public transportation risks, strategies to deal with inappropriate attention, or how to seek support from community members for problems they encounter. The *K3 Final PST Report* included feedback from trainees that safety and security sessions were

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[8] Results do not include the K4 PST

repetitive and hard to understand. The report concluded that the safety and security training was not effective. The report stated:

> ―During the Bridge-to-Site day at the conclusion of the PST several if not most Trainees could not answer even the most basic questions regarding safety and security. This was a telling sign that the material was not taken seriously or retained at all."

According to the SSC, she did not feel prepared to conduct the K3 Volunteer safety and security training by herself. The SSC had expected support from a deputy PST director but the person hired for the job was let go without being replaced. The training group was also larger than the one at the previous PST, and the SSC was not comfortable conducting training sessions with the larger group. Without support, the SSC designed and planned the K3 safety and security sessions independently, which she had not done before, and delivered the sessions by herself. As a result, the design, planning, and delivery of the sessions were not effective and the SSC was unable to develop rapport or build trust with the K3 trainees. This in turn impacted the SSC's ability to provide Volunteer support following training.

The need for safety and security training improvements was identified by the training staff in their assessment report. According to the *K3 Final PST Report*:

> For future PSTs it is recommended to have a RPCV training staff member directly assist the SSC on safety and security training design and implementation. The SSC took all of the responsibility for designing, planning and presenting information. This was extremely stressful and could be eliminated in future PSTs with more support and component integration.

Post staff followed through on the recommendation and utilized two Volunteers from Cambodia's second group of Volunteers (K2) to support training. The SSC said that collaborating with the Volunteers helped her adjust her delivery techniques to a more effective American style. The SSC believed that she has become more confident delivering presentations and credits a two-week training course she attended in August 2010 presented by the Office of Safety and Security.

We note that additional Volunteer safety and security training support has been provided by the Bangkok-based PCSSO. The PCSSO traveled twice to Cambodia, in August 2007 and February 2008, prior to the K2 PST and again, June 2009, prior to the K3 PST to support the SSC's training development. The PCSSO traveled again to Cambodia in September 2009 to follow-up on the K3 PST and visited once in July 2010 prior to the arrival of Cambodia's fourth group of Volunteers K4. In a discussion with OIG, the PCSSO was confident that the K4 safety and security PST sessions were significantly improved. Nonetheless, the SSC still feels she requires support to deliver effective training sessions in PST. The *K3 Final PST Report* recommended that the SSC seek team support with PST.

According to Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide*, the CD should play a role in ensuring staff collaboration in training activities. The guide states:

Some of the critical roles for the CD to fill [include] promoting team-building efforts among country program and training staff (including APCD/PMs, PCMO, SSC, etc.) and monitoring the success of the team approach as training continues—and where there is a need, actively working alongside the training director or manager to construct and solidify collaboration among staff members.

We recommend:

12. **That the training manager continue and expand the practice of including Volunteers who can share their experience-based perspectives during pre-service training programs.**

13. **That the safety and security coordinator collaborates with training and programming staff to plan and conduct safety and security training sessions.**

14. **That the safety and security coordinator receive additional training in the areas of training development and training delivery.**

Volunteers are dissatisfied with diversity training.

Many Cambodians are poorly informed about American cultural diversity and believe that all Americans are of European origin. According to Volunteers, a bias against darker skin color is common in Cambodia and impacts Americans who are not light skinned. According to the *PC/Cambodia Welcome Book*:

> Some Volunteers may experience blatant bigotry, but subtle discrimination is more common . . . In general, Cambodians view lighter skin as more beautiful, a perception based more on an aesthetic bias than any racial prejudice and one that existed long before encounters between Cambodia and the West.

Asian Americans also experience biases. Asian Americans can be mistaken for nationals from other countries and they can also be mistaken for Cambodians and held to language and cultural expectations they are unable to meet. If they are perceived as Thai or Vietnamese they may experience prejudices due to a long and ongoing history of regional conflict.

A diversity session was held during PST, but Volunteers did not feel it was sufficient to prepare them for the challenges they encounter in Cambodia. Volunteers also believed that staff lacked awareness of diversity issues, which is described in more detail later in this report. Volunteers indicated that more training is needed regarding diversity among Volunteers. Volunteer comments included:

> "There has been no purposeful training on diversity during PST . . . we as Americans have a lack of ability to talk about these issues."

> "They even train the men how to support the women Volunteers but don't do that for ethnicities."

Due to the lack of training and preparation for such encounters, Volunteers felt unsupported and isolated when they experienced discrimination. Volunteers were upset and offended by the lack of awareness and support among staff regarding these problems. A group of K4 trainees recalled that their PST diversity training session got ―pretty heated" because several trainees were angry that other trainees and training staff had not realized they were being treated differently in the Khmer communities. As a result, the trainees felt the diversity session should occur earlier in training and more comprehensively treat issues of diversity and discrimination in Cambodia.

Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide* identifies some specific steps that posts can take to promote and support diversity. These include:

> Conducting [training] activities directed at helping Volunteers and staff to identify the different groups and backgrounds that are a part of their program; to hear and understand the issues people of different backgrounds and perspectives may face; to identify and practice ways in which diverse Volunteers (and staff) can establish communications and networks with each other and support each other.

A diversity training guide from the Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support identifies the following training goals:

- Develop an awareness and appreciation of the diversity within the training group and how interaction within the group may be positively or negatively impacted.
- Develop strategies for Volunteer and trainee mutual support and how to be allies for each other.
- Identify how interaction with the community and project effectiveness might be affected by Volunteer diversity and develop appropriate coping strategies.
- Identify the appropriate process to raise allegations of discrimination or sexual harassment.

Trainees and Volunteers would feel less isolated and more supported if diversity training occurred earlier in PST and promoted awareness and understanding among both staff and trainees. Post staff could also prepare Volunteers for diversity training by establishing appropriate expectations regarding diversity challenges in the VADs.

> **We recommend:**
>
> 15. **That the training manager enhance diversity training and deliver training shortly after trainees arrive in Cambodia.**
>
> 16. **That the director of programming and training update Volunteer Assignment Descriptions to establish expectations regarding diversity challenges.**

Another key objective of our country program evaluation is to assess the extent to which the post's resources and agency support are effectively aligned with the post's mission and agency priorities. To address these questions, we assess a number of factors, including staffing; staff development; office work environment; collection and reporting performance data; and the post's strategic planning and budgeting.

In reviewing the post's relationship with headquarters and the U.S. Embassy, the office work environment, and post's strategic planning and budgeting process, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would warrant action by the post.

Staff at post required additional Emergency Action Plan (EAP) training.

Staff EAP training is required under *Peace Corps Manual Section 270* and its importance is clearly stated in the post's EAP (2009). The plan states:

> The effectiveness of the Emergency Action Plan depends upon the full support and cooperation of all Staff, Volunteers and Trainees. It is essential that members of Peace Corps Cambodia be knowledgeable of the Emergency Action Plan and their individual roles and responsibilities.

The SSC advised OIG that post staff members were not sufficiently trained regarding their EAP responsibilities. The PCSSO had also identified and reported this weakness on multiple occasions. Following an August 2007 visit to Cambodia, the PCSSO issued a recommendation ―to conduct staff development sessions regarding roles and responsibilities as defined in the EAP." Following another visit in June 2009, the PCSSO issued a recommendation ―to design trainings for office staff to enhance office emergency preparedness." The PCSSO issued a ―required recommendation" in September 2009 to conduct staff EAP training. And in December 2009, the PCSSO recommended that staff receive EAP training by participating in EAP tests and functional drills.

According to the SSC, the staff EAP training had not been implemented due to scheduling difficulties and noted that leadership support would be needed to implement staff training. Staff confirmed that the SSC has struggled to be assertive with other staff at post or request their support, particularly with staff that represent a higher level of authority. According to *Peace Corps Manual* section 270, the SSC ―must collaborate closely with other staff to ensure that all required components of the Volunteer safety and security support system are operational and are being properly executed." Increased involvement from post leadership may be required to implement staff EAP training and reduce the risk that post will respond ineffectively to crises.

> **We recommend:**
>
> **17. That the country director address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations by implementing staff Emergency Action Planning training.**

Post staff expressed interest in more frequent staff meetings.

The benefits of regular staff meetings are illustrated in Peace Corps's *Characteristics and Strategies of a High Performing Post: Post Management Resource Guide*. The guide states:

> One of the quickest ways to undermine communication and trust is to meet only when there is a problem . . . For communication to take place and trust and cooperation to be established, people must also meet under ordinary circumstances, when they are not under pressure to solve a problem right away. One approach to this is to have regular meetings, both one-on-one and as a group . . . The use of such meetings is cited repeatedly by CDs as an effective technique for promoting good communication and team spirit among the staff.

The previous CD held two or more staff meetings each month. The current CD has held several meetings each year but the majority of staff interviewed by OIG would prefer to see an increase in the number of staff meetings.

Staff identified several benefits to more regular meetings, which included: capacity building, training, and orientation for new staff; team building; collaboration and alignment between programming, training, and safety and security; staying informed about current operations and activities; and sharing learning and development experiences.

We recommend:

18. That the country director establish regular staff meetings.

The post had significant staff development needs.

Staff development at the post is an essential management function due to the large number of staff both new to Peace Corps and to their roles. Of the 13 staff we interviewed, only three had previous Peace Corps work experience before joining the post, and four staff-members had been on the job for less than one year. The post has added two additional staff-members to the programming team.

