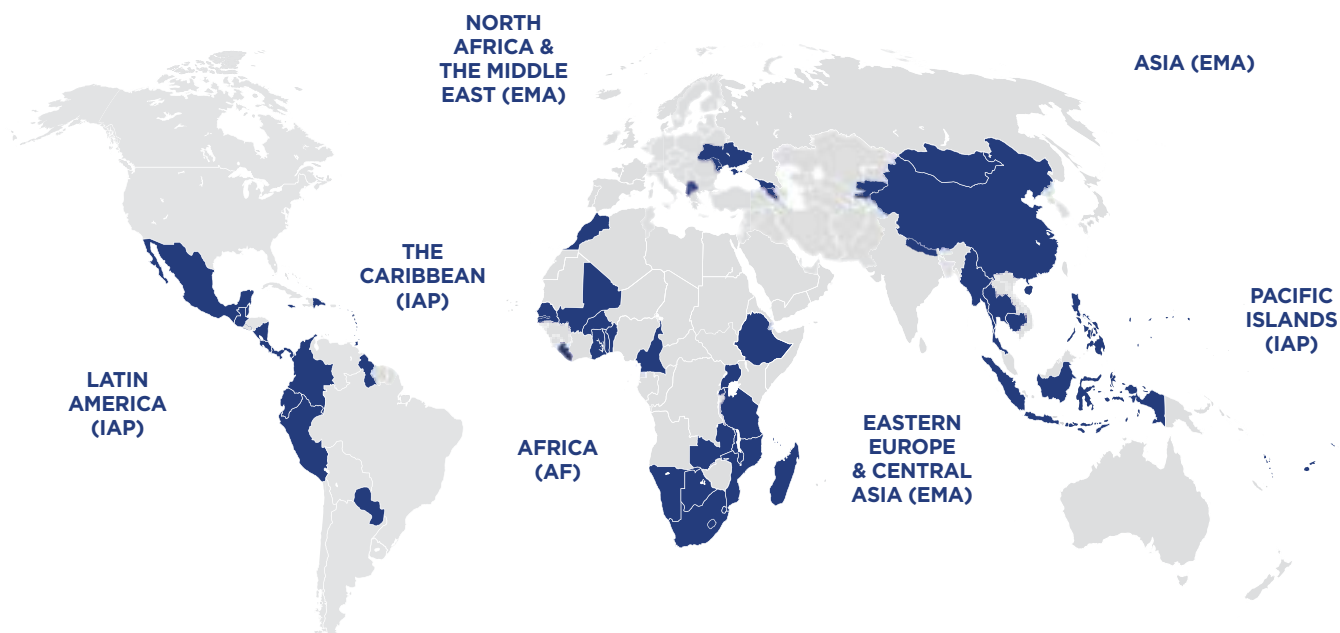




FY 2017 Annual Performance Report

WHERE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS SERVED IN FY 2017



Caribbean

Dominican Republic
Eastern Caribbean:

- Dominica
- Grenada
- St. Lucia
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Jamaica

Latin America

Belize
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
Guatemala
Guyana
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru

North Africa & the Middle East

Morocco

Africa

Benin
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Comoros
Ethiopia
Ghana
Guinea
Lesotho
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mozambique
Namibia
Rwanda
Senegal

Sierra Leone
South Africa
Swaziland
Tanzania
The Gambia
Togo
Uganda
Zambia

Eastern Europe & Central Asia

Albania
Armenia
Georgia
Kosovo
Kyrgyz Republic
Macedonia
Moldova
Ukraine

Asia

Cambodia
China
Indonesia
Mongolia
Myanmar
Nepal
Philippines
Thailand
Timor-Leste

Pacific Islands

Federated States of
Micronesia:
• Micronesia
• Palau
Fiji
Samoa
Tonga
Vanuatu

AF: Africa Region

EMA: Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region

IAP: Inter-America and Pacific Region

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MISSION

To promote world peace and friendship through community-based development
and cross-cultural understanding

Since its establishment in 1961, the Peace Corps has been guided by a mission of world peace and friendship. The agency exemplifies the best of the American spirit by making it possible for Americans to serve around the world advancing development and building cross-cultural understanding. Through this unique approach to development, the Peace Corps is building strong relationships between our country and the people of our partner nations while making a difference in the overseas communities it serves, in the lives of its Volunteers, and back home in the United States. More than 230,000 Volunteers have served in 141 countries since 1961.

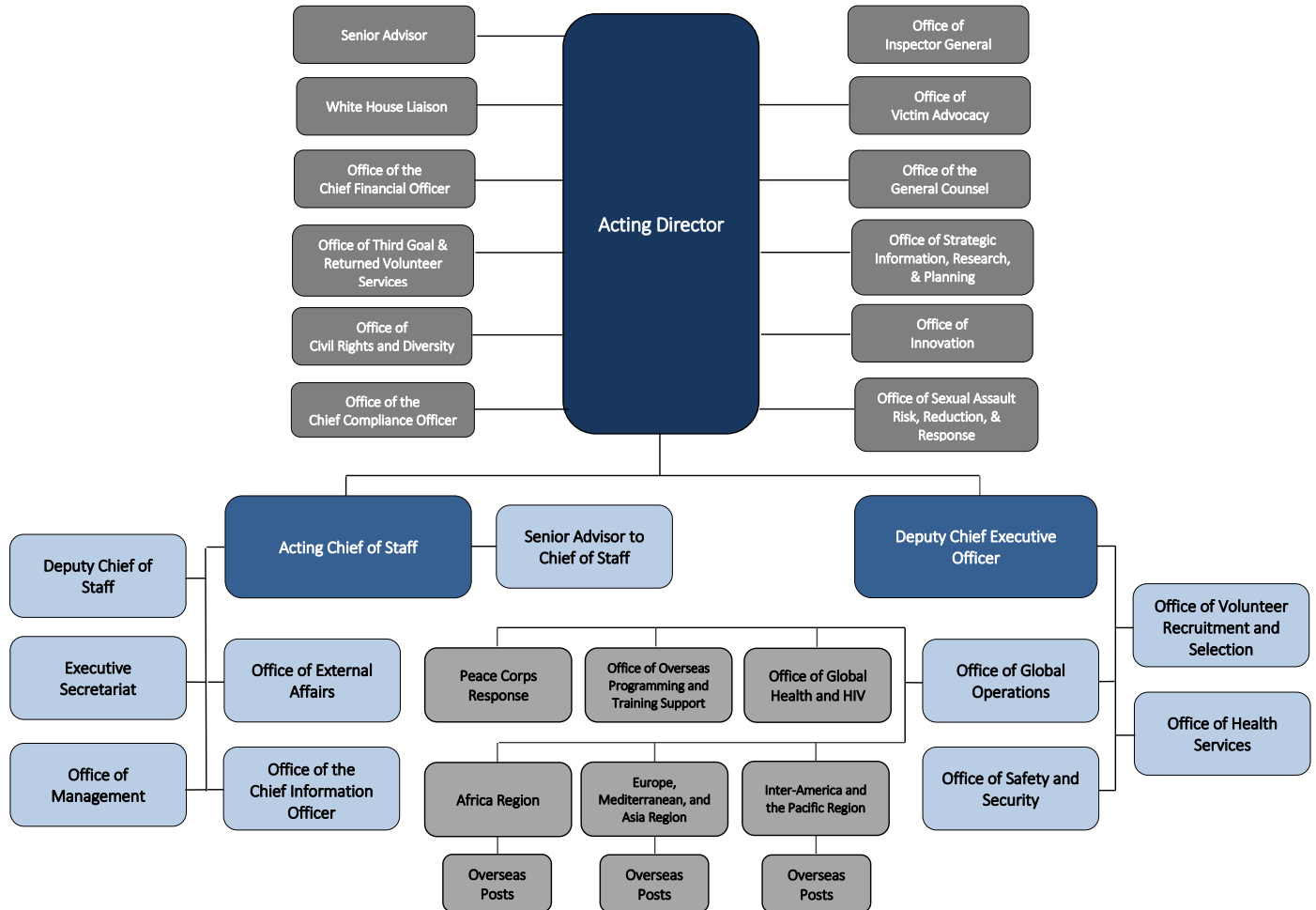
The Peace Corps advances its mission through the work of the Volunteers, both during and after their tour of service. Rather than providing monetary assistance to countries, the agency sends Volunteers to share their skills and experience while living and working alongside local individuals and communities. This day-to-day interaction gives Volunteers a unique perspective and the opportunity to partner with local communities to address their development challenges and to strengthen mutual understanding.

Peace Corps Volunteers are the face of our nation in communities around the globe, building positive perceptions of the United States and sharing American values with their communities. After Volunteers complete their service, they return to the United States with new sets of skills, deep knowledge of other cultures, and long-lasting relationships. Returned Volunteers continue their service by promoting awareness of other cultures and global issues with friends, family, and the American public; maintaining relationships with colleagues and friends from the countries where they served; and sustaining their commitment to volunteerism and public service.

“The Peace Corps represents some, if not all, of the best virtues in this society. It stands for everything that America has ever stood for. It stands for everything we believe in and hope to achieve in the world.”

SARGENT SHRIVER
FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS, 1961-66

PEACE CORPS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Updated January 2018

CORE VALUES

The following core values shape and guide decisions at all levels in the agency:

Volunteer Well-Being: The Peace Corps works to provide a safe, healthy, and productive service for every Volunteer. The safety, security, and physical and emotional health of Volunteers are the agency's top priorities.

Quality and Impact: The Peace Corps pursues quality improvements to strengthen its programs while maintaining a meaningful global presence.

Commitment to National Service: The Peace Corps seeks to expand opportunities for Americans to serve their country by volunteering their time in the service of others.

Diversity and Inclusion: The Peace Corps actively supports a culture of inclusion that builds on the strengths of the diversity of the American public and of the countries where we serve.

Evidence-Based Decisions: The Peace Corps uses high-quality data and evidence to focus resources on agency priorities, inform performance improvements both in the field and at headquarters, and promote institutional learning.

Innovation: The Peace Corps utilizes innovative approaches and technology to solve both persistent and emerging operational challenges and to advance local development.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Peace Corps Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Annual Performance Report (APR) provides detailed performance information to the President, Congress, external stakeholders, domestic and overseas staff, and the American people. This report is the final performance report that follows the performance framework established in the Peace Corps FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan. The report allows readers to assess the Peace Corps' FY 2017 performance and longitudinal progress over the past four years.

The four-year strategic plan lays out the long-term goals and objectives designed to advance the Peace Corps mission. The annual performance plan identifies the strategies and goal leaders employed to accomplish these goals and objectives, as well as the specific results the agency expects to achieve.

The combined FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan and Annual Performance Plan includes the following components:

- **Strategic goals** reflect the broad, long-term outcomes the agency works toward to achieve the Peace Corps mission—promoting world peace and friendship through community-based development and cross-cultural understanding.
- **Strategic objectives** break down the high-level strategic goals to express the agency's priority and focus areas in order to achieve the strategic goals.
- **Strategies** include the actions that the agency intends to take in order to meet its goals and objectives.
- **Performance goals** state quantitative levels of performance, or “targets,” to be accomplished within specific timeframes. Targets and actual results are provided for prior years when available. The agency uses performance goals both to assess progress and drive performance improvement. Performance goals are updated each year in the annual performance plan in conjunction with the budget formulation process.
- **Goal leads** are identified for each performance goal with the title of the lead individual and the name of the office in the lead role. While several offices or overseas posts may be responsible for the individual strategies that advance progress on performance goals, goal leads are given the convening authority to coordinate agencywide efforts to develop, implement, and report on plans to achieve each performance goal within a specific timeframe.
- **Partner offices** are listed for performance goals where individual strategies and activities are accomplished through specific collaborative efforts beyond the goal lead's direct authority. Partner offices work in collaboration with the goal lead(s) to develop and implement strategies while also contributing to reporting on the performance goal.

Appendices provide additional detail on the development of the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan. Appendices include a summary of the Peace Corps' performance management framework (Appendix A), a description of how evaluation and research informed the development of the plan (Appendix B), and data verification and validation standards for the performance goal indicators (Appendix C).

Transition from the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan to the 2018–2022 Strategic Plan

The FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan incorporates new strategic and management objectives that do not directly mirror those present in the FY 2014–2018 plan. However, the long-term outcomes and concepts outlined in both plans are interrelated, and the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan served as an effective foundation for building on past successes and continuing the agency’s efforts to accomplish its Strategic Goals. Even though several performance goals in the 2014–2018 plan will not be continued in the next strategic plan, many will continue to be monitored internally as they remain priorities for the agency.

As the agency moves forward, two performance goals in the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan will be incorporated in the next FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan. These performance goals include performance goal 3.1: Advance Community-Based Development Outcomes (page 28) and performance goal 8.1: Improve Language Learning (page 48).

GPRA Modernization Act of 2010

The President’s Budget identifies lower-priority program activities, where applicable, as required under the GPRA (Government Performance and Results Act) Modernization Act, 31 U.S.C. 1115(b)(10). The public can access the volume at [whitehouse.gov/omb/budget](https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget).

The Peace Corps has not been asked to contribute to the federal government’s cross-agency priority goals. Per the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, the contributions of those agencies required to report on cross-agency priority goals can be found at [performance.gov](https://www.performance.gov).

STRATEGIC GOALS

The Peace Corps Act (1961) articulates three core goals that contribute to the Peace Corps mission of world peace and friendship:

1. To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women
2. To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served
3. To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans

These three core goals continue to serve as the foundation for the Peace Corps' approach to development and the three strategic goals that guide the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan:

Strategic Goal 1: Building Local Capacity

Advance local development by strengthening the capacity of local communities and individuals through the service of trained Volunteers.

The Peace Corps' approach to development is local and community-based. Peace Corps Volunteers work to strengthen the capacity of host country individuals, groups, and communities to advance local development outcomes. Volunteers engage in project work and train local partners in areas such as agriculture, community economic development, education, environment, health, and youth in development. This focus on local capacity building helps to ensure that the work of Peace Corps Volunteers is sustained long after their service is complete.

Public Benefit: Through Volunteers' capacity-building work, local communities and individuals strengthen the skills they need to address their specific challenges. As a result, local conditions are improved around the globe, and the American people benefit from a more stable, prosperous, and peaceful world.

Strategic Goal 2: Sharing America with the World

Promote a better understanding of Americans through Volunteers who live and work within local communities.

Volunteers promote a better understanding of Americans among local people through day-to-day interactions with their host families, counterparts,¹ friends, and others. Over the course of their two years of service, Volunteers share America with the world—dispelling myths about Americans and developing deep relationships with local people. Through this approach, Volunteers also learn more about local community strengths and challenges and build trust with local partners, strengthening their project work.

Public Benefit: Volunteers are some of America's most effective goodwill ambassadors in local communities and areas of the world where other development or cross-cultural exchange organizations are rarely present. As the result of interactions with Volunteers, local individuals and communities gain a more complete understanding of the United States and become more willing to engage with Americans.

¹ The Peace Corps assigns a "counterpart," or primary host community work partner, to each Volunteer.

Strategic Goal 3: Bringing the World Back Home

Increase Americans' awareness and knowledge of other cultures and global issues through Volunteers who share their Peace Corps experiences and continue to serve upon their return.

During their two years of service, Volunteers learn the languages, customs, traditions, and values of the people with whom they live and work. Volunteers bring the world back home by sharing their experiences with family, friends, and the American public during and after their service. They directly connect Americans with local individuals and communities both independently and through Peace Corps-supported programs. As a result, they deepen and enrich Americans' awareness and knowledge of other countries, cultures, and global issues. Long after they return from their assignments abroad, returned Volunteers continue their service by promoting a better understanding of other cultures, encouraging and supporting volunteerism, and engaging in public service.

Public Benefit: Sustained interaction between Americans and other peoples engenders mutual understanding and trust, increasing respect and human dignity in world affairs at home and abroad. Additionally, through their overseas experiences, Volunteers develop language, intercultural, technical, and entrepreneurial skills that prepare them for jobs in the 21st century. They bring these skills with them to their work in both the public and private sectors, sharing their global experiences and outlook with their colleagues, friends, and family. This, in turn, helps to build a more competitive U.S. workforce.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The 11 strategic objectives identified in this plan constitute the roadmap for advancing the Peace Corps mission and strategic goals. As the primary unit of analysis for assessing the agency's performance, strategic objectives are measured through specific, time-bound performance goals.

1. Volunteer Well-Being

Enhance the safety, security, and health of Volunteers through rigorous prevention and response systems and high-quality medical and mental health services

2. Service Opportunity of Choice

Position the Peace Corps as the top choice for talented Americans interested in service by reaching a new generation of potential Volunteers and streamlining the application process

3. Development Impact

Advance community-based development by strengthening the capacity of local individuals and communities, focusing on highly effective technical interventions, and leveraging strategic partnerships

4. Cross-Cultural Understanding

Build a deeper mutual understanding of other cultures by developing meaningful connections between American and host country individuals and communities

5. Continuation of Service

Support returned Volunteers' continuation of service by fostering a vibrant alumni network, providing tools and resources to ease their transition after service, and offering opportunities for them to share their experiences

6. Diversity and Inclusion

Actively recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce and Volunteer corps and build an inclusive culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness

7. Site Development

Establish an environment conducive to Volunteer success through an integrated approach to developing effective projects, preparing work sites, and successfully collaborating with local partners

8. Train Up

Develop a highly effective Volunteer corps through a continuum of learning throughout service

9. High-Performing Learning Organization

Cultivate a high-performing learning organization by investing in professional development for staff, improving staff retention, and strengthening institutional memory

10. Global Connectivity

Enable seamless communication and collaboration for all Volunteers and staff by modernizing and integrating information technology systems and leveraging the innovation of Volunteers and staff in the field

11. Measurement for Results

Advance the agency's ability to measure progress, improve performance, and demonstrate impact through integrated monitoring, reporting, and evaluation practices

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Each of the Peace Corps' three strategic goals is supported by several strategic objectives. The table below indicates which strategic objectives support each strategic goal.

