

STANDARD SECTOR INDICATOR CODE: ENV-025	Visitor Service Programs: Number of new or improved visitor services that have been implemented in or near protected areas with the assistance of the Volunteer/partner. (ENV-025)	
ENVIRONMENT SECTOR	Sector Schematic Alignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Area: Natural Resource Planning and Management • Project Activity Area/Training Package: Protected Area Management 	
Type: Outcome	Unit of Measure: Visitor Service Activities	Disaggregation: None
<p>Definitions:</p> <p>Examples of visitor services designed to enhance understanding, and degree of visitor satisfaction, include, but are not limited to: New or improved visitor centers, exhibits, interpretive guide services, information services, trails, interpretive trails, brochures, informational literature, maps, directional signs, food and beverage services, and camping and lodging facilities.</p> <p>What would “count” are comprehensive services, not individual items. For instance, an exhibit that included 20 displays would “count” as one service, not 20.</p> <p>Partner/s—refers to the local counterpart who is co-facilitating implementation of new or improved visitor services with the Volunteer</p> <p>Rationale: An increase in the number of new or improved visitor service programs will increase the opportunities for visitors to access, appreciate, understand, enjoy, and care about protected areas.</p>		
<p>Measurement Notes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sample Tools and/or Possible Methods (for Peace Corps staff use): Volunteers should use data collection tools to measure progress against project indicators. A data collection tool to measure this indicator could be based on one of the following methods—survey, observation, or interview—though there may be other data collection methods that are appropriate as well. For more information on the suggested methods, please see Appendix I in the MRE Toolkit. Also be sure to check the intranet page as sample tools are regularly uploaded for post use. Once a tool has been developed, post staff should have a few Volunteers and their partners pilot it, and then distribute and train Volunteers on its use. 2. General Data Collection for Volunteer Activities: All Volunteer activities should be conducted with the intention of achieving outcomes – knowledge change (short-term), skills demonstration (intermediate-term), and behavioral changes (intermediate to long term) as defined by the progression of indicators within the objectives of a project framework. The progression of measurement for all Volunteer activities should begin with baseline data being conducted prior to the implementation of an activity (or set of activities), followed by documenting any outputs of the activities and then later at the appropriate time, measurements of specific outcomes (see “Frequency of Measurement”). 3. Activity-Level Baseline Data Collection: Activity-level baseline data should be collected by Volunteers/partners before or at the start of their activities involving visitor services. It provides a basis for planning and/or assessing subsequent progress or impact with these same people. Volunteers should take a baseline measurement 		

regarding the outcome(s) defined in this indicator (i.e. determine whether or not a community in question had visitor service activities in place before working with the Volunteer) early in their work focused on implementing new visitor service activities. The information for the baseline measurement will be the same or very similar to the information that will be collected in the follow-on measurement (see “Frequency of Measurement”) after the Volunteer has conducted his/her activities and it is usually collected using the same data collection tool to allow for easy management of the data over time.

Because Volunteers are expected to implement relevant and focused activities that will promote specific changes within a target population (see the “unit of measure” above), taking a baseline measurement helps Volunteers to develop a more realistic snapshot of where visitor services within the target population are in their process of change instead of assuming that they are starting at “0.” It also sets up Volunteers to be able to see in concrete terms what influence their work is having on the individuals/communities they work with during their service. Please note that data collection is a sensitive process and so Volunteers will not want to take a baseline measurement until they have been able to do some relationship and trust-building with the person/people the Volunteer is working with, and developed an understanding of cultural norms and gender dynamics.

4. Frequency of Measurement: For reporting accurately on this outcome indicator, Volunteers must take a minimum of two measurements with individuals/communities of the target population reached with their activities. After taking the baseline measurement (described above), Volunteers should take at least one follow-on measurement involving the same visitor service activities, typically after completing one or more activities focused on achieving the outcome in this indicator and once they have determined that the timing is appropriate to expect that the outcome has been achieved. Please note that successful documentation of a behavior change or new practice may not be immediately apparent following the completion of activities and may need to be planned for at a later time. Once Volunteers have measured that at least one visitor service activity has been achieved for the indicator, they should report on it in their next VRF.

Volunteers may determine to take more than one baseline and one follow-on measurement with the same activities for the following valid reasons:

- a. Volunteers may want to measure whether or not any additional activities have now achieved the outcome in the indicator, particularly for any activities that are on-going in nature (no clear end date);
- b. Volunteers may want to enhance their own learning and the implementation of their activities by using the data collected as an effective monitoring tool and feedback mechanism for the need to improve or increase their activities;
- c. A Peace Corps project in a particular country may choose to increase the frequency of measurement of the indicator and Volunteers assigned to that project will be required to follow in-country guidance.

In all cases, any additional data collection above the minimum expectation should be based on the time, resources, accessibility to the target population, and the value to be gained versus the burden of collecting the data. Following any additional measurements taken, Volunteers should report on any new activities achieved for the outcome in their next VRF.

5. Definition of Change: The minimum change to report against this indicator is that a new visitor service activity has been implemented, as compared to what was measured initially at baseline. In the case of this indicator, if the individual/community the Volunteer/partner works with already had interpretive guide services organized and implemented, then the Volunteer would not be able to count it for this activity because the Volunteer’s work did not actually lead to the desired change. However, if as a result of working with the Volunteer/partner, the community implemented a camping and lodging program, that would count because the Volunteer’s work

influenced the creation of that activity.

6. General Reporting in the VRF: For this indicator, Volunteers will only report one number in the “total number” section of the VRF; the total number of visitor service activities implemented by a community for a protected area.

7. Reporting on Disaggregated Data in the VRF: There are no disaggregation requirements for this indicator. The Volunteer must only count the total number of visitor service activities now implemented.

Data Quality Assessments (DQA): DQAs are needed for each indicator selected to align with the project objectives. DQAs review the validity, integrity, precision, reliability, and timeliness of each indicator. For more information, consult the Peace Corps MRE Toolkit.

Alignment with Summary Indicator: ENV. IMPROVED NAT. RES. MGMT PRACTICES