Both staff and Volunteers stated that staff development was needed in important areas including active listening/Volunteer support, conflict resolution, presentation skills, and diversity training.

Staff comments included:

> ―I feel that staff could use some role-playing and practice working with Volunteers that are upset or frustrated, some conflict resolution stuff. . . Khmer staff are not comfortable in front of groups.‖

> ―The staff struggle sometimes with their role when a Volunteer calls for help with an issue; should they advocate for the Volunteers at their sites or just interpret?‖

Volunteers of diverse backgrounds experienced staff members questioning their nationality because they are not of European heritage. Volunteer comments included:

"There are staff who asked me if I'm American . . . I didn't come straight from Africa."

"I don't know how much diversity training staff receive. I've had diversity issues . . . Most Cambodians think all Americans are white."

Many staff members had a strong interest in visiting Peace Corps staff at other posts to share ideas and learn their best practices. In the most recent IPBS submission the post identified "Personnel Management and Staff Development" as one of the top four post management functions that are most in need of attention. The staff development activities listed in the IPBS included: diversity/American culture, active listening/Volunteer support, and developing training opportunities for staff, especially for them to experience Peace Corps processes at other posts. The IPBS also identified a goal to build staff capacity and skills by implementing an annual all-staff retreat, which did not occur in 2009 due to budget cuts. By meeting staff training needs the staff will position itself to effectively expand the size and scope of its Volunteer program.

We recommend:

19. That the country director implement the staff development activities outlined in the FY 2011-2013 Integrated Planning and Budget System.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

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

The Evaluation Unit within the Peace Corps OIG 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.

OIG Evaluation Unit announced its intent to conduct an evaluation of PC/Cambodia on July 21, 2010. For post evaluations, we use the following researchable questions to guide our work:

- To what extent has post developed and implemented programs to increase host country communities' capacity?
- Does training prepare Volunteers for Peace Corps service?
- Has the post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers?
- Are post resources and agency support effectively aligned with the post's mission and agency priorities?

The evaluation team conducted the preliminary research portion of the evaluation July 21-September 3, 2010. This research included review of agency documents provided by headquarters and post staff; interviews with management staff representing the EMA region, Overseas Programming and Training Support, Office of Safety and Security; and inquiries to OMS, VRS, and the Office of Private Sector Initiatives.

In-country fieldwork occurred from September 7 - 28, 2010 and included interviews with post senior staff in charge of programming, training, and support; the U.S. Ambassador; the embassy regional security officer; and host country government ministry officials. In addition, we interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 24 Volunteers (60 percent of Volunteers serving at the time of our visit) based on their length of service, site location, project focus, gender, age, ethnicity, and marital status.

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

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this post evaluation, interviews were conducted with 24 Volunteers, 14 post staff members, and 18 representatives from Peace Corps headquarters in Washington D.C., the U.S. Embassy in Cambodia, and key ministry officials. Volunteer interviews were conducted using a standardized interview questionnaire, and Volunteers were asked to rate many items on a five-point scale (1 = not effective, 3 = average effective, 5 = very effective). The analysis of these ratings provided a quantitative supplement to Volunteer comments, which were also analyzed. For the purposes of the data analysis, Volunteer ratings of —3" and above are considered favorable. In addition, 16 out of 24 Volunteer interviews occurred at the Volunteers' sites, and we inspected 11 Volunteer homes using post-defined site selection criteria. The period of review for a post evaluation is one full Volunteer cycle (typically 27 months).

The following table provides demographic information that represents the entire Volunteer population in Cambodia; the Volunteer sample was selected to reflect these demographics.

Table 5: Volunteer Demographic Data

Project	Percentage of Volunteers
English Teaching and Teacher Training[9]	100%
Gender	**Percentage of Volunteers**
Female	60%
Male	40%
Age	**Percentage of Volunteers**
25 or younger	65%
26-29	28%
30-54	8%
55 and over	0

Source: August 2010 PC/Cambodia Volunteer roster.
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

At the time of our field visit, the post had 26 staff positions. The post also employed 12 temporary language and cross-cultural facilitators to assist with PST. We interviewed 14 staff members, including the former DPT.

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[9] Ten Volunteers were identified as ETTT/Health Volunteers. These cross-sector Volunteers were piloting the Community Health Education program that was launched in 2010.

Table 6: Interviews Conducted with PC/Cambodia Staff Members

Position	Status	Interviewed
Country Director	USDH	X
Executive Secretary	PSC	
Safety and Security Coordinator	PSC	X
Director of Programming and Training	USDH	X
Former Director of Programming and Training (July 2006 – Nov 2009)	USDH	X
Program Manager (2)	PSC	X
Training Manager	PSC	X
Language and Cross-Cultural Coordinator	PSC	X
Program Assistant	PSC	X
Director of Management and Operations	USDH	X
Budget & Financial Manager	PSC	X
Cashier	FSN	
General Services Manager	PSC	
Information Technology Specialist	PSC	X
Administrative Assistant	PSC	
General Services Clerk (5)	PSC	
Cleaner (3)		
Peace Corps Medical Officer	PSC (US)	X
Peace Corps Medical Contractor	PSC	X
Medical Assistant	PSC	

Data as of September 2010.

