



2020 Host Country Staff Survey Summary Report

Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning



2020 HOST COUNTRY STAFF SURVEY TABLE OF CONTENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Building on the success of six previously administered surveys starting in 2014, the 2020 Host Country Staff Survey (HCSS) continues to tap into the wealth of experience and knowledge found among our host country staff. As a crucially important component of the Peace Corps' operations and mission, host country staff offer a unique perspective on identifying agency successes and challenges including: building a more inclusive and diverse organization, broad insights into staff training needs and additional insight into the work of Volunteers.

The HCSS solicits feedback from staff whose work is vital to Peace Corps operations but whose viewpoints were previously unavailable to agency management at headquarters, prior to 2014. The data received through the HCSS complements the Peace Corps' other performance data sources, including the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) of U.S. direct-hire (USDH) staff and the Annual Volunteer Survey (AVS).

The HCSS is distributed online to a multicultural and multilingual community of respondents. All post staff who are hired as foreign service nationals (FSNs) or personal services contractors (PSCs) are eligible to participate in the HCSS, regardless of whether they are nationals of the host country, the United States, or a third country.

The first HCSS, piloted in 2014, focused on measuring two objectives from the agency's legacy strategic plan. In 2015, all core questions were retained, while the scope of the survey expanded slightly to offer broader insight. Following improvements to the survey instrument implemented in 2016, the 2017 survey retained as much consistency as possible, while adding questions to gain greater insight into staff learning and development preferences and team cohesion. While many of the earlier questions were preserved in the 2018 HCSS, extensive changes were nevertheless made based on stakeholder feedback.

The 2020 Host Country Staff Survey retained all core questions from the 2019 survey with the addition of an evacuation section. The evacuation report can be found in the post evacuation AAR.

Lastly, the survey is offered in English, Spanish, French, and Russian.

II. TOP-LINE FINDINGS

2020 HCSS TOP-LINE FINDINGS

The 2020 HCSS received responses from 52% of its total population. It is important to note that all subsequent references to “staff” in this report refer only to those who participated in the 2020 HCSS and do not reflect the views and opinions of all overseas staff. Survey results must be viewed in light of the constraints and limitations outlined in Appendix A.

Staff overwhelmingly reported that they were satisfied with their job training and the work of Peace Corps Volunteers in their country, with positive increases in almost all categories compared to the results seen in 2018 and 2019.

In addition:

