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To: Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Director
Dee Hertzberg, Acting Regional Director, Africa Operations
Anne Hughes, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Kathy A. Buller, Inspector General

Date: August 11, 2016

Subject: Final Report on the Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Rwanda (IG-16-02-E)

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

Management concurred with all 12 recommendations, all of which remain open. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. OIG will review and consider closing recommendations 1-5, 7, 10, and 12 when the documentation reflected in OIG's comments and the agency's response to the preliminary report is received. For recommendations 6, 8, 9, and 11 additional documentation is required.

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

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

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

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

cc: Elizabeth Ogunwo, White House Liaison
Kathy Stroker, Acting General Counsel
Carlos Torres, Deputy Director
Ronald Campbell, Country Director, Rwanda
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PEACE CORPS
Office *of* Inspector General

Peace Corps/Rwanda Volunteer, Esteban Orozco at his worksite with the head of the health clinic

Final Country Program Evaluation
Peace Corps/Rwanda
IG-16-02-E
August 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

More than 600 Peace Corps Volunteers have served the people of Rwanda since the program was launched in 1975. All Volunteers were evacuated in February 1993 and Peace Corps/Rwanda (hereafter referred to as "the post") was closed in 1994. The post was reopened in 2008. At the time of our evaluation there were two projects in Rwanda: health and teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). At the onset of this evaluation, 108 Volunteers were serving in Rwanda.

WHAT WE FOUND

PC/Rwanda coordinated well with the Government of Rwanda in implementing projects designed to meet the country's development needs. Through its relationships with the Ministries of Health and Education, the post had placed Volunteers in communities where they had a Rwandan counterpart and sufficient work opportunities related to their primary assignments. However, a lack of management, planning, and communication among staff during the site development process had resulted in many Volunteers being placed in homes that did not meet the post's housing standards.

The post's training program was effective in preparing Volunteers for some aspects of their Peace Corps service, particularly regarding language and Rwandan culture. In addition, medical and health training was rated favorably by the Volunteers we interviewed. However, technical training did not provide Volunteers with the necessary skills to achieve their project objectives. Technical training for Volunteers in the TEFL project relied on frequently unqualified Volunteer assistant trainers and not enough on qualified post staff. The post had recently shifted the focus of the health project, but had not adjusted the new group of health trainees' technical training to align with the new project goals. This left health Volunteers generally unprepared when they arrived at their sites.

The post had the necessary resources to provide high quality support to Volunteers, and staff were effective at responding to safety incidents, communicating with Volunteers, and conducting site visits to Volunteers' communities. Effective communication between the medical and administrative teams had resulted in an impressive emergency readiness protocol.

However, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) assessed that there was a need for post leadership to maintain higher standards regarding key aspects of Volunteer service, including expectations regarding time spent in their communities, integration, and culturally appropriate behavior. Generally, Peace Corps/Rwanda prioritized meeting the diverse support needs of Volunteers over the needs of Rwandan communities Volunteers were sent to serve. For example, post leadership allowed Volunteers to have pet dogs, despite the fact that this is inappropriate and taboo in Rwandan society. In addition, the post allowed Volunteers to spend too much time away from their communities, including early in their service when their focus should be on community integration. Our analysis showed that more than 25 percent of Volunteers in Rwanda were out of their sites five or more days per month for reasons other than allotted vacation, emergency, or medical leave. This represented frequent abuse of the agency's policy on personal

time away from community. Lastly, the post did not actively manage or accurately document the amount of time Volunteers were staying at the post's transit house in Kigali, which had become a magnet drawing Volunteers out of their communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN BRIEF
Our report contains 12 recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen post operations and correct the deficiencies detailed in the accompanying report.

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HOST COUNTRY BACKGROUND

The Republic of Rwanda is a small country in central-eastern Africa that borders Tanzania, Burundi, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Known as "the land of a thousand hills," Rwanda's rolling plains in the east rise to mountain ranges and volcanoes in the west.

In April 1994, a plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down. A civil war followed and erupted into a genocide that killed between 800,000 and 1 million Rwandans. The Rwandan Patriotic Front gained control of the country in July 1994. After the war, Rwandan leadership took careful measures to institute healing in the country and prevent further conflict. Leaders implemented *gacaca*, a village-level justice system emphasizing confession and forgiveness, in part to mitigate the heavy burden on the country's legal system and to diminish the potential for retribution and further violence. Reconciliation plays a major role in Rwandan society. The focus on forgiveness, remembrance of victims, and the minimization of differences is strong—so much so that discussion of ethnicity is currently illegal in Rwanda.

Rwanda's economy largely consists of tea and coffee exports, tourism, and subsistence farming. Healthcare in Rwanda is provided through a decentralized, multi-tiered system that covers more than 90 percent of the population. Rwanda has the highest primary school enrollment rates in Africa: primary school net enrollment for girls and boys in 2012 was 98 percent and 95 percent respectively, and primary school completion was about 73 percent. In 2008 the government changed the official language of classroom instruction from French to English. Many Rwandan teachers are still learning English and the government is focusing education resources on improving the quality of English instruction.

PEACE CORPS PROGRAM BACKGROUND

More than 600 Volunteers have served in Peace Corps/Rwanda since the program's inception in 1975. Peace Corps operated in Rwanda from 1975 to 1993 in the areas of university education, agriculture, fisheries, conservation, and health. All Volunteers were evacuated in February 1993 and the post was closed in 1994. The post was re-opened in 2008 with Volunteers serving in public health. In 2009, the post added a TEFL project. At the time of the evaluation, there were 108 Volunteers in-country, of which 62 Volunteers were potential interviewees based on OIG methodological standards[1]. There were no Peace Corps Response[2] Volunteers in-country at the time of the evaluation; however the post had recently hired a Response coordinator and had plans to integrate Response Volunteers into their TEFL and health programming.

The TEFL project made up the larger percentage of the post's volunteer population, and had one September training input of roughly 35 trainees per year. Approximately 25 trainees were

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[1] Peace Corps/Rwanda staff and Volunteers interviews were conducted for this evaluation in January 2016. OIG's evaluation methodology recommends that a Volunteer should have at least four months of service to be a potential Volunteer interviewee. Because a group of TEFL Volunteers had started their service on December 1, 2015, the number of Volunteers with at least 4 months of service at the time of fieldwork was 62.

[2] Peace Corps Response sends professionals with specialized experience on short-term service assignments.

brought in each June for training as health Volunteers. More detailed explanations of the two project areas are discussed below:

Health. PC/Rwanda operated a health project since the post re-opened in 2008, with various focuses. Originally, health Volunteers were assigned to schools and non-governmental organizations, where they implemented HIV/AIDS awareness, prevention, and mitigation activities. In 2010, the health project began placing Volunteers with implementing partners of a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development. The project included several interlocking health goals, including improved maternal and child health, hygiene and safe water use, malaria control and prevention, and HIV prevention and impact mitigation. In 2015, the post developed a new health project framework focused on maternal and child health, specifically through the First 1,000 Days Initiative[3]. This initiative placed Volunteers with health clinics to support pregnant women, mothers, and young children near the clinic. At the time of the evaluation, the post was still in the process of shifting to the new project framework, and some Volunteers we interviewed had only received technical training for the previous health project. There were 33 health Volunteers in-country at the time of the evaluation.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language. In 2009, Peace Corps/Rwanda established the TEFL project to assist the Government of Rwanda with the transition to English as the official language of instruction in schools. The stated purpose of the TEFL project was: "Rwandan students and teachers will gain access to personal, professional, and academic opportunities through English and gender awareness in the school and larger community." TEFL Volunteers worked with students and teachers to improve English language proficiency and assisted Rwandan teachers to implement student-centered teaching techniques. Volunteers also worked with students, teachers, and community members on enhancing support for student learning and gender awareness. There were 75 TEFL Volunteers in-country at the time of the evaluation[4].

The post's Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 operating budget was approximately $2.3 million.[5] There had not been an OIG evaluation of Peace Corps/Rwanda since the post re-opened in 2008.

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[3] The Government of Rwanda implemented the First 1,000 Days Initiative to address chronic malnutrition, undernutrition, and stunted growth in children under five through interventions targeted at the health, nutrition, and hygiene behaviors of parents and caregivers.

[4] Peace Corps/Rwanda staff and Volunteers were interviewed for this evaluation in January 2016. As a rule OIG interviews Volunteers who have been in service at least four months. Twenty-nine of 75 TEFL Volunteers were eligible to be interviewed for this evaluation.

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

EVALUATION RESULTS

PROGRAMMING AND SITE DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation assessed the extent to which the post had 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 the post is meeting its project objectives,
- Counterpart selection and quality of counterpart relationships with Volunteers, and
- Site development policies and practices.

Through the evaluation we determined that the post coordinated well with the Government of Rwanda in implementing projects designed to meet the country's development needs. Additionally, the post used relationships with the Ministries of Health and Education to place Volunteers in communities where Volunteers had sufficient work opportunities and a counterpart. In reviewing the coordination with the Government of Rwanda, counterpart selection and relationships, staff feedback on Volunteers' performance reports, and management of small grants, we found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by the post.

Coordination with the Government of Rwanda. The post coordinated well with the Government of Rwanda. In August 2015, the post entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Education and was coordinating with the Ministry of Health on an MOU. The post coordinated with the Government of Rwanda in identifying potential Volunteer communities and communicated regularly on projects and activities.

Counterpart Selection and Relationships. Volunteers expressed to us that they were able to collaborate with their Rwandan counterparts on activities related to their project objectives. Nineteen out of 20 Volunteers we interviewed stated that they had formed a working relationship with a counterpart in their community. Additionally, 82 percent of Volunteers (17 of 20) rated the amount of project support they received from their counterpart as favorable[6] and 93 percent of Volunteers (14 of 15[7]) characterized the working relationship with their counterpart as "good" or "very good." While most Volunteers rated their counterpart relationships positively, a few staff reported that some counterparts had negative perceptions regarding their Volunteer's behavior and commitment to their communities[8]. As presented in the Volunteer Support section

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[6] 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 = neutral, 5 = very effective). The percentage of Volunteers who gave a favorable rating includes those who gave ratings of 4 or 5.

[7] Some Volunteers did not answer every question.

[8] We did not obtain direct feedback from counterparts about the performance of Volunteers or their working relationships with Volunteers.

of this report, we found that more than a quarter of Volunteers were spending excessive time away from their communities.

From right to left: Volunteer Sarah Johns; her supervisor, the head of the health clinic; and her counterpart outside of the health clinic maternal ward.

Staff Feedback on Volunteers' Performance Reports. Volunteers submitted performance reports via the volunteer reporting form (VRF) every four months. Most Volunteers completed their VRFs on time and post staff typically provided performance feedback on the submitted VRFs. Seventeen of 20 Volunteers interviewed (89 percent) stated they received feedback on their VRFs "most of the time" or "always." Additionally, 11 of 16 Volunteers interviewed (69 percent) rated the quality of feedback they received on their VRF as favorable. Volunteers had received performance feedback from multiple post staff, including but not limited to the country director (CD), director of programming and training (DPT), program manager (PM), and programming and training specialist (PTA).

Management of Small Grants. Seventeen out of 20 Volunteers interviewed (85 percent) either managed or collaborated with other Volunteers on small grant projects. The post used a staff committee to assess each grant application to ensure that the projects were building the capacity of individuals in the community and the project was a collaborative effort with community partners. Grants funded projects such as youth empowerment camps. In addition, Volunteers were involved with umbrella grants which funded projects in multiple Volunteers' communities such as trainings on community finance or sustainable gardening. In general, the post's grant management process operated efficiently and all Volunteers interviewed stated that the grants coordinator was either "supportive" or "very supportive."

