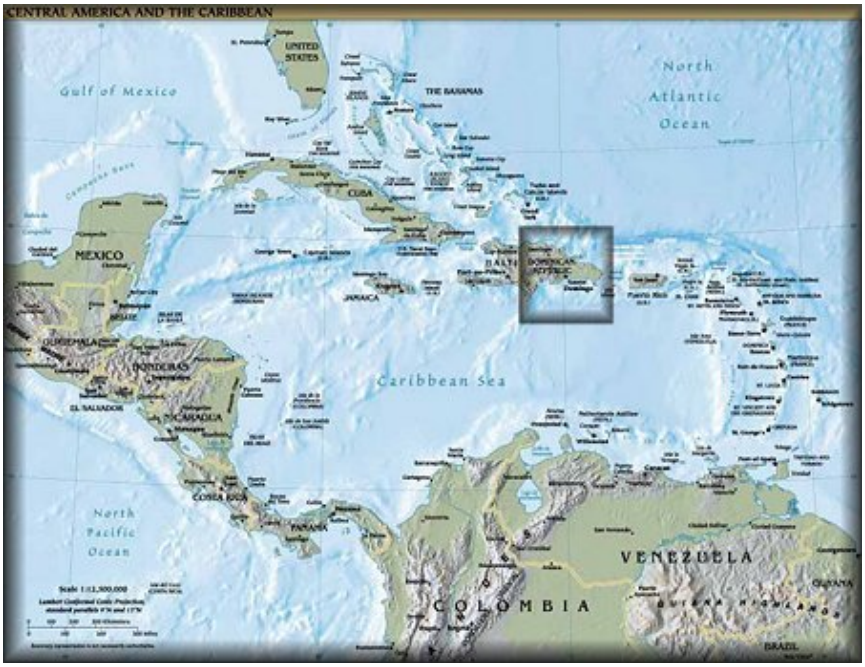
Peace Corps
Office of Inspector General



Flag of the Dominican Republic

Final Program Evaluation Report: Peace Corps/Dominican Republic IG-09-03-E

December 2008

Final Program Evaluation Report:
Peace Corps/Dominican Republic
IG-09--E

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) performed an evaluation of the Peace Corps program in the Dominican Republic; the field work was conducted May 27 – June 13, 2008. The Office of Inspector General's evaluation of the Peace Corps/Dominican Republic program covered fiscal years 2006, 2007, and 2008. We identified successful systems and initiatives that the post had in place; however, we also identified several opportunities to improve the effectiveness of Peace Corps/Dominican Republic.

Peace Corps's program in the Dominican Republic began in 1962. Over 4,600 Volunteers have served in the Dominican Republic. At the beginning of our evaluation, there were 145 Volunteers, 36 Trainees, and 27 Peace Corps staff in the Dominican Republic. There are five project sectors: (1) health, (2) education, (3) youth, (4) economic development, and (5) environment.

The OIG evaluation determined that PC/Dominican Republic benefits from strong, committed leadership and able management. Volunteers reported that they were satisfied with their work; in interviews, Volunteers stated they have a clear understanding of their primary goals and objectives and are meaningfully engaged in their work assignments. Volunteers also rated their perception of safety as above average to "very safe" at their homes and work sites.

PC/Dominican Republic has excellent training resources provided by a locally owned company, ENTRENA, S.A. ENTRENA's training format aligns with Peace Corps's competency-based training guidelines. Volunteers that the OIG interviewed rated their training overall as effective.

PC/Dominican Republic has been proactive in its effort to standardize and document many aspects of post operations. With programming and training operations running effectively, now is the time for PC/Dominican Republic to concentrate on standardizing and documenting operations to ensure that despite future staff transitions, the post will continue to operate at a high level of effectiveness.

In 2007, PC/Dominican Republic began the revision of its five project plans in order to support the implementation of a performance management system. With the project plans as cornerstones, the goal of the performance management system is to integrate the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of program operations and to measure actual project performance and develop performance budgets.

The potential benefits of the performance management system are promising, although it remains to be seen how well the PC/Dominican Republic Performance Management System will align with the agency's new Peace Corps Volunteer Reporting Management Tool scheduled for deployment in January 2009. The post has obtained a waiver to use its own reporting tool for FY 2009.

Site selection is another area in which the post is operating well but could improve. The OIG evaluation found that not all Associate Peace corps Directors (APCDs) were using the same site development procedures and several Volunteer Site Development forms and Safety Checklists we reviewed were incomplete. In addition, certain criteria were missing from the PC/Dominican Republic housing checklist and some criteria were not sufficiently defined. Standardizing site selection criteria and housing safety and security criteria will ensure that potential Volunteer sites and houses are properly selected on a consistent basis.

Completion of site locator forms (SLF) was one of the few areas in which we found problems with both current operations and lack of standards. Of 30 houses we attempted to locate using the SLF, we successfully located five (17%). The purpose of a site locator form is to provide directions to a person who is not familiar with the location of the Volunteer in the event of an emergency.

Our report contains seven recommendations, which, if implemented, should strengthen internal controls and correct the deficiencies detailed in the accompanying report.

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INTRODUCTION

Peace Corps's program in the Dominican Republic began in 1962. Over 4,600 Volunteers have served in the Dominican Republic. The Government of the Dominican Republic honored 45 years of Peace Corps service to the people of the country in February 2007 with a reception hosted by its Vice President.

The Dominican Republic, with a population of approximately 9.5 million people, shares the eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. The island is often the recipient of severe weather damage, most recently Tropical Storm Noel in the fall of 2007. Young people make up the majority of the Dominican population; the post estimates that 54% of Dominicans are under the age of 25. Lack of access to potable water, inadequate access to preventative health services, limited educational opportunities, underemployment, and low wages are present. Reports of daily blackouts and power surges caused by energy shortages are also a problem. Rising transportation, food, and rent costs impact the cost of living for Volunteers and staff. In response to these conditions, Volunteers have and continue to contribute to technical skills transfer and institutional capacity building in a wide range of fields including: urban and rural community development, youth development, conservation, environmental awareness, community health and child survival, community economic development, water and sanitation, and information and communications technology for education.

The United States Embassy estimates that, "100,000 U.S. citizens live in the Dominican Republic; many are dual nationals. An important element of the relationship between the two countries is the fact that more than one million individuals of Dominican origin reside in the United States, most of them in the metropolitan Northeast and some in Florida."

As a result, Dominicans may be more acquainted with American culture than is typical of most Peace Corps posts and fewer Dominicans may form impressions of the U.S. based solely on interactions with Volunteers.