	Strategic Goal 1: Building Local Capacity	Strategic Goal 2: Sharing America with the World	Strategic Goal 3: Bringing the World Back Home
Strategic Objectives			
1. Volunteer Well-Being	●	●	●
2. Service Opportunity of Choice	●	●	●
3. Development Impact	●	●	
4. Cross-Cultural Understanding	●	●	●
5. Continuation of Service			●
6. Diversity and Inclusion	●	●	●
7. Site Development	●	●	
8. Train Up	●	●	
9. High-Performing Learning Organization	●	●	●
10. Global Connectivity	●	●	●
11. Measurement for Results	●	●	●

PERFORMANCE RESULTS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

The Peace Corps' 11 strategic objectives, which contribute to the three strategic goals, were assessed through 26 measurable performance goals during FY 2017. Each performance goal includes a quantitative performance level, or "target," to be accomplished in a specific time frame.

FY 2017 Results Legend:

Target Met	<i>100 percent of the target set for FY 2017 was met</i>
Slightly below target	<i>95 to 99 percent of the target set for FY 2017 was met</i>
Target not met	<i>Below 95 percent of the target set for FY 2017 was met</i>
FY 2017 data not available	<i>Two performance goals rely on data from the Global Counterpart Survey, a biannual survey that was last conducted in FY 2016</i>

Strategic Objective	Performance Goal	Baseline Level	Performance Goal Results in this Strategic Plan				
		2013	2014	2015	2016	FY 2017 Result	FY 2017 Target
1. Volunteer Well-Being	1.1 Increase Volunteer Satisfaction with Safety and Security Support	71% ¹	84%	81%	80%	80%	80%
	1.2 Reduce Volunteer Dissatisfaction with Medical and Mental Health Support	9% ¹	9%	10%	10%	14%	7%
	1.3 Increase Volunteer Personal Safety	-	-	-	0%	41%	35%
2. Service Opportunity of Choice	2.1 Volunteer Requests Met	90%	98%	97%	94%	96%	96-102%
	2.2 Increase Service Opportunities	7,209	6,818	6,919	7,213	7,376	9,400
	2.3 Increase Applications	10,118 ¹	19,151	24,848	23,987	22,645	24,000
3. Development Impact	3.1 Advance Community-Based Development Outcomes	-	76%	75%	76%	86%	85%
	3.2 Strengthen Local Capacity	-	-	83%	86%	FY 2017 data not available	87%
	3.3 Improve Feedback to Volunteers	38% ¹	55%	54%	57%	52%	65%

Strategic Objective	Performance Goal		Baseline Level	Performance Goal Results in this Strategic Plan				FY 2017 Result	FY 2017 Target
			2013	2014	2015	2016			
4. Cross-cultural Understanding	4.1 Greater Understanding of Americans		--	94%	90%	91%	FY 2017 data not available	95%	
	4.2 Increase Cross-Cultural Connections		--	57%	57%	54%	49%	67%	
5. Continuation of Service	5.1 Support Returned Volunteer Career Transition		-	2,649	2,831	4,116	3,818	3,250	
	5.2 Increase Returned Volunteer Engagement		-	9,754	10,866	15,426	9,323	14,000	
6. Diversity and Inclusion	6.1 Increase Applicant Diversity		30%	33%	35%	36%	36%	35%	
	6.2 Build an Open and Inclusive Organizational Culture	U.S. direct hire staff	-	88%	83%	85%	82%	90% ²	
		Host country staff	-	89%	92%	90%	91%		
		Volunteers	-	80%	76%	71%	68%		
7. Site Development	7.1 Improve Site Development		42% ¹	59%	59%	62%	62%	66%	
	7.2 Improve Counterpart Selection and Preparation		32% ¹	53%	51%	53%	52%	59%	
8. Train Up	8.1 Improve Language Learning		--	63%	63%	58% ¹	56%	65%	
	8.2 Increase Effectiveness of Technical Training		50% ¹	63%	63%	64%	63%	66%	
9. High-Performing Learning Organization	9.1 Improve Staff Training	U.S. direct hire staff	57%	55%	52%	53%	56%	60% ²	
		Host country staff	-	62%	66%	69%	72%		
	9.2 Increase Staff Tenure		4.5 years	4.0 years	4.2 years	3.3 years	3.2 years	4 years	
10. Global Connectivity	10.1 Develop an Integrated Technology Platform		-	15%	45%	49%	79%	70%	
	10.2 Facilitate Knowledge Sharing		-	77%	78%	77%	78%	84%	
10. Global Connectivity	10.1 Develop an Integrated Technology Platform		-	15%	45%	49%	79%	70%	
	10.2 Facilitate Knowledge Sharing		-	77%	78%	77%	78%	84%	

Strategic Objective	Performance Goal	Baseline Level	Performance Goal Results in this Strategic Plan				
		2013	2014	2015	2016	FY 2017 Result	FY 2017 Target
11. Measurement for Results	11.1 Conduct Baselines	--	0%	100%	100%	25%	100%
	11.2 Increase Evidence-Based Decisions	--	68%	86%	95%	84%	100%
	11.3 Using Evidence to Encourage Innovation	--	70%	43%	58%	50%	100%

¹ Italicized results are not comparable to later years due to changes in measurement.

² All listed population groups must reach the performance goal target in order for the goal to be shown as having met its target.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: VOLUNTEER WELL-BEING

Enhance the safety, security, and health of Volunteers through rigorous prevention and response systems and high-quality medical and mental health services

Rationale: The Peace Corps advances its mission through the work of the Volunteers—the most important strategic asset of the agency. Volunteers dedicate themselves to serving their host country in local communities where the health-care infrastructure, security, and environmental conditions differ from those of the United States. While safety, security, and medical risks are an inherent part of Volunteer service, the Peace Corps continually seeks to minimize the risks to Volunteers wherever possible and to provide an effective and compassionate response when crimes do occur. Further, Volunteers may experience a range of emotions as they encounter unique stressors associated with living and working in local communities and the social and cultural complexities of development work. Providing support to enhance the well-being and resiliency of Volunteers helps ensure that they focus on their assignments, minimize risk-taking behaviors, and return home safely and in good health. Volunteer well-being is the shared responsibility of staff and Volunteers.

Strategies

- Ensure that the reforms from the Kate Puzey Peace Corps Volunteer Protection Act of 2011 continue to guide agency policy and practice
- Train staff who interact with Volunteers on methods for mentoring, developing, and supporting Volunteers
- Improve the recruitment, retention, and support of Peace Corps medical staff and safety and security staff
- Encourage a comprehensive approach to Volunteer support through agencywide initiatives such as the Sexual Assault Risk-Reduction and Response program
- Expand mental and emotional health support to provide Volunteers with the tools to cope with the challenges of service
- Collaborate with other governmental and nongovernmental agencies on projects to improve Volunteer health outcomes
- Foster the development of Volunteer individual safety and security planning through the provision of additional training and materials

FY 2017 Status: Agency monitoring of this strategic objective shows progress over the past four years. The agency strengthened the 10-week curriculum for Peace Corps trainees on preventing disease and maintaining health in their host countries, provided continuing medical education for Peace Corps medical officers (PCMOs), implemented a Peer Support Network Program for Volunteers, and trained post staff to provide interpersonal support and encourage resilience during site visits. The 11 “Healthy Volunteer 2020” indicators related to the broad topics of Physical and Mental Health, Tobacco and Alcohol Use, Environmental Quality, and Health Services were developed with expert advice from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion in the Department of Health and Human Services.

The Office of Health Services is better positioned to support Volunteer medical needs than ever before. The Peace Corps has rolled out a successful electronic medical record system (PCMEDICS) that gives overseas Peace Corps medical officers streamlined access to Volunteer medical records—whether those medical officers are sitting in an office, working in remote areas, or traveling internationally. In addition, PCMEDICS enables a centralized process for coordinating and documenting medical, mental health, and dental services from local service providers and U.S. providers when Volunteers are on medevac status. PCMEDICS also allows for healthcare providers at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, DC to access these records in real time. This capacity for improved information availability, increased collaboration, and reliable epidemiological trending enhances the cohesiveness of the Peace Corps healthcare system, which ultimately yields higher-quality, more timely care for Peace Corps Volunteers.

Additionally, the Office of Safety and Security has implemented a new, well-received approach to enhanced safety and security training for all Volunteers. The Peace Corps will use feedback from Volunteers and staff who piloted the new training in FY 2017 as it continues to roll out the new training and resources to all remaining posts in FY 2018.

Supporting the well-being of Volunteers will always be a high priority of the Peace Corps. Volunteers face a number of challenges as they learn to navigate the rigors of service. While Peace Corps staff, including PCMOs, are well equipped to handle diverse Volunteer needs, the agency also recognizes the need to emphasize Volunteer resiliency, including setting clear and accurate expectations of care in countries where conditions differ substantially from those in America. Moving forward, the Peace Corps expects that satisfaction with support will increase as Volunteers learn to manage adjustment difficulties in a more systematic way, become more resilient, and seek support from both clinical and non-clinical staff in a way that aligns with post resources and capabilities.

Performance Goal 1.1: Increase Volunteer Satisfaction with Safety and Security Support <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report feeling satisfied¹ with safety and security support to 82 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	76%	78%	80%
Result	73%	68%	71%	84% ²	81%	80%	80%

¹Includes the top two positive response options on a five-point balanced scale.

²Due to the improvements to the Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) in FY 2014, including modifying the response scales and reducing the length of the questionnaire by half, results from FY 2011-13 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2014 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2014 onward is possible.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Safety and Security; Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Office: Office of Victim Advocacy

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded to the following survey question with the top two positive responses (“satisfied” and “very satisfied”) divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded: “How satisfied are you with the following types of support provided by in-country Peace Corps staff: Safety and security?” Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” response option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: The agency employs a rigorous Volunteer safety and security program to reduce risk and respond to crime and security incidents. Volunteer satisfaction with safety and security support is a measure of the agency’s safety and security prevention and response systems.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. This performance goal provides an assessment of the agency’s safety and security prevention and response program from the perspective of the end user—the Volunteer. The agency emphasizes effective Volunteer training as the cornerstone of a rigorous safety and security program. Volunteer safety training is designed to enable Volunteers to assess their environment in order to reduce risk and respond to security incidents. Volunteers who felt they had learned personal security skills in their training were more satisfied with Peace Corps safety and security support overall than those who felt their training had been insufficient. While the Peace Corps has executed strategies that support this performance goal with regard to safety training, Volunteer’s satisfaction with safety and security support has not changed over the past four years. As correlation suggests the two are related, further analysis of the key drivers of satisfaction with safety and security support will be pursued in FY 2018.

Performance Goal 1.2: Reduce Volunteer Dissatisfaction with Medical and Mental Health Support <i>Reduce the percentage of Volunteers who report feeling dissatisfied¹ with medical and mental health support to 7 percent by FY 2016 and maintain that level of performance through FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	8%	7%	7%	7%
Result	7%	7%	9%	9%	10%	10%	14%

¹Includes the bottom two negative response options on a five-point balanced scale.

Goal Lead: Associate Director, Office of Health Services

Partner Offices: Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

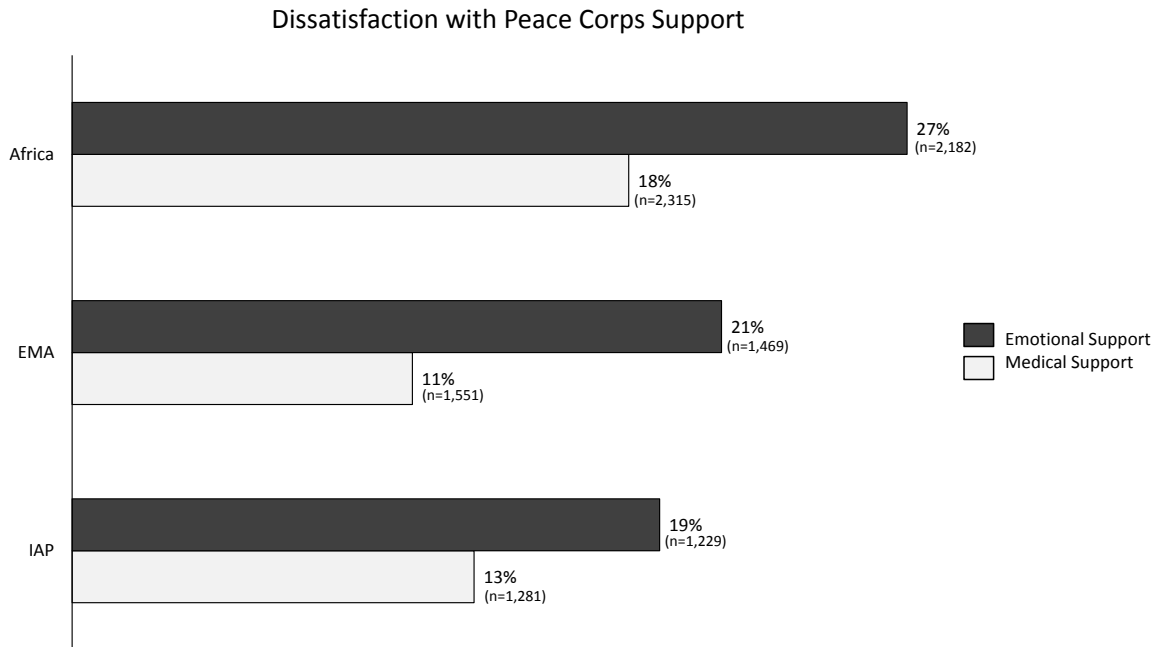
Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” to the following survey question divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded: “How satisfied are you with the following types of support provided by in-country Peace Corps staff: Medical?” Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” response option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: Medical and mental health support for Volunteers is provided primarily by Peace Corps medical

officers (PCMOs) at each post. PCMOs are responsible for establishing and managing the in-country Volunteer health program and act as both program managers and clinicians. Where necessary, PCMOs or the Peace Corps' Counseling and Outreach Unit (COU) may also refer Volunteers to external health care providers in their country of service for additional treatment or diagnostic testing. This performance measure is focused on service delivery by Peace Corps staff alone. Health-care research suggests a strong relationship between patient satisfaction with health care and improved health outcomes.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. The results in FY 2017 show a higher percentage of dissatisfied Volunteers than in the prior six years. While these results are statistically similar to previous years—and they place the Peace Corps well above high-performing U.S.-based health-care providers—they continue to fall below the agency's target for this performance goal. Several factors may contribute to Volunteer satisfaction with the overall medical support they receive during service, including satisfaction with Peace Corps medical officers, the quality of host country providers and medical facilities in their communities, expectations of care and treatment that may differ from what is available in resource-restrained countries, disease incidence, and health outcomes. Currently, the agency does not include information on these other factors in the analysis of this performance goal, but new "Healthy Volunteer 2020" indicators that track health outcomes have been developed by the Office of Health Services for a more holistic assessment of health delivery. Baseline data on these indicators were collected in FY 2017, and moving forward they will continue to be tracked by the Office of Health Services. The agency also developed and tested a new system for analyzing and reporting on concerns reported by Volunteers through the Quality Nurse Line.

Volunteer health is a combination of medical and mental health, and the responsibility for supporting Volunteers' mental health expands beyond PCMOs to include all staff at posts. Non-medical Peace Corps staff may interact with a Volunteer struggling to maintain a healthy mental state prior to a formal PCMO-Volunteer interaction. Additionally, Volunteers located in different regions are exposed to unique emotional and physical stressors related to climate, rural settings, and common local diseases. Thus, it is important to examine the correlations between Volunteer satisfaction with the emotional support provided by Peace Corps staff and Volunteer satisfaction with PCMO support at a regional level. An analysis of 2017 survey results showed a clear correlation linking these two dimensions of health support by region. Volunteers serving in the Africa region were the most likely to be dissatisfied with both emotional and medical support, with emotional support driving dissatisfaction. Similar findings are shown in EMA and IAP regions. These findings suggest that further exploring ways to improve mental health support across regions may contribute to healthier, more productive service for Volunteers.



In addition, in the FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, the agency will prioritize Volunteer resilience by delineating a systematic and comprehensive approach to setting expectations and building skills—one that emphasizes mutual support between staff, partners, and Volunteers so that Volunteers are better equipped to successfully navigate the challenges of service. This approach will include setting realistic expectations of service and increasing the range of individuals from whom Volunteers can seek support when facing adjustment challenges, so that they do not expect Peace Corps medical officers to provide all types of support.

Performance Goal 1.3: Increase Volunteer Personal Safety <i>Increase the percentage of posts that adopt Volunteer personal safety planning as part of the pre-service training package to 70 percent by FY 2018,</i>							Target met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	-	-	35%
Result	-	-	-	-	-	0%	41%

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Safety and Security; Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Office: Office of Victim Advocacy

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of posts that have adopted personal safety planning as part of the standardized training package in Volunteers' pre-service training divided by the total number of open posts that have offered pre-service training sessions in the fiscal year.

Overview: Volunteers who engage in safety and security planning will be better prepared and more able to respond to challenges to their well-being. Incorporating personal safety planning into the standard training provided to Volunteers is expected to enhance their knowledge, skills, and self-efficacy in managing day-to-day risks. This was a new measure added in FY 2017; targets and results are not available for prior years.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. In 2017, 25 of the 61 posts that held one or more pre-service training (PST) sessions used the modified Personal Security and Risk Reduction training, which includes the introduction of the new *MySafety Guide* resource. The resource and training include improved information and exercises designed to promote the development of personal safety plans and individual risk reduction strategies. These posts will also hold a special follow-up session during the in-service training (IST). This special IST session will allow Volunteers to reflect on the needs, expectations, concerns, and suggestions identified during their PST and share promising practices for dealing with day-to-day risks related to safety and security. Staff at the posts piloting the new resource guide and revised training have generally reported positive results, and some posts that are not piloting the guide have requested to use it. The updated training and *MySafety Guide* resource will be rolled out to all remaining posts in FY 2018 by the Office of Safety and Security.² Brief surveys administered to Volunteers at both pre-service and in-service training will provide additional data in the future that will help inform continuous improvement to the safety and security training and resources provided to Volunteers.

² This performance goal will no longer be tracked by the agency for external reporting purposes after FY 2017.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: SERVICE OPPORTUNITY OF CHOICE

Position the Peace Corps as the top choice for talented Americans interested in service by reaching a new generation of potential Volunteers and streamlining the application process

Rationale: Increasing the quantity and quality of Volunteer applications is essential in order to achieve the agency's three strategic goals—all of which are completed through the work of skilled Volunteers. The Peace Corps strives to maintain its position as a leading service opportunity in an environment in which talented Americans have an increasingly wide array of service opportunity options.

Strategies

- Continue to improve the agency's tools for communicating service opportunities to prospective Volunteers, including the Peace Corps' newly redesigned website and the development of additional content for mobile devices
- Leverage paid and donated media to aid in recruitment communications and efforts
- Develop a customer relationship management system to track new applicants throughout the Volunteer lifecycle
- Implement strategies to retain all invitees and foster a seamless transition from invitation to departure
- Establish a cohesive agencywide approach to meeting posts' requests that includes clear guidelines for potential overfill (when more trainees are received than expected) and appropriate reserve levels (when fewer trainees are received) for each post
- Expand the Peace Corps Response program to fill requests for highly skilled and experienced Volunteers
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the application and placement reforms in order to ensure that posts receive the most qualified Volunteers

FY 2017 Status: Competitive Volunteer recruitment, strategic external outreach, and bold communications have dramatically improved over the course of the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan. The agency has successfully sustained the innovative improvements to the Volunteer application and selection process made in FY 2014. The Peace Corps also launched the agency's largest rebranding initiative in over a decade, which included a new logo; a recruitment campaign; and a modern, responsive website (peacecorps.gov) optimized for both desktop and mobile devices. These combined efforts have been continuously monitored and improved over the past four years. The results have been substantial and positive with regard to recruitment and public engagement. Looking forward, the Peace Corps will continue to improve Volunteer recruitment, selection, and placement in FY 2018 and beyond through internal goals and milestones.

The agency is committed to maintaining its position as the top choice for talented Americans interested in international service. Over the next two years, the agency will seek to improve targeted aspects of the application and pre-departure lifecycle. Through planned technological improvements to the application

platform, the agency will aim to strengthen the pre-departure environment and facilitate a more streamlined process for communicating with invitees. Additionally, the agency plans to utilize a learning management system to deliver online training courses to invitees on topics such as Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) and safety and security. Ultimately, these improvements will bolster the agency's efforts to retain invitees by increasing their level of engagement with the Peace Corps in the weeks and months prior to their departure. Data will continue to play a key role in monitoring, assessing, and improving the application process moving forward.

Performance Goal 2.1: Volunteer Requests Met <i>Field 100 percent of the Volunteers requested by overseas posts each year.</i>							Target met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	95%	95%	95%	100%	100%	96-102%	96-102%
Result	97%	97%	90%	98%	97%	94%	96%

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Office: Office of Health Services

Data Source: Peace Corps database (DOVE/PCVDBMS)

Calculation: The number of trainees who have entered on duty divided by the number of Volunteers requested.

Overview: The ultimate outcome for the Service Opportunity of Choice objective is for the agency to fully meet overseas posts' programming needs by meeting their requests for skilled Volunteers. The Peace Corps has enough qualified applicants to meet the requests made by posts, and the agency makes every effort to account for changes in posts' needs and the availability of qualified applicants by inviting a higher number of applicants than the number of trainees requested by posts. In spite of these precautions, attrition between the final date for applicants to join a new training group and the group's date of departure from the United States is still the primary challenge to reaching a 100 percent fill rate. Several causes of attrition during the period between invitation and departure—such as unanticipated developments in a candidate's medical or legal process, family responsibilities, and changes to educational or professional plans—remain difficult to predict.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. This performance goal monitors the fill rate, which is the number of trainees who have entered on duty at a post divided by the number of Volunteers requested at that post. In FY 2017, the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection analyzed fill rates and concluded that the complexity of variables and difficulty isolating individual factors would continue to result in a range of fill rates. The agency began using a percentage range as the target for this performance goal in recognition of the inherent difficulty in predicting exact attrition. The target range (96-102%) for FY 2016–2017 reflects a manageable level of variance around the optimal target fill rate. This level of variance reflects posts' ability to adjust operational plans and programs to accommodate slight increases or decreases in

the number of Volunteers that they receive. By continuing to analyze these data, especially in light of a new application process, the Peace Corps may be able to better identify causes of systematic attrition, which would lead to improved performance. Additionally, the agency will continue to pursue attrition mitigation strategies, such as backfilling programs that have experienced unanticipated loss and strengthening engagement of invitees during the pre-departure environment.

Performance Goal 2.2: Increase Service Opportunities <i>Increase the number of Volunteers serving annually to 10,000 by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Targets	-	-	-	7,600	8,200	8,800	9,400
Results	9,095	8,073	7,209	6,818	6,919	7,213	7,376

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Office: Peace Corps Response

Data Source: Peace Corps database (PCVDBMS/HRMS)

Calculation: The number of Volunteers comprising the agency's "on-board strength" (OBS), defined as the number of Volunteers and trainees—including Peace Corps Response Volunteers—from all funding sources who are serving anywhere in the world on September 30 of the fiscal year.

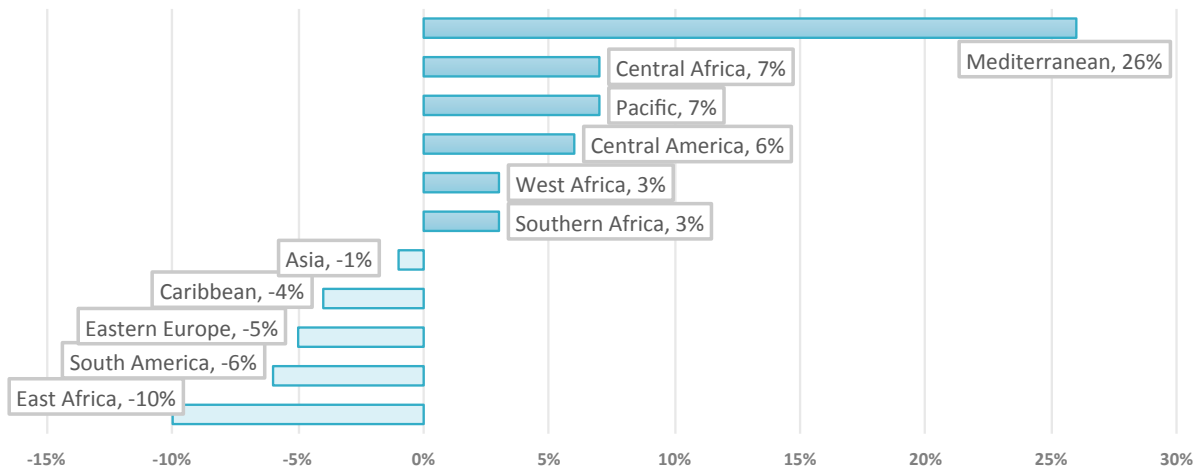
Overview: Per the Peace Corps Act, "It is the policy of the United States and a purpose of the Peace Corps to maintain, to the maximum extent appropriate and consistent with programmatic and fiscal considerations, a Volunteer corps of at least 10,000 individuals." Subject to the availability of sustained funding, building and maintaining a large Volunteer population ensures that more Americans have the opportunity to serve—a high priority for the agency. Aspirational targets for this goal were set to increase the number of Volunteers serving annually in order to ensure steady growth.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. However, despite program closings and temporary program suspensions due to safety and security concerns, the Peace Corps has been able to steadily increase the number of Volunteers every year since FY 2014.

In FY 2017, the Peace Corps maintained active programs in 65 countries, administered by 61 overseas posts. In Burkina Faso, where 124 Volunteers were serving in Community Economic Development, Education, and Health, the program was temporarily suspended due to security concerns. The Peace Corps will continue to monitor the safety and security environment and hopes to continue its partnership with the government and people of Burkina Faso when conditions allow for the safe return of Volunteers. Myanmar was the only new country entry in FY 2017. In March 2017, the first cohort of 16 Volunteers began their two-year service in the Education sector.

The figure below shows the change in the number of Volunteers in the field by sub-region, providing geographic context for the presence of the Peace Corps in different areas of the world. The Peace Corps will continue to use data from the agency's annual Country Portfolio Review to inform decisions about trainee input for future years. More information on the Country Portfolio Review can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Percent Difference in On-Board Strength by Sub-Region (FY 2016 to FY 2017)



Performance Goal 2.3: Increase Applications

Increase applications for Volunteer service to 25,000 by FY 2018.

**Target
not met**

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	20,000	22,000	23,000	24,000
Result	12,206	10,091	10,118	19,151 ¹	24,848	23,987	22,645

¹ The definition of an application for Volunteer service was modified in FY 2014. Under the updated definition, an application occurs when a qualified U.S. citizen submits a completed application for either the Peace Corps Volunteer program (two-year) or the Peace Corps Response program (short-term). FY 2011-13 results are reported for Peace Corps Volunteer program applications only and are based on the application process used at that time, which required that individuals submit both an application form and a health history form. Peace Corps Response applications from FY 2014 onward only require the application form.

Goal Lead: Associate Director, Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

Partner Offices: Peace Corps Response; Office of Communications; Office of Strategic Partnerships

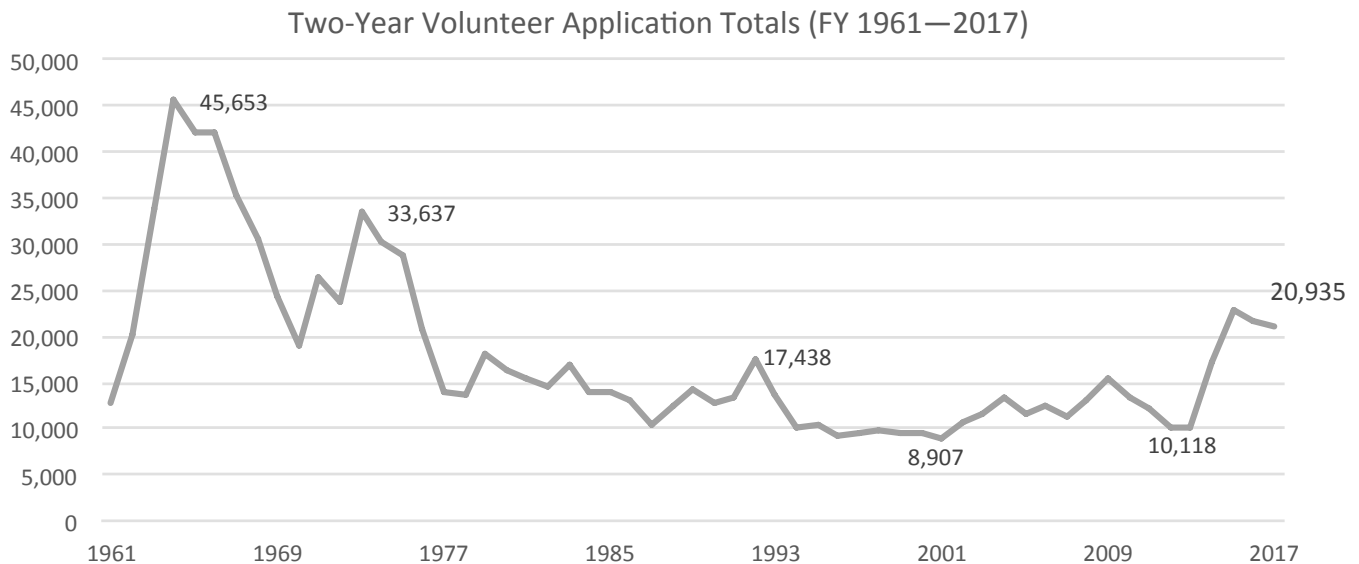
Data Source: Peace Corps database (DOVE/PCVDBMS)

Calculation: The total number of completed applications for the Peace Corps Volunteer program and the Peace Corps Response program from U.S. citizens who are at least 18 years old.

Overview: An increase in the number of applications for Peace Corps service is a clear indication of the competitiveness of the Peace Corps as a service opportunity of choice. The substantial increase in applications related to the Peace Corps' updated policies and streamlined processes in FY 2014 is balanced

by progressively higher targets for the remaining years in the strategic plan. The agency's goal is to ensure that there are multiple applicants for each Volunteer request so that Peace Corps service remains competitive and well-qualified candidates are placed in the field.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. In FY 2017, there were 20,935 applications for two-year Volunteer service. When combined with the additional 1,710 applicants who applied to Peace Corps Response only, total application numbers reached 22,645 in FY 2017. Though this was below the goal of 24,000 total applications, it marks a 30-year high for the agency, sustaining the trend started in FY 2015, the first full year following the agency's historic application and recruitment reforms. With this many applicants in FY 2017, the agency was able to meet requests from the field for well-qualified Volunteers. The consistent influx of applications over the past few years indicates a continued strong desire among Americans to volunteer for service abroad.



Transparency in the application process—ensuring that applicants can easily search Volunteer opportunities and find openings best suited to their skill sets and needs—has been a key component of competitive recruitment. Volunteer openings now include detailed information, such as comprehensive project descriptions, program size, required and desired skills, country-specific language needs, and in-country living conditions. Prospective applicants can browse service opportunities by country, work area, language requirement, and departure date at peacecorps.gov/openings/.

Similar to the Peace Corps' two-year Volunteer program, Peace Corps Response employs a transparent application process where applicants can search and apply to specific job openings (peacecorps.gov/volunteer/response-openings/). In contrast to the two-year program, Peace Corps Response sends experienced professionals to undertake short-term, high-impact service assignments in specialized fields. The number of Peace Corps Response Volunteers fielded every year is correlated with the number of available opportunities each year. The number of opportunities increased steadily every year from FY 2014 through FY 2016. Correspondingly, the number of Response Volunteers fielded increased every year

between FY 2014 and FY 2016, culminating in a historic high of 379 Response Volunteers fielded in the last fiscal year. In FY 2017, the agency fielded 288 Response Volunteers. This decrease corresponds to a decrease in the number of available service opportunities as the agency did not field any Global Health Service Partnership (GHSP) positions in FY 2017.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

Advance community-based development by strengthening the capacity of local individuals and communities, focusing on highly effective technical interventions and leveraging strategic partnerships

Rationale: The Peace Corps delivers development assistance to interested host countries through the work of its Volunteers. Volunteers utilize effective technical interventions to share their skills and experience with local individuals and communities. Through this collaborative approach, Volunteers help strengthen local capacity to address development challenges. In addition, the Peace Corps partners with other U.S. government, nongovernmental, and private sector development partners to leverage training, resources, knowledge, and skills to expand the reach of Peace Corps programs and to enhance Volunteers' impact.

Strategies

- Embrace new approaches (theories of change, logical frameworks) to develop more focused-in projects with fewer standard indicators
- Fully implement standardized technical training to ensure Volunteers have the skills required to meet community needs
- Provide monitoring and evaluation training to staff and Volunteers
- Train all posts on the use of the redesigned Volunteer Reporting Tool to support timely and high-quality feedback mechanisms
- Develop post standards on the frequency and quality of feedback provided to Volunteers on their work
- Provide guidance to posts detailing ways to improve the selection and cultivation of counterparts
- Expand counterpart training opportunities to provide counterparts and community members with tools to work effectively with Volunteers and to strengthen the capacity of host country individuals and communities
- Leverage agency strategic partners to provide Volunteers with additional technical training, tools, and resources

FY 2017 Status: This strategic objective demonstrated significant progress in documenting development impact at the project level although efforts to support Volunteers with individual feedback continued to be challenging. The agency's project-level planning efforts are collectively referred to as Programming, Training, and Evaluation (PT&E) Alignment. PT&E Alignment uses the lessons learned by the agency over recent years as it has streamlined its programs into six sectors and supported post staff in designing, implementing, and evaluating high-quality programming and training for Volunteers. In FY 2016, the PT&E alignment process was launched with the development of "anchor activities" for each sector—evidence-informed activities that focus Volunteers and their counterparts on highly effective interventions. In FY 2017, agency specialists developed resource packages for each sector (including guidance, tools, and templates) to assist posts with designing logical project frameworks; providing Volunteers with effective training; and ensuring high-quality,

timely feedback on Volunteer work in order to strengthen development impact.