Achieving Project Objectives. We found that the post had many strong programming elements, such as the inclusion of ministry officials in identifying potential Volunteer sites, staff feedback on Volunteer performance reports, and management of small grants. In reviewing Volunteers' ability to meet project objectives, the evidence is less clear. Based on annual project status reports for 2014, the TEFL project met its indicator targets and project objectives. Some TEFL

Volunteers we interviewed expressed confidence that their work was achieving project objectives. However, as described in the Training section below, the technical training for TEFL Volunteers could be improved to provide a better foundation for TEFL Volunteers to achieve project objectives. The 2014 status report for the health project tracked progress related to the previous health project framework, and it showed that Volunteers were not meeting project objectives. At the time of the evaluation no performance data was available for the new health project's focus, the First 1,000 Days. However as described in the Training section of this report, the health technical training was not aligned with the First 1,000 Days project objectives, and the post could have provided a better foundation for health Volunteers to achieve project objectives. We make recommendations related to improving technical training in the Training section below.

In addition, the evaluation found areas related to site development, in particular Volunteer housing and the post's use of site history files, which require management attention. The rest of this section provides more information about these topics.

Some Volunteers' housing did not meet Peace Corps/Rwanda housing standards.

According to the post's safety & security housing checklist, post staff must complete a housing inspection tool before a Volunteer may move into a house. Every housing criterion on the inspection tool should be in compliance and a house cannot be approved for Volunteer occupancy until all housing criteria are met. The PC/Rwanda Site Development and Site Monitoring Standards and Procedures states, "It is critical that the PCMO [Peace Corps Medical Officer], SSM [safety and security manager] and Program Managers work together to develop and approve all site development and site monitoring criteria and procedures."

Based on our housing inspections, more than half of all Volunteers interviewed (11 of 20) lived in homes that did not meet the post's housing criteria. Of these homes, 5 of 11 failed to meet one or more of these easily observed housing criteria: that the house should not be shared, or should be shared with just one person of the same gender (one was non-compliant); that all windows on the house have bars (three were non-compliant); and that the bathroom be cemented, not shared, and within 20 meters of the house (four houses were non-compliant). The other six homes failed OIG's inspections due to problems, such as leaking roofs or faulty electric outlets, that may have occurred after the post's initial housing inspection.

Post staff acknowledged that finding appropriate Volunteer housing in Rwanda was difficult in part due to the country's high population density. Separately, this evaluation found that the housing approval process did not function well due to poor planning and management of the site development process, including communication among staff regarding housing inspections and approvals. Specifically, staff involved in site development were not consistently reporting housing deficiencies to the housing coordinator, PCMOs, or the SSM in a timely manner. The housing coordinator was also the pre-service training (PST) home stay coordinator for roughly half the year, and therefore not always available to review and approve potential Volunteer housing throughout the country. As one staff member noted, "not all staff members associated with site development are on the same page related to housing." Another staff member said:

> Sometimes we have been approving the housing without having coordination with other units. Some houses are approved that were only looked at by the [programming or field support team]. I would like to have someone coordinate the communication with the programming and training assistants, program manager, SSM, field support coordinator, and PCMO.

Staff described a lack of coordination and communication between units as barriers to identifying appropriate homes for Volunteers. The post's practice of placing Volunteers in homes that did not comply with housing criteria increased potential health and safety risks to Volunteers.

> **We recommend:**
>
> 1. **That the country director and the director of programming and training implement a process that improves documentation, coordination, and communication among staff involved in site development and the housing approval process to mitigate the risk of placing Volunteers in non-compliant housing.**
>
> 2. **That the country director clarify the roles, expectations and responsibilities of staff and Volunteers in addressing housing deficiencies that occur after site installation, including deficiencies that currently exist.**

Site history files were incomplete.

The agency's Programming, Training, and Evaluation Guidance[9] states that:

> Each post establishes its own site selection criteria and processes with guidance from its region. Many posts have developed site-preparation handbooks, and all have developed forms to use in site development, including site criteria checklists, housing criteria checklists, Volunteer request forms, and site survey forms. Site-history information that is critical for future site-development consideration should be kept in site-history files.

In addition, the Office of Safety and Security's standard operating procedure on site history files specifies that certain procedures need to be followed in order "to ensure that relevant, site specific, safety and security information is being collected, stored and made readily available to programming staff with an active role in the site development and site selection process." These procedures include identifying what kind of information needs to be centrally maintained in an electronic format, periodically reviewing site history files to ensure that the right information is being collected on each site, and reviewing each potential site for any security concerns. The procedure specifies the sort of information that should be included in site history files.

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[9] The previous version of the Programming, Training, and Evaluation Guidance provided a more detailed list of the required documents for post's site history files. This list included items such as notations about crime incidents, names of past Volunteers and partners, and records of any safety concerns observed during site visit.

Our evaluation found that the post's site history files contained minimal documentation. OIG reviewed a random set of eight site history files and found that none were complete according to the post's internal standards, and most were missing more than one type of site history document. Specifically, half the files we reviewed (4 of 8) did not contain a completed site survey; more than half the files (5 of 8) did not hold a site selection criteria sheet signed by the director of programming and training; two files did not include a completed housing checklist and it was unclear if housing checks had taken place before Volunteers moved into their houses, as required by agency policy, or after; and two did not include a Volunteer request form from the host agency. In addition, no site history files we reviewed included a record of site visits from staff, and no site history files we reviewed included documentation of a safety and security assessment of the site.

It did appear that files related to sites developed for the most recent group of Volunteers to enter on duty were more complete than those related to older sites, suggesting that staff had recently started to focus on improving documentation in the post's site history files. Nevertheless, site history files were generally incomplete and did not include the level of documentation that would have allowed OIG to confirm that staff had fully considered the post's programmatic and security standards for each site prior to Volunteers being placed there. Site history files were incomplete for the same reason that Volunteer housing did not meet the post's standards, as cited above: insufficient communication and coordination by staff to ensure that the post placed the appropriate documentation for each site in each site history file. The documentation is an important management control to confirm that the post places Volunteers in sites with sufficient programmatic viability, and that any history of safety and security problems at the site has been considered.

> **We recommend:**
>
> 3. **That the director of programming and training improve the post's management of site history files so that files are complete, staff members know what documents belong in site history files, and site history files are consulted during the site development and approval process.**

TRAINING

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 and the planning and development of the training life cycle.

As a result of our evaluation we concluded that in many areas related to training, including trainee assessments, the inclusion of staff in the training development process, and resources given to training staff, there were no significant concerns that would necessitate action by the

post. In addition, language, cultural, medical, and safety training were rated favorably by the majority of Volunteers.

Trainee Assessments. The post used the trainee assessment portfolio, PST language proficiency interviews, and weekly progress checks with trainees to assess the trainees' progress and readiness to swear-in as Volunteers. The portfolio included written and oral assessments of each trainee's progress. In addition to the portfolio, assessments of a trainee's progress and preparation for Peace Corps service were conducted by the training manager, language and cross culture coordinator, homestay coordinator, PM, PTAs, and language and cross culture facilitators (LCFs) throughout PST. According to our analysis of language proficiency interview scores provided by the post, 93 percent of recent trainees (69 of 74) had achieved the post's required Kinyarwanda level[10].

Staff Inclusion in Training Development. The post included staff from different units when designing and delivering trainings. Staff from the programming, safety and security, and medical units stated that they were included in training design, development, and revision.

Training Staff Resources. The post had the necessary resources to deliver training effectively to Volunteers. At the time of the evaluation, the post's training staff included a training manager, a language and cross-cultural coordinator, a homestay coordinator, four full-time PTAs, two full-time LCFs, and a training assistant. During PST, the post also hired temporary LCFs and had one LCF for every three trainees. However, despite having sufficient training staff, the evaluation found that the TEFL project relied too much on Volunteer assistant trainers (VATs) to deliver technical training sessions during PST.

Volunteers' Perceptions of Training. Interviewed Volunteers generally had positive views about many aspects of PST, including language, cross cultural, and medical training. Volunteers also felt that in-service training was effective. Table 1 on the following page displays Volunteers' ratings of different training categories.

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[10] The post's language requirement for competency level in Kinyarwanda varied by project sector. Education trainees had to obtain the "intermediate-low" level, while health trainees had to obtain the "intermediate-mid" level.

Table 1: Volunteer Ratings of PST Effectiveness
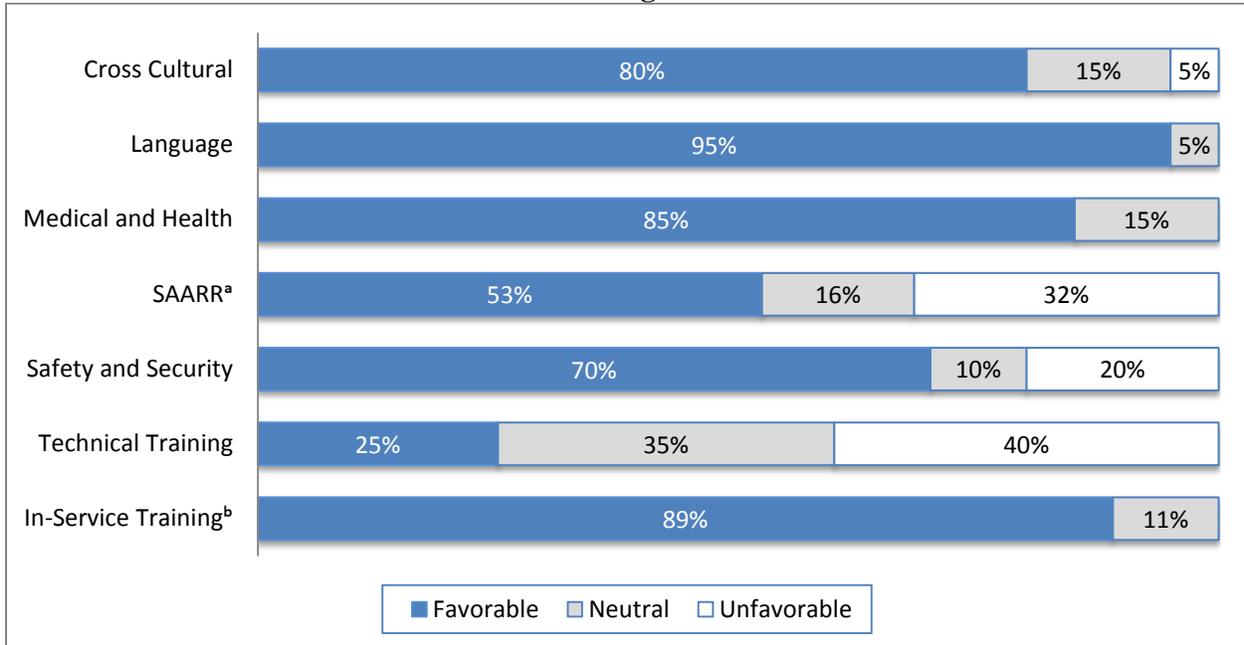
Source: Volunteer interviews conducted by OIG evaluators. Some Volunteers did not answer every question.
[a]N=19, [b]N=19. All other training categories N=20.

The evaluation uncovered that technical training and sexual assault risk reduction and response (SARRR) training were ineffective and require management attention. The remainder of this section provides more information about these topics.

Technical training was ineffective at preparing Volunteers for service in their communities.

According to Peace Corps Manual Section (MS) 201, Selection Standards:

> To qualify for selection for overseas service as a Peace Corps Volunteer, applicants must demonstrate that they possess the following personal attributes: … Technical competence. Proficiency in the technical skills needed to carry out the assignment.

Only 5 of 20 Volunteers interviewed (25 percent) stated that PST technical training was effective in preparing them for service. In general, Volunteers in both the TEFL and health projects felt that PST technical training was ineffective. The average rating for the effectiveness of health PST technical training was 2.7 out of 5, while TEFL PST technical training received an average score of 3.1. The causes of the trainings' ineffectiveness were different for each project. The remainder of this section will describe the ineffectiveness of PST technical training for each project.