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted a program evaluation of Peace Corps/Dominican Republic April - September 2008. At the beginning of our review, there were 145 Peace Corps Volunteers and 36 Peace Corps Trainees in the Dominican Republic. The following table provides demographic data on Volunteers/Trainees by sector, gender, and age.

Table 1: PC/Dominican Republic Volunteer/Trainee Demographic Data

Sector	Percent of Volunteers/Trainees
Community Economic Development (CED)	18%
Community Environmental Development (CEDE)	22%
Healthy Communities and Water Safe to drink (HE)	20%
Information and Communication Technology for Education (ED)	24%
Youth, Family & Community Development (YFCD)	15%
Gender	**Percent of Volunteers/Trainees**
Female	65%
Male	35%
Age	**Percent of Volunteers/Trainees**
20 - 29	92%
30 - 39	6%
40 - 49	0%
50 and over	3%

Source: PC/Dominican Republic Data.
Note: Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

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

The Evaluations Unit within the Peace Corps Office of Inspector General provides agency 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 Office of Inspector General Evaluations Unit announced its intent to conduct an evaluation of Peace Corps/Dominican Republic on April 2, 2008. For post evaluations, we use the following researchable questions to guide our work:

- To what extent has the post developed and implemented programs intended to increase the capacity of host country communities to meet their own technical needs?
- To what extent has the post implemented programs to promote cross-cultural understanding?
- To what extent does training provide Volunteers the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to integrate into the community and perform their jobs?

- To what extent has the post provided adequate support and oversight to Volunteers?
- To what extent are post resources and agency support and oversight effectively aligned with the post's mission and program, and agency priorities?

The evaluation team conducted the preliminary research portion of the evaluation April 2 – May 23, 2008. This included a review of agency documents provided by headquarters and post staff and interviews with management staff representing the region and the Center for Field Support and Applied Research (the Center). In-country fieldwork occurred May 27 - June 13, 2008, and was comprised of interviews with post staff in charge of programming, training, and support; the U.S. Ambassador; the U.S. Regional Security Officer; and host country government ministry officials. In addition, we interviewed a stratified judgmental sample of 20% of currently serving Volunteers based on their time of service, site location, project focus, gender, age, and ethnicity. The majority of the Volunteer interviews occurred at the Volunteers' homes; we also inspected these homes using post-defined site selection criteria.

This evaluation was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency. The findings and recommendations provided in this report have been reviewed by agency stakeholders affected by this review. The period of review for a post evaluation is one full Volunteer cycle (typically 27 months).

EVALUATION RESULTS

PROGRAMMING

The United States and the Dominican Republic share an active country agreement that was signed in 1962. The agreement lays out the major responsibilities held between the governments of the United States and the Dominican Republic, though the language is not specific to program sectors or Volunteer activities.

In August 2006, the post submitted to the region its plan of goals, objectives and activities called "Embracing the Future." In 2007, the post began revising its project plans to form the cornerstones of a performance-based "Performance Management System." The revised project plans were constructed using a spreadsheet format (Excel) to facilitate the interlinking of documents and provide a stable platform to collect data for evaluation and reporting. There are six components to each project plan workbook:

- Project framework
- Volunteer work plan
- Training competencies and objectives
- Trainee request
- Volunteer Assignment Description
- Evaluation and reporting tool

The project framework separates each project goal into related objectives, each objective into related strategies, each strategy into related work activities, and each work activity into specific tasks. The framework was designed to function as a map and menu for Volunteers. Volunteers will select only those tasks from the framework that are appropriate for their sites, though they will have considerable options to choose from. As an example, the ICT for Education project framework spans 883 rows of an Excel spreadsheet and includes three goals, five objectives, eight strategies, 32 work activities, and over 130 tasks for Volunteers to choose from, each with corresponding fields for reporting results.

The complexity of the project framework is a potential challenge acknowledged by PC/Dominican Republic staff. Whether Volunteers have the Excel skills, technical resources, and training to successfully operate this tool has yet to be determined.

PC/Dominican Republic Volunteers provide technical assistance to interested communities, groups, and individuals in the following five sectors:

- **Healthy Communities and Water Safe to Drink**
  The Health sector is comprised of two projects. The Healthy Communities project focuses on child health, maternal/reproductive health and the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Volunteers participate in the Peace Corps peer education program *Escojo Mi Vida* (I Choose My Life),[1] which aims to reduce maternal mortality and HIV and STD infection rates among youth. The Water Safe to Drink project works to improve rural families' access to safe drinking water.

- **Community Environmental Development**
  The Agro-Forestry project and the Environmental Awareness Education project have combined into a single project plan. The project's goals are to promote environmental awareness among poor Dominicans and to increase the standard of living through conservation of natural resources. The *Brigada Verde* (Green Brigade) Youth Environmental Clubs are a main component of the project. The clubs promote leadership development while focusing on environmental issues.

- **Information and Communications Technology for Education**
  The ICT for Education project works to improve local educational systems' teaching and learning by training teachers, students and community members in information technology. Due to lack of ministry staff and resources, the Special Education sub-sector will be phased out in 2010 with the close of service (COS) of the last two Volunteers.

- **Community Economic Development**
  The goals of the Community Economic Development project are to work with community leaders to improve their ability to organize, plan and implement projects, to work with existing and aspiring entrepreneurs and to improve the management of household finances.

[1] Seventy percent of Youth Volunteers also work with the *Escojo Mi Vida* peer education program as either a primary or secondary project.

- **Youth, Family, and Community Development**
  The purpose of the Youth, Family, and Community Development project is to empower young people to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make positive life decisions and to work with community groups and organizations to respond to youth needs.

Of the Volunteers we interviewed, over 75% (26 of 33) reported that they feel their activities relate to their primary project objectives "above average" or "very well."

According to the 2006 Biennial Volunteer Survey, Volunteers in the Dominican Republic on average work more hours per week on their primary assignments than the global average. Regarding their primary project activities, Volunteers rated themselves significantly higher than global averages at:

- Meeting their primary objectives.
- Building local capacity for sustainability.
- Including local people in planning and implementing activities.
- Complementing other local development activities.
- Receiving support from in-country staff and resources.

Dominican government officials have not been engaged as project partners, except in the education sector.

PC/Dominican Republic maintains positive ties with Dominican ministries and officials but most are not engaged as project partners. Fifty percent (16 of 32) of Volunteer respondents reported that they never interact with host country government officials.

Two exceptions are the Secretary of Education and the Dominican Office of the First Lady. The Secretary of Education signed a memorandum of understanding with PC/Dominican Republic in 2005 and ministry officials work directly with PC/Dominican Republic Education Volunteers. The post also has a new partnership with the Dominican Office of the First Lady; six education Volunteers were placed in computing centers funded by her office.