From March to October 2017, the agency field-tested the new approach and sector resource packages in 20 projects at 15 participating posts, with representation across all three regions and each of the six sectors. Results from this field test will be used to strengthen materials and processes related to PT&E Alignment prior to the global rollout in April 2018.

Performance Goal 3.1: Advance Community-Based Development Outcomes <i>Increase the percentage of projects with documented gains in community-based development outcomes to 90 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target Met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	-	80%	85%
Result	-	-	-	76%	75%	76%	86%

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support; Office of Global Health and HIV/AIDS; Office of Strategic Partnerships; Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Data Source: Volunteer Reporting Tool

Calculation: The number of projects that meet two thresholds for a “documented gain” on at least one of the standard sector indicators used for this goal divided by the number of projects that include one or more of the 19 standard sector indicators. The two thresholds are (1) at least 25 percent of the Volunteers assigned to the selected projects must report some results and (2) the combined total of all Volunteer results must be at least 25 percent of the annualized targets for the project.

Overview: Community-based projects are undertaken by multiple generations of Volunteers serving for two years over a defined timeframe to advance the host country’s public benefit goal. Plans for each project are designed and executed in collaboration with local partners. The plans define the project background and the implementation strategy. Project frameworks are used by the Peace Corps to operationalize the project plans by describing the goals, objectives, activity statements, and indicators of a project.

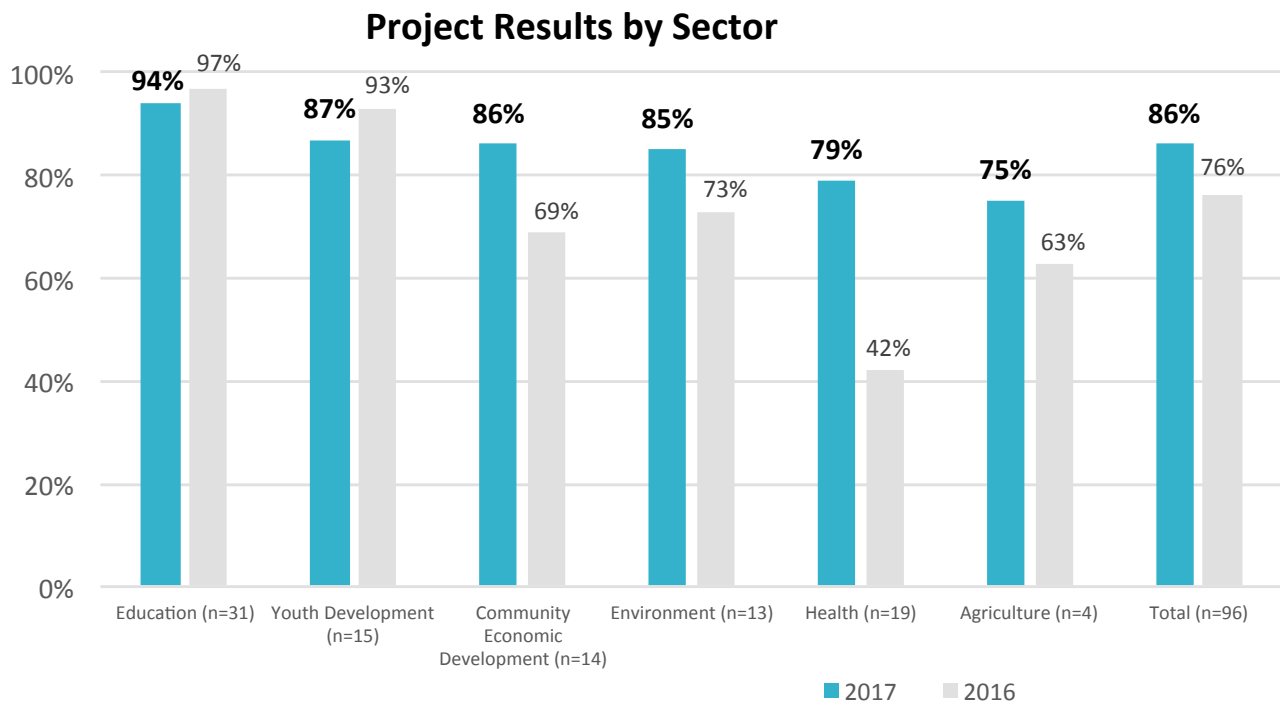
In order to measure this performance goal, the agency selected 19 standard sector indicators representing all six of the Peace Corps’ sectors. These indicators are based on industry standards and are outcome-oriented measures of changes in specific knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, or conditions that result from project activities. An increase in the percentage of projects with documented gains is used as evidence that Volunteers are contributing to community-based development.

In FY 2017, posts began developing new logical project framework models for their project planning and design. These models illustrate the logical linkages between planned activities; outputs; and short-term and long-term outcomes for Volunteers, their work partners, and project stakeholders. Volunteers in these projects benefit from a more comprehensive sense of their work and the role that they play in community-

based development as well as a streamlined number of indicators that the post monitors and evaluates to assess progress.

For FY 2017 reporting, the indicators used in this assessment continue to be the 19 that were selected in FY 2014, allowing the agency to assess progress over time. As the shift to new logical project frameworks continues, the measurement of this performance goal in the FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan will be updated to ensure consistency.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met in FY 2017 and is further analyzed by sector in the chart below. Ninety-six projects were included in this analysis. The results by sector were calculated by dividing the number of projects with one or more indicators passing both thresholds (as explained in the calculation above) by the total number of projects reported for that sector. Results across all six sectors ranged from 75 to 94 percent with four sectors (Environment, Community Economic Development, Health, and Agriculture) registering large increases in the proportion of projects that met these thresholds compared to results in FY 2016. The sector with the highest proportion of projects with documented gains was Education.



Performance Goal 3.2: Strengthen Local Capacity <i>Increase the percentage of counterparts who report increased capacity to 90 percent by FY 2018.</i>							FY 2017 data not available
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	-	84%	87%
Result	-	-	-	-	83%	86%	-

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support; Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Data Source: Global Counterpart Survey

Calculation: The number of counterparts who ranked one of the following descriptions as the top Volunteer impact on their work divided by the total number of randomly selected counterparts interviewed by post staff: *“helped to improve day-to-day work skills of others,” “suggested new ways to meet goals,” and “motivated or inspired others to do better work.”*

Overview: Volunteers strengthen local capacity by working closely with community partners through all phases of their project. This goal measures the increase in the capacity of local counterparts—Volunteers’ primary community partners—from the perspective of the counterparts themselves. To measure this goal, assigned counterparts were asked about the ways Volunteers impact their work and the work of their organizations. Many counterparts cited increased capacity within their communities, which may better position host country partners to achieve measurable and sustainable results.

FY 2017 Progress Update: Data is not available for this performance goal in FY 2017. The target was met in FY 2016. A random global sample of 400 counterparts was used to measure counterparts’ perception of the capacity building that resulted from working with Peace Corps Volunteers. For two consecutive years, the Global Counterpart Survey provided evidence that the Peace Corps was having a positive effect on both Strategic Goal One and Goal Two. Given that the results were consistently positive, an additional Global Counterpart Survey in FY 2017 would not have been an efficient use of resources. Thus, no FY 2017 data were collected. However, Regions do continue to collect, analyze, and disseminate information on best practices for capacity building among counterparts including inviting counterparts to attend Volunteer training where feasible, expanding the range of counterparts to include individuals who support community integration as well as project work, and seeking ways to explore analysis of capacity building at the level of the host organization.

Performance Goal 3.3: Improve Feedback to Volunteers <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report feeling satisfied¹ with the timeliness and quality of feedback provided on their work to 68 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	40%	59%	62%	65%
Result	39%	33%	38%	55% ²	54%	57%	52%

¹ Includes the top two positive response options on a five-point balanced scale.

² Due to the improvements to the Annual Volunteer Survey in FY 2014, including modifying the response scales and reducing the length of the questionnaire by half, results from FY 2011-13 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2014 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2014 onward is possible. Targets for FY 2015 and beyond were revised in view of the higher than projected FY 2014 results.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support; Office of the Chief Information Officer

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded to the following two survey questions with the top two positive responses (“satisfied” and “very satisfied”) divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded positively to the following two questions: *“How satisfied are you with the timeliness of feedback from Peace Corps staff about your work?”* and *“How satisfied are you with the quality of feedback from Peace Corps staff about your work?”* Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: Volunteers live and work in local communities that are often far away from Peace Corps staff. When Volunteers receive timely, high-quality feedback on their work from staff via email, text messages, phone calls, responses to the Volunteer Reporting Tool, or other mechanisms, they are able to benefit from the experience and advice of staff, share successes, and address challenges. This interaction contributes to the ability of Volunteers to achieve their project outcomes.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met, with 52 percent of the Volunteers reporting feeling satisfied with both the timeliness and quality of the feedback they were given. Notably though, 59 percent of the Volunteers who responded to the survey question were satisfied with the *timeliness* of the feedback they received, and 62 percent were satisfied with its *quality*. Many posts have prioritized feedback as a critical issue and have begun to explore opportunities for improvements through increased access to technology, more frequent “check-ins,” training for staff on providing constructive feedback, and informing Volunteers on the many ways in which feedback is given.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

Build a deeper mutual understanding of other cultures by developing meaningful connections between American and host country individuals and communities

Rationale: Volunteers advance cultural understanding between the United States and the communities where they serve by living and working side by side with local partners and by sharing their experiences with family, friends, and the American public both during their service and when they return to the United States. Through comprehensive intercultural learning opportunities, Volunteers acquire skills that allow them to not only understand other cultures but to navigate among cultures appropriately, responsibly, and effectively. In this way, Volunteers create a cultural window that enables American and host country individuals and communities to have meaningful conversations, develop strong relationships, and sustain their interactions.

Strategies

- Develop intercultural competency standards and anchor activities to assist in community integration for Volunteers
- Coach post staff to use language training as a method for developing Volunteers' intercultural communication skills
- Develop measures to assess Volunteers' intercultural competence at multiple points during their service
- Incorporate age-appropriate, intercultural education into Third Goal activities
- Encourage currently serving and returned Volunteers to leverage new technology, including social media, to share their experiences in order to foster communication between Americans and host country individuals and communities (e.g., Blog It Home and video contests)
- Strengthen the Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match program with online platforms and expand educator access to information based on their curriculum needs

FY 2017 Status: Strategies and key milestones that support achievement of this strategic objective have been executed according to plan. The efforts and planned milestones at the regional level to support this strategic objective are part of the standard operating processes at posts. The Global Counterpart Survey, which is designed to provide information on the impact of Volunteers from the perspectives of local community counterparts, will continue to be administered on a biannual basis. The next Global Counterpart Survey is planned for late FY 2018.

The Peace Corps' approach to cross-cultural understanding and its effectiveness in Strategic Goal Two (Sharing America with the World) is described in detail in two notable reports: Peace Corps Works: [A Cross-Sectional Analysis of 21 Host Country Impact Studies](#) and [the 2016 Global Counterpart Survey Summary Report](#).

Performance Goal 4.1: Greater Understanding of Americans <i>Maintain the percentage of counterparts who report a greater understanding of Americans after working with a Volunteer at or above 95 percent through FY 2018.</i>							FY 2017 data not available
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Targets	-	-	-	-	-	95%	95%
Results	-	-	-	94%	90% ¹	91%	-

¹ Results from FY 2015 onward are based on data collected from a globally representative random sample of counterparts.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support; Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Data Source: Global Counterpart Survey

Calculation: The number of counterparts who reported learning about the United States or Americans divided by the number of randomly selected counterparts interviewed by post staff who responded to the following question: “Have you learned anything new about the United States or Americans through your interactions with Peace Corps Volunteers?”

Overview: Counterparts work closely with Volunteers. Their increased understanding of the United States as a country and of Americans as a people as a result of sustained day-to-day interactions with Volunteers indicates a successful partnership for building cultural understanding between the United States and the countries where Volunteers serve.

FY 2017 Progress Update: Data is not available for this performance goal in FY 2017. Given that the three-year trend from FY 2014–2016 showed consistently high percentages of counterparts reporting greater understanding of Americans, an additional survey in FY 2017 would not have been an efficient use of resources. Thus, no FY 2017 survey was conducted. The FY 2016 survey included a supplemental question about the specific content that counterparts reported learning through working with Peace Corps Volunteers. Counterparts reported that they learned most about how Americans approach work, followed by American values, then American diversity. A full summary of the most recent Global Counterpart Survey results is available in the [2016 Global Counterpart Survey Summary Report](#).

Performance Goal 4.2: Increase Cross-Cultural Connections <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report that they facilitated direct interactions between Americans and host country individuals and communities to 70 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Targets	-	-	-	-	60%	63%	67%
Results	-	-	-	57%	57%	54%	49%

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Director, Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Partner Office: Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who reported facilitating direct interactions between Americans and host country individuals divided by the number of Volunteers who responded to the following question: *“Did you facilitate direct interactions between Americans and host country individuals in the last 12 months?”*

Overview: When Volunteers actively build strong connections between the United States and host countries, they are promoting mutual cultural understanding and contributing substantially to the Peace Corps’ foundational goals and mission. Direct interactions between Americans and host country individuals and communities include communication through visits, letters, social media, email, web conferences, and other mechanisms. Volunteers may facilitate these direct interactions independently or through Peace Corps-sponsored programs such as the Coverdell World Wise Schools Correspondence Match.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met in 2017. Volunteers reported slightly less facilitation of direct interactions between Americans and host country individuals relative to previous years. The agency continues to encourage the use of the Peace Corps’ digital materials and guidance to promote interactions between Americans and host country individuals. The upcoming integration and alignment of the agency’s programming, training, and evaluation efforts will also provide an opportunity to gain additional data on cross-cultural understanding through Volunteer reporting.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: CONTINUATION OF SERVICE

Support returned Volunteers' continuation of service by fostering a vibrant alumni network, providing tools and resources to ease their transition after service, and offering opportunities for them to share their experiences

Rationale: More than 230,000 Americans have served as Peace Corps Volunteers since 1961—a significant “domestic dividend” of skilled and dedicated individuals who continue serving the American public and the communities where they lived and worked abroad long after they return home. By providing tools and resources to Volunteers to ease their transition after service, such as career counseling and best practices for sharing their experiences and promoting service, the Peace Corps is positioning returned Volunteers to be active contributors to the agency’s Third Goal. The agency also encourages returned Volunteers to share their experiences with family, friends, and the public; build and maintain connections between Americans and host country individuals and communities; and recruit the next generation of Volunteers. Significant additional work to advance the Peace Corps mission is undertaken directly by the returned Peace Corps Volunteer community through returned Volunteer groups and the actions of individual returned Volunteers— independent of the agency. Notably, a significant number of returned Volunteers continue their service as international development or foreign policy specialists.

Strategies

- Leverage social media, email, and other online tools to effectively communicate and share knowledge with and among returned Volunteers
- Collect regular feedback from returned Volunteers through a survey to track their professional and academic progress and to inform the development of tools that will help them continue their service throughout their careers
- Expand returned Volunteer career services by centralizing tools and resources available to returned Volunteers through an expanded and easily accessible online job portal
- Develop a “Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services” curriculum to be included in pre-departure, pre-service, and close-of-service training for Volunteers
- Engage the American public through strong partnerships with businesses, schools, and government agencies to provide communication platforms for returned Volunteers, increase public understanding of other cultures, and generate a commitment to public service and community development

FY 2017 Status: The Peace Corps has consistently made progress in this strategic objective over the past four years. A gradual shift from live events and individual services to virtual communications with the returned Volunteer community has dramatically increased the quantity and diversity of interactions from FY 2015–2017. In FY 2018, the Peace Corps will focus on improving other related outcomes that support increased American’s awareness and knowledge of other cultures and global issues through Volunteers. Priority areas include streamlining returned Volunteer services to ensure operational efficiency, interoffice collaboration, a broader range of career services, and a centralized Returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) communication strategy. Additionally, the Peace Corps will focus on improving the tools and systems that

enable RPCVs to refine the competencies gained abroad. By reinvesting those skills back home, in both their workplaces and communities, RPCVs contribute to the competitive workforce and stronger American communities.

Performance Goal 5.1: Support Returned Volunteer Career Transition <i>Increase the number of returned Volunteers who access the Peace Corps' career services to 3,250 by FY 2018.</i>							Target Met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	2,500	2,750	3,000	3,250
Result	-	-	-	2,649	2,831	4,116	3,818

Goal Lead: Director, Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services

Partner Office: Office of Strategic Partnerships

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of returned Volunteers (defined as individuals who have completed a tour as a Peace Corps Volunteer) who registered for or participated in agency-initiated career services during the fiscal year.