TEFL Technical Training. Three of 9 TEFL Volunteers interviewed (33 percent) felt that PST technical training was ineffective. Volunteers felt unprepared for their primary assignments as teachers and believed the training did not build the necessary skills to teach appropriately to the English proficiency level of their Rwandan students. Volunteers said:

"The games and the activities that we were trained on did not prepare me. I feel pretty unconfident designing units that will be enjoyable and good for the students. I don't know how to structure my teaching to be helpful. The training I received during PST to be a teacher was very anecdotal and I would have liked more hard skills on how to be a teacher."

"Good, but could have used more. The lesson planning session was in the beginning and then when we got to do it, people forgot it … Could have more practical teaching or application in PST. There was a lot of theory and methods, but needed more practice"

Post staff also acknowledged that TEFL PST technical training was not always effective. As one staff member stated, "the challenge [with technical training] is when we give [Volunteers] skills, such as teaching students and teaching teachers. However when they arrive at site, the skills that they are taught do not match the needs of the teachers and students in the schools."

We determined that one cause of ineffective technical training for TEFL trainees was the post's over-reliance on minimally qualified VATs to facilitate training during PST. Based on training records we examined, VATs facilitated 18 technical training sessions during PST for the group of TEFL Volunteers we interviewed.[11] Below is a list of technical training sessions facilitated by VATs:

Table 2: TEFL Technical Sessions Facilitated by VATs

Session Name
Analyzing and building good school relationships
Lesson planning
Assessment concepts
Assessment and grading
Crossing educational cultures
Teaching speaking
Teaching listening
Teaching vocabulary
Student-centered teaching
Teaching reading
Teaching basic writing skills
Chalkboard management
Teaching large classes
Co-planning, co-teaching and co-adjusting
Teaching multi-level proficiency level classes
Materials design
Teaching grammar
Critical thinking

Source: PC/Rwanda training records.

The use of VATs instead of a Rwandan TEFL specialist, such as the PM or PTA, caused technical training to be inconsistent. Some remarks by Volunteers about the post's use of VATs

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[11] Due to standards in our methodology for selecting Volunteers to be interviewed, the evaluators only interviewed TEFL Volunteers from the 2014 TEFL training group.

are provided to illustrate the drawbacks of overuse of Volunteer assistant trainers and underuse of qualified trainers on staff:

> "It [technical training] was by Volunteers, whose only experience was a year of teaching in Rwanda. There was a lot that we did not get from a technical standpoint. We only got the VATs' experiences in their school. We could have used someone with more experience and real teaching experiences and real experience teaching teachers."

> "In terms of technical training they [post staff] leave a lot to VATs. The quality of the technical training with the VATs depended on the VATs."

> "I think there should be some more staff involved in model school. VAT perspective is helpful, but it is not the end all be all. You will only get one feedback from the [programming] staff [during model school]. The program manager needs to be more present in schools."

> "The problem is that it [technical training] is taught by the VATs and a lot of these people [VATs] do not have education degrees and they only have 6 months of experience. The [Volunteers] who want to be VATs are overinvolved in committees and miss classroom time for that, so they are not well qualified to do these sessions. The [Volunteer] teachers who are actually teaching are not going to want to leave their classroom to teach [trainees]."

Additionally, because of the over-reliance on VATs some Volunteers felt like they did not know their TEFL programming staff, especially the PM, before going to site. As Volunteers stated:

> "The big issue is that the programming team is not present at PST. Overall I would say that their [TEFL programming team] presence is lacking for PST. My conclusion is because the programming [team] is too busy. I don't know why the programming team has to develop sites. That seems like a separate thing. So there could be a separate site development team, so the P&T can focus on training volunteers. I am not sure what the TEFL PM is doing. I don't think he is the one visiting site and he is definitely not at PST."

> "We did not meet our PM until week 9 or so of PST. [I] did not become involved with him until swearing in. I think the PM should be more involved in PST. The PTA was at PST every day."

As a result of ineffective technical training, the post had not laid as strong a foundation as it could have for TEFL Volunteers to achieve the goals of the TEFL project.

Health Technical Training. The health project was transitioning to a new project framework titled the First 1,000 Days, which had not been finalized before trainees arrived in Rwanda. The post had not redesigned technical training for the first group of health Volunteers assigned to work toward the new project goals. Predictably, just 2 of 9 health Volunteers (22 percent) who went through PST during this transition rated technical training as effective. Other Volunteers who felt their technical training was ineffective said:

> "We were not sure what the project was in the beginning. At the end of training we had an assessment of what our project was and we were like, we don't know what the project is."

> "The first 1000 days outline was not set in stone yet. We really did not know the goals. There were a lot of questions about how we were supposed to do our community needs assessment."

> "It did not teach us anything to do in our community… A lot of us were frustrated because we did not receive much technical skills."

The lack of a finalized project framework tailored to the First 1,000 Days project resulted in ineffective health technical training.

We recommend:

4. **That the director of programming and training and the training manager utilize qualified staff, including the TEFL program manager and the programming and training assistants, to deliver technical training, and rely less on volunteer assistant trainers.**

5. **That the director of programming and training align technical training for the health project with the goals and objectives of the new health project framework.**

6. **That the director of programming and training, the training manager, and the program managers improve how the post selects and supervises volunteer assistant trainers for and during pre-service or other Volunteer trainings.**

Sexual assault risk reduction and response training in Rwanda needed improvement.

According to section 8A of the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011:

> Once a volunteer has arrived in his or her country of service, the President shall provide the volunteer with training tailored to the country of service that includes cultural training relating to gender relations, risk-reduction strategies . . . and information regarding a victim's right to pursue legal action against a perpetrator.

Only 53 percent of Volunteers interviewed (10 of 19) stated that the PST SARRR training sessions were effective. In fact, six Volunteers felt that the SARRR training sessions were either "ineffective" or "very ineffective." Of these six Volunteers, five stated the sessions were ineffective because they were scripted and the SSM delivered the sessions word-for-word from the script. Some Volunteers said:

> "It [SARRR training] is stupid because post staff have to read from the script."

> "It [SARRR training] had very similar questions to other sessions and making it a 4-hour session was not good. Washington needs to make it more compact. People reading from a sheet is not good. Less robotic would help the safety of the volunteers. Trainees don't pay attention and then in situations they don't know what to do."

> "These sessions were really hard to sit through. There is not much that the facilitator can do because the session so scripted."

> "SSM follows the session word-for-word. She is very thorough. Question for Peace Corps: what are they

expecting from these sessions? I would train the people who are delivering to focus on main points because trainees are not paying attention to the sessions because they are so boring and dry."

OIG assessed that the SARRR training was ineffective because the provided script did not allow the post to sufficiently tailor the content for the Rwandan context, as the Kate Puzey Act requires. In particular, SARRR training should be more tailored to address gender relations, factors associated with an enhanced risk of sexual assault, and risk reduction strategies specific to the situations Volunteers may face in Rwanda. Because the SARRR training was read from a generic script meant to apply to every country of service, Volunteers were unengaged and inattentive during the sessions. The post's ability to deliver effective SARRR training is especially important because Rwanda had the highest reported rate of sexual assaults against Peace Corps Volunteers in the Africa region in 2014.

We recommend:

7. **That the director of programming and training work with the safety and security manager, the training manager, and others as needed to tailor SARRR training sessions to address more fully the safety and security risks, and related risk reduction strategies, specific to Rwanda.**

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Our country program evaluation attempts to answer the question, "Has the 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), and the handling of crime incidents; and the adequacy of the Volunteer living allowance.

During the evaluation, we determined that in some areas, including emergency preparedness, response to safety incidents, site visits, administrative support, and medical unit management, the post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers. In these areas, elaborated briefly below, OIG found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by post.

Emergency Preparedness. Our review of documentation showed that the post had conducted successful drills to test Volunteers' responses when the emergency action plan was activated. During our fieldwork, 15 of 19 Volunteers (79 percent) correctly identified their emergency consolidation points, and 2 of the 4 who could not recite their consolidation point from memory were able to locate their emergency action plan which had the information. Also, OIG was able to arrive at 13 of 15 Volunteer homes (87 percent) using the map and directions written by the Volunteer or the GPS coordinates provided by the post. For the other two Volunteers, OIG found the Volunteer's immediate neighborhood, close to the Volunteer's house.

Response to Safety Incidents. Nine of 19 Volunteers (47 percent) we spoke to had been victims of crimes; a crime rate of approximately 50 percent was not unexpected relative to 2013 and 2014 agency crime statistics. Seven of the 9 crimes were thefts of Volunteer property, such as wallets or phones. In addition, 7 of the 9 victims had reported the crime to PC/Rwanda staff. Among the Volunteers who had reported crimes to PC/Rwanda, 6 of 7 (86 percent) believed that post staff had handled the response to the crime "well" or "very well."

Site Visits. PC/Rwanda provided an adequate number of site visits to Volunteers, according to the post's standards which state that every Volunteer in Rwanda should have at least two site visits during their service. Eighteen of 19 Volunteers interviewed had been visited by staff according to the post's standards for site visits.[12] The 18 Volunteers who had received site visits stated that the visits met their support needs "well" or "very well."

Administrative Support. The living allowance and settling-in allowance provided to PC/Rwanda Volunteers was sufficient: 14 out of 19 Volunteers (74 percent) interviewed stated that their living allowance was "sufficient" or "more than sufficient." Volunteers did state that the living allowance was sufficient for living in the village, but may not have been sufficient depending on the frequency of travel to Kigali. The post administered the required living allowance survey to Volunteers but did not receive a high enough response rate to justify any change to the monthly living allowance.

Medical Unit Management. The medical unit functioned well due to a high-performing staff that included two PCMOs and a medical assistant. The medical assistant was a nurse who could take vitals and provide immunization when the PCMOs were not available. The medical unit was clean and well-organized at the time of the evaluation. The medical unit also maintained a complete and detailed medical emergency evacuation plan that included contact information for medical providers in Rwanda, for Peace Corps headquarters and regional Peace Corps medical staff, and for the U.S. embassy and airline in Rwanda. The plan also had copies of Peace Corps technical medical guidelines and policies, operating procedures for different medical emergencies, and a contact list for all Volunteers that specified travel times to Kigali and the closest medical facility for each Volunteer.

In addition to a well-documented medical emergency evacuation plan and well-managed medical unit, PC/Rwanda implemented an emergency readiness protocol that improved the post's preparedness to respond to potential Volunteer emergencies. In April 2015 the medical unit, administration unit, and country director collaborated to institute an improved emergency readiness protocol. The protocol included stationing a duty driver 24/7 in the post's temporary duty apartment on the office compound. Coordination between the medical unit and drivers ensured that the PCMOs' go-bags were loaded in the duty vehicle at the end of each workday in order to reduce the post's response time during Volunteer emergencies.

PC/Rwanda's emergency readiness protocol was particularly robust in part thanks to the availability of a temporary duty apartment on the office compound, as well as the small size and relatively good road network in Rwanda. For this reason, not every post may be able to develop an identical protocol. However, in light of our recent review of medical preparedness practices in

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[12] One Volunteer stated that only the PCMO had visited their site.

other countries, we assessed that PC/Rwanda exemplified the sort of coordination, collaboration, and planning between units that can lead to more an effective emergency response posture no matter the resources available to a post. For more information, see the following OIG report released in March of 2016: (IG-16-01-E: Final Evaluation Report: OIG Follow-Up Evaluation on Issues Identified in the 2010 Peace Corps/Morocco Assessment of Medical Care).

Duty driver apartment located inside the PC/Rwanda office compound.

Driver Roger Hakizimana in the PC/Rwanda duty driver apartment.