Fifty-five percent of Volunteer respondents reported daily interactions with non-governmental organizations or other project partners.

Not all Volunteers were assigned multiple counterparts and/or community project partners.

Despite the revised PC/Dominican Republic site development process that requires two community partners to attend partner day activities during pre-service training, the project plans for Community Environmental Development, Healthy Communities and Water Safe to Drink, and Information and Communication Technology for Education do not require multiple counterparts and/or community project partners. However, the Youth, Family, and Community Development project plan and the Community Economic

Development project plan do provide that more than one counterpart or community project partner be assigned to a Volunteer. The 2007 Youth, Family, and Community Development project plan states, "In addition the PCV will also have a second project partner or community counterpart…" The 2008 Community Economic Development project plan states, "CED PCVs will be assigned to 2 - 3 project partners from representative groups per community."

The Center's 2007 review of the Community Economic Development project recommended multiple project partner assignments:

> Given that many partners are probably engaged in a variety of activities, some of which may not have anything directly to do with Volunteers or the project, it is suggested that Volunteers be assigned to more than one project partner, as appropriate…

Volunteers assigned to only one counterpart encounter a significant challenge when that counterpart is ineffective. In interviews, several Volunteers reported ineffective working relationships with an assigned counterpart. These Volunteers also reported challenges identifying and transitioning to a more appropriate counterpart.

In order to increase the capacity of Volunteers to build appropriate and effective partnerships, we encourage PC/Dominican Republic to assign multiple project partners to Volunteers in all sectors. Establishing multiple counterpart "options" at each site and instilling Trainees' expectations to work with multiple project partners helps to address this challenge.

The Volunteer Assignment Descriptions (VADs) were accurate and well-balanced.

Seventy-three percent (22 of 30) of Volunteers responding to how well their VAD described their activities selected "average" to "very well."

In 2007, the VADs were integrated into the performance-based project design and key sections of the VADs are now informed directly from the project plans. The interlinked VADs should effectively manage the expectations of prospective Volunteers by more closely aligning with the project design.

Our review of the VADs found that they accurately summarized information contained in the project plans and activities that the Volunteers would perform as part of their daily activities.

Small Project Assistance and Peace Corps Partnership Project grants addressed Dominican communities' underserved sectors.

The Small Project Assistance (SPA) grants and the Peace Corps Partnership Program (PCPP) help Volunteers build local capacity in vital areas including introducing community members to the process of grant writing.

In FY 2007, Volunteers completed 11 SPA projects and 24 PCPP projects. Latrine construction was the most common project, followed by improved cooking stoves and clean water improvements. Other projects focused on youth development and educational needs.

As the United Nations Development Programme's 2006 Human Development Report cites primary health and basic education as the two most underserved sectors in the Dominican Republic, grant projects implemented by Volunteers appear to address these needs. Therefore, we found that Volunteers were appropriately using SPA and PCPP grants.

SITE DEVELOPMENT

The post's site development and selection procedures were not in alignment.

A Peace Corps Safety and Security Officer's (PCSSO) visit in 2007 found that the post's Site Development Form and Safety Checklist lacked the necessary criteria to determine the suitability of a Volunteer's site. The 2007 PCSSO report cited the following "Site Development Procedural Guidance" from the Volunteer Safety Council:

> Site selection should be based on established safety and security criteria that reflect consideration of, among other things, any relevant site history; access to medical, banking, postal, and other essential services; availability of communication, transportation, and markets; different housing options and living arrangements; and other Volunteer support needs.

We reviewed paper files for 16 Volunteers who we planned to visit and found that only one had a fully completed Site Development Form and Safety Checklist. In our interviews with Associate Peace Corps Directors (APCDs), we discovered that they used disparate site development procedures.

At the time of this evaluation, PC/Dominican Republic had begun implementing standard site selection procedures for all sectors. The Programming and Training Officer (PTO) reported working with APCDs to redevelop the process and we were provided a sample copy of the new process that included the following components:

- Site Selection Process Guide
- Community Volunteer Request Form
- Community Meeting Attendance List
- Project Site Development Initial Report
- Minimum Volunteer Housing Checklist
- Project Site Development Form And Safety Checklist

PC/Dominican Republic created the Project Site Development Initial Report to identify additional Volunteer support needs: population and access, communications, water,

medical facilities, electricity and intranet services, housing, and transportation. In addition to the new site selection internal controls, the post plans to train APCDs to enter data into Volunteer Information Database Application while in the field.

The post's implementation of this comprehensive process should enable the post to meet agency criteria and reduce the likelihood of unsafe or inappropriate Volunteer site selection.

We recommend:

1. **That the PTO ensure APCDs comply with the new site selection procedures.**

Volunteers reported that they were satisfied with their project sites.

Fifty-nine percent of the Volunteers whom we interviewed (20 of 34) reported that they were "very satisfied" (the highest rating) with PC/Dominican Republic's decision to select their project site. Overall, 94% (32 of 34) of the Volunteers whom we interviewed reported that they were satisfied with PC/Dominican Republic's decision to select their project site.

PC/Dominican Republic is effective at placing Volunteers in communities appropriate for meeting the goals of the Peace Corps. This is supported by the 2006 Biennial Volunteer survey which reported that host country colleagues and work sites in the Dominican Republic were better prepared for their Volunteers' arrival than global averages.

TRAINING

Since 1982, PC/Dominican Republic has outsourced its training program to a private Dominican Republic organization, ENTRENA, S.A.[2] ENTRENA is a local organization that has the capacity to operate more efficiently and affordably than its competitors. Both the owner and the training director are former Volunteers with many years of development experience in the Dominican Republic.

ENTRENA's services include pre-service trainings (PST), in-service trainings (IST) at three months and twelve months and language in-service trainings. The 10-week PST begins with three weeks of center-based core training. Trainees live with their first host families during this time. Core training is followed by five weeks of community-based training (CBT) that focuses on technical and language skills. During CBT Trainees live with new host families. In the ninth week, Trainees return to the training center to receive their assignments and transition to a five-day stay at their project sites. Swearing-in is held in week ten following final language assessments and competency exams.

[2] PC/Dominican Republic is one of only two posts in the agency to use a contractor for its training needs, the other is PC/Paraguay.

In 2005, PC/Dominican Republic compared the costs of ENTRENA's contracted services to comparable in-house services and found the contracted services to cost slightly more. The Inter-America and Pacific Region supports the ENTRENA contract due to a high quality of training without significantly increased costs. Both regional and post staff reported that they are very satisfied with the quality of ENTRENA's training

ENTRENA's training format aligns with Peace Corps's competency-based training guidelines.