Overview: The agency provides returned Volunteers with professional career services, seminars, and transition tools upon returning from service. These services include career conferences and fairs, employer panels, employer information sessions, career-focused webinars, résumé reviews, mock interviews, and career service consultations at headquarters and regional recruitment offices. Providing the career and personal development tools necessary for returned Volunteers' success in both professional and service opportunities eases their transition upon returning home and facilitate an environment where they can share their experiences and promote volunteerism and public service.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. The agency served 3,818 returned Volunteers and conducted 6,895 career service activities in FY 2017 (an average of 1.8 activities for every participating returned Volunteer). Although the increased demand for career services occasionally led to wait times for access to career development specialists, much progress was made in expanding career services for returned Volunteers overall. The RPCV Portal expanded to over 15,000 accounts, improving RPCV contact information for the agency, as well as streamlining the event registration process for RPCVs. Though a prolonged hiring freeze in the Federal Government impacted attendance at events, the performance goal was still achieved. Returned Volunteer Career Services engaged a wide range of employers in FY 2017, including Google, Apple, Microsoft, FINCA International, the U.S. Department of Justice, the U.S. Department of the Interior, MorningStar, Engility, Maher & Maher, Mastercard, Tetra Tech, the Small Business Administration, NASA, the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, FEMA, PYXERA Global, and RTI International. The Peace Corps has set strategies and goals in the FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan to expand its internet resources available to returned Volunteers on the RPCV Portal. Additionally, the agency plans to consolidate all career and transition services for returned Volunteers to the RPCV Portal in an effort to develop a streamlined and efficient mechanism for RPCVs to identify, request, and access services

Performance Goal 5.2: Increase Returned Volunteer Engagement <i>Increase the number of returned Volunteers who participate in agency-supported Third Goal activities to 16,000 by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	8,000	10,000	12,000	14,000
Result	-	-	-	9,754	10,866	15,426	9,323

Goal Lead: Director, Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services

Partner Offices: Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection; Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of returned Volunteers (defined as individuals who have completed a tour as a Peace Corps Volunteer) who registered for agency-supported Third Goal activities during the fiscal year.

Overview: The agency facilitates a wide array of activities to provide returned Volunteers with opportunities to share their experiences, including events and programs that are directly sponsored by the Peace Corps and others that are jointly sponsored by the Peace Corps and its strategic partners. These events include the Coverdell World Wise Schools Speakers Match, recruitment events, and Peace Corps Week. The agency also develops materials for returned Volunteers to independently conduct Third Goal activities.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. This performance goal is shared between the Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services (3GL/RVS) and the Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS). In FY 2017, 3GL/RVS reported 6,741 RPCVs participating in agency-supported Third Goal activities and VRS reported participation of 2,582 RPCVs. In FY 2017, the Peace Corps continued its client-based approach to engaging returned Volunteers by focusing opportunities for Third Goal activities using online platforms, such as Facebook and GovDelivery. Third Goal activities were also reported using the RPCV Portal, which streamlined communication, data collection and reporting. VRS transitioned to a new system for event management, using the Peace Corps customer relationship management platform. This transition had an impact on data collection and reporting during the last six months of the third and fourth quarters FY 2017, and may have contributed to lower-than-expected FY 2017 total results.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Actively recruit, support, and retain a diverse workforce and Volunteer corps and build an inclusive culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness

Rationale: Volunteers serve as cultural ambassadors in the local communities where they live and work. To promote a better understanding of America, it is critical that Volunteers represent the rich diversity of the U.S. population. In addition, since many staff are drawn from the pool of returned Volunteers, a diverse Volunteer corps contributes to building a more diverse workforce. To harness and support the unique perspectives of a diverse workforce and Volunteer corps, the agency fosters an inclusive culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, fairness, and meaningful ongoing dialogue.

Strategies

- Train directors, managers, and supervisors to address diversity and inclusion goals and understand Equal Employee Opportunity policies and principles
- Expand collaboration among key stakeholders to integrate diversity and inclusion concepts and Equal Employee Opportunity policies and principles into core business practices and agency culture
- Collaborate with returned Volunteer groups, strategic partners, and local and regional groups aligned with underrepresented populations to support the recruitment of diverse applicants
- Support and monitor the implementation of the same-sex couples initiative, which allows same-sex couples to serve together as Peace Corps Volunteers
- Support employee resource groups to help recruit, retain, and foster a diverse workforce through the use of data-informed, resourceful, and innovative methods
- Provide tools and training for staff to increase their awareness and empower them to prevent the types of discrimination and harassment issues that can occur within a diverse environment
- Review and revise the eligibility standards for Volunteer service, including medical status eligibility standards, to ensure that applicants are not evaluated on the basis of any factor that is not relevant to the ability to serve effectively
- Develop a plan for a streamlined mentoring program to connect recently returned Volunteers with current Peace Corps applicants to improve retention

FY 2017 Status: Strategies that support this strategic objective have been supported and monitored by the interoffice Diversity Governance Council, which was established in FY 2015. The mission of the Diversity Governance Council (DGC) is to support and promote diversity and inclusion (D&I) within the Peace Corps and to encourage a workplace environment that is open and accepting of differences among individuals. The founding of the DGC, which meets quarterly, has led to several key accomplishments for this strategic objective, including the addition of a D&I policy statement in the Peace Corps Manual and the development of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. An additional recommendation of the DGC resulted in the creation of a new position at Peace Corps in late 2016: Chief Diversity Officer. This position reports directly to the Chief of Staff and is responsible for providing strategic direction and coordination to create an inclusive organizational culture.

Successful efforts in increasing the number of Volunteers from underrepresented groups has heightened the need for the Peace Corps to examine and enhance support to a diverse Volunteer corps. Looking forward, the Peace Corps' FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan incorporates intercultural competence and diversity as a cross-cutting issue. For example, as part of a performance goal on optimizing Volunteer resilience, the agency has committed to developing an intercultural competence, diversity, and inclusion (ICD&I) framework. Agency leaders are committed to promoting diversity as plans are developed and implemented.

Performance Goal 6.1: Increase Applicant Diversity <i>Increase applications for Volunteer service from individuals of minority racial and ethnic groups to 35 percent by 2016 and maintain that level of performance through FY 2018</i>							Target met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	32%	34%	35%	35%
Result	26%	27%	30%	33%	35%	36%	36%

Goal Lead: Associate Director, Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

Partner Offices: Office of Communications; Office of Civil Rights and Diversity

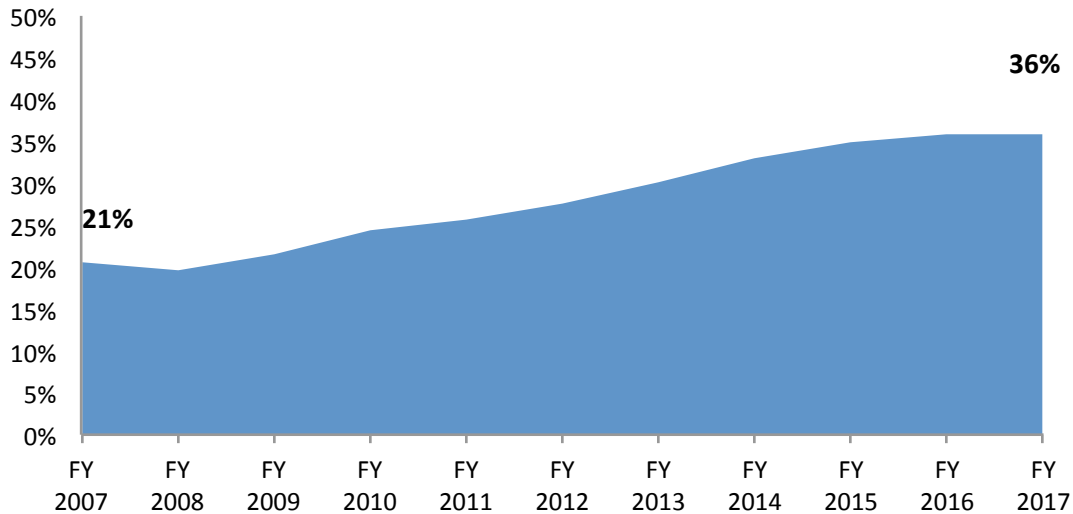
Data Source: Peace Corps database (DOVE/PCVDBMS)

Calculation: The number of completed applications from individuals belonging to minority racial and ethnic groups divided by the total number of completed applications for Peace Corps Volunteer service and Peace Corps Response positions. Applicants who did not provide their race or ethnicity are not included in this calculation.

Overview: Maintaining the number of applications from individuals of minority racial and ethnic groups—who are traditionally underrepresented populations—results in a Volunteer force that reflects the diversity of America. Given that Peace Corps projects generally require at least a Bachelor's degree level of education, the agency works to maintain a Volunteer population that reflects the diversity of the college-degreed U.S. population. Thus, targets for this goal are set based on that population.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The Peace Corps has met targets for this performance goal for the past four years. The sustained increase in applicant diversity is likely the result of the agency's increased outreach to over 181 Minority-serving Institutions in FY 2016 and FY 2017. Minority racial and ethnic groups include the following designations on the Peace Corps application: Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Asian, American Indian or Native Alaskan, and two or more races. Over the past ten years, the percentage of applications from minority applicants has steadily increased from 21 percent in FY 2007 to 36 percent in FY 2017. The two largest minority groups to apply in FY 2017 were Hispanic or Latino (14%) and Black or African American (11%).

Percentage of Applicants from Individuals of Minority Racial and Ethnic Groups



Performance Goal 6.2: Build an Open and Inclusive Organizational Culture

Increase the percentage of Peace Corps Volunteers, U.S. direct hire staff, and host country staff who agree¹ that the agency has an inclusive organizational culture to 90 percent and maintain that level of performance through FY 2018.

Target
not met

		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target ²		-	-	-	85%	88%	90%	90%
Result	U.S. direct hire staff	-	-	-	88%	83%	85%	82%
	Host country staff	-	-	-	89%	92%	90%	91%
	Volunteers	-	-	-	80%	76%	71%	68%

¹ Includes the top two positive responses on a five-point balanced scale.

² Targets for FY 2015 and beyond apply to each of the three population groups. All three groups must reach 90 percent for the target to be reached.

Lead: Chief Diversity Officer; Director, Office of Civil Rights and Diversity

Partner Offices: Office of Human Resource Management; Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Data Sources: Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) for U.S. direct hire domestic and overseas staff; Host Country Staff Survey (HCSS) for non-U.S. direct hire staff employed by the Peace Corps at overseas posts as personal services contractors or Foreign Service nationals; Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) for Volunteers

Calculation: For each data source (EVS, HCSS, and AVS), the number of individuals who responded to the following survey question with the top two positive responses (“agree” or “strongly agree”) divided by the total number of respondents: “To what extent do you disagree or agree that the organizational culture of the

Peace Corps (including staff and Volunteers) is inclusive of diverse people?" Respondents who selected the "not applicable/don't know" option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: This performance goal measures the openness and inclusion of the Peace Corps as perceived by post staff, headquarters staff, and Volunteers with respect to race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, family status, and gender identity or expression. This direct outcome measure can be used to evaluate how all groups perceive the agency's culture of inclusion and to what extent employees and Volunteers feel valued.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met among host country staff but not among U.S. direct hire staff (USDH) or Volunteers. As a result, the overall target was not met. Results have declined for both Volunteers and U.S. direct hire staff since the measure started being tracked in FY 2014. For the U.S. direct hire staff, the overall three-year decline (FY 2014 to FY 2017) was six percentage points, and for Volunteers the decline was 12 percentage points. Successful efforts in increasing the number of Volunteers from underrepresented groups has heightened the need for the agency to improve support provided to all Volunteers. Moving forward, execution of the strategies contained in the agency's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan are critical to addressing some of the needs and gaps noted among USDH staff and Volunteers.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: SITE DEVELOPMENT

Establish an environment conducive to Volunteer success through an integrated approach to developing effective projects, preparing work sites, and successfully collaborating with local partners

Rationale: Before Volunteers arrive in their country of service, the Peace Corps works to ensure that each Volunteer will have meaningful work opportunities that meet the development needs of the local community and that there are local partners interested in working alongside the Volunteer. The agency also verifies that each work site can support the Volunteer's safety, security, and medical and mental health needs. This foundation allows each Volunteer to focus on building relationships and strengthening local capacity upon arrival in the community and throughout service.

Strategies

- Identify, prepare, and train host families, host agencies, and counterparts to live and work effectively with Volunteers, including setting clear expectations regarding the role of the Volunteer
- Establish well-defined and meaningful work opportunities for Volunteers by selecting sites with well-documented needs
- Ensure that project frameworks and sites are aligned with Volunteers' skills, experience, and the needs of local communities
- Explore key research questions and best practices on the standards and criteria conducive to effective site identification and development using Country Portfolio Review findings and other data sources
- Develop a mobile technology solution to track and document the effective selection, documentation, and preparation of sites
- Improve the technology platform for managing and mobilizing data on the development, monitoring, and history of Volunteer sites that is mobile, facilitates document sharing, and takes a modularized approach to integration
- Support posts in their implementation of regional site development and site monitoring standards and procedures

FY 2017 Status: Progress has been made on this strategic objective in FY 2017 with all three regions having successfully implemented significant improvements to their regional guidance on site development procedures. Additionally, the Peace Corps is aligning programming and site development by matching project frameworks and sites more strategically with Volunteers' skills, experience, and the needs of local communities.

Moving forward, the FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan has set a goal to define and implement a comprehensive site management system by the end of FY 2021. The Peace Corps will establish a comprehensive site management system based on evidence-informed guidance and tools. The system will foster an enabling environment for Volunteers, communities, and partners to address mutually-defined development priorities. The resulting agencywide site development strategies will be implemented gradually and deliberately, using a phased approach. The limitations of post staff resources and existing country-specific site development procedures will be considered throughout the process.

Performance Goal 7.1: Improve Site Development <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report feeling satisfied¹ with site selection and preparation to 68 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	44%	62%	64%	66%
Result	42%	41%	42%	59% ²	59%	62%	62%

¹Includes the top two response options on a five-point balanced scale.

²Due to the improvements to the Annual Volunteer Survey in FY 2014, including modifying the response scales and reducing the length of the questionnaire by half, results from FY 2011-13 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2014 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2014 onward is possible. Targets for FY 2015 and beyond were revised in view of the higher than projected FY 2014 results.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Health Services; Office of Safety and Security

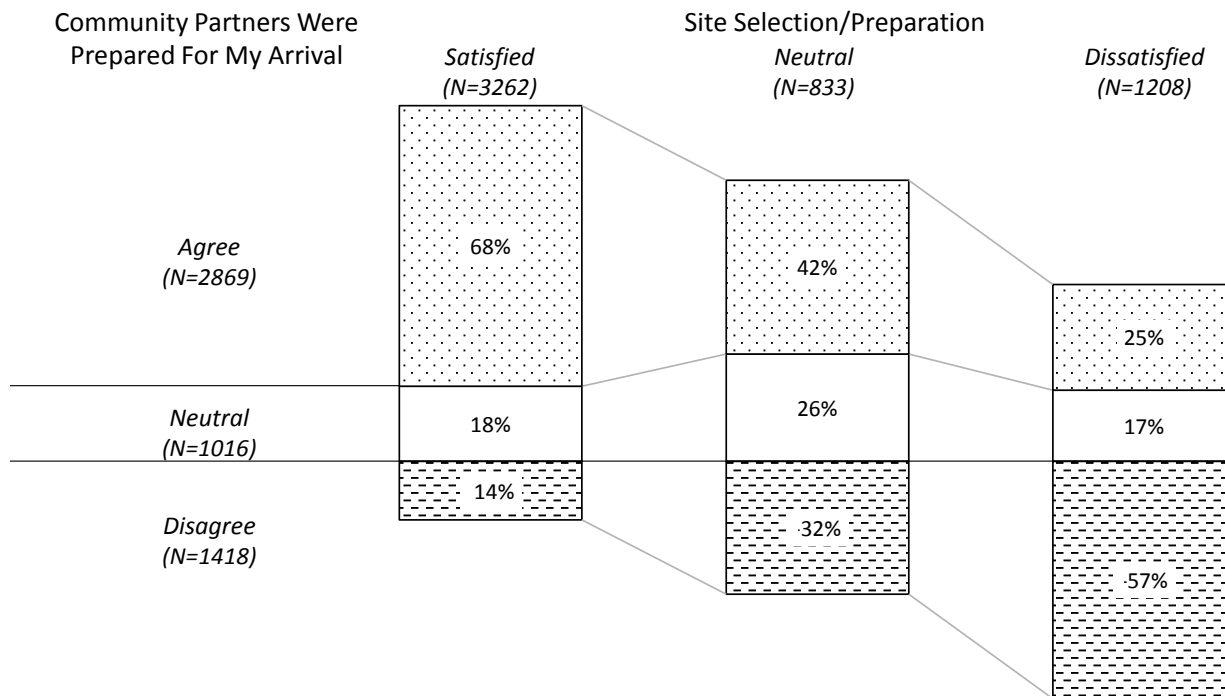
Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded to the following survey question with the top two positive responses (“satisfied” and “very satisfied”) divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded to the question: “How satisfied are you with (Site selection/preparation) provided by in-country Peace Corps staff?” Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: The quality of a Volunteer’s site, housing, and work assignment is a critical feature of a safe, productive Volunteer experience. Each post must ensure that Volunteer sites, housing, and work assignments are appropriate and meet all Peace Corps and post-established criteria. Site development criteria address living arrangements, potential for integration, communication infrastructure, transportation, access to essential health care, and other support services, security climate, vulnerability to natural disasters, the planned work role for the Volunteer, and cooperation of host authorities.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met, but progress has been made over the past four years. Through an analysis of survey data, the agency found that Volunteer satisfaction with the site selection and preparation conducted by Peace Corps post staff was significantly correlated to the perceived “level of preparedness” among host community members. Among the 3,182 Volunteers who were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with site development and preparation, 69 percent felt community members were prepared for their arrival. Comparatively, among the 1,132 Volunteers who were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with site development and preparation, only 27 percent felt community partners were prepared for their arrival.