Additional interviews with 18 people were conducted during the preliminary research phase of the evaluation, in-country fieldwork and follow-up work upon return to Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Table 7: Interviews Conducted with PC/Headquarters Staff, Embassy Officials and Key Ministry Officials

Position	Organization
Regional Director	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Chief of Operations	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Chief Director of Management and Operations	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Acting Chief of Program & Training	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Country Desk Officer	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Country Desk Assistant	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Safety & Security Desk Officer	PC/Headquarters/EMA Region
Programming & Training Specialist/Health	PC/Headquarters/OPATS
Associate Director	PC/Headquarters/OGO
Management Analyst	PC/Headquarters/OGO
Manager, Overseas Recruitment, Selection and Support	PC/Headquarters/M/HRM
Director, Office of Medical Services	PC/Headquarters/VS
Deputy Director, Office of Medical Services	PC/Headquarters/VS
Chief of Clinical Programs	PC/Headquarters/VS
Safety & Security Officer/Thailand	PC/Headquarters/SS
Ambassador	U.S. Embassy in Cambodia
Regional Security Officer	U.S. Embassy in Cambodia
Secretary of State	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport

Data as of September 2010.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

WE RECOMMEND:

1. That the director of programming and training ensure that programming staff comply with post's Site Identification Procedural Guidance.

2. That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Teacher Training Volunteer Assignment Description to more fully describe the challenges of working in the Cambodian school system and to emphasize the importance of secondary activities.

3. That the training manager review pre- and in-service training programs to ensure that they adequately address and prepare Volunteers to carry-out secondary activities.

4. That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Youth Development Advisor Volunteer Assignment Description to establish more accurate expectations.

5. That the director of programming and training review the Small Project Assistance (SPA) process and re-design SPA training so that Volunteers know how to apply for funding and manage the program.

6. That the country director, in consultation with the Peace Corps safety and security officer, develop a professional development plan for the safety and security coordinator and monitor progress towards those skill development goals.

7. That the director of programming and training establish guidelines to ensure that programming staff communicate regularly with Volunteers.

8. That the director of programming and training ensure that Volunteers receive timely feedback to Volunteer Reporting Forms.

9. That the country director and director of programming and training work with Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) representatives to improve the effectiveness of the VAC as a tool for communication between Volunteers and staff.

10. That the safety and security coordinator develop guidance for staff and Volunteers to ensure Site Locator Forms are complete and accurate and that maps are verified for accuracy after Volunteers submit them.

11. That the country director: (1) address the 2009 Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendation to update the Volunteer site and housing criteria; (2) train staff to use the criteria; and (3) systematically inspect housing to ensure it meets the criteria.

12. That the training manager continue and expand the practice of including Volunteers who can share their experience-based perspectives during pre-service training programs.

13. That the safety and security coordinator collaborates with training and programming staff to plan and conduct safety and security training sessions.

14. That the safety and security coordinator receive additional training in the areas of training development and training delivery.

15. That the training manager enhance diversity training and deliver training shortly after trainees arrive in Cambodia.

16. That the director of programming and training update Volunteer Assignment Descriptions to establish expectations regarding diversity challenges.

17. That the country director address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations by implementing staff Emergency Action Planning training.

18. That the country director establish regular staff meetings.

19. That the country director implement the staff development activities outlined in the FY 2011-2013 Integrated Planning and Budget System.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE TO
THE PRELIMINARY REPORT

Since 1961.

Memorandum

To: Kathy Buller, Inspector General

Through: Daljit K. Bains, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Helen Lowman, EMA Regional Director
               Jon Darrah, Country Director

Date: March 31, 2011

CC: Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Deputy Director
               Stacy Rhodes, Chief of Staff
               Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General
               Jim O'Keefe, Assistant IG, Evaluations
               Esther Benjamin, Associate Director, Global Operations
               Ed Hobson, Associate Director, Safety and Security
               David Burgess, Chief of Operations, EMA
               Steve Miller, Director, Overseas Programming and Training Support
               Sarah Morgenthau, Director, Peace Corps Response
               Maura Fulton, Chief of Programming & Training, EMA
               Ryan Schreiber, Country Desk Officer

Subject: Response to the Preliminary Report of Peace Corps/Cambodia, February 2011

Enclosed please find the Europe Mediterranean and Asia (EMA) Region's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Cambodia, as outlined in the Preliminary Report of the Program Evaluation Report of the IG Audit sent to the Agency on February 17, 2011.