PC/Dominican Republic transitioned to a competency and learning objective training format in January 2007. New agency training guidelines were recommended by the Director of the Center for Field Studies and Applied Research in a 2006 memorandum and approved by the agency Director. In part, the memorandum stated the following:

> First, establish a consistent definition of competency…Second, learning objectives during training are competency indicators…Finally, learning results will be measured…

During pre-service training, Trainees in all sectors learn five core competencies that are divided into 58 associated learning objectives. Core competencies are clusters of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to major functions all Volunteers perform. They are the same for all PC/Dominican Republic Trainees. Learning objectives are measurable indicators of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Technical competencies are similarly grouped into competencies with associated learning objectives. Additionally, PST and IST curricula and schedules align with PC/Dominican Republic's established core competencies and learning objectives. In 2007, the Center's Training Status Report (TSR) feedback stated, "PC/Dominican Republic's core competencies and learning objectives are strong, clear, and well crafted."

ENTRENA measures learning results using criterion-referenced testing and Trainee self-assessments, both implemented in 2007. Criterion-referenced testing employs written tests, competency stations, and qualitative assessments to measure learning.
At the end of the most recent PST in May 2008:

- All Trainees achieved the required 80% to pass the criterion-referenced testing.[3]
- All Trainees achieved the required 100% to pass the safety and security exam, though 23 Trainees (64%) failed the initial test and passed the second time.
- Except for one, all Trainees achieved qualifying language criteria. The one Trainee was sworn-in with a provision for continued language instruction.

Trainee self-assessments are administered before and after training as an additional tool to establish core competency learning results. Upon entering the most recent PST in February 2008, the average score of a Trainee's ability to meet core training objectives

[3] Four Trainees failed one of their tests initially. They subsequently retook and passed their tests.

was 2.36.[4] At the end of training in May 2008, the average Trainee's score of meeting core training objectives was 4.61; ENTRENA aims for a minimum score of 4.0.

Our review found that PC/Dominican Republic's training program clearly aligns with agency guidelines. This is supported by the Center Training Design Specialist's comment in the TSR 2007 Feedback, "PC/Dominican Republic is commended for the changes in training design that led to more focused training, a reduction of training time by one week, and more open communication between staff and trainees regarding qualification for service."

Pre-service training was rated as effective by Volunteers.

Ninety-four percent (32 of 34) of the Volunteers we interviewed rated PST training as "moderately" to "very effective" (see Table 2) for both safety and security and medical and health. Ninety-one percent of the Volunteers we interviewed rated the cross-culture training as "moderately" to "very effective," and 85% (29 of 34) of the Volunteers we interviewed rated the language training as "moderately" to "very effective." The most common rating for the effectiveness of each of these training areas was "very effective."

Table 2: Volunteers Rated PST Effectiveness[1]

Area	Ineffective	Below average	Moderately	Above average	Very effective
Language	6%	9%	21%	26%	38%
Culture	0%	9%	24%	29%	38%
Safety/Security	3%	3%	26%	26%	41%
Medical/Health	0%	6%	15%	35%	44%
Technical	0%	21%	32%	26%	21%

Source: OIG Volunteer Interviews.

[1] N= 34.

The effectiveness of technical training is a challenge for Peace Corps posts, including PC/Dominican Republic. As shown in the above table, Volunteers rated the effectiveness of technical training lower than other training areas. In the 2006 Biennial Volunteer Survey, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1= not at all effective, 5= very effective), Volunteers in the Dominican Republic rated training to "perform technical aspects of your work" at 3.3, which surpassed the global average rating of 2.9.

Despite its achievements, ENTRENA recognizes the need to improve the relevance of technical training for all Volunteers. ENTRENA's May 2008 End of Training Report recommends, "…that all competencies and learning objectives are revisited and modified according to the realities of PCV work."

[4] The self-assessment tool uses a 1 to 5 scale (1= I have never heard of the topic, 5= I feel confident in the subject and could facilitate my co-workers).

We encourage PC/Dominican Republic to continue to strengthen communication with ENTRENA in order that improvements in technical training effectiveness can be achieved.

We recommend:

2. **That the post invite the ENTRENA training director to staff meetings to augment collaboration and maximize training improvement opportunities.**

Not all Volunteers' counterparts attended counterpart session during in-service training.

Five of the Volunteers we interviewed reported that they did not participate in the required counterpart sessions during in-service training (IST). These five Volunteers provided one of two explanations: (1) the Volunteer's counterpart chose not to attend the sessions, (2) the Volunteer arrived at IST with a "substitute" counterpart who was not previously involved in their project.

In-service training was negatively impacted for these Volunteers as they and their counterparts missed an important team-building opportunity.

Due to the anecdotal data we have on this issue, we encourage the post to review counterpart participation during IST to determine if this problem is more widespread and an area in need of improvement.

We recommend:

3. **That the post assess IST Volunteer guidance to ensure counterpart participation during IST.**

CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

The second of Peace Corps' three goals is to help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the people served. Cultural exchange is an integral part of the transfer of knowledge and skills that occurs both between host-country community partners and Volunteers.

Volunteers most often cited work styles among Dominicans and the role of women as areas of cross cultural understanding that were hardest for them to obtain. When asked to describe the easiest ways for them to obtain cross cultural understanding, Volunteers most often cited practicing Spanish, often while sharing meals and

socializing with their host partners and members of their community. Eighty-five percent (29 of 34) of Volunteers we interviewed rated their understanding of cross-cultural issues as above average.

APCDs emphasized that training Volunteers to exhibit culturally appropriate behaviors and actions is necessary for their successful integration into a community as well as helping ensure their personal safety.

PC/Dominican Republic has incorporated agency best practices into its cross-cultural training.

PC/Dominican Republic uses several different training methods in its cross cultural training to help ensure that Volunteers gain cross-cultural understanding, including suggestions from *Indicators of a High Performance Post* and the *Peace Corps Program and Training Guidelines Booklet 3: How to Integrate Second and Third Goals into Programming and Training*.

According to senior post staff, cross cultural training during PST is effective because Trainees have opportunities to learn and practice new ways of communicating with members of the host families with whom they live. Some examples from the post's curriculum used for teaching culturally appropriate behavior are as follows:

- Trainees learn to present in Spanish their position as a Volunteer, in both social and professional situations, and converse about their family and interests.
- Trainees learn behaviors that are expected in the event of the death, marriage, or birth of a community member.
- Volunteers learn to identify behaviors and actions, perceptions of U.S. nationals, and differences in gender roles between the U.S. and Dominican Republic that could jeopardize a Volunteers' personal security.