VOLUNTEER SATISFACTION WITH SITE SELECTION/PREPARATION AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Results are based on the following survey question:

"How satisfied are you with the site selection/preparation support provided by in-country Peace Corps staff?"

Performance Goal 7.2: Improve Counterpart Selection and Preparation							Target not met
<i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report feeling satisfied¹ with the community integration and project work support by their assigned counterpart to 61 percent by FY 2018.</i>							
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	34%	55%	57%	59%
Result	31%	32%	32%	53% ²	51%	53%	52%

¹ Includes the top two response options on a five-point balanced scale.

² Due to the improvements to the Annual Volunteer Survey in FY 2014, including modifying the response scales and reducing the length of the questionnaire by half, results from FY 2011-13 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2014 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2014 onward is possible. Targets for FY 2015 and beyond were revised in view of the higher than projected FY 2014 results.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Health Services; Office of Safety and Security

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

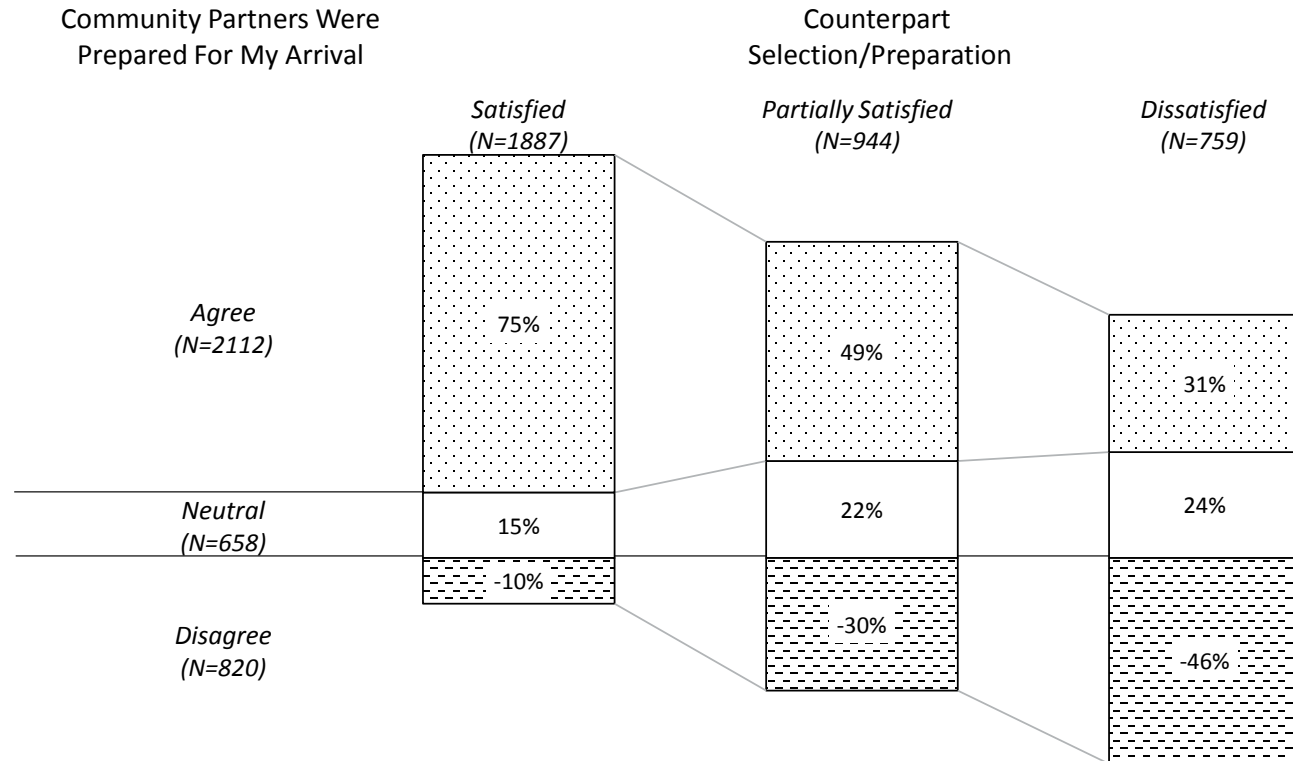
Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded to the following two questions on the survey with

the top two positive responses (“satisfied” and “very satisfied”) divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded to the two questions: “How satisfied are you with the following aspects of working with your Peace Corps-assigned counterpart? a. Accomplishing your project work; b. Integrating into your community.” Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: While Volunteers work with a variety of local partners throughout their service, the Peace Corps selects and assigns local counterparts to Volunteers when they first arrive at their sites to help them to integrate into their communities and to serve as resources for their project work. The percentage of Volunteers who report being satisfied with the support from their assigned counterparts indicates the extent to which they are satisfied with the way posts are selecting and preparing local partners as a part of the site identification and preparation process.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. The perceived “level of preparedness” among host community members was highly correlated with the results on this performance goal. Three out of every four Volunteers (76%) who were satisfied with their assigned counterpart also agreed that community partners were prepared for their arrival. In contrast, of the 645 Volunteers who were dissatisfied with their counterpart, only 31 percent agreed that community partners were prepared for their arrival.

VOLUNTEER SATISFACTION WITH COUNTERPART SELECTION/PREPARATION AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



Results are based on the following survey questions: “How satisfied are you with the following aspects of working with your Peace Corps-assigned counterpart: accomplishing your project work and integrating into your community?” The “partially satisfied” category for site selection/preparation is used for respondents who were “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with one—but not both—of these aspects

Agency analysis conducted in FY 2017 reinforces the importance of the site identification process and the counterpart relationship in driving Volunteer effectiveness. In addition to identifying counterparts to support the Volunteers' entry into their host communities, the agency can also improve effective skills-training to better enable Volunteers to build productive relationships with their counterparts and other work partners.

Volunteers who viewed their counterpart and community partner training as effective were 25 percent more likely to be successful in building the capacity of their host organizations. The Peace Corps will explore additional ways to include community member preparedness as a key component of site development and preparation in the future.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8: TRAIN UP

Develop a highly effective Volunteer corps through a continuum of learning throughout service

Rationale: High-quality training is central to the success of Volunteers. The Peace Corps invests in technical training to ensure that Volunteers have the necessary skills to draw upon, contribute to, and support local capacity-building efforts. Training also focuses on building Volunteers' language skills and intercultural competence to advance technical work and to facilitate cultural integration and mutual understanding. Providing a continuum of learning throughout service ensures that Volunteers receive the tools and support they need.

Strategies

- Develop, refine, and evaluate training materials in accordance with the Programming, Training, and Evaluation (PT&E) Alignment strategy
- Share programming, training, and evaluation resources through an online knowledge-sharing platform
- Develop formal processes to document the training received, expertise and proficiency levels achieved, and certifications earned by Volunteers
- Fully implement mandatory close-of-service language testing and encourage posts to administer language exams to Volunteers at mid-service
- Improve training and professional development for staff overseas with the development and implementation of a staff learning continuum
- Develop and implement a Volunteer learning continuum—from pre-departure to close of service—that emphasizes self-directed learning, utilizes coaching and mentoring, fosters communities of practice, and includes individual learning plans for Volunteers

FY 2017 Status: While results for both performance goals were below their targets, substantial progress was made on this strategic objective. For example, the training component of the staff learning continuum for overseas programming and training staff was successfully completed. The agency will use this staff learning continuum to strategically support staff development to more effectively train Volunteers throughout their service.

The agency continued to see improvement in reporting on close-of-service language testing in FY 2017, and 29 posts saw greater than 90 percent of their Volunteers reach the “advanced” level at close-of-service testing. The technical reporting of the Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) data is improving, but some challenges still exist. A “Language Learning throughout Service” strategy is being finalized and implementation across posts is starting. Improving language training remains a performance goal in the FY 2018–2022 strategic plan. Staff and Volunteer training also will remain as priorities in the next strategic plan as the next stage of the agency’s focus on training.

Performance Goal 8.1: Improve Language Learning <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers tested at close of service who achieve the “advanced” level or above on the language proficiency interview to 70 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	50%	55%	60%	65%
Result	-	-	-	63%	63%	58%	56%

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region); Director, Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Partner Office: Office of the Chief Information Officer

Data Source: Peace Corps database (VIDA)

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who achieved an “advanced” or “superior” level score on their language proficiency interview at close of service divided by the number of Volunteers who were tested at close of service.

Overview: Developing local language skills is critical for Volunteers’ ability to integrate into their communities, work effectively, and maintain their safety and security. An increase in the percentage of Volunteers who achieve a high level of language proficiency indicates that the agency is providing effective language training and support throughout the Volunteers’ service.

Volunteers’ language ability is measured through the language proficiency interview, administered by agency-certified language testers. The language interview includes four proficiency levels based on the American Council for Teaching Foreign Languages proficiency guidelines: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced, and Superior. Volunteers are taught and tested in the primary language spoken at their site. Measuring language ability at close of service allows posts to determine the efficacy of their language-learning program and what types of activities Volunteers can reasonably be expected to perform in the local language(s). At the Advanced level, Volunteers should be able to perform the basic functions required in most projects such as training, co-planning, or facilitating technical activities.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. Although FY 2017 results for this performance goal were below the established target, further progress was made on increasing the percentage of Volunteers who were tested at their close of service. In FY 2015, 54 percent of Volunteers were tested at their close of service compared to 73 percent of Volunteers in FY 2016 and 77 percent in FY 2017. More than 90 percent of Volunteers received close-of-service language testing at 29 posts in FY 2017. At eight posts, more than 90 percent of the Volunteers who received the close-of-service language test achieved the “advanced” level. Additionally, over time, the proportion of Volunteers who received the close-of-service language test for the most difficult languages at posts has increased steadily from 51 percent of the Volunteers tested in 2015 to 59 percent of those tested in 2017. Language difficulty is classified from Level 1 to Level 4. Languages classified as Level 3 or Level 4 in terms of difficulty are more challenging and time-consuming than developing that level of proficiency in languages classified at the Level 1 or 2 of difficulty. The acquisition of local language skills is paramount for Volunteer effectiveness and remains a top priority in the FY 2018-2022

Strategic Plan. The Peace Corps will continue to analyze best practices and try to replicate what works best across the agency to increase Volunteer local language skills.

Performance Goal 8.2: Increase Effectiveness of Technical Training <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report that their technical training was effective¹ in preparing them to work at their site to 67 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Slightly below target
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	52%	64%	65%	66%
Result	<i>44%</i>	<i>44%</i>	<i>50%</i>	63% ²	63%	64%	63%

¹Includes the top two positive response options on a five-point balanced scale.

²Due to the improvements to the AVS in FY 2014, including modifying the response scales and reducing the length of the questionnaire by half, results from FY 2011 to FY 2013 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2014 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2014 onward is possible.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region); Director, Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who responded to the following survey question with the top two positive responses (“effective” or “very effective”) divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded to the question: “Please evaluate the effectiveness of your Peace Corps training in preparing you to perform technical aspects of your work.” Respondents who selected the “not applicable/don’t know” option are not included in this calculation.

Overview: Effective technical training covers topics related to the work that Volunteers will do at their Volunteer site. It includes the instruction Volunteers receive during pre-service training, in-service training, and other post-sponsored events that cover work activities related to their assigned project framework. This training is a key component of the preparation Volunteers receive that enables them to engage with their counterparts and communities as true partners in development, strengthening the capacity of local individuals so that together they can have a positive impact on their organizations and communities. This training is critical for achieving the Peace Corps’ Goal One: Building Local Capacity.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The results were slightly below target. Less than half of the respondents (46%) to the 2017 Annual Volunteer Survey felt prepared or very prepared to meet the challenges of service when they first arrived in their host countries. After Peace Corps training and field experience, however, the great majority (85%) felt prepared or very prepared. In order to gather more data concerning the strengths and areas for improvement of technical training, additional questions were added to the Annual Volunteer Survey in 2017. These questions revealed that 81 percent of respondents agreed that their technical trainers were knowledgeable, and 76 percent agreed they effectively communicated material. While 69 percent agreed that technical training content was relevant to their work site, just over half (51 percent) agreed it was covered in sufficient depth. The Peace Corps has set strategies and goals in the FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan to further develop competency-based Volunteer learning with an emphasis on technical, intercultural

competence, diversity, and inclusion (ICD&I), and language training for each phase of the Volunteer lifecycle. With this data the Peace Corps will now be able to better focus its technical training efforts.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 9: HIGH-PERFORMING LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Cultivate a high-performing learning organization by investing in professional development for staff, improving staff retention, and strengthening institutional memory

Rationale: The unique law limiting the majority of Americans working as Peace Corps staff to five-year appointments (“known as the “five-year-rule”) results in an influx of fresh ideas and innovation, but it also produces significant human capital and knowledge management challenges. Host country staff often serve longer than American staff and have very different professional development needs. To successfully advance the Peace Corps mission, the agency must be a high-performing learning organization that invests in staff development, retains employees to the fullest extent of the law, and draws from a deep institutional memory to learn from its past and circulate best practices among Volunteers and staff.

Strategies

- Develop a competency and skills assessment program for Peace Corps domestic and overseas staff
- Utilize an automated system to track training events in order to develop a more cost-effective training program
- Identify the core positions that suffer from frequent staff turnover and consider developing a narrowly focused request to seek legislative modification to the five-year rule
- Review and standardize the onboarding process for all staff and link it to learning and professional development opportunities
- Implement a mentoring and coaching program for all agency staff, including a component designed for host country staff that focuses on effective strategies for advancing their careers and for working with Volunteers
- Improve the off-boarding process by collaborating with federal government employers to place staff with noncompetitive eligibility
- Improve the retention of staff through a number of methods, including retention agreements for staff in specialized positions, cross-training, individual development plans, earlier consideration of extension requests, modification to the agency policy to enable managers to provide employees with earlier notification of extensions to their term appointments, and increased utilization of career ladders
- Collect and analyze data on the causes of early employee resignations and develop informed solutions to address the issue
- Expand the agencywide use of technological platforms and increase online training to expand learning opportunities for domestic and overseas staff

FY 2017 Status: Significant progress has been made on some areas in this strategic objective. The Peace Corps has provided information on the impact of the five-year rule to Congress. This rule limits most

employee's tenure to five years. Legislation has been introduced and if enacted would increase the flexibility of this rule. The Peace Corps' Office of Staff Learning and Development (OSLD) has implemented a number of programs improving performance management training, professional development, onboarding and off-boarding, and Overseas Staff Training.

The OSLD worked closely with the Office of Strategic Information, Research and Planning to develop and add training needs assessments questions to the Host Country Staff Survey. Over time, these questions will help the Peace Corps gain greater insights into staff learning and development needs.

In response to the Office of the Inspector General's *2014 Program Evaluation Report: Training Peace Corps' Overseas Staff*, OSLD procured a new Learning Management System (LMS) to expand mandatory and professional development online learning and improve the tracking of employee training. Substantial work in FY 2017 has been completed, with the planned launch of the new system scheduled for April 2018.

Performance Goal 9.1: Improve Staff Training								Target not met
Increase the percentage of staff who report feeling satisfied ¹ with the training they received to do their job to 62 percent by FY 2018.								
		FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target ²		-	-	-	54%	56%	58%	60%
Result	U.S. direct hire staff	50%	50%	57%	55%	52%	53%	56%
	Host country staff	-	-	-	62%	66%	69%	72%

¹ Includes the top two positive response options on a balanced five-point scale.