Staff Supportiveness and Communication with Volunteers. Volunteers were generally very satisfied with the level of support and communication they received from staff. See Table 3 below for a summary of ratings by Volunteers of staff supportiveness. Some staff members, including the PCMOs, SSM, training manager, PTA, and grants coordinator received favorable rating above 90%.

Table 3: Volunteer Perceptions of Staff Support
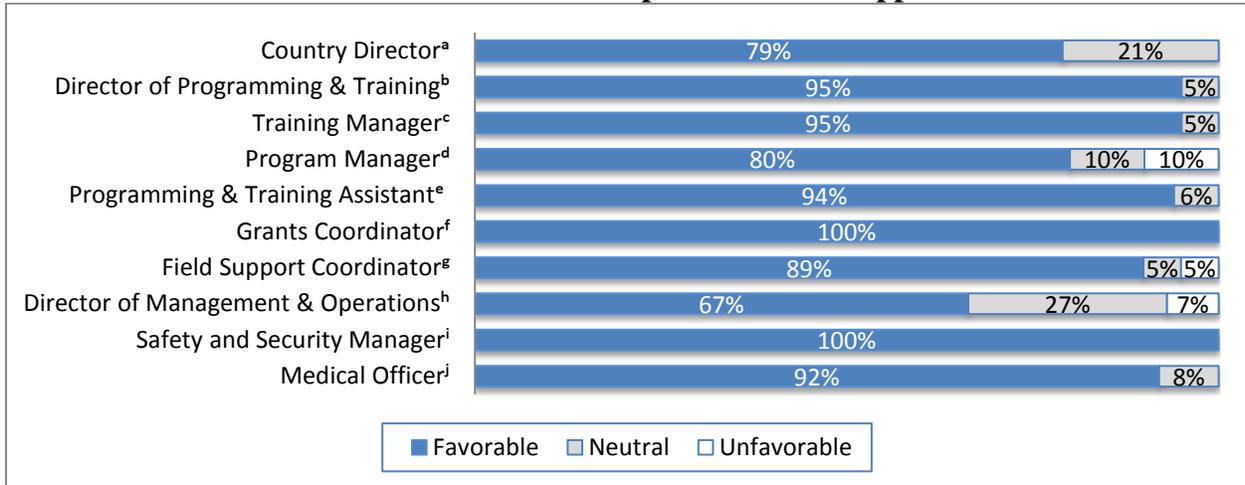
	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable
Country Director[a]	79%		21%
Director of Programming & Training[b]	95%		5%
Training Manager[c]	95%		5%
Program Manager[d]	80%	10%	10%
Programming & Training Assistant[e]	94%		6%
Grants Coordinator[f]	100%		
Field Support Coordinator[g]	89%	5%	5%
Director of Management & Operations[h]	67%	27%	7%
Safety and Security Manager[i]	100%		
Medical Officer[j]	92%		8%

Source: Volunteer interviews conducted by OIG evaluators. Some Volunteers did not answer every question.
[a]N=14, [b]N=19, [c]N=19, [d]N=20, [e]N=18, [f]N=16, [g]N=19, [h]N=15, [i]N=16, [j]N=20.

Though Volunteers perceived staff to be "supportive" or "very supportive", the evaluation uncovered some areas that require management attention, particularly management of the transit house and post expectations for Volunteer time away from site, integration, and behavior. OIG assessed that there was a need for post leadership to maintain higher standards regarding the importance of Volunteer commitment to service in Rwanda and the manner in which Volunteers should comport themselves. Generally, Peace Corps/Rwanda prioritized meeting the diverse support needs of Volunteers over the needs of Rwandan communities Volunteers were sent to serve. The remainder of this section provides more information on this topic.

The post did not uphold standards for Volunteer time away from site, integration, and behavior.

According to the Peace Corps Act, Peace Corps Volunteers should be:

> Qualified for service abroad and willing to serve, under conditions of hardship if necessary, to help the peoples of such countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained manpower, particularly in meeting the basic needs of those living in the poorest areas of such countries, and to help promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the peoples served and a better understanding of other peoples on the part of the American people.

In addition, Peace Corps policy regarding Volunteer conduct, MS 204 Attachment A[13], describes 10 core expectations for Peace Corps Volunteers, including that they "serve where Peace Corps asks [them] to go, under condition of hardship, if necessary, and with the flexibility needed for effective service."

At the time of evaluation, we found that the post did not uphold standards for Volunteers, especially regarding time away from site, integration into the community, and acting in a professional and culturally appropriate manner. As one volunteer pointed out, "Here [it] is a clear message that the staff is doing whatever it needs to support the volunteer ... Staff is focused on

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[13] See Appendix D.

the volunteers. Volunteers steer the ship." And as a staff member said, "Sometimes they [Volunteers] are [running the show]. It is difficult."

OIG assessed that post's inadequate expectations for Volunteer performance and behavior had contributed to Volunteers spending too much time away from their communities, not integrating into their communities, and engaging in cultural inappropriate behavior such as keeping dogs as pets. This will be discussed in more detail below.

Time Away from Site. According to MS 220, Volunteers "need occasional days away from their communities to take care of personal needs. Such time away from their community does not constitute leave. However, such breaks should be taken infrequently and must not be abused." Additionally, PC/Rwanda's Volunteer Handbook states:

> Because PCVs are promoting the three goals of Peace Corps 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, PCVs are strongly encouraged to spend as much time in their communities as possible to meet PC's goals … PC's agreement with the GOR [Government of Rwanda], and PC's fundamental goals requires PCVs to spend the vast majority of their time in their community.

Also, MS 220 4.2 specifies that Volunteers should not take annual leave during the first three months of service, "except when the Country Director approves leave under special circumstances, or in conjunction with an authorized emergency leave." Senior officials in the Africa region confirmed that it is "accepted practice" for posts to restrict Volunteers to their communities for the first three months of service in order to focus on community integration.

Despite these policies and accepted practices, our evaluation found that Volunteers in Rwanda spent too much time out of their sites, away from the communities they were sent to serve. OIG's analysis of 2015 transit house records and whereabouts reports[14] found that more than 25 percent of Volunteers in Rwanda were away from their sites five or more days per month for reasons other than vacation, emergency, or medical leave. OIG concluded this represented frequent abuse of the agency's personal time away from community policy. Some Volunteers spent eight to 10 nights per month away from their communities. Some staff referred to Volunteers who were frequently away from their communities as "frequent fliers" and even "tourists."

A lack of emphasis on the importance of staying at site, combined with a high rate of Volunteer participation in Volunteer-led committees, led to Volunteers spending too much time away from their communities. An example of post's inadequate expectations for Volunteers' time at site was the voluntary eight-week challenge for recently sworn-in Volunteers: if the Volunteer spent every night at their site during the first eight weeks of service, the post invited the Volunteer to Kigali for a celebration. However, as one volunteer said: "The first eight-week challenge is only a challenge, but it should be a requirement. Learning to sit through the tough moments and learning to rely on the community … is important for a volunteer." The Volunteer continued to describe the importance of participating in activities in one's community that might be uncomfortable at first, because participating in community events demonstrates the Volunteer's commitment to being considered part of the community.

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[14] Analysis includes a sample of 185 two-year Volunteers that served some portion of their service in 2015. The percentage of time away from site was determined by dividing the number of nights away from site by their total number of days in-service in 2015.

OIG's analysis found that just 6 of 27 health Volunteers who started service in August 2015 had achieved the eight-week challenge. Additionally, we found that in 2015 just 15 of 47 education Volunteers had spent every night in their communities during the first month of their service.

Volunteers frequently left their sites to participate in Volunteer-led committee meetings. Committees met quarterly, typically on a Saturday or Sunday in Kigali. At the time of the evaluation, there were seven Volunteer committees in Rwanda. The size of the committees ranged from six to 15 Volunteers. See Table 4 below.

Table 4: PC/Rwanda Committees

Committee Name	Number of Volunteer Members
Volunteer Advisory Committee	10
Project Advisory Committee	6
Gender and Development	8
STOMP Out Malaria	12
Peer Support Network	8
Ndi umunyamerika[15]	15
HIV	11

Source: A list provided by PC/Rwanda of Volunteer committees and membership.

At the time of the evaluation, 44 of the 62 Volunteers in service long enough to be considered for an interview were involved in at least one committee. Some volunteers participated in multiple committees. Figure 1 shows the degree of committee participation among these 62 Volunteers.
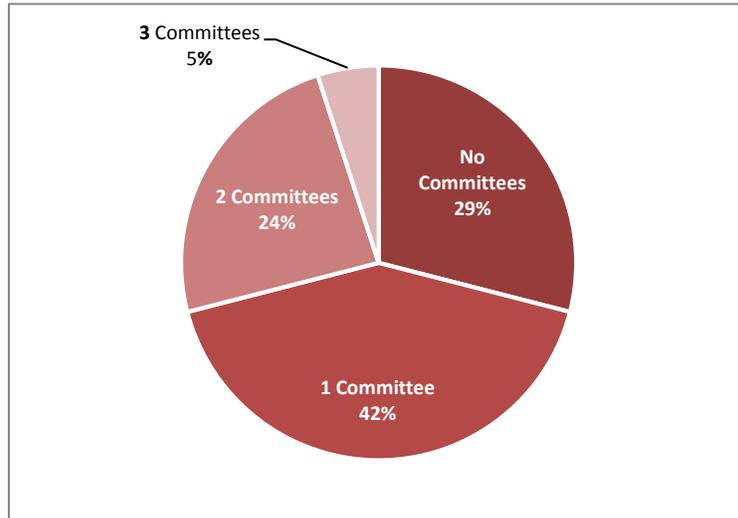
Figure 1: Percentage of Volunteers Participating in Committees
Source: A list provided by PC/Rwanda of Volunteer committees and membership. (N=62)

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[15] In Kinyarwanda, Ndi umunyamerika translates to "I Am American." The group was formed to support Volunteers who are not always considered by Rwandans to be "real Americans" due to their ethnicity or race.

Some Volunteers recognized that involvement in these committees led to being out of site too often. Here are some comments from Volunteers:

> "I am on two committees, so I have to travel at least two weekends a month. I leave on Friday or late Thursday [after work]."

> "I am only on one committee because I want to say at site. If I got offered another committee I would turn it down. Between PC training and committee meetings, I don't not always want to be in Kigali. I feel that this [partner organization] asked for me, so I should be here [in my community]."

> "Committee work can pull volunteers out of site leading to the negative cycle of integration and out of site."

Although Rwanda is perceived as a relatively safe country, spending an excessive amount of time out of site in Kigali or in other regional towns exposed Volunteers to an elevated risk of crime. As one staff member stated:

> "My initial reaction would be that Rwanda is safe and secure place to service. But the most recent data show some other things. Some of it has been capital city crime. … Transit house have a way of attracting Volunteers to the capital, which increases risk of some crimes such as assaults, robberies, and property crimes. A lot of Rwanda incidents [against Volunteers] come when they are travelling and in the capital city. They have some level of burglaries in their communities, but not the same level as in the capital city."

Based on OIG's analysis, 56 crimes against Volunteers had occurred between January 1, 2015 and February 15, 2016 in Rwanda. Nineteen of these crimes (34 percent) occurred in Kigali and an additional 18 crimes happened in regional towns or at the Volunteer's house while the Volunteer was away from the community.

Community Integration. According to Peace Corps MS 204, Volunteer Conduct:

> V/Ts [Volunteers/trainees] have responsibilities more complex than those of private citizens. While they are expected to learn and respect host country culture and customs, they must also conduct themselves in a way that reflects credit on the United States and the Peace Corps. Indeed, the V/T is often the most identifiable, and frequently the only, U.S. citizen in a community. Accordingly, V/Ts are expected to adopt lifestyles sensitive to host country cultural norms, and exercise common sense and good judgment to promote safety and reduce risks at home, at work, and while traveling.