The tables below list selected practices from *Indicators of a High Performance Post* and the *Peace Corps Program and Training Guidelines Booklet 3: How to Integrate Second and Third Goals into Programming and Training* that we observed in PC/Dominican Republic. These training practices cover design, implementation, management, and evaluation.

Table 3: Training Practices from Indicators of a High Performance Used by PC/Dominican Republic

Selected Indicators of a High Performance Post	PC/Dominican Republic Training Activity That Addresses This
Whether or not the post has a year round-training center, there is a staff member who functions in a training management position and has year-round responsibility for overseeing and directing PST, IST, training staff development, and other training planning, activities, and administrative support.	PC/Dominican Republic training contract is managed by a training director, in cooperation with the PTO and APCDs.
Strategies are employed to support both continuity and change in training. The learning and experience gained from one year are successfully applied to the next, and new ideas and initiatives are actively solicited for each new training plan and cycle.	Training director and PTO provided materials that support ongoing solicitation of feedback and input from Volunteers regarding how to improve training and what topics would be most useful for Volunteers.
Trainees have effective means of participating in, evaluating, and influencing their own training.	Training Director and PTO provided materials that demonstrate ongoing feedback is solicited from Volunteers regarding quality and relevance of training.
In addition to the principal components of technical, language, cross-culture, safety/security, and health, PST and IST designs include appropriate components and activities to treat such topics as policies and procedures, personal responsibility and support techniques, problem-solving, peer support, and strategies for dealing with stress.	PST sessions include stress management and Peace Corps rules and regulations.
The Peace Corps holds training workshops that serve as both a Peace Corps contribution to the host country community (e.g., women in development conference for school girls or technical IST including counterparts), and an opportunity for the Peace Corps to bring together its own Volunteers, staff, and other groups and call attention to and improve its activities in-country.	PC/Dominican Republic holds conferences attended by host country nationals such Escojo Mi Vida and Brigada Verde.

Source: OIG analysis of PC/Dominican Republic data.

Table 4: Programming and Training Booklet 3 Training Practices Used by PC/Dominican Republic

Selected Programming and Training Booklet 3 Ideas	PC/Dominican Republic Training Activity That Addresses This
Include host-country agency partners and community partners in the planning and implementation of PST and IST.	Training curriculum includes project partner participation in PST and IST.
Develop and implement a strong and on-going language training program that stresses that language acquisition is key to cross-cultural sharing.	PC/Dominican Republic training competencies include various cross-cultural communication language lessons.
Identify competencies for both project and living skills needed to carry out the projects.	Training competencies identify technical and cultural skills.
Evaluate the effectiveness of training annually with programmers and trainers. Review competencies for both technical skills and living skills.	Effectiveness of training is reviewed more than once per year, as evidenced by criterion reference tools and training report summaries submitted by training director.

Source: OIG analysis of PC/Dominican Republic data.

We observed that PC/Dominican Republic and ENTRENA were working to continuously improve training delivery to its Volunteers to help ensure that they have the skills necessary to successfully integrate into their communities.

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT

Volunteers in the Dominican Republic reported that they were satisfied with the support that they received from post staff as indicated by information provided by 34 Volunteers interviewed; this was supported by PC/Dominican Republic Volunteer responses to the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer Survey. Volunteers also reported that they were satisfied with the support received from their APCDs.

The following feedback collected from post staff about Volunteer support echoes the same message provided by Volunteers:

- Medical support is strong.
- Support from the post's administrative office is improving.
- Safety and security support is in a period of transition.
- Communications are timely and ongoing, but the resolution of matters of concern to Volunteers could be better disseminated.
- Issues of health and safety that emerge are integrated into training and communications in a timely manner.

Some Volunteers reported that they were not informed on the resolution of issues addressed during Volunteer Advisory Council meetings.

The post regularly disseminated information to Volunteers. For example, post staff email a notification to Volunteers twice per month on topics such as staffing updates, training, medical, and policy notifications. A trimestral magazine written by Volunteers for the purpose of enhancing communication among Volunteers is also distributed. Additionally, post management shares information with and includes Volunteers in post decision-making through the Volunteer Advisory Council (VAC). However, some Volunteers whom we interviewed stated that they were not sure whether issues or concerns raised in prior VAC meetings had been resolved.

Post management and Volunteers described a VAC process whereby a regional representative (a Volunteer) collects questions and concerns from Volunteers via a regional VAC meeting or informally, and presents these in a post-wide VAC meeting attended by post senior management.[5] Issues are considered and the ones chosen are prioritized by VAC attendees. Next, issues chosen are assigned to a post staff or task group. Finally, a status report of all issues raised is disseminated at both a subsequent post-wide and regional VAC meeting. Volunteers we interviewed rated the effectiveness of this process moderately effective, on average.

We reviewed VAC meeting minutes which clearly indicate the status of the post's efforts to address issues raised by Volunteers. Although PC/Dominican Republic appears to have a process for addressing Volunteer concerns and a process for reporting the status of these concerns, the post should be aware that not all Volunteers have received the follow-up information of how the post is addressing their concerns.

The post has improved its support to Volunteers.

Recent initiatives by the post have resulted in additional improvements in the area of Volunteer support. The following table provides a brief description of some of the improvements and planned improvements.

[5] These meetings are typically held quarterly.

Table 5: Summary of Volunteer Support Improvements

Volunteer Support Improvements	Improvement Description
Post Re-organized and Recruited Five Regional Peace Corps Volunteer Leaders	RPCVLs will help perform housing checks and conduct site visits, serve as the regional emergency coordinator, and assist with site development, among other things.
Medical Support Is Rated Strongest by Volunteers	Peace Corps Medical Officers received the highest rating among all post staff—"highly supportive"—in Volunteer interviews. Dengue, a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes, has risen worldwide particularly due to a longer rain season this past year, according to Peace Corps' Chief, Epidemiology and Surveillance. Emphasis on preventative measures such as use of long-sleeved clothing, insect repellants, and bed nets is reflected in PC/Dominican Republic's training materials and newsletters, as expected.
More Timely Reimbursement Claims Processing	The Administrative Unit reduced its service window hours in order for staff to process Volunteers' reimbursement claims in a timelier manner.
Proposed Living Allowance Adjustments Pending Approval	Post proposes to reduce the number of living allowance cost categories from six to four, and requests a 17% living allowance increase. According to staff, this change would increase the efficiency of living allowance payments, and more closely reflect food, rent and transportation prices in-country. This request is still pending approval by regional management.

Source: OIG analysis.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Volunteers we interviewed rated their perception of how safe they felt on a 1 to 5 scale, from "unsafe" (rated a 1) to "very safe" (rated a 5). All Volunteers rated their home and work sites "average safe" or "very safe." They also reported that they perceive their safety level as average when they travel and visit the PC/Dominican Republic office.