The EMA Region concurs with all **19** recommendations provided by the OIG in its Preliminary Program Evaluation Report: Peace Corps/Cambodia. Post has addressed and provided supporting documentation for 5of the 19 recommendations and will work to address the remaining recommendations by the set target dates.

The Region will continue to work with Post and the departments identified in the Preliminary Report to ensure closure of these recommendations by the dates included within for outstanding recommendations.

1. **That the director of programming and training ensure that programming staff comply with post's Site Identification Procedural Guidance.**

Concur: DPT and P and T staff reviewed the current documents and held subsequent meetings to revise and combine documents used in the Site ID process. The outcome of these meetings will be the creation of a Post site ID and Site Visitation Manual by June 2011. All staff will be trained in this procedural manual by July 2011.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised Site ID Forms
- Flow Chart of Site ID Process

Status and timeline for completion: July 2011

2. **That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Teacher Training (ETTT) Volunteer Assignment Description to more fully describe the challenges of working in the Cambodian school system and to emphasize the importance of secondary activities.**

Concur: The Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD) will be revised to place more emphasis on involvement in secondary projects.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised VAD

Status and timeline for completion: June 2011

3. **That the training manager review pre- and in-service training programs to ensure that they adequately address and prepare Volunteers to carry-out secondary activities.**

Concur: IST November 2010 and February 2011 featured sessions on secondary activities. Most of these sessions were PCV led so that challenges and timing can be discussed from a field perspective. Volunteers were taught how to conduct assessments so that they can identify projects. All future trainings will feature sessions on secondary project implementation.

Documents to be submitted:

- IST Session Plans

Status and timeline for completion: April 2011

4. **That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Youth Development Advisor Volunteer Assignment Description to establish more accurate expectations.**

Concur: Peace Corps Cambodia will not request Volunteers in the Youth Development assignment area beginning with the next input of Volunteers in quarter 4 of fiscal year 2012. Post will focus in on appropriate assignment areas that reflect the current project sectors in country.

Documents to be submitted:
- Quarterly Request Summary for Quarter 4 FY12

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

5. **That the director of programming and training review the Small Project Assistance (SPA) process and re-design SPA training so that Volunteers know how to apply for funding and manage the program.**

Concur: Post has now implemented a Project Review Committee (PRC) which consists of USAID members, Program Managers and two volunteers who were selected through an application process. The new PRC was introduced at the February-March IST's and will meet for an orientation on March 14th. The PRC will meet three times a year or more if there are many grant submissions in a given month. The PRC was also announced to the VAC and in an upcoming newsletter.

Documents submitted:
- PRC Agenda and Minutes
- Grant Review Process Document

Status and timeline for completion: March 2011

6. **That the country director, in consultation with the Peace Corps safety and security officer, develop a professional development plan for the safety and security coordinator and monitor progress towards those skill development goals.**

Concur: The current SSC has agreed to move to another position at post. Post will recruit another SCC in the next few months who is expected to be on staff by May 2011. . In the interim, the current SSC will continue to perform the existing duties of the SSC until the position is filed

Documents to be submitted: N/A

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

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7. **That the director of programming and training establish guidelines to ensure that programming staff communicate regularly with Volunteers.**

Concur: The DPT has established guidelines for regular communication which include monthly phone calls to the Volunteer, feedback on the VRT, and responsiveness to Volunteer emails and requests.

Documents to be submitted:
- Guidelines for communication with Volunteers

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

8. **That the director of programming and training ensure that Volunteers receive timely feedback to Volunteer Reporting Forms.**

Concur: The DPT has instructed the Programming and Training unit to provide VRF feedback within two weeks of receiving the VRF. The staff will use the special section of the VRF to provide this feedback. The DPT will review staff feedback after each VRT submission cycle (twice per year).

Documents to be submitted:
- Sample feedback to volunteers using VRF
- Sample review of staff feedback by DPT after each VRT submission cycle

Status and timeline for completion: December 2011

9. **That the country director and director of programming and training work with Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC) representatives to improve the effectiveness of the VAC as a tool for communication between Volunteers and staff.**

Concur: The VAC has met twice since the DPT arrived in July, 2010. New VAC members were selected from Warden Areas and the by-laws were reviewed. One of the VAC meetings was attended by the Best Practices team. The agenda for the VAC is solicited two weeks before the meeting and the minutes are submitted to the CD for approval and then disseminated to the PCVs and placed on SharePoint. A VAC member will now be responsible for creating the agenda and submitting to staff two weeks before the meeting.