² Targets for FY 2015 and beyond apply to both population groups. In FY 2016, for example, both USDH staff and host country staff must reach 58 percent for the target to be reached.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Management; Office of Staff Learning and Development

Partner Offices: Office of Human Resource Management; Associate Director, Office of Global Operations/ Director, Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

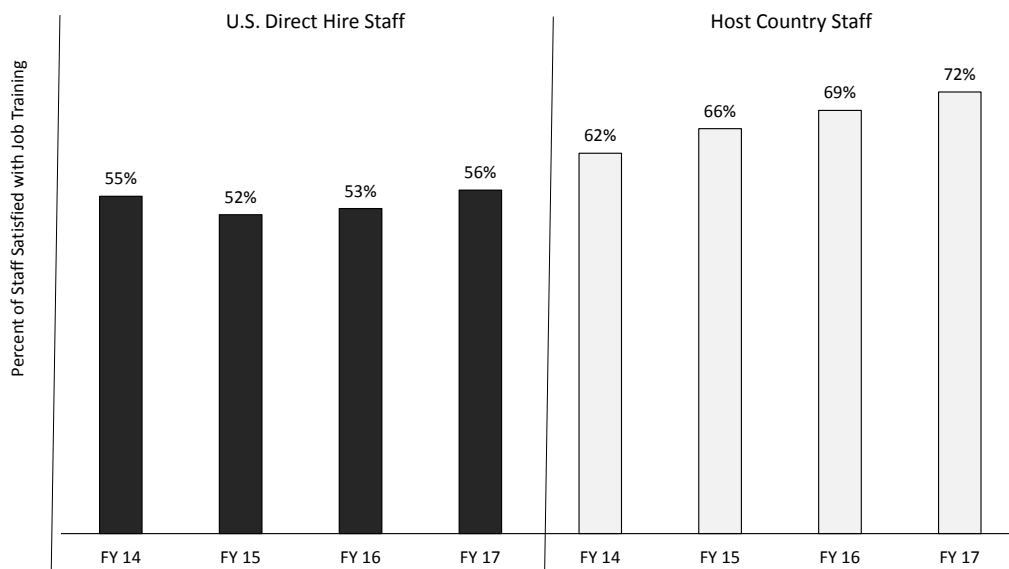
Data Source: Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) for U.S. direct hire domestic and overseas staff; Host Country Staff Survey (HCSS) for non-U.S. direct hire staff employed by the Peace Corps at overseas posts as personal service contractors or Foreign Service Nationals

Calculation: For each population and data source (EVS and HCSS), the number of respondents to the following survey questions with the top two positive responses ("satisfied" and "very satisfied") divided by the total number of respondents for that survey question: *"How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?"*

Overview: An increase in staff satisfaction with their training indicates that staff are being provided the tools and training to do their jobs effectively and to develop professionally.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. Satisfaction with job training increased by three percentage points for both U.S. direct hires and host country staff. While the host country staff satisfaction rate greatly exceeded the target, the satisfaction rate for U.S. direct hires indicates that more work is needed to reach the target. Although the overall target was not met in FY 2017, the Peace Corps has made significant improvements in staff development. Participation in training services has tripled since the Office of Staff Learning and Development was created in 2015. The Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support implemented post training for project development and management as part of the Programming, Training, and Evaluation (PT&E) initiative. The agency will conduct further analysis to better identify the best practices that are driving the increasing training satisfaction scores among host country staff.

Percent of Staff Satisfied with Job Training


Performance Goal 9.2: Increase Staff Tenure

Increase the average tenure of U.S. direct hire staff to 4 years by FY 2016 and maintain that level of performance through FY 2018.

**Target
not met**

	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	-	4 years	4 years
Result	-	3.5 years	4.5 years	4.0 years	4.2 years	3.3 years	3.2 years

Goal Lead: Director, Office of Human Resource Management

Partner Office: Office of Congressional Relations

Data Source: National Finance Center

Calculation: The median number of months of tenure (e.g., number of months from entry-on-duty to separation, departure, or retirement) averaged across all U.S. direct hire staff who left the agency in a given fiscal year.

Overview: Staffing at the Peace Corps is governed by the Peace Corps Act, which limits the appointments of most U.S. direct hire staff working in domestic and overseas offices to five years. The Peace Corps Act allows the Director to extend appointments for one additional year at her or his discretion and to offer an additional “tour” of 30 months for up to 15 percent of the U.S. direct hire staff. These additional appointments are generally offered to employees who have demonstrated an exceptional record of performance in order to achieve one of the following purposes: to promote continuity of functions in administering the Peace Corps; to permit individuals working at overseas posts to work in the United States; to permit individuals working in the United States to work at overseas posts; and to permit individuals working in a recruitment, selection, or a training role to serve in another capacity. Within the overall five-year limit, the agency works to retain high-performing employees for as long as possible in order to minimize staffing gaps.

The staff who are covered by this performance goal are U.S. direct hire staff working in domestic and overseas offices. Consultants and other employees who are exempt from the five-year rule are not included in the measurement. Experts are not included in the measurement for any time period that follows their transition out of a staff role into an expert appointment.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. The FY 2017 result of a median of 3.2 years fell below the established target. The budget uncertainty during FY 2017 and the public announcement of plans to downsize the federal government workforce may have resulted in some staff having sought other opportunities earlier in their tenure as compared to prior years. While the five-year rule has a clear impact on staff tenure, the Peace Corps seeks to address these needs through employee engagement, training, and professional development opportunities. This is a core strategy of the agency’s Employee Development Lifecycle as established by the Office of Staff Learning and Development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 10: GLOBAL CONNECTIVITY

Enable seamless communication and collaboration for all Volunteers and staff by modernizing and integrating information technology systems and leveraging the innovation of Volunteers and staff in the field

Rationale: Information technology (IT) is changing rapidly. Often, Volunteers in the field and their local partners are using a broader range of technologies than the Peace Corps can support. At the same time, the agency maintains several legacy applications to manage information at headquarters and overseas posts that no longer meet the evolving needs of the Peace Corps. The confluence of these factors produces inefficiencies in how Volunteers and staff communicate and collaborate, inhibiting the agency's ability to advance its mission. A globally connected agency, supported by a flexible and secure network of IT systems and invigorated by field-based problem solving, will leverage modern technology to break down barriers to communication and collaboration. Achieving this objective while maintaining operational stability, security, and reliability in a complex global operational environment while also ensuring critical regulatory and policy mandates are met is a major IT challenge for the Peace Corps.

Strategies

- Build modern tracking, analysis, and reporting applications that enable easy database maintenance, data integration, and data access
- Modernize the Peace Corps Intranet to improve information sharing and collaboration among staff
- Create a consolidated Volunteer, returned Volunteer, and staff contact database to improve data quality and access to contact information
- Establish a clearly defined, transparent risk assessment strategy related to new IT projects and archive decisions for reference
- Provide guidance to staff on new methods of communication commonly used by Volunteers to facilitate communication and collaboration
- Design flexible systems, platforms, and processes to be compatible with evolving technology (e.g., social and collaborative networks, mobile devices, a unified data model, cloud-based technology)
- Support the development of Volunteer-driven solutions, to improve how the agency uses technology to deliver on its mission
- Encourage the use of PCLive as the Peace Corps' knowledge-sharing platform for Volunteers and staff to facilitate collaboration and communication through an interactive resource library and communities of practice.
- Develop a data management strategy that facilitates the use of open and authenticated data to inform real-time and long-term decision making
- Develop a strategy to move the existing data center to a co-located facility and to the cloud.

FY 2017 Status: The Peace Corps continued to make progress toward achieving this strategic objective during the past year. The agency met its target on its legacy systems retirement goal. Although the Peace Corps has increased the content and use of digital materials, it fell short of its target. The Technology Advisory Board (TAB) established in FY 2016 evaluated and advised on many recommendations for the decommissioning of applications that were no longer needed or including their functionality into other existing systems. These recommendations, along with other efforts, have resulted in the consolidation, re-platform, and decommissioning of legacy and redundant systems. Going forward, the Peace Corps will continue to strive to attract quality IT professionals to modernize and protect its IT infrastructure and information.

Performance Goal 10.1: Develop an Integrated Technology Platform							Target met
<i>Retire all legacy applications and consolidate functions into an integrated platform by FY 2018.</i>							
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	10%	30%	50%	70%
Result	-	-	-	15%	45%	49%	79%

Goal Lead: Chief Information Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of legacy applications retired divided by the total number of legacy applications.

Overview: Through the OCIO's IT modernization initiatives, legacy applications—defined as systems based on outdated technology that is no longer fully supported by the Peace Corps—are being retired and their functions consolidated into a common, integrated platform. The concept does not include systems that are mandated by Congress or systems that are critical to agency needs or operations. A full list of legacy applications that are scheduled to be retired is managed by the Office of the Chief Information Officer. Legacy applications are considered to have been “retired” when they have been de-activated, and any core functions have been consolidated into a central, integrated platform (e.g., Dynamics Customer Relationship Management system or SharePoint). These initiatives improve data quality and facilitate increased access to data to meet the evolving information needs of the agency.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was met. In FY 2014, the agency completed an audit of its applications. Through the audit, the agency identified 142 legacy applications, one-third of which were identified as low-impact applications that could be retired without replacement. By the close of FY 2017, 113 legacy applications (79 percent of the original 142) had been retired. The agency continues to make significant progress to develop an integrated technology platform. Development work on approved Technology Advisory Board (TAB) projects continues to ensure the future scalability, sustainability, and integration of the developing Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and SharePoint platforms. Retaining and hiring quality IT professionals will be key to increasing momentum during FY 2018.

Performance Goal 10.2: Facilitate Knowledge Sharing <i>Increase the percentage of Volunteers who report that they use the digital materials provided by the Peace Corps in their work to 85 percent by FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	80%	82%	84%
Result	-	-	-	77%	78%	77%	78%

Goal Lead: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations/Director, Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support

Partner Offices: Office of the Chief Information Officer; Office of Digital Integration; Office of Innovation

Data Source: Annual Volunteer Survey

Calculation: The number of Volunteers who report using digital materials divided by the total number of Volunteers who responded to the question.

Overview: With the spread of internet and mobile technology to many of the communities where Volunteers serve, Volunteers are able to collaborate with peers across projects, communities, countries, and the world. Access to digital resources through knowledge-sharing platforms facilitates this collaboration by enabling both Volunteers and staff to store and search for specific project information. As a result, Volunteers and staff can build upon already-successful projects and strategies. PCLive is a knowledge and information exchange platform for Volunteers and staff.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. However, the Peace Corps continues to achieve progress towards making materials digitally available to Volunteers. PCLive continues to grow in use both domestically and abroad. By the end of the fiscal year, there were over 3,600 registered users, nearly 30 active online communities, and over 300 new resources submitted to the resource library. Volunteers are now being auto-enrolled on PCLive, which means that all new Invitees have access to PCLive prior to departing from the United States to start their service. PCLive continues to support knowledge and information sharing amongst and between staff and Volunteers via online communities, an expansive resource library, post collections, blogs, and micro-learning (short videos and recorded presentations). The Peace Corps made substantial progress this year in providing e-learning content to Volunteers on the Learning Management System (LMS). The number of active e-learning courses available increased from 19 to 67, and the number of total course visits more than doubled, from 235,005 to 501,799. The LMS also supports participant knowledge sharing through discussion forums, reinforcing best practices across posts and program sectors. In addition to the agency's global platforms, information resource centers at some posts are transitioning from traditional physical library collections to digital resource hubs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 11: MEASUREMENT FOR RESULTS

Advance the agency's ability to measure progress, improve performance, and demonstrate impact through integrated monitoring, reporting, and evaluation practices

Rationale: The Peace Corps has significantly expanded its emphasis on evidence-based decision making and has developed capacity in monitoring, evaluation, evidence-gathering, and analysis, both at posts and at headquarters. Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation practices are conducted at all levels of the agency. A coherent, integrated approach that combines training, regular reviews of ongoing programs, the collection of baseline data, and well-documented pilot tests will provide staff with rigorous, high-quality data. That data can then be used to inform decision making at both the program and agency level, identify promising practices, foster transparency, and advance performance improvement.

Strategies

- Identify evaluation priorities each fiscal year related to management and performance challenges, as well as programming opportunities, such as Feed-the-Future.
- Provide guidance to posts and headquarters offices on monitoring, reporting, and evaluation practices, including piloting and experimentation parameters
- Provide monitoring, reporting, and evaluation training to Volunteers, overseas staff, and counterparts
- Develop the analytical skills of staff, counterparts, and Volunteers by providing project support and targeted training on analytical and/or survey-based competencies
- Collect or construct baseline data prior to new country entries and the initiation of new projects to assess Volunteer impact
- Expand access to timely and high-quality data through the development of new data sources, the improvement of existing data sources, and the simplification of reports and products
- Develop a communication strategy that identifies the products, formats, and dissemination plan for data collected and analyzed by the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning
- Increase transparency, strengthening the agency's focus on data and analytic quality
- Implement methods other than surveys for gathering and analyzing business intelligence
- Further implement the Monitoring and Evaluation Task Force recommendations by making progress on Programming, Training, and Evaluation (PT&E) alignment efforts.

FY 2017 Status: Over the past four years, the agency has expanded its evidence base with new sources of data such as the Host Country Staff Survey, Global Counterpart Survey, and expanded Country Portfolio Review. In FY 2017, the agency pivoted from continuing to expand the number of data sources to focus on further advancing its logical planning and analytic capabilities. The agency has developed evidence-based

sector logic models, and each region has tested the use of project-level logic models. All projects established from 2017 and beyond are now required to have logic models, and existing Peace Corps projects are expected to incorporate logic models by 2021. This updated approach to programming will help the Peace Corps focus on critical activities and indicators relevant to their respective sectors, thereby enhancing the impact of its projects. As the agency's inventory of existing data sources expanded between 2014 and 2016, so did the agency's use of data to inform decision-making and high-level planning at headquarters. Among the aforementioned improvements to existing data sources, several are particularly notable and proved useful in informing strategy and planning. For example, the linkage of Volunteer administrative data to Volunteer survey data in 2017 was informative to Volunteer support and placement functions. Business intelligence was also improved by including new metrics in the Country Portfolio Review, such as host country staff feedback and measures of post operational complexity. More work remains to be done in encouraging the use of data, and more skills are needed in synthesizing diverse data sources.

Performance Goal 11.1: Conduct Baselines <i>Increase the percentage of new country entries¹ and new Volunteer project frameworks where baseline data has been collected or compiled to 100 percent by FY 2016 and maintain that level of performance through FY 2018.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	50%	75%	100%	100%
Results	-	-	-	0%	100%	100%	25%

¹ The term "new country entries" includes both countries that the Peace Corps is entering for the first time as well as countries to which it is returning after a sustained absence.

Goal Leads: Associate Director, Office of Global Operations; Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Partner Offices: Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning; Office of Overseas Programming and Training Support; Office of Global Health and HIV/AIDS

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of new country entries and new project frameworks for which baseline data was collected divided by the total number of new country entries and new project frameworks during the fiscal year. Calculations are based on the fiscal year in which Volunteers are scheduled to begin entering the communities where they will be serving. A baseline data collection effort in progress was considered to meet this goal as long as the study design and primary data collection are complete prior to the start of the interventions.

Overview: Conducting baseline surveys or compiling baseline data from partner organizations, when combined with post-based intervention measurements, will allow the agency to demonstrate with confidence the impact of Volunteers on specific projects. Baseline data is collected before project activities begin in order to establish a point of reference that will be compared to data collected later to determine the extent to which knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, systems, and conditions change over the life of the project. The two types of situations in which baseline data are collected include new country entries and new Volunteer project frameworks. For the purpose of this performance goal, a "new Volunteer project

framework” is defined as a project in a new sector for a country or a new project in an existing sector for a country that has been significantly redesigned.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. Each year is unique in the demand that is placed on agency resources for opening new post projects. In FY 2017, the agency opened one new post and established three new projects. Sierra Leone completed its data collection in this fiscal year. It conducted a well-designed and executed baseline study of maternal-child health behaviors in rural communities. This baseline featured outcome metrics aligned to the program logic as well as a 15-hour training of enumerators by a monitoring and evaluation specialist with professional experience in maternal and child health. A baseline survey was used to collect primary data in rural communities and health clinics from representative members of the population with whom Volunteers would be working. The survey included questions designed to measure understanding of Americans, in alignment with Peace Corps Goal Two. Ultimately, 106 surveys of members of the beneficiary population were conducted, providing the Africa Region the ability to estimate the effectiveness of the new Sierra Leone health project after Volunteers have been in place and working.

Performance Goal 11.2: Increase Evidence-Based Decisions <i>Increase the percentage of posts and headquarters offices that demonstrate the use of evidence in program, policy, and/or budget decisions to 100 percent by FY 2016 and maintain that level of performance through FY 2017.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	50%	75%	100%	100%
Result	-	-	-	68%	86% ¹	95%	84%

¹ Due to the improvements to the data collection process in FY 2015, including shifting from qualitative data collection to a structured questionnaire, results from FY 2014 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2015 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2015 onward is possible.

Goal Lead: Director, Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Partner Offices: Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of posts and headquarters offices that demonstrated the use of evidence in policy, program, and/or budget decisions divided by the total number of posts and headquarters offices operating in the fiscal year.

Overview: For the purposes of this performance measure, “evidence” refers to results from conclusions derived from the process of collecting, analyzing, and/or reporting programmatic, administrative, or financial data through formal or informal research and evaluation activities. Evidence may be collected to support decisions to redesign or discontinue programs, develop or revise policies, prioritize resources, or modify processes. An increase in the use of evidence in decision making will help posts and headquarters offices improve program performance and make more cost-effective decisions.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. This performance goal is measured through an annual “data call” to all posts and headquarters offices requesting that they provide the best example they have of an evidence-based decision that their post or office made during the fiscal year in the areas of program, policy, or budget. To be included in this result, a respondent must:

1. Identify at least one high-quality source of evidence used to make the decision, and
2. Assert that the evidence-based decision was expected to have at least a modest impact on their operations.

The following were considered to be sources of high-quality evidence: official agencywide surveys; a formal evaluation with a defined methodology and analysis plan; a logic model to inform a project’s plan and design; the agency’s Country Portfolio Review summary or dataset; in-depth interviews with a formal questionnaire; focus group discussions with a structured question guide; administrative data (such as language test scores, data on early terminations, or budget); and, data from established business processes or products (such as help desk tickets or numbers of applications).