Community integration is a core expectation for Volunteers. The Peace Corps instructs Volunteers to "recognize that your successful and sustainable development work is based on the local trust and confidence you build by living in, and respectfully integrating yourself into, your host community and culture." However, Volunteers' excessive time away from site negatively impacted their integration into their communities. As one Volunteer said:

> It is [a] bad cycle. You want to go to Kigali to visit your friends and then [when] you come back to your village, you [have] hindered your integration because you were in Kigali. So you want to go to Kigali more to visit your friends. So you have the transit house frequent flyers, and the site rats.

The post did not always emphasis the importance of integration during service. As a Volunteer pointed out:

> The last month of PST trainees are allowed to go to Kigali for a day and make it back by night. [During] PST the training town is your site. And allowing trainees to go to Kigali shows that it is ok to leave site.

Staying at site to build trust and confidence with local counterparts, colleagues, officials, and community members is particularly important in Rwanda where community integration can be difficult. Integration can be especially difficult for Volunteers from diverse backgrounds who reported facing a lack of understanding by Rwandans related to American diversity.

As stated above, the post had many committees to support Volunteers in implementing projects and integrating into their communities. However, the committees themselves required Volunteers to spend a significant amount of time out of their communities, ironically making it more difficult for Volunteers to implement projects and integrate into their communities.

Volunteer Behavior. Another Core Expectations for Peace Corps Volunteers is that all Volunteers must "recognize that [they] are responsible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for [their] personal conduct and professional performance." In addition, according to Peace Corps policy regarding Volunteer Conduct, MS 204 states:

> V/Ts have responsibilities more complex than those of private citizens. While they are expected to learn and respect host country culture and customs, they must also conduct themselves in a way that reflects credit on the United States and the Peace Corps. Indeed, the V/T is often the most identifiable, and frequently the only, U.S. citizen in a community. Accordingly, V/Ts are expected to adopt lifestyles sensitive to host country cultural norms, and exercise common sense and good judgment to promote safety and reduce risks at home, at work, and while traveling.

The Peace Corps' reputation and goodwill in Rwanda had been partly diminished by the manner in which some Volunteers comported themselves, including failing to integrate into their communities or to adhere to Rwandan cultural norms regarding personal dress and household cleanliness. Some Rwandan supervisors had contacted PC/Rwanda staff to request the staff tell Volunteers to clean their houses or improve their hygiene. A staff member also told us that a Volunteer had struggled to integrate because no one in the community was willing to be seen in public with the Volunteer based on the Volunteer's disheveled appearance.

In addition, some Volunteers engaged in culturally inappropriate behavior, including the taboo practice of keeping dogs as pets and excessive alcohol consumption. These Volunteer behaviors had been harmful to Peace Corps' reputation in some communities. As one staff member stated:

> Volunteer behavior out there [in the community] is the biggest thing that helps or hurts us to get sites. … So, if Volunteers do their job well, that is the best advocate for Peace Corps. Otherwise, we go around knocking on doors, trying to sell this program, and people say "no thank you, no thank you, no thank you."

The post had not always emphasized to Volunteers the importance of engaging in professional and culturally appropriate behavior. Staff members did not believe that post leadership had done enough to enforce consequences for excessive alcohol consumption. The 2014 Health of the Volunteer report showed that the rate of alcohol-related problems in Rwanda[16] was 10 times the

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[16] The Peace Corps defines an alcohol-related problem to "include any incident except for an injury in which behavior is altered or impaired due to alcohol intoxication. These include incidents observed by staff, Volunteers, Trainees, or any reliable source."

regional and global rates, and that Rwanda accounted for one-third of all alcohol-related problems reported in the Africa region (10 of 29).

As one staff member said:

> If alcohol leads a Volunteer getting into some risky behavior, then [the post] should help the Volunteer get out of the situation, but there should be some consequences. If there is no action [or consequences] than other [Volunteers will] think it is ok.

In addition, at the time of the evaluation, post leadership had recently changed the post's pet policy to allow Volunteers to keep dogs as pets. However, the previous 2015 PC/Rwanda Volunteer Handbook stated that "because of cultural perceptions and historical associations (i.e. genocide), PC/Rwanda does not allow Volunteers to have dogs." This cultural norm had not changed, yet the post had changed their policy due to Volunteer requests. Rwandans do not like dogs because they bring back traumatic memories of what dogs did during the 1994 genocide, including consuming corpses and rabidly biting survivors. In fact one staff member said, "When I plan to visit a Volunteer who has a dog, we [the Volunteer and I] make arrangements so that we won't be disturbed because as I fear dogs much [because] my family members have had a sad history with dogs during the genocide."

A staff member summarized the importance of Volunteers' behavior, time at site, and ability to integrate:

> If Rwandans think that you are not behaving well they won't help you, especially if you have a reputation for drinking or promiscuity, or you dress badly. If young Volunteers just do what they want and don't pay attention to this part of Rwandan culture, they [Volunteers] will be coldly received. The community will be indifferent to them [Volunteers]. The Volunteer will perceive this as not being accepted and not being able to integrate. It will affect their integration. They [Volunteers] will leave site more, come to Kigali too much, and have more problems. It is a vicious cycle, you see? It is very important to understand this."

Inappropriate Volunteer behavior, fueled by excessive time away from their communities, has the potential to place Volunteers at greater risk of personal harm as well as to harm the Peace Corps' reputation and goodwill in the communities it is trying to serve.

In order to elevate expectations and uphold standards for Volunteer behavior, especially related to time away from community and community integration, we recommend:

> **8. That the country director increases messaging to trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.**

> **9. That the country director reinforces with Volunteers the importance of adopting lifestyles consistent with Rwandan cultural norms, and clarifies and enforces the consequences for Volunteers whose failure to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle jeopardizes his or her health and safety or the reputation of the Peace Corps.**

10. **That the country director work with the Volunteer advisory committee and other Volunteer committees to clarify guidelines for Volunteer involvement in committees with the goal of minimizing Volunteers' time out of site for committee work.**

11. **That the country director, working with program staff, the Volunteer advisory committee, and other committee chairs determine which Volunteer committees are necessary, and assess which, if any, can be combined or eliminated.**

Post staff was not properly documenting staff approvals for Volunteer stays at the transit house.

Peace Corps policy regarding the use of transit houses (MS 218 6.2 and 6.3) is based on the principle that "transit houses are neither overused by Volunteers nor become magnets that unduly draw Volunteers from their sites and the local culture." When a post manages an approved transit house, Peace Corps policy requires that: "lists must be maintained detailing the names of Volunteers and the length of each Volunteer's stay. If the lists are not maintained, the CD must send warning notes to applicable Volunteers, and, if that fails, approval for use of the transit house must be withdrawn." According to the PC/Rwanda Volunteer Handbook 2015:

> PCVs are granted permission to stay overnight at the infirmary (sick bay) or transit house only under the following circumstances:
>
> - Medical conditions approved by the PCMOs, including examinations for mid-service and close of service, illness requiring observation or rest, etc.
> - Safety or Security conditions in site that require the Volunteer to be removed and approved by the Safety and Security Manager
> - Administrative reasons need to be approved by the DMO [Director of Management and Operations] or DDMO [Deputy Director of Management and Operations]
> - Program related reasons need to be approved by the PM or DPT and can include such meetings as VAC [Volunteer Advisory Committee], PSN [Peer Support Network], PAC [Project Advisory Committee] or other committee meetings.

Agency policy and the post's handbook require that staff have a documented reason each time a Volunteer stays at the transit house, as well as an understanding of the length of each Volunteer's stay. OIG's analysis of transit house records from 2015 demonstrated that 70 percent of Volunteer nightly transit house stays did not include a documented reason. As a result, the post did not have the information it needed to manage the transit house according to Peace Corps policy.

The post's process for approving Volunteer stays in the transit house was to provide the office compound guards with a list of approved Volunteers by 5 p.m. each evening. Volunteers who were not on the transit house list for the night had to leave or obtain approval to stay. However,

properly documenting which Volunteers were approved to stay at the transit house was difficult for a few reasons. Some Volunteers were approved after 5 p.m., when the list had already been provided to the guards. Sometimes when a strict staff member denied a Volunteer's request to stay at the transit house, the Volunteer would simply ask another more lenient staff member until permission to stay was granted. The high frequency with which Volunteers used the transit house made it difficult for staff to maintain accurate and complete records of who was in the transit house, when, and for what purpose. Staff complained that having the transit house on site essentially meant that the post was running a hostel for Volunteers. Due to the lax manner in which the post managed Volunteer access to the transit house, it was clear that some Volunteers had abused the agency's policy against overusing the transit house. It was also likely that the transit house had become a magnet that drew some Volunteers away from their sites.

> **We recommend:**
>
> **12. That the country director and director of management and operations improve the post's management and oversight of the transit house.**

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

Another key objective of our country program evaluation is to determine the extent to which the post's resources and management practices are adequate for effective post operations. To address this question, we assessed a number of factors, including staffing; staff development; staff performance appraisals; post's strategic planning and budgeting; and the office work environment.

In reviewing staffing, staff development, staff performance appraisals, and the post's strategic planning and budgeting, we found no significant areas of concern that would necessitate action by the post.

Staffing. The post was adequately staffed for the Volunteer population and projects being implemented at the time of the evaluation. Generally, the staff worked well together to support Volunteers and respond to Volunteer concerns.

Staff Development. In general, the post provided reasonable opportunities for staff development. According to one staff member, "the post has budgeted $500 this year for each staff member for staff development." The post also offered external staff development resources and opportunities, such as e-learning websites and English classes at the British High Commission.

Staff Performance Appraisals. During our evaluation, we reviewed staff files for 10 random staff members. Nine out of 10 staff files contained performance evaluations from the past year. The one file that did not contain a performance evaluation was for a staff member that had been hired in the middle of the past year.

Strategic Planning and Budgeting. In general the post was effective at strategic planning and budgeting. The post had no unfunded requests in the past year.

Office Work Environment. Some host country national staff expressed dissatisfaction with changes in their health insurance coverage, which is determined by the U.S. Embassy. We referred this issue to post management. Additionally, there were some communication and coordination challenges among the post staff in some work areas, including housing approval during site development and collaboration between the programming team and the safety and security team to ensure Volunteer site locator forms were completed in a timely manner. These challenges were referenced throughout the report as needed to support the report's findings and recommendations.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

WE RECOMMEND:

1. That the country director and the director of programming and training implement a process that improves documentation, coordination, and communication among staff involved in site development and the housing approval process to mitigate the risk of placing Volunteers in non-compliant housing.

2. That the country director clarify the roles, expectations and responsibilities of staff and Volunteers in addressing housing deficiencies that occur after site installation, including deficiencies that currently exist.

3. That the director of programming and training improve the post's management of site history files so that files are complete, staff members know what documents belong in site history files, and site history files are consulted during the site development and approval process.

4. That the director of programming and training and the training manager utilize qualified staff, including the TEFL program manager and the programming and training assistants, to deliver technical training, and rely less on volunteer assistant trainers.

5. That the director of programming and training align technical training for the health project with the goals and objectives of the new health project framework.

6. That the director of programming and training, the training manager, and the program managers improve how the post selects and supervises volunteer assistant trainers for and during pre-service or other Volunteer trainings.

7. That the director of programming and training work with the safety and security manager, the training manager, and others as needed to tailor SARRR training sessions to address more fully the safety and security risks, and related risk reduction strategies, specific to Rwanda.

8. That the country director increases messaging to trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.

9. That the country director reinforces with Volunteers the importance of adopting lifestyles consistent with Rwandan cultural norms, and clarifies and enforces the consequences for Volunteers whose failure to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle jeopardizes his or her health and safety or the reputation of the Peace Corps.