Documents submitted:
- VAC Meeting Notes October 2010, November 2010,March 2011
- VAC Bylaws

Status and timeline for completion: March 2011

10. **That the safety and security coordinator develop guidance for staff and Volunteers to ensure Site Locator Forms are complete and accurate and that maps are verified for accuracy after Volunteers submit them.**

Concur: The SSC conducts a session at PST on how to create an accurate map on the Site Locator form. The SSC will have a session for the General Service Clerk and Drivers (GSCDs) after PST to insist on verification of site map and GPS coordinates. The GSCDs will be asked to sign the site locator map as it is verified. If the map is not accurate, the PCV will be asked to redraw the map and give to the GSCD at the visit. The SSC has also changed the site locator form to include the name of the village, commune and district. The form will also be translated into Khmer.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised Site Locator Form with signature of verification from GSCD

Status and timeline for completion: September 2011

11. **That the country director: (1) address the 2009 Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendation to update the Volunteer site and housing criteria; (2) train staff to use the criteria; and (3) systematically inspect housing to ensure it meets the criteria.**

Concur: Post has reviewed the site selection criteria and forms related to this process. Forms were combined and simplified to obtain the necessary information. The forms now collect more specific information related to safety and security. SSC and DPT will work collaboratively to create a Site ID and site visitation manual by September 2011. Training on this revised process will occur by September 2011

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised Manual

Status and timeline for completion: September 2011

12. **That the training manager continue and expand the practice of including Volunteers who can share their experience-based perspectives during pre-service training programs.**

Concur: Pre service training will commence during the month of July and August when staff will invite PCVs to become part of the process. Part of the Mid Service Training sessions will be obtaining input from the current Volunteers regarding future PSTs.

Documents to be submitted:
- PST Calendar of Training Events

Status and timeline for completion: September 2011

13. That the safety and security coordinator collaborates with training and programming staff to plan and conduct safety and security training sessions.

Concur: SSC has become a regular member of the P and T staff meetings. SSC will continue to communicate the topics for safety and security sessions during each training and the P and T team will schedule these sessions.

Additionally, headquarters will be providing a three-day, sub-regional training of trainers focusing on how to deliver Safety and Security related material during PST and IST. The attendance of Director of Programming and Training (or equivalent), their Training Manager (or equivalent) and their Safety and Security Coordinator will be required. In addition to implementing the PST sessions related to sexual assault prevention and response, this training of trainers will develop a standardized safety and security training program for each post.

Documents submitted:
- Sample of P and T Staff Meeting Agendas and Minutes depicting SSC participation and collaboration with programming and training staff.

Status and timeline for completion: March 2011

14. That the safety and security coordinator receive additional training in the areas of training development and training delivery.

Concur: The current SSC has agreed to move to another position at post. Post will recruit another SCC beginning March 2011.

Documents to be submitted: N/A

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

15. That the training manager enhance diversity training and deliver training shortly after trainees arrive in Cambodia.

Concur: The Training Manager will enhance diversity training through exploration of other post materials and volunteer input. A diversity session will be presented within the first 2 weeks of PST

Documents to be submitted:
- Diversity sessions from other posts
- Diversity Session Plan for PST

Status and timeline for completion: August 2011

16. That the director of programming and training update Volunteer Assignment Descriptions to establish expectations regarding diversity challenges.

Concur: The DPT will update the VAD to include accurate expectations regarding diversity challenges.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised VAD

Status and timeline for completion: July 2011

17. **That the country director address Peace Corps safety and security officer recommendations by implementing staff Emergency Action Planning training.**

Concur: All staff EAP training was completed during the first two years, but only part of the staff was trained during the third year. SSC will provide annual staff training for the entire staff by March 28, 2011, and again 6th months later. Several new staff members will be asked to participate in the EAP communications test. EAP training will continue to be included in the Training of Trainers for the upcoming PST.

Documents to be submitted:
- Staff Training Agenda and Module.
- Participant sign in sheet

Status and timeline for completion: March 2011

18. **That the country director establish regular staff meetings.**

Concur: The CD has established regular staff meetings through the Program and Training Unit which meets twice a month to discuss Post information and P and T issues. These meetings are attended by the SSC and the IT specialist. Administrative, Medical Unit and Executive staff will attend on an as needed basis. In addition, staff meetings are held for trainings and special events. Once a month, there has been an administrative all staff meeting. Senior staff meets informally on a regular basis.

Documents submitted:
- Sample Staff Meeting Minutes and Agendas

Status and timeline for completion: March 2011

19. **That the country director implement the staff development activities outlined in the FY 2011-2013 Integrated Planning and Budget System.**

Concur: The country director will continue to implement staff development activities as outlined in the 2011 - 13 IPBS.
Documents to be submitted:
- Table of Implemented staff development activities

Status and timeline for completion: December 2011

OIG COMMENTS

Management concurred with all 19 recommendations. Based on the documentation provided, we closed 5 recommendations: numbers 5, 9, 13, 17, and 18. 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 region or post 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.

Fourteen recommendations, numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 19, remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in OIG Analysis is received.

1. That the director of programming and training ensure that programming staff comply with post's Site Identification Procedural Guidance.