Based on this analysis, a total of 84 percent of posts and 86 percent of headquarters offices demonstrated evidence-based decision making for an overall result of 84 percent. This represents a decrease from last year’s result of 95 percent. The reasons for the decline in result for this performance goal require further study. A general focus on strengthening staff’s ability to synthesize data is included in the strategies in the FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan.

Performance Goal 11.3: Using Evidence to Encourage Innovation <i>Increase the percentage of posts and headquarters offices that conduct structured pilots to test new approaches to advance programmatic goals and/or address management challenges to 100 percent by FY 2017.</i>							Target not met
	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Target	-	-	-	-	50%	75%	100%
Result	-	-	-	70%	43% ¹	59%	50%

¹Due to the improvements to the data collection process in FY 2015, including shifting from qualitative data collection to a structured questionnaire, results from FY 2014 (italicized) are not directly comparable to results in FY 2015 and future years. However, year-to-year comparison of results from FY 2015 onward is possible.

Goal Lead: Director, Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

Partner Offices: Regional Directors (Africa Region; Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region; Inter-America and the Pacific Region)

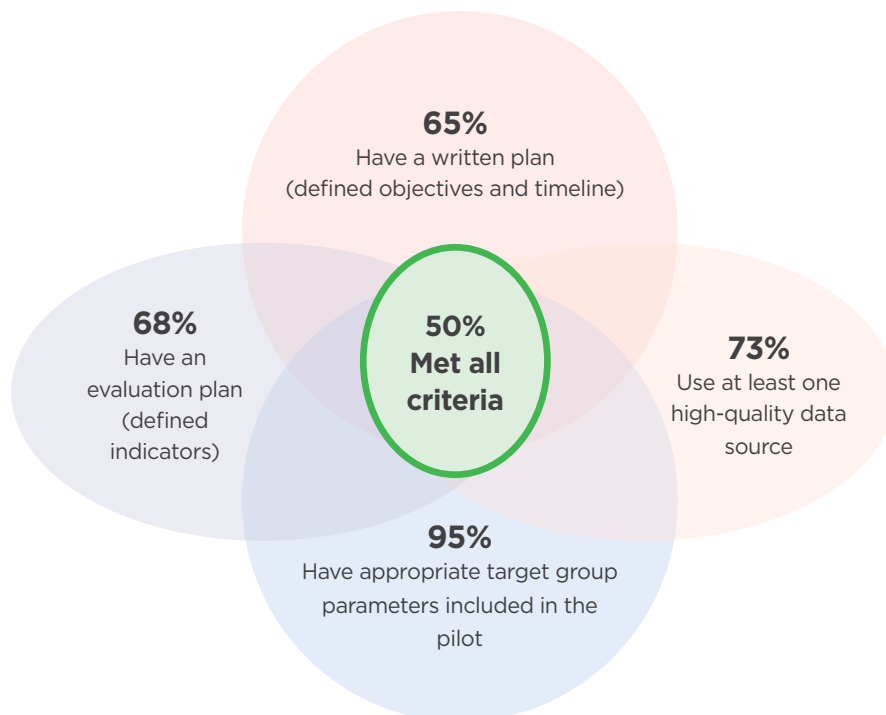
Data Source: Peace Corps administrative records

Calculation: The number of posts and headquarters offices that conducted pilots using structured monitoring and assessment divided by the total number of posts and headquarters offices that conducted pilots in the fiscal year.

Overview: Pilot testing and experimentation refers to the structured development of innovative solutions to enhance Volunteers' impact and to address persistent and emerging operational challenges. Pilot studies are conducted to test new approaches to program delivery prior to widespread adoption. The primary goal of a pilot study is to identify problems before resources are expended on full implementation. Structured pilots are conducted based on specific Peace Corps criteria that ensure the study is developed and executed in a manner that will provide the agency with evidence to inform the decision to expand, modify, or discontinue a new approach. The use of standard criteria and rigorous measurement enable the agency to learn from these pilots and determine if the new approaches should be fully adopted. Those criteria were published in FY 2016 in the form of agencywide guidance.

FY 2017 Progress Update: The target was not met. This performance goal is measured through an annual "data call" to posts and headquarters offices. The data for this goal were measured as a proportion of the 40 posts and offices (out of 83 surveyed) which reported conducting a pilot in FY 2017. All 40 posts and offices that reported conducting a pilot during this time period were asked to indicate which elements of a structured pilot had been developed using a checklist that was provided to them. The results were analyzed to ensure that each pilot included a combination of the following elements, at a minimum: (1) defined indicators (measures of success or failure) and/or an evaluation plan; (2) a written plan for data collection and analysis and/or key elements of the plan, including defined objectives and a timeline with a defined start and end date; and (3) at least one source of high-quality evidence. The sources of "high-quality evidence" for this analysis were the same as the ones cited in Performance Goal 11.2. Finally, to be considered a "pilot"—with the potential for scalability—the activity was expected to involve less than 60 percent of the target population. Posts that exceeded this percentage were seen as already implementing a revised practice or policy rather than conducting a pilot. Overall, 50 percent of the posts and offices that reported conducting a pilot met these criteria.

Minimum Criteria for Structured Pilots



Appendix A: Performance Management System

The goals, objectives, and strategies included in the FY 2018–2022 Strategic Plan guide the Peace Corps' efforts to advance its mission. The Peace Corps' performance management system is rooted in an inclusive and participatory culture where staff and Volunteers at all levels are invested in improving the agency.

The Peace Corps Director oversees the agency's performance management efforts. The Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) is responsible for strategic planning and reporting. OSIRP works closely with offices across the agency to collect and analyze data to improve agency operations. The director of OSIRP serves as the performance improvement officer for the agency. The agency actively participates in the federal government's Performance Improvement Council to contribute to and stay current with government-wide performance improvement guidelines and best practices.

Several processes occur throughout the year to ensure that activities align with the goals in the strategic plan. For example, evidence and data are available and used by agency leadership, managers, and staff to inform program, policy, and budget decisions. In addition, opportunities for performance improvement are identified, tracked, and executed.

- **Annual Strategic Review.** Each year, the Peace Corps Director leads a forward-looking meeting with the active engagement of senior leadership from across the agency and staff at all levels. The goal is to inform the development of the next annual performance plan. Prior to the meeting, lead offices identify challenges, opportunities, and possible realignments for each of the Peace Corps' strategic and management objectives. This comprehensive performance review informs annual planning and budget formulation, sets performance improvement areas for the year, and identifies potential evaluation topics to better understand the effectiveness of agency activities. Senior leadership disseminates proposed action steps that emerge from the day's discussions through a summary report and incorporates key strategies into the annual performance plan for the following year. This annual meeting is a key opportunity for senior leadership to take part in a comprehensive discussion of long-term courses of action that will maximize organizational collaboration and creativity.
- **Country Portfolio Review:** The Country Portfolio Review (CPR) is a comprehensive review of active and potential Peace Corps posts that is conducted by the agency using external and internal data. The review focuses on the safety, security, and medical care of Volunteers; host country engagement with the Peace Corps; host country needs; programming and training; post management and costs; and congruence with U.S. government development priorities. The review includes data from a variety of external sources, including the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the U.S. Department of State, the World Health Organization, the International Food Policy Research Institute, the World Economic Forum, and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Internal data sources include administrative and financial data, results from surveys of post and headquarters staff, and results from the Annual Volunteer Survey and the Host Country Staff Survey.
- **Integrated Planning and Budget System (IPBS).** Headquarters offices and overseas posts develop strategic and operational plans to ensure that their activities are aligned with and advance the agency's strategic goals and objectives. The initial stage of this effort focuses on office-level and post-level assessments of progress-to-date on key initiatives and a review of the most recent data from

administrative sources and annual surveys. OSIRP gathers input on major programmatic shifts and agencywide strategic planning for use in the Annual Strategic Review meeting from their submissions. In the second stage, each office and post creates its IPBS plan during the agency's budget formulation process.

- **Quarterly Strategic Plan Performance Reviews.** The Peace Corps utilizes quarterly reviews, which are chaired by the Peace Corps Director, as the primary mechanism for monitoring and assessing performance throughout the year. In preparation for each review, goal leads determine the status of each performance goal in the strategic plan based on both quantitative and qualitative analyses. They provide a brief written summary of the progress-to-date, challenges, additional support that may be needed, and next steps to share with other agency staff. Then, during the quarterly reviews, key officials from across the agency discuss select performance data from the past quarter and develop strategies to meet performance targets by the end of the fiscal year. This quarterly assessment of progress allows the agency to focus efforts on performance goals with the greatest need and opportunity for improvement.

Appendix B: Evaluation and Research

The Peace Corps remains committed to performance improvement through the use of high-quality data and evidence. Programmatic monitoring and some evaluation activities are conducted at overseas posts while larger-scale research and evaluation work occurs in a variety of headquarters offices. These efforts allow the agency to draw conclusions from existing evidence and to develop new sources of data to better understand performance challenges and improve operations. Evaluations, surveys and other reporting can be found at: <https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/open-government/>. The Peace Corps Office of Inspector General also conducts a variety of audits and evaluations, which can be found at <https://www.peacecorps.gov/about/inspector-general/reports.>

Sources of evidence

The Peace Corps continues to maintain its evaluation and research capabilities to satisfy the demand, both internally and externally, for evidence to support critical decisions, better demonstrate the impact of Volunteers, and maximize the efficiency of agency operations. Strategic Objective 11 (Measurement for Results) in the FY 2014–2018 Strategic Plan strengthened the agency’s focus on evidence-based decision making, monitoring, and evaluation practices. Efforts to enhance the use of existing data and to build the Peace Corps’ evidence base are supported by the continued improvements in core agency resources that are outlined in Appendix C.

Appendix C: Verification and Validation of Performance Data

Data collection and reporting consistency are supported by the use of detailed performance goal data reference sheets, which include operational definitions, data sources, and a comprehensive methodology for measuring each performance goal. The agency ensures the data are complete and accurate through oversight and review by the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning. The major data sources that are available to agency staff for assessing performance goals are detailed below.

Peace Corps databases

The Peace Corps maintains several database systems to collect Volunteer and program information. In order to maintain data integrity and ensure that the appropriate data entry methodology is followed, only authorized staff who have been properly trained can access key systems. Routine reconciliation processes among agency units enable users to verify and test performance data as well as to isolate and correct data entry or transfer errors. Internal, automated system processes also ensure data is appropriately transferred among different applications. The required level of accuracy to provide current and historical information about programs and Volunteers is met through database rules and business processes. Where data limitations do exist, largely due to data-entry compliance in isolated systems, they will be noted in the appropriate performance goal section.

Volunteer Reporting Tool

Since FY 2008, Volunteers have been reporting on their work and the progress they are making toward their project outcomes through the Volunteer Reporting Tool (VRT). The VRT is also utilized to report on Volunteers' contributions to agency strategic partners, such as the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and Feed the Future.

Since the development of the first version of the VRT, the agency has made numerous enhancements to improve the user experience, reduce data entry errors, and improve reporting. Volunteer reports are submitted to overseas post staff through the VRT on a quarterly or semiannual basis. Staff review all reports and work with Volunteers to verify data and correct anomalies prior to end-of-year analysis. The agency provides in-depth VRT training and support to Volunteers and staff to ensure data are collected, analyzed, and reported properly. The agency has also developed data collection tools to standardize the methods that Volunteers use to collect data.

The primary data quality challenge that remains is ensuring that an adequate percentage of Volunteers report on the project indicators. The agency is addressing this challenge by working with overseas posts to encourage higher reporting rates and by appropriately documenting and considering reporting rates when conducting analyses.

Peace Corps administrative records

For some performance goals, the Peace Corps collects annual data from headquarters offices and overseas posts through an online data call (survey). Responses are housed in an external, electronic database. Data cleaning procedures are applied to the dataset prior to analysis. Staff in positions of leadership or designated delegates at all overseas posts and headquarters offices are required to complete the survey. The survey is

designed with clear logic and data validation rules to minimize data entry error. The data are independently reviewed by the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning, and anomalies are addressed to improve data quality. Other data are collected from specific headquarters offices individually.

While these administrative records do not have the benefit of the verification and validation standards executed in Peace Corps database systems, the agency is able to ensure a high level of accuracy by working with individual offices and posts to develop reliable data collection and analysis procedures.

Annual Volunteer Survey

The Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS) is a confidential, voluntary online survey of all currently serving, two-year Volunteers. This comprehensive survey provides Volunteers' assessments of the effectiveness of Peace Corps training, in-country staff support, their personal health and safety, and their overall service experience.

In FY 2014, the agency substantially redesigned the survey questionnaire to improve data quality by reducing measurement error, strengthening respondent confidentiality, and shortening the survey by half. By maintaining these improvements through FY 2017, the agency is well on its way to being able to provide truly comparable, multiyear trend data to internal and external stakeholders. As a result of these enhancements to the AVS, the agency has gained a more accurate understanding of the perspectives of Volunteers.

The 2017 AVS was fielded from June 19–August 11 directly to currently serving Volunteers; 88 percent of them completed the survey. The high response rate in combination with data verification and validation measures minimize total survey error at the global level. The survey is not, however, administered to a random sample of Volunteers. As with other non-randomized surveys, the AVS is subject to nonresponse bias.

Survey respondents in FY 2017 reflected the Peace Corps' overall composition by gender, age, geographic location, and length of service. Responses to all AVS questions were directly provided by the Volunteers and housed in an external, electronic survey database. To ensure data quality, rigorous data cleaning procedures are applied to the dataset prior to analysis. The results are then used to inform agency leadership about the Volunteers' perspectives on key issues.

It is worth noting that, as with any survey, the AVS reflects the experiences and opinions of Volunteers at a fixed point in time and can be influenced by various factors, such as major external events or the ability to recall information. The agency takes into consideration both statistical and practical significance to account for variation in AVS results from year to year. Thus, nominal percentage point movements may not be practically meaningful or significant. In using AVS results, the agency reviews longer-term trends to account for normal, expected variations in responses.

Global Counterpart Survey

First launched in FY 2014, the Global Counterpart Survey is designed to provide information on the impact of Volunteers from the perspectives of the individuals with whom Volunteers work most closely. The second and third Global Counterpart Surveys in FY 2015 and FY 2016 consisted of a short interview of Volunteers' primary work partners administered by overseas staff. The survey has now shifted to a biannual data collection instrument, the next iteration of which is planned for late FY 2018.

This survey is administered either over the phone or in person. Global results are drawn from a randomly selected group of 400 respondents that represents all counterparts. Data quality challenges include potential interviewer error and ambiguity in the total survey population. The interviews are conducted by staff experienced in project fieldwork and counterpart communication but who may not have extensive experience in survey interviewing or data collection. Issues of translation, variation in interview styles, and accuracy of coding may have unpredictable influences on the results. The agency is addressing this challenge by providing extensive tools, training, and support to staff and by closely monitoring survey results to identify inconsistencies. Prior to initiating the interviews, training sessions are conducted via WebEx for interested post staff. The agency also provided translations of the survey in French and Spanish.

Determining the survey population is a challenge. Since no direct sampling frame exists that lists all Volunteer counterparts at all posts, Volunteers are used as a selection proxy for the counterparts who make up the random sample. In this survey, the agency has defined “counterpart” as the Volunteer’s primary work partner as reflected in post records for his or her primary project. In cases where a Volunteer no longer has any working relationship with their post-assigned counterpart, the Volunteer is asked to identify their primary work partner.

Employee Viewpoint Survey

The Employee Viewpoint Survey is administered to all U.S. direct hire staff annually. The survey measures employees’ perceptions about how effectively the agency is managing its workforce. The agency uses the survey results to compare working conditions at the Peace Corps with other federal government agencies and to identify opportunities to improve workforce management.

The demographic profile of survey respondents is consistently representative of the U.S. direct hire staff. The survey is administered electronically, and with very few exceptions that are related to the Peace Corps’ performance goals, most questions are identical to the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey fielded each year across the federal government by the Office of Personnel Management.

The survey is not administered to a random sample of Peace Corps employees; as a result, the survey is subject to nonresponse bias. Additionally, the survey represents the views of employees at a fixed point in time and can be influenced by external factors. The agency accounts for these data limitations by drawing conclusions from multiyear trends and by comparing the results with those of other federal agencies.

Host Country Staff Survey

This survey has been fielded every year since FY 2014 to systematically gather perspectives from host country staff. It is a short, confidential, voluntary survey designed to learn more about the agency’s impact in the posts where it operates by gathering input from host country staff, as well as achievements in the Peace Corps’ Goals One and Two. The survey was administered online from August 21 to September 15, 2017. The survey comprises 17 questions covering the following: diversity and inclusion, staff training, contributions to the Peace Corps’ goals, development impact, job satisfaction, and comparability to other available jobs.

The primary data quality challenge with this survey is the development of the sampling frame. Identifying and contacting all host country staff is difficult due to the fact that some staff members in administrative or support positions do not have official email addresses. Due to this challenge, the sampling frame consists

of the host country staff who can be reached via email. Overall, 52 percent of all eligible host country staff responded to the survey in FY 2017. Additionally, while the Host Country Staff Survey is offered in English, French, and Spanish, limited literacy in those languages as well as factors such as lack of computer access or familiarity with online survey tools for some staff may contribute to nonresponse bias.



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