10. That the country director work with the Volunteer advisory committee and other Volunteer committees to clarify guidelines for Volunteer involvement in committees with the goal of minimizing Volunteers' time out of site for committee work.

11. That the country director, working with program staff, the Volunteer advisory committee, and other committee chairs determine which Volunteer committees are necessary, and assess which, if any, can be combined or eliminated.

12. That the country director and director of management and operations improve the post's management and oversight of the transit house.

APPENDIX A: OBJECTIVE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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

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

The Evaluation Unit announced its intent to conduct an evaluation of the post on October 5, 2015. 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 management practices adequate for effective post operations?

The evaluation team conducted the preliminary research portion of the evaluation October 5, 2015 to January 10, 2016. This research included review of agency documents provided by headquarters and post staff; interviews with management staff representing the Africa region, Office of Global Health and HIV, Office of Health Services, Office of Safety and Security, Office of Victim Advocacy, Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection, Overseas Programming and Training Support, and Peace Corps Response; and inquiries to Office of Strategic Partnerships.

In-country fieldwork occurred from January 11 to 29, 2016, and included interviews with post senior staff in charge of programming, training, and support; the U.S. ambassador; the U.S. Embassy's regional security officer; host country government ministry officials; and partners from other U.S. government agencies. In addition, we interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 20 Volunteers (32 percent of Volunteers serving at least four months at the time of our visit) based on their length of service, site location, project focus, gender, age, and ethnicity.

The evaluation team conducted an analysis of transit house use and volunteer whereabouts in 2015. Data for the transit house use analysis was provided by the volunteer liaison and covered transit house use from January 2015 to February 2016. Volunteer whereabouts data for 2015 was obtained through Peace Corps Volunteer Information Database Application.

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. The evidence, findings, and

recommendations provided in this report have been reviewed by agency stakeholders affected by this review.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

As part of this post evaluation, interviews were conducted with 20 Volunteers, 18 staff in-country, 26 representatives from Peace Corps headquarters in Washington D.C., the U.S. Embassy in Rwanda, 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 = neutral, 5 = very effective). The analysis of these ratings provided a quantitative supplement to Volunteers' comments, which were also analyzed. For the purposes of the data analysis, Volunteer ratings of "4" and above are considered favorable. In addition, 15 out of 20 Volunteer interviews occurred at the Volunteers' homes, and we inspected these 15 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 Volunteer population in Rwanda that was eligible to be interviewed; the Volunteer sample was selected to reflect these demographics.

Table 6: Volunteer Demographic Data

Project	Percentage of Volunteers
Health	53%
Teaching English as a Foreign Language	47%
Gender	**Percentage of Volunteers**
Female	71%
Male	29%
Age	**Percentage of Volunteers**
25 or younger	66%
26-29	18%
30-49	15%
50 and over	2%

Source: Peace Corps Volunteer roster as of October 2015.
Note: Percentages may not total 100 percent due to rounding.

At the time of our field visit, the post had 39 staff positions. The post also employed temporary staff to assist with PST. Given the time of our visit, these positions were not staffed. We interviewed 18 staff. The staffing configuration of posts often varies and staff may hold additional responsibilities relevant to the evaluation in addition to their official job title. We conduct interviews with sexual assault response liaisons; grants coordinators; monitoring, reporting, and evaluation champions; and Peace Corps Response coordinators as necessary and when appropriate for the post.

Table 7: Interviews Conducted with Post Staff

Position	Status	Interviewed
Cashier	FSN*	
Deputy Director of Management and Operations	FSN	X
Administrative Assistant	PSC*	
Assistant General Services Manager/Facilities Manager	PSC	
Assistant General Service Manager/Motor pool Coordinator	PSC	
Driver (5)	PSC	
Facilities Assistant	PSC	
Field Support Coordinator	PSC	X
Finance Assistant	PSC	
Food Security Coordinator	PSC	X
Gardener	PSC	
General Service Manager	PSC	
Homestay Coordinator	PSC	X
IT Specialist	PSC	
Language and Cross-Culture Coordinator	PSC	X
Language and Cross-Culture Facilitators (2)	PSC	
Medical Assistant	PSC	
PC Response Coordinator	PSC	X
Peace Corps Medical Officer	PSC	X
Programming and Training Assistant (4)	PSC	X (2)
Program Manager (2)	PSC	X (2)
Safety and Security Coordinator	PSC	X
Training Assistant/Grants Coordinator	PSC	X
Training Manager	PSC	X
Volunteer Liaison	PSC	
Peace Corps Medical Officer	TCN PSC*	X
Country Director	USDH	X
Director of Management and Operations	USDH	X
Director of Programming and Training	USDH	X
Communication Coordinator	US PSC	

Data as of October 2015.
*PSC stands for "personal services contractor"; FSN stands for "foreign service national"; TCN stands for "third country national"; USDH stands for "United States direct hire."

Twenty-six additional interviews 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 8: Interviews Conducted with Peace Corps Headquarters Staff, Embassy Officials and Key Ministry Officials

Position	Organization
Representative	Ministry of Education
Maternal and Child Health Specialist	Ministry of Health
Mission Director	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/Rwanda
Chief Administrative Officer	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Chief of Operations	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Chief of Programming and Training	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Country Desk Officer	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Regional Director	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Regional Security Advisor	PC Headquarters/Africa Region
Director	PC Headquarters/Office of Global Health and HIV
Program Specialist	PC Headquarters/Office of Global Health and HIV
Director, Office of Medical Services	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Deputy Director, Counseling and Outreach Unit	PC Headquarters/Office of Health Services
Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer	PC Headquarters/Office of Safety and Security
Associate Victim Advocate (2)	PC Headquarters/Office of Victim Advocacy
Supervisory Placement Officer - Assessment	PC Headquarters/Volunteer Recruitment and Selection
Nutrition Specialist	PC Headquarters/Overseas Programming and Training Support
TEFL Specialist	PC Headquarters/Overseas Programming and Training Support
TEFL M&E Specialist	PC Headquarters/Overseas Programming and Training Support
Chief of Operations	PC Headquarters/Peace Corps Response
Programming Specialist	PC Headquarters/Peace Corps Response
Mission Director	U.S. Agency for International Development/Rwanda
Ambassador	U.S. Embassy/Rwanda
Regional Security Officer	U.S. Embassy/Rwanda
Former PC/Rwanda Country Director	

Data as of January 2016.

APPENDIX C: LIST OF ACRONYMS

CD	Country Director
DMO	Director of Management and Operations
DDMO	Deputy Director of Management and Operations
DPT	Director of Programming and Training
FY	Fiscal Year
GPS	Global Positioning System
LCF	Language and Cross Culture Facilitator
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	Manual Section
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PC	Peace Corps
PCMO	Peace Corps Medical Officer
PM	Program Manager
PST	Pre-Service Training
PTA	Programming and Training Assistant
SARRR	Sexual Assault Risk Reduction and Response
SSM	Safety and Security Manager
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
VAT	Volunteer Assistant Trainer
VRF	Volunteer Reporting Form

APPENDIX D: CORE EXPECTATIONS FOR PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

The mission of the Peace Corps is to promote world peace and friendship by:

- Helping people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women
- Helping promote better understanding of Americans on the part of peoples served
- Helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

In working toward fulfilling the Peace Corps Mission, as a trainee and Volunteer, you are expected to:

1. Prepare your personal and professional life to make a commitment to serve abroad for a full term of 27 months

2. Commit to improving the quality of life of the people with whom you live and work; and, in doing so, share your skills, adapt them, and learn new skills as needed

3. Serve where the Peace Corps asks you to go, under conditions of hardship, if necessary, and with the flexibility needed for effective service

4. Recognize that your successful and sustainable development work is based on the local trust and confidence you build by living in, and respectfully integrating yourself into, your host community and culture

5. Recognize that you are responsible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for your personal conduct and professional performance

6. Engage with host country partners in a spirit of cooperation, and mutual learning and respect

7. Work within the rules and regulations of the Peace Corps and the local and national laws of the country where you serve

8. Exercise judgment and personal responsibility to protect your health, safety, and well-being and that of others

9. Recognize that you will be perceived, in your host country and community, as a representative of the people, cultures, values, and traditions of the United States of America

10. Represent responsibly the people, cultures, values, and traditions of your host country and community to people in the United States both during and following your service

APPENDIX E: AGENCY'S RESPONSE TO THE PRELIMINARY REPORT

Since 1961.

MEMORANDUM

To: Kathy Buller, Inspector General

Through: Anne Hughes, Chief Compliance Officer

From: Dorothea Hertzberg, Acting Regional Director, AF
              Ken Yamashita, Associate Director, Global Operations
              Jennifer Hedrick, Country Director, PC/Rwanda

Date: August 1, 2016

CC: Carrie Hessler-Radelet, Director
              Laura Chambers, Chief of Staff
              Carlos Torres, Deputy Director
              Joaquin Ferrao, Deputy Inspector General
              Jerry Black, AIG/Evaluations
              Daniel Baker, Programming, Training & Evaluation Expert, AF
              William Bryan Dwyer, Director of Programming & Training, PC/Rwanda
              Angela Kissel, Compliance Officer

Subject: Preliminary Report on the Evaluation of Peace Corps/Rwanda (Project No. 15-
              EVAL-03)

Enclosed please find the agency's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Rwanda as outlined in the Preliminary Report of Peace Corps/Rwanda sent to the Agency on June 15, 2016.

The Region and the Post have addressed and provided supporting documentation for seven of the 12 recommendations provided by the OIG in its Preliminary Evaluation Report: Peace Corps/Rwanda, and will work to address the remaining recommendations by the set target dates.

1

<u>**Recommendation 1**</u>
That the country director and the director of programming and training implement a process that improves documentation, coordination, and communication among staff involved in site development and the housing approval process to mitigate the risk of placing Volunteers in non-compliant housing.

<u>Concur</u>
Response: The Safety and Security Manager (SSM), Field Support Coordinator (FSC), and Housing and Homestay Coordinator (HHC) met to review and update our housing policies based on dynamics in the field, and the "Housing Standards and Inspection Checklist" was updated to reflect the local context and constraints of finding housing for PCVs. A new checklist was approved by Senior Management Team including the Country Director (CD), Director of Programming and Training (DPT), Program Managers (PM), Peace Corps Medical Officer (PCMO), SSM, etc.

With the DPT in attendance, the PMs, the HHC, SSM and PCMO conducted staff training on July 25, 2016 for all staff involved in the site development and housing approval process. They covered the programming, safety, and health dimensions of successfully meeting established housing criteria and effective problem solving related to the same.

All remaining housing questions are now systematically addressed during weekly Volunteer Focus meetings, during which time the CD, DPT, program staff, SSM, and PCMO can address specific housing question in a holistic, coordinated manner. The PMs are responsible for compiling and bringing Volunteer housing issues to the table and relevant staff know to elevate such questions to PMs.

<u>**Documents Submitted**</u>:
- Updated "Housing Standards and Inspection Checklist"
- Updated "Site Development and Site Monitoring Standards and Procedures"
- Housing Staff Training PowerPoint

<u>**Status and Timeline for Completion:**</u> Completed, July 2016

<u>**Recommendation 2**</u>
That the country director clarify the roles, expectations and responsibilities of staff and Volunteers in addressing housing deficiencies that occur after site installation, including deficiencies that currently exist.

<u>Concur</u>
Response: The CD and DPT ensure that the process, execution, and documentation of Volunteer in-site housing aligns with and meets Peace Corps requirements. The CD has established that PMs bear primary responsibility for insuring in-site Volunteer housing meets established PC Rwanda housing criteria and bear primary responsibility for documenting the same on the PC Rwanda Housing Standards and Inspection Checklist.