> **Concur**: DPT and P and T staff reviewed the current documents and held subsequent meetings to revise and combine documents used in the Site ID process. The outcome of these meetings will be the creation of a Post site ID and Site Visitation Manual by June 2011. All staff will be trained in this procedural manual by July 2011.
>
> **Documents to be submitted:**
> - Revised Site ID Forms
> - Flow Chart of Site ID Process
>
> **Status and timeline for completion**: July 2011
>
> **OIG Analysis**: Please submit a copy of the revised site ID and site visitation manual.

2. That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Teacher Training (ETTT) Volunteer Assignment Description to more fully describe the challenges of working in the Cambodian school system and to emphasize the importance of secondary activities.

> **Concur:** The Volunteer Assignment Description (VAD) will be revised to place more emphasis on involvement in secondary projects.
>
> **Documents to be submitted:**
> - Revised VAD
>
> **Status and timeline for completion**: June 2011
>
> **OIG Analysis**: Please submit a copy of the revised ETTT VAD.

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3. That the training manager review pre- and in-service training programs to ensure that they adequately address and prepare Volunteers to carry-out secondary activities.

> **Concur:** IST November 2010 and February 2011 featured sessions on secondary activities. Most of these sessions were PCV led so that challenges and timing can be discussed from a field perspective. Volunteers were taught how to conduct assessments so that they can identify projects. All future trainings will feature sessions on secondary project implementation.
>
> **Documents to be submitted:**
> - IST Session Plans
>
> **Status and timeline for completion**: April 2011
>
> **OIG Analysis**: Please submit a copy of IST session plans.

4. That the director of programming and training revise the English Teacher and Youth Development Advisor Volunteer Assignment Description to establish more accurate expectations.

> **Concur:** Peace Corps Cambodia will not request Volunteers in the Youth Development assignment area beginning with the next input of Volunteers in quarter 4 of fiscal year 2012. Post will focus in on appropriate assignment areas that reflect the current project sectors in country.
>
> **Documents to be submitted:**
> - Quarterly Request Summary for Quarter 4 FY12
>
> **Status and timeline for completion**: May 2011
>
> **OIG Analysis**: Please submit a copy of the Quarterly Training Request Summary for Quarter 4 FY12.

6. That the country director, in consultation with the Peace Corps safety and security officer, develop a professional development plan for the safety and security coordinator and monitor progress towards those skill development goals.

> **Concur:** The current SSC has agreed to move to another position at post. Post will recruit another SCC in the next few months who is expected to be on staff by May 2011. . In the interim, the current SSC will continue to perform the existing duties of the SSC until the position is filed
>
> **Documents to be submitted:** N/A
>
> **Status and timeline for completion**: May 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit an updated staffing chart.

7. That the director of programming and training establish guidelines to ensure that programming staff communicate regularly with Volunteers.

Concur: The DPT has established guidelines for regular communication which include monthly phone calls to the Volunteer, feedback on the VRT, and responsiveness to Volunteer emails and requests.

Documents to be submitted:
- Guidelines for communication with Volunteers

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a copy of the guidelines for communication with Volunteers.

8. That the director of programming and training ensure that Volunteers receive timely feedback to Volunteer Reporting Forms.

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Documents to be submitted:
- Sample feedback to volunteers using VRF
- Sample review of staff feedback by DPT after each VRT submission cycle

Status and timeline for completion: December 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a sample of feedback to Volunteers using the VRF and a sample review of staff feedback by the DPT.

10. That the safety and security coordinator develop guidance for staff and Volunteers to ensure Site Locator Forms are complete and accurate and that maps are verified for accuracy after Volunteers submit them.

Concur: The SSC conducts a session at PST on how to create an accurate map on the Site Locator form. The SSC will have a session for the General Service Clerk and Drivers (GSCDs) after PST to insist on verification of site map and GPS coordinates. The GSCDs will be asked to sign the site locator map as it is verified. If the map is not accurate, the PCV will be asked to redraw the map and give to the GSCD at the visit. The SSC has also changed the site locator form to include the name of the village, commune and district. The form will also be translated into Khmer.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised Site Locator Form with signature of verification from GSCD

Status and timeline for completion: September 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a copy of the revised Site Locator Form with signature of verification from GSCD.

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Documents to be submitted:
- Revised Manual

Status and timeline for completion: September 2011

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Documents to be submitted: N/A

Status and timeline for completion: May 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit an updated staffing chart.

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Documents to be submitted:
- Diversity sessions from other posts
- Diversity Session Plan for PST

Status and timeline for completion: August 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a diversity session plan for PST.

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Concur: The DPT will update the VAD to include accurate expectations regarding diversity challenges.

Documents to be submitted:
- Revised VAD

Status and timeline for completion: July 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a copy of the revised VAD.

19. That the country director implement the staff development activities outlined in the FY 2011-2013 Integrated Planning and Budget System.

**Concur:** The country director will continue to implement staff development activities as outlined in the 2011 - 13 IPBS.

Documents to be submitted:
- Table of Implemented staff development activities

Status and timeline for completion: December 2011

OIG Analysis: Please submit a table of implemented staff development activities

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PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION	This program evaluation was conducted under the direction of Jim O'Keefe, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations, and by Senior Evaluator Reuben Marshall. Additional contributions were made by Heather Robinson and Lisa Chesnel. Jim O'Keefe Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations
OIG CONTACT	Following issuance of the final report, a stakeholder satisfaction survey will be distributed. If you wish to comment on the quality or usefulness of this report to help us improve our products, please e-mail Jim O'Keefe, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations and Inspections, at jokeefe@peacecorps.gov, or call (202) 692-2904.
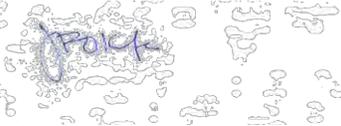
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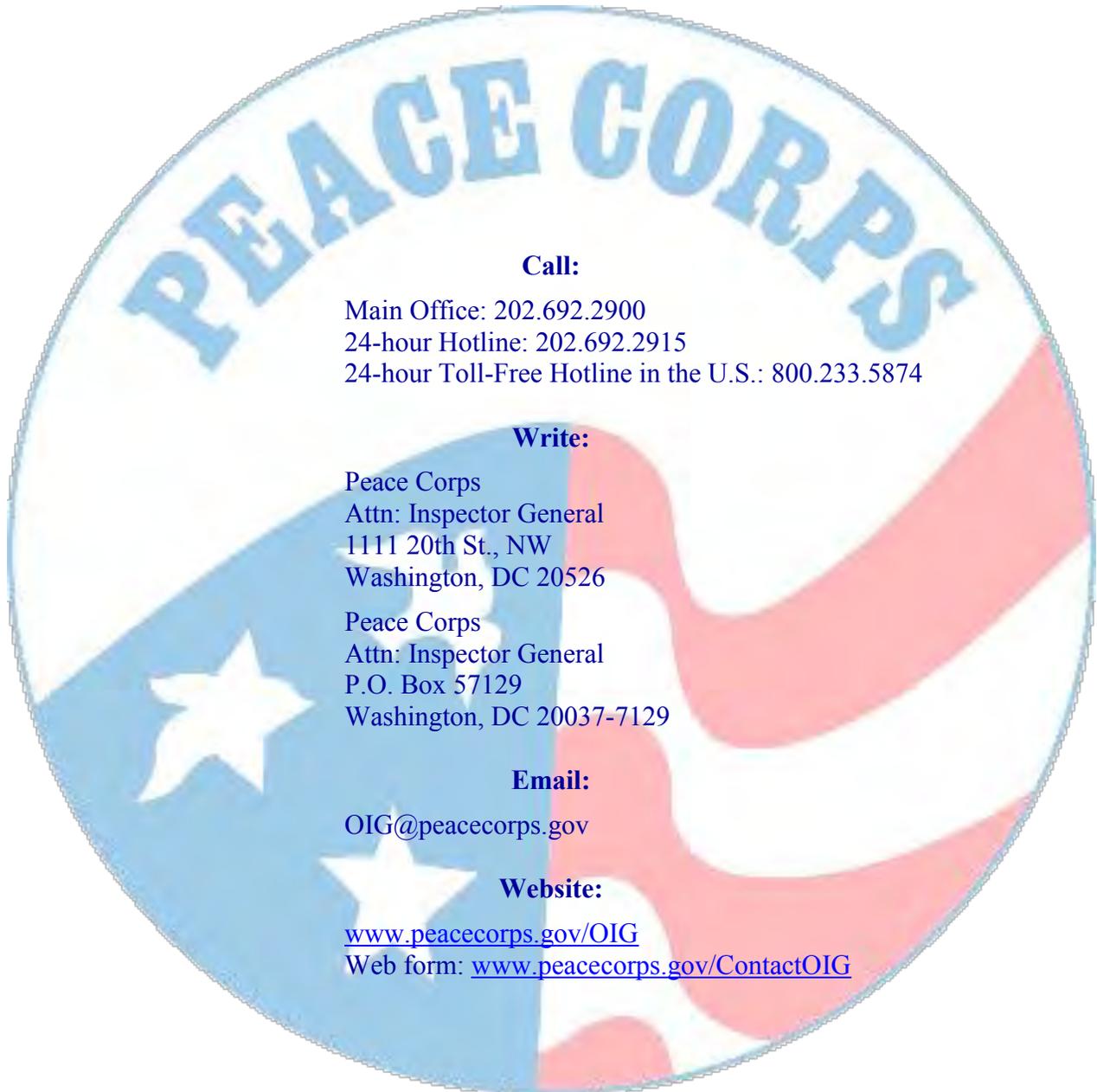
Call:

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