Forty-one percent (14 of 34) of Volunteers we interviewed indicated that they had been the victim of a crime during their service; this is comparable to a global average of 38%, according to results of the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer Survey. The majority of crimes reported by Volunteers in 2007 were theft, burglary with the Volunteer present or absent, and robberies. When comparing PC/Dominican Republic to 2007 subregion averages, PC/Dominican Republic Volunteers reported a higher percentage of burglaries while a Volunteer was physically present, but a lower percentage of robbery and thefts. Of the three rapes that were reported in the Central American subregion in 2007, PC/Dominican Republic reported one. The Safety and Security Coordinator (SSC) reported a need to emphasize security training regarding personal safety issues, specifically burglaries and dating.

The posts' training curriculum reflects that all Volunteers are trained to report all crimes experienced by Volunteers. However, of five Volunteers who reported to us that they had been a victim of a crime, only two told us that they would report any crime if one were to occur; while the other three said that they would only report a crime if it were a major crime. Also of note, a few Volunteers emphasized they were satisfied with the posts' handling of a crime they reported in the past.

Volunteers we interviewed rated the level of support received from their Safety and Security Coordinator (SSC) as "above average." Post-specific data from the 2006 Peace Corps Volunteer Survey showed that of post staff, Volunteers felt most comfortable discussing issues with their SSC. Also, data showed that the SSC received a high rating for responsiveness to issues. However, caution should be exercised when interpreting this due to turnover in this position—three different individuals have served in this position in the past two years.

SITE VISITS

Eighty-five percent of Volunteers rated their APCD "moderately" to "highly supportive" in Volunteer interviews. Eighty-six percent (25 of 29) of Volunteers we interviewed reported that the number of site visits that they have received were adequate, and 90% (28 of 31 respondents) rated site visits "moderately effective" or higher.

We reported earlier that program staff were working to improve the site selection process by ensuring a more consistent process is used by all post staff. However, we found that improvements could be made to further strengthen PC/Dominican Republic's conduct and tracking of housing inspections during site visits. Additionally, increased accountability regarding critical sections of the site locator form will help ensure Volunteers are located quickly in the event of an emergency.

The post's housing checklist and housing policy were incomplete.

Certain housing safety and security criteria were missing from the PC/Dominican Republic housing checklist and some criteria were not sufficiently defined. We found that during our observations of Volunteer housing, we (1) were unable to determine whether Volunteer housing met certain safety and security guidelines, and we (2) overlooked certain safety and security features as a result. Our finding is related to a prior PCSSO recommendation that PC/Dominican Republic's housing inspection system should include security criteria and written procedures.[6]

The post has developed housing policy guidelines and a housing checklist that staff use to select adequate housing and conduct site visits of Volunteer housing. However, certain

[6] In a report dated September 10, 2007, the PCSSO recommended that the post should, "establish a system to ensure that all [Volunteer] houses are inspected to meet Post's security criteria, and that documentation exists to support that an inspection has occurred." Further, the PCSSO described this should include, "written procedures, a record of inspections, and a list of [Volunteers] whose houses have been inspected."

criteria on the checklist are not sufficiently defined. For example, we were unable to determine whether the location of Volunteer housing was "not next to or nearby bars, nightclubs, or public hang out/party areas" or was “flood prone” without further definition. We overlooked additional criteria—installation of screens over windows, electricity and gas, and animals—during our observations of Volunteer housing that is discussed in the housing policy but absent from the checklist. It was clear from interviews with APCDs and the SSC that these items were not consistently observed during housing inspections.

We recommend:

4. **That the post a) define each Volunteer housing standard in order that the presence or absence of each may be accurately assessed, and b) include all housing policy standards in the housing checklist.**

Some site locator forms lacked sufficient information to locate Volunteers’ homes.

According to MS 270, the country director is responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that site locator forms are revised and updated when necessary. A site locator form should include a map and directions to their site, and other relevant information. Of the 30 houses we attempted to locate using the SLF, we successfully located 17% (5 of 30).

In general, SLF maps were computer-generated or hand drawn, and contained such details as the Volunteer's home and work sites, the location of a neighbor or community partner, and point of entry into their community such as bus stop or highway exit, as instructed. The use of reference points such as schools, forks in the road, and "*colmados*" (local markets) in drawings and written instructions was often confusing with no further information to differentiate one school from another. Further, on more than one occasion, a map led us to a Volunteer’s former living accommodation.

According to post staff, one reason these may be difficult to follow is Volunteers develop a SLF and map to their home and work site within their first days in their new site. Program and support staff also reported that efforts are made to ensure that a SLF is on file for each Volunteer, but our review revealed that their accuracy was not systematically confirmed. In follow-up conversations with both the SSC and the country director, we learned that Volunteers will be instructed to update their site locator forms when they visit the Peace Corps office. In particular, they will be asked to update their SLF during medical or other office visits.

We believe that there are two critical fields not listed on the PC/Dominican Republic Site Locator Form: (1) the date the SLF was completed by the PCV, and (2) regional Emergency Coordinator contact information. With no date on the SLF, it is unknown

whether the information has been verified. Also, we believe including regional emergency coordinator contact information on the SLF will be useful in the future to know whom each Volunteer should contact, or be contacted by, for emergency instructions.

We completed a larger study of this issue January 2007 - January 2008.[7] As a part of this study, the OIG reviewed 160 site locator forms in 10 Peace Corps countries. We found that site locator forms lacked essential elements and did not always provide enough information to locate Volunteers in a timely manner. Similar to PC/Dominican Republic, we found that even though a) posts relied on Volunteers to accurately fill out and submit the site locator forms, and b) most posts visited required a staff member to review the SLF; this process still did not result in accuracy or completeness. We also found that holding Peace Corps staff accountable for verifying the form's most critical elements may improve the accuracy and completeness of the most important sections of the SLF.

We recommend:

5. **That the country director require APCDs to review the accuracy and completeness of the most critical sections of site locator forms.**

Emergency Planning is improving.

We found that the post's Emergency Action Plan showed that it was generally well prepared for an emergency. Additionally, of Volunteers we interviewed, 59% (20 of 34) rated their level of familiarity with the PC/Dominican Republic Emergency Action Plan (EAP) as "above average" or higher. Alternatively, only two Volunteers rated their familiarity with the EAP as "below average."

We also asked Volunteers to describe their responsibilities in case of an emergency, as well as where they are expected to meet (i.e., consolidate) in case of an emergency. In general, Volunteers sufficiently described instructions for following the post's process for stand fast (i.e., remain in their site), consolidation, and evacuation.