2

The HHC is the primary in-site Volunteer housing troubleshooter after the PMs. The FSC and Programming and Training Assistants (PTA) are also trained to assess and help address housing issues.

Post has initiated a housing audit to identify shortcomings and bring all Volunteer housing into compliance with our Site Development and Site Monitoring Standards and Procedures. The DPT is managing the audit in coordination with PMs, HHC, FSC, SSM, and Admin team.

Documents Submitted:
- Updated "Housing Standards and Inspection Checklist"
- Housing audit email and questionnaire

Documents to be Submitted:
- Housing status audit summary

Status and Timeline for Completion: Ongoing, October 2016

Recommendation 3
That the director of programming and training improve the post's management of site history files so that files are complete, staff members know what documents belong in site history files, and site history files are consulted during the site development and approval process.

Concur
Response: We completed an exhaustive site development review with staff and our Project Advisory Committee in FY 15 and have updated our Site Development and Site Monitoring Standards and Procedures and forms to reflect the updated processes. We are now executing on the updated guidance and all future site history folders will bear all of the documentation that attests to compliance with these updates.

Documents Submitted:
- Index of items to be filed in site history files
- Photographs of filing system
- Updated Site Development and Site Monitoring Standards and Procedures and forms

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, July 2016

<u>**Recommendation 4**</u>
That the director of programming and training and the training manager utilize qualified staff, including the TEFL program manager and the programming and training assistants, to deliver technical training, and rely less on volunteer assistant trainers.

> <u>**Concur**</u>
> **Response:** Beginning with the Health 8 (HE8) group that are currently in pre-service training (PST), post will have staff or other trained experts facilitate or co-facilitate the majority of technical sessions. As we are becoming a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Certification post, only highly trained staff and trainers will be able to deliver technical sessions that during our TEFL and Teacher Support PST. Volunteer Assistant Trainers (VAT) will only be used as co-facilitators in technical sessions and primary facilitators on Volunteer-centered sessions, such as committees, affinity groups, and participating in language and cultural sessions.
>
> For in-service trainings (IST), Behavior Change Communication/Project Design and Management (BCC/PDM), and mid-service trainings (MST), post will ensure that highly trained staff, counterparts, and additional experts are facilitating or co-facilitating the majority of technical training sessions.
>
> <u>**Documents Submitted:**</u>
> - Updated HE8 Calendar of Training Events (COTE) that demonstrates facilitation roles for technical training sessions
> - Handover notes to new DPT re: technical training
>
> <u>**Documents to be Submitted:**</u>
> - Updated ED8 COTE
>
> <u>**Status and Timeline for Completion:**</u> Ongoing, September, 2016

<u>**Recommendation 5**</u>
That the director of programming and training align technical training for the health project with the goals and objectives of the new health project framework.

> <u>**Concur**</u>
> **Response:** The DPT, Health Program Staff, and the Health Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members have reviewed and updated the PST COTE to reflect the activities, goals, and objectives of the new draft first 1,000 days project framework. The new framework should be endorsed prior to the IST portion of PST, which will take place in October 2016, and will make further updates to technical training possible.
>
> The HE7 IST in October 2015 was mapped to the new draft First 1,000 Days project framework and will continue to be so going forward. This included a full week of counterpart participation and training under the new draft framework.

Documents Submitted:
- Updated First 1,000 Days Project Framework
- HE7 IST Agenda
- HE8 PST COTE

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, May 2016

Recommendation 6

That the director of programming and training, the training manager, and the program managers improve how the post selects and supervises volunteer assistant trainers for and during pre-service or other Volunteer trainings.

Concur

Response: Post will implement this recommendation beginning with the VATs who are participating in our HE8 PST. As in the past, all VATs will be selected through a competitive process, and the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members will have the opportunity to provide input on the applicants. As in the past, all selected VATs will attend a three-day training of trainers (ToT) in order to prepare them for their roles as VATs. Beginning with HE8 PST, we will have VATs co-facilitate, rather than facilitate, more technical sessions. We will require that their sessions are mapped to the new project framework and that they identify specific resources in the Volunteer Resources Library that will support their work under the specific goals and objectives of our updated draft framework.

Documents Submitted:
- Email Solicitation for VATs
- General ToT Agenda
- VAT Comportment Documentation
- HE8 PST COTE

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, May 2016

Recommendation 7

That the director of programming and training work with the safety and security manager, the training manager, and others as needed to tailor SARRR training sessions to address more fully the safety and security risks, and related risk reduction strategies, specific to Rwanda.

Concur

Response: The DPT corresponded with the SARRR Team Lead in the Director's Office regarding this recommendation. On her advice, our SSM, PCMOs, and SARLs will make updates to our SARRR training sessions and then hold a conference call with PC/HQ to ensure that post changes conformed to PC/HQ norms. All future SARRR sessions will be delivered using updated training materials.

- Before and after SARRR training session materials

Status and Timeline for Completion: Ongoing, August 2016

Recommendation 8
That the country director increases messaging to trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.

Concur
Response: While post regularly emphasizes the importance of volunteers' integration and spending quality time at site, there are still some Volunteers who are not compliant with post policies. Post will continue its efforts in reinforcing these key messages and policies in order to improve compliance with Post's expectations.

Below is an example of a typical schedule for a Health Volunteer during their first year at post:
- IST – 10 business days, 15 nights out of site (5 days with counterpart)
- BCC/PDM – 3 business days, 4 nights out of site (with counterpart)
- GLOW Camp – 7 calendar days, 8 nights out of site (with community members)
- BE Camp or Camp TechKobwa – 7 calendar days, 8 nights out of site (with community members)
- Grassroots Soccer – 4 calendar days, 5 nights out of site (with counterpart)
- 1 Committee – 4 calendar days, 4-8 nights out of site (depending how far from capital)

In this representative example, a Health Volunteer will be away from site for close to four nights per month for officially sanctioned activities, during *most* of which they will be accompanied by a counterpart or community member. This example does not factor in any time for GAD, STOMP Out Malaria, VAT ToTs, WASH, Community Finance Initiative or other programming initiatives that might take a Volunteer out of their site. For TEFL and Teacher Support Volunteers, IST is one week shorter, and post has initiated two-day, three-night ToTs with counterparts to train on the new Rwandan curriculum, syllabi, and how to make teaching materials from locally available resources. The other variables noted above apply equally to these Volunteers. Being away from site as demonstrated above is well-within the spirit of the qualitative guidance cited in the Preliminary Program Evaluation Report.

In addition, the Government of Rwanda has very high expectations that the PCVs are not only integrating, but truly in a measurable way contributing to their Vision 2020 goals. These trainings and activities provide PCVs the skills necessary to not only meet Peace Corp's Goal 1 in a measurable way, but also for PC Rwanda to be a serious development partner with the Government of Rwanda.

Community Integration. Post stresses the importance of community integration and has initiated several important innovations to support Volunteer community integration.

The eight-week challenge is specifically designed to help Volunteers understand the importance of community integration. The CD issues this challenge at the end of PST when she is reviewing the Volunteer Handbook and emphasizing the Volunteers 24/7 role as ambassadors for the Peace Corps and U.S. While six of 28 Volunteers successfully completed the 8-week challenge, only leaving site for medical or safety and security reasons, 24 of the 28 Volunteers completed the challenge only leaving for the aforementioned reasons or for limited and essential programming or training reasons approved by the CD.

Additional community integration innovations include:
- Hiring a Field Support Coordinator to specifically help with integration issues
- Hiring two full-time LCFs to help with post PST language learning (a barrier to successful integration)
- The Peace Corps Trainee (PCT) site visit assignment
- Revised Community Needs Assessments (CNA) for both projects developed in coordination with the PAC. These are followed with specific sessions during IST.
- Introduction of Community Liaisons to support Volunteer integration at site
- Community Integration sessions during PST and at the Supervisor's Conference.

Community integration is a core piece of PC/Rwanda's culture and management. Post messages and manages accordingly, however, there are still some Volunteers who ignore these core values, and they are confronted when it becomes clear that they don't think integration is important. This messaging begins during PST. Per the recommendation, post will increase messaging to Trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.

Some of the more recent updates, such as the revised CNAs, have not yet had time to gain traction with the Volunteer population. Post feels that with these tools, Volunteers will have a richer understanding of community integration and will spend more time in site moving forward. Post will also initiate new presentation prior to swearing-in to stress the importance of integration during the Bridge to Service period.

Documents Submitted:
- Field Support Coordinator SOW
- PCT Site Visit Assignment
- Community Health CNA
- TEFL CNA
- Community Health COTE
- TEFL COTE
- Supervisor's Conference Agenda
- Community Liaison PowerPoint

Documents to be Submitted
* Importance of integration presentation

Status and Timeline for Completion: September 2016

Recommendation 9
That the country director reinforces with Volunteers the importance of adopting lifestyles consistent with Rwandan cultural norms, and clarifies and enforces the consequences for Volunteers whose failure to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle jeopardizes his or her health and safety or the reputation of the Peace Corps.

Concur
Response: The post continually emphasizes the importance of engaging in professional and culturally appropriate behavior.

Alcohol: The CD, PCMO, and SSM take the lead on emphasizing culturally appropriate behavior with regard to alcohol use and message important alcohol guidance at PST and IST, and with email updates.

Dogs: The decision to amend the dog ownership policy was taken by the post Management Team after 18 months of deliberations with host country national staff and key stakeholders. Guidance in the Volunteer Handbook addresses the complexity of the issue. Post does not believe that the dog policy is an example of "culturally inappropriate behavior," it is an example of taking a progressive, thorough approach to a reality on the ground. Post has not received any complaints from community members or counterparts regarding dogs and dogs were not mentioned by any of the surveyed counterparts in the latest counterpart survey. Post has, however, had numerous stories from Volunteers about breakthroughs with community members facilitated by interactions occasioned by their animals.

Hygiene: Post gives Trainees and Volunteers extensive guidance on appropriate personal hygiene and dress in Rwanda. When a Volunteer is brought to our attention for not conforming with Rwandan norms and PC standards, post deals with the situation immediately.

Post staff provides Volunteers with rigorous guidance on the importance of integration and comporting themselves in a manner that will enable them to serve effectively in their communities. When Volunteers exhibit behaviors that are not in keeping with even the spirit of this, post takes steps to address the issue with Volunteers. When necessary, post has used behavior and performance improvement plans to address lifestyle, comportment, and performance issues.

Post will continue to reinforce messaging to Volunteers on adopting culturally appropriate lifestyles and will address any issues expeditiously when Volunteers do not

meet Post's expectations. Post will also initiate new presentation to stress the importance of culturally appropriate behavior during the Bridge to Service period prior to swearing-in.

Documents Submitted:
- Health COTE
- TEFL COTE
- Supervisor's Conference Agenda
- Volunteer Handbook
- PCMO Presentation
- LCF Session Plans
- Senior management meeting minutes detailing discussion of dog policy

Documents to be Submitted
- Importance of culturally appropriate behavior presentation

Status and Timeline for Completion: Ongoing, August 2016

Recommendation 10
That the country director work with the Volunteer advisory committee and other Volunteer committees to clarify guidelines for Volunteer involvement in committees with the goal of minimizing Volunteers' time out of site for committee work.

Concur

Response: The Country Director met with all committee chairs on February 18th, 2016 and revised the policies governing committees including: who is eligible to join committees, the number of committee members allowed and the number of meetings they can host each year.

Documents Submitted:
- Email sent to all volunteers outlining the updated committee regulations
- Copy of updated Volunteer Handbook outlining committee regulations

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, February 2016

Recommendation 11
That the country director, working with program staff, the Volunteer advisory committee, and other committee chairs determine which Volunteer committees are necessary, and assess which, if any, can be combined or eliminated.

Concur

Response: The Country Director met with all committee chairs on February 18, 2016, and discussed the purpose, effectiveness and accountability of committees. It was determined that there are no superfluous committees. Each of the committees if serving a demonstrable Volunteer need (Peer Support Network [PSN], Ndi UmunyAmerika, Safe

Space) or work purpose (VAC, PAC, STOMP, CFI, and HIV). Post has changed the rules of participation, which will drop overall participation rates.

The CD followed-up this conversation with a meeting with Senior Staff about the critical role each committee plays. The staff liaison to each of these committees ensured each committee had clear goals and objectives, and holds the committee accountable to meeting those goals.

Documents Submitted:
- Meeting minutes with Senior Management discussing committees
- Email from CD to Volunteers outlining the changes in committee participation

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, July 2016

Recommendation 12
That the country director and director of management and operations improve the post's management and oversight of the transit house.

Concur
Response: Since the IG has visited post, PC/Rwanda has made improvements in the process for requesting and approving Volunteers' use of the transit house. Post has changed the transit house policy so that PCVs are required to request use of the transit house at least two weeks prior to the intended dates of use and cannot remain for more than two consecutive nights for issues other than those related to medical or safety and security.

In addition, to provide more accountability and oversight, post has amended the transit house roster to include the name of the authorized approver and to outline the process if a request is denied. Post has also written an SOP outlining the reasons for use of the transit house which provides a clear protocol for Volunteers to request its use and for staff to approve or deny use. In addition, post has created a template for Volunteers to use when requesting use of the transit house for programmatic or administrative reasons, including a section for administrative use for approval or denial of the request.

Finally, Post has amended the Volunteer Handbook to reflect the new process, and has communicated the changes to volunteers and staff through email.

Documents Submitted:
- Updated Transit House Roster
- Transit House SOP
- Transit House Use Request Sheet
- Updated PCV Handbook
- Email to Volunteers and staff explaining new process

Status and Timeline for Completion: Completed, July 2016

APPENDIX F: OIG COMMENTS

Management concurred with all 12 recommendations, which remain open. In its response, management described actions it is taking or intends to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the agency has taken these actions or that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities. However, when we feel it is warranted, we may conduct a follow-up review to confirm that action has been taken and to evaluate the impact.

OIG will review and consider closing recommendations 1-5, 7, 10, and 12 when the documentation reflected in the OIG's comments and the agency's response to the preliminary report is received. For recommendations 6, 8, 9, and 11 additional documentation is required.

These recommendations remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the documentation reflected in our analysis below is received.

6: That the director of programming and training, the training manager, and the program managers improve how the post selects and supervises volunteer assistant trainers for and during pre-service or other Volunteer trainings.

> **Concur**
> **Response:** Post will implement this recommendation beginning with the VATs who are participating in our HE8 PST. As in the past, all VATs will be selected through a competitive process, and the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members will have the opportunity to provide input on the applicants. As in the past, all selected VATs will attend a three-day training of trainers (ToT) in order to prepare them for their roles as VATs. Beginning with HE8 PST, we will have VATs co-facilitate, rather than facilitate, more technical sessions. We will require that their sessions are mapped to the new project framework and that they identify specific resources in the Volunteer Resources Library that will support their work under the specific goals and objectives of our updated draft framework.
>
> *Documents Submitted:*
> - *Email Solicitation for VATs*
> - *General ToT Agenda*
> - *VAT Comportment Documentation*
> - *HE8 PST COTE*
>
> **Status and Timeline for Completion:** Completed, May 2016
>
> **OIG Analysis:** OIG appreciates the agency response and submitted documents for recommendation # 6. In addition to the documents listed as submitted in the agency's response, please provide the OIG with documentation that:

- Specifies the criteria the post will use to select volunteer assistant trainers.
- Includes the PST Calendar of Training Events for 2016 Education training input (ED8)

8: That the country director increases messaging to trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.

<u>**Concur**</u>

Response: While post regularly emphasizes the importance of volunteers' integration and spending quality time at site, there are still some Volunteers who are not compliant with post policies. Post will continue its efforts in reinforcing these key messages and policies in order to improve compliance with Post's expectations.

Below is an example of a typical schedule for a Health Volunteer during their first year at post:
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In addition, the Government of Rwanda has very high expectations that the PCVs are not only integrating, but truly in a measurable way contributing to their Vision 2020 goals. These trainings and activities provide PCVs the skills necessary to not only meet Peace Corp's Goal 1 in a measurable way, but also for PC Rwanda to be a serious development partner with the Government of Rwanda.

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The eight-week challenge is specifically designed to help Volunteers understand the importance of community integration. The CD issues this challenge at the end of PST when she is reviewing the Volunteer Handbook and emphasizing the Volunteers 24/7 role as ambassadors for the Peace Corps and U.S. While six of 28 Volunteers successfully completed the 8-week challenge, only leaving site for medical or safety and security reasons, 24 of the 28 Volunteers completed the challenge only leaving for the aforementioned reasons or for limited and essential programming or training reasons approved by the CD.

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- Introduction of Community Liaisons to support Volunteer integration at site
- Community Integration sessions during PST and at the Supervisor's Conference.

Community integration is a core piece of PC/Rwanda's culture and management. Post messages and manages accordingly, however, there are still some Volunteers who ignore these core values, and they are confronted when it becomes clear that they don't think integration is important. This messaging begins during PST. Per the recommendation, post will increase messaging to Trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwandan communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate.

Some of the more recent updates, such as the revised CNAs, have not yet had time to gain traction with the Volunteer population. Post feels that with these tools, Volunteers will have a richer understanding of community integration and will spend more time in site moving forward. Post will also initiate new presentation prior to swearing-in to stress the importance of integration during the Bridge to Service period.

Documents Submitted:
- *Field Support Coordinator SOW*
- *PCT Site Visit Assignment*
- *Community Health CNA*
- *TEFL CNA*
- *Community Health COTE*
- *TEFL COTE*
- *Supervisor's Conference Agenda*
- *Community Liaison PowerPoint*

<u>*Documents to be Submitted*</u>
- *Importance of integration presentation*

Status and Timeline for Completion: September 2016

OIG Analysis: In the agency response to recommendation # 8, the agency states that "per the recommendation, post will increase messaging to Trainees and Volunteers throughout their service regarding the importance of being in service to their Rwanda communities and spending enough time in their communities to integrate." However, it is unclear from the agency's response how the post plans to increase messaging to Volunteers during their service on the importance of staying at site. The agency's response seems to highlight policies, procedures, and standards that the post was implementing at the time of our evaluation, which we already evaluated.

In responding to recommendation # 8, please provide documentation that sufficiently demonstrates:
- The post has taken steps to improve messaging to Volunteers during their service about the importance of staying at site to allow for enough time for community integration. For example, newsletters from the CD to all Volunteers or presentations provided to Volunteers at ISTs, All-Volunteer conferences, or COS conference.
- The post has implemented appropriate practices to ensure that post's and agency's standards related to Volunteer time away from site and community integration are upheld. For example, closer adherence to the "accepted practice" of encouraging Volunteers to stay at their sites for the first three months to focus on community integration, and limiting the number of post-sponsored activities that draw Volunteers away from their sites.

9: That the country director reinforces with Volunteers the importance of adopting lifestyles consistent with Rwandan cultural norms, and clarifies and enforces the consequences for Volunteers whose failure to adopt a culturally appropriate lifestyle jeopardizes his or her health and safety or the reputation of the Peace Corps.

<u>Concur</u>
Response: The post continually emphasizes the importance of engaging in professional and culturally appropriate behavior.

Alcohol: The CD, PCMO, and SSM take the lead on emphasizing culturally appropriate behavior with regard to alcohol use and message important alcohol guidance at PST and IST, and with email updates.

Dogs: The decision to amend the dog ownership policy was taken by the post Management Team after 18 months of deliberations with host country national staff and key stakeholders. Guidance in the Volunteer Handbook addresses the complexity of the issue. Post does not believe that the dog policy is an example of "culturally inappropriate behavior," it is an example of taking a progressive, thorough approach to a reality on the

ground. Post has not received any complaints from community members or counterparts regarding dogs and dogs were not mentioned by any of the surveyed counterparts in the latest counterpart survey. Post has, however, had numerous stories from Volunteers about breakthroughs with community members facilitated by interactions occasioned by their animals.

Hygiene: Post gives Trainees and Volunteers extensive guidance on appropriate personal hygiene and dress in Rwanda. When a Volunteer is brought to our attention for not conforming with Rwandan norms and PC standards, post deals with the situation immediately.

Post staff provides Volunteers with rigorous guidance on the importance of integration and comporting themselves in a manner that will enable them to serve effectively in their communities. When Volunteers exhibit behaviors that are not in keeping with even the spirit of this, post takes steps to address the issue with Volunteers. When necessary, post has used behavior and performance improvement plans to address lifestyle, comportment, and performance issues.

Post will continue to reinforce messaging to Volunteers on adopting culturally appropriate lifestyles and will address any issues expeditiously when Volunteers do not meet Post's expectations. Post will also initiate new presentation to stress the importance of culturally appropriate behavior during the Bridge to Service period prior to swearing-in.

Documents Submitted:
- *Health COTE*
- *TEFL COTE*
- *Supervisor's Conference Agenda*
- *Volunteer Handbook*
- *PCMO Presentation*
- *LCF Session Plans*
- *Senior management meeting minutes detailing discussion of dog policy*

Documents to be Submitted
- *Importance of culturally appropriate behavior presentation*

Status and Timeline for Completion: Ongoing, August 2016

OIG Analysis: It is unclear in the agency's response how the post is going to reinforce with Volunteers the importance of adopting lifestyles consistent with Rwandan cultural norms. It is also unclear from the agency's response how the post is going to clarify and enforce the consequences for Volunteers who fail to adopt culturally appropriate lifestyles.

In responding to recommendation # 9, please provide documentation that shows:

- The post has taken steps to reinforce with Volunteers throughout their service the importance of adopting culturally appropriate lifestyles. For example, newsletters from the CD to all Volunteers or presentations provided to Volunteers at ISTs, All-Volunteer conferences, or COS conference.
- The post has clarified its guidance (e.g. in an updated Volunteer Handbook) for Volunteers on culturally inappropriate conduct in Rwanda. Guidance should include and not be limited to the post's policy related to whether or not Volunteers may have dogs as pets, in keeping with local norms and practices regarding dogs.
- The post has clarified what consequences will be enforced when Volunteers do not adopt culturally appropriate lifestyles during service.

11: That the country director, working with program staff, the Volunteer advisory committee, and other committee chairs determine which Volunteer committees are necessary, and assess which, if any, can be combined or eliminated.

<u>**Concur**</u>
Response: The Country Director met with all committee chairs on February 18, 2016, and discussed the purpose, effectiveness and accountability of committees. It was determined that there are no superfluous committees. Each of the committees if serving a demonstrable Volunteer need (Peer Support Network [PSN], Ndi UmunyAmerika, Safe Space) or work purpose (VAC, PAC, STOMP, CFI, and HIV). Post has changed the rules of participation, which will drop overall participation rates.

The CD followed-up this conversation with a meeting with Senior Staff about the critical role each committee plays. The staff liaison to each of these committees ensured each committee had clear goals and objectives, and holds the committee accountable to meeting those goals.

<u>Documents Submitted</u>:
- Meeting minutes with Senior Management discussing committees
- Email from CD to Volunteers outlining the changes in committee participation

<u>**Status and Timeline for Completion:**</u> Completed, July 2016

OIG Analysis: Before closing recommendation # 11, OIG will review the updated Volunteer Handbook which the agency indicates will be submitted under recommendation 10.

APPENDIX G: PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION

This program evaluation was conducted under the direction of Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations Jerry Black, by senior evaluator Greg Yeich. Additional contributions were made by senior evaluator Erin Balch.

[signature: Jerry Black]

OIG CONTACT

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

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