The post most recently tested their emergency communication system during a stand fast initiated as a result of the Dominican Republic presidential election held in May 2008. All Volunteers were instructed to remain in their site or current location during the period of May 14 – 19, 2008. The message to stand fast was disseminated to Volunteers via an email message, text message, and via PC/Dominican Republic emergency coordinators.

[7] See Program Evaluation Report: Volunteer Safety and Security, IG-08-13-E.

Table 6: Comparison of Emergency Communication Response Rates

Time Elapsed	Percent Response Rate by Time Elapsed	
	October 2004	March 2008
3 hours	73% (120 of 176)	39% (65 of 167)
6 hours	85% (149 of 176)	70% (117 of 167)
24 hours	91% (160 of 176)	90% (151 of 167)
48 hours	98% (173 of 176)	98% (164 of 167)

Source: PC/Dominican Republic data.

According to data provided by the post, in March 2008 PC/Dominican Republic had met its goal of reaching 90% of Volunteers within 24 hours, but did not reach its goal of reaching all Volunteers within 48 hours. It took slightly more than three days to reach all 167 Volunteers. This test is an improvement since our October 2004 observation of PC/Dominican Republic's emergency communication system.[8] Then, it took nearly five days (117 hours) to contact all Volunteers and Trainees.

Post staff have developed a new operational procedure (a list of difficult to reach Volunteers) with the goal of reaching Volunteers in less time. For example, Volunteers that have weak or no cellular service at their project sites will be contacted at initiation of an event or test, such as by sending a project partner or a post driver to reach them in-person. Previously, this would occur many hours after initiation of an emergency communication system event. Post staff are hopeful all Volunteers will be reached in a more timely manner during the next emergency (or test) as a result.

Three individuals have served as Safety and Security Coordinator for PC/Dominican Republic in the past two years. It will be important that the post establishes new relationships with embassy security officials and to maintain consistent communication regarding security matters.

The SSC is currently reviewing contracts for each consolidation point to ensure that sufficient food and water supplies will be made available to Volunteers in an emergency.[9] Completion of this task prior to hurricane season (June to October) would have been ideal. However, it is assuring that the new SSC has made review of these contracts a priority and we look forward to a status update on the results of this review.

AGENCY PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Volunteers routinely report on the individuals they assist and service providers they train in trimester or other reports, which is summarized by post staff and submitted to headquarters. Consistency of this information is critical as it is reported to the Congress annually. Two indicators reported by Volunteers and presented to the Congress in the Peace Corps annual Performance and Accountability Report are: (1) individuals assisted by Volunteers and (2) service providers trained by Volunteers.

[8] See Program Evaluation of PC/Dominican Republic, IG-05-11-E.
[9] PC/Dominican Republic uses hotels for their consolidation points.

Peace Corps plans to deploy a reporting tool for Volunteers in January 2009 for all posts to more efficiently and effectively manage the collection, use, and reporting of Volunteer project data. However, a waiver would allow some posts to continue to use their own reporting tool. It is unclear whether the two indicators listed above would be accurately and consistently reported to the Congress under this new system.

Volunteers have not received standardized training on reporting project data.

PC/Dominican Republic senior post managers described—and Volunteers we interviewed confirmed—that Volunteers had not received satisfactory training regarding how to accurately fill out project trimester reports. The reason provided was that the post was revising its project plans and corresponding reporting tools to simplify data collection and ensure accuracy of data collected by Volunteers. The scope of our evaluation did not include a review of Volunteers' trimester reports.

One-third of Volunteers (11 of 33) felt the information they reported in their trimester reports is "highly reliable" and two (6%) felt that their reporting is "unreliable." Concrete examples of exact counts of unique beneficiaries were provided, such as students who regularly attend their English class. However, illustrative examples of the challenges Volunteers face in counting individuals assisted included asking an illiterate community member to write his name on an attendance sheet or guessing the number of unique beneficiaries who listened to a lecture aired on public media such as television or radio. Volunteers concluded they must use estimation in these cases which limits the accuracy of this information.

The reliability of Volunteer-reported information—particularly information reported to the Congress—is dependent on the training and supervision they receive to complete trimester reports in PC/Dominican Republic. We recently completed an evaluation of Peace Corps/Albania and found that without proper training and supervision, the collection task may be interpreted differently among Volunteers.

We recommend:

6. **That the post strengthen its training program so that all Volunteers accurately complete trimester reports in their new format.**

It was unclear whether posts would consistently report project data using new Volunteer reporting tool.

The purpose of the agency-wide Volunteer reporting tool is to better enable posts to produce summary progress status reports, and it is viewed by the agency as vital for integrating and reflecting Volunteers' work in performance reporting to Congress and the American public. A pilot test of the Peace Corps Volunteer Reports Management

(PCVRM) tool was conducted at eight overseas posts, and included assessing the costs and benefits of using the tool compared to not using it.[10] Field staff that tested the pilot tool reported they spent less time processing and preparing Volunteer and annual reports, they managed Volunteer reports more effectively, and their ability to aggregate data on an annual basis was improved.

However, this pilot also does not appear to address reliability of data collected by Volunteers, nor limitations. In addition, posts such as PC/Dominican Republic are allowed to apply for a waiver in order to continue to use their own tool for Volunteer project reporting.[11] PC/Dominican Republic staff reported they will seek a waiver so they may continue to use the Volunteer reporting tool that post has been working to develop as part of its performance management system.

In August 2008, we recommended that the Center for Field Research and Assistance, the EMA regional director, and the PC/Albania country director assure that performance information (1) is useful to management, (2) is subject to verification and validation, and (3) considers both costs and benefits. Further, as these reporting tools evolve, a more concerted effort to coordinate data collection efforts is necessary to assure that accurate, consistent and reliable data is reported.

We recommend:

7. **That the region establish and disseminate standard guidance and training for use by post staff and Volunteers to ensure that performance data is consistently collected and reported.**

[10] The PCVRM was pilot tested by the following eight posts: Belize, Bolivia, Eastern Caribbean, Ecuador, Paraguay, South Africa, Swaziland, and Tonga. Costs were expressed in hours of field staff time dedicated to Volunteer reporting tasks.

[11] Posts that are already using reporting systems that meet or exceed the data requirements of the Volunteer Reporting Tool may seek a waiver in FY09, provided they report on certain required year end data, according to a Regional Director's Memorandum (July 24, 2008).

POST STAFFING

At the time of our field visit, PC/Dominican Republic had 28 staff positions, one of which was vacant. The positions included three U.S. direct hire employees (USDH), six foreign service nationals (FSN), and 14 personal services contractors (PSC). We interviewed 14 staff.

Volunteers in the Dominican Republic are satisfied with the support they receive from post staff as indicated by information provided by 34 Volunteers we interviewed during June 2008.

PC/Dominican Republic Positions

Position	Status
Country Director	USDH
Programming and Training Officer	USDH
APCD/Small Enterprise Development	USDH
APCD/Education	FSN
APCD/Health	FSN
APCD/Natural Resources	FSN
APCD/Youth	PSC
Program Support and Grants Coordinator	PSC
Program Assistant	PSC
Program Assistant	PSC
Program Assistant	PSC
Administrative Officer	FSN
Administrative Assistant	FSN
Cashier	FSN
Financial Assistant	PSC
Administrative Assistant	PSC
Reception (2)	PSC
Driver (2)	PSC
Janitor (2)	PSC
PCMO (2)	PSC
Medical Secretary and Staff Development Coordinator	PSC
ICT Coordinator	Vacant
Resource Center Coordinator	PSC
Safety and Security Coordinator	PSC

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend:

1. That the PTO ensure APCDs comply with the new site selection procedures.

2. That the post invite the ENTRENA training director to staff meetings to augment collaboration and maximize training improvement opportunities.

3. That the post assess IST Volunteer guidance to ensure counterpart participation during IST.

4. That the post a) define each Volunteer housing standard in order that the presence or absence of each may be accurately assessed, and b) include all housing policy standards in the housing checklist.

5. That the country director require APCDs to review the accuracy and completeness of the most critical sections of site locator forms.

6. That the post strengthen its training program so that all Volunteers accurately complete trimester reports in their new format.

7. That the region establish and disseminate standard guidance and training for use by post staff and Volunteers to ensure that performance data is consistently collected and reported.

APPENDIX A

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PRELIMINARY REPORT

MEMORANDUM

To: **Kathy Buller, Inspector General**

From: **Allene Zanger, Regional Director, Inter-America and Pacific**

CC: **John Dimos, Chief Compliance Officer**

Date: **December 9, 2008**

Subject: **Preliminary Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Dominican Republic**

Enclosed please find the Region's response to the recommendations made by the Inspector General for Peace Corps/Dominican Republic, as outlined in the Preliminary Program Evaluation of Peace Corps/Dominican Republic.

The Region concurs with 7 of 7 recommendations.

1. That the PTO ensure APCDs comply with the new site selection procedures.

Concur. Post has begun the process of revising their existing site selection procedures. These updated procedures will be completed and fully implemented by the end of the next site selection cycle. See Attachment 1.

Date of Completion: May, 2009

2. That the post invite the ENTRENA training director to staff meetings to augment collaboration and maximize training improvement opportunities.

Concur. Post invited the ENTRENA Training Director to the October Senior Staff meetings and to all subsequent Senior Staff and All Staff meetings. She attended both the All Staff Meeting and Program and Training meeting, and will continue to do so. See Attachment 2.

Date of Completion: October, 2008

3. That the post assess IST Volunteer guidance to ensure counterpart participation during IST.

Concur. Post will work with Volunteers, APCDs, and Regional PCVLs and Sector PCVLs to develop strategies to increase and strengthen counterpart and project partner participation during ISTs. Although a large majority of the project partners have attended the three-month IST, participation in all other recurring IST events has been constrained due to budget limitations, including Peace Corps policies regarding the use of appropriated funds for counterpart training. When funding is available from sources such as Small Project Assistance Program/Field Assistance Requests, The Center for Field Assistance, PEPFAR, Peace Corps Partnership and others, Project Partners are always in attendance. See Attachment 3.

Date of Completion: February, 2009 and ongoing.

4. That the post a) define each Volunteer housing standard in order that the presence or absence of each may be accurately assessed, and b) include all housing policy standards in the housing checklist.

Concur. When the OIG team visited, PCDR had just replaced an under-performing Safety and Security Coordinator (SSC). The new SSC has aggressively begun working to upgrade the housing policy, housing standards, and the housing checklist.

PCDR will submit a UFR to cover the costs associated with the purchase of door and window locks (security hardware) which will be given to all Volunteers for installation—PCVs will be reimbursed for all installation costs. Post has completed, and submitted to the Regional SSO for review, the first draft of the policy and checklist. See Attachment 4.

Date of Completion: February, 2009 (implementation) and ongoing.

5. That the country director require APCDs to review the accuracy and completeness of the most critical sections of site locator forms.

Concur. Post is implementing revised procedures to check and update the Emergency Locator Forms (ELFs). Responsibility for maintaining the ELFs has been transferred to the SSC; checks for accuracy and completeness of the ELFs will be made by the Volunteers, PCVLs, and APCDs. Regular report updates will be given to the Country Director.

Date of Completion: January, 2009 and ongoing.

APPENDIX B

OIG COMMENTS

Management concurred with all seven recommendations. We closed recommendation numbers 2 and 4. Recommendation numbers 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 remain open pending confirmation from the chief compliance officer that the following has been received:

- For recommendation number 1, documentation that new site selection procedures have been implemented.

- For recommendation number 3, a copy of the post's strategies to increase and strengthen counterpart participation during Volunteers' first in-service training.

- For recommendation number 5, a copy of the safety and security coordinator's (SSC) scope of work, including the SSC's role in reviewing the completeness and accuracy of site locator forms.

- For recommendation number 6, documentation that the post is training Volunteers on how to complete trimester reports.

- For recommendation number 7, a copy of the region's training curriculum and standard guidance to posts regarding the collecting and reporting of Volunteer performance data.

In their response, management described actions they are taking or intend to take to address the issues that prompted each of our recommendations. We wish to note that in closing recommendations, we are not certifying that the region or post has taken these actions nor that we have reviewed their effect. Certifying compliance and verifying effectiveness are management's responsibilities. However, when we feel it is warranted, we may conduct a follow-up review to confirm that action has been taken and to evaluate the impact.

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION AND OIG CONTACT

PROGRAM EVALUATION COMPLETION

This program evaluation was conducted under the direction of Shelley Elbert, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations, and by Evaluators Reuben Marshall, Tom O'Connor, and April Thompson. Additional contributions were made by Susan Gasper and Heather Robinson.

OIG CONTACT

If you wish to comment on the quality or usefulness of this report to help us improve our products, please e-mail Shelley Elbert, Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations and Inspections, at selbert@peacecorps.gov , or call (202) 692-2904.

REPORT FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE, AND MISMANAGEMENT

Fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in government affect everyone from Peace Corps Volunteers to agency employees to the general public. We actively solicit allegations of inefficient and wasteful practices, fraud, and abuse related to Peace Corps operations domestically or abroad. You can report allegations to us in several ways, and you may remain anonymous.

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Fax:	**(202) 692-2901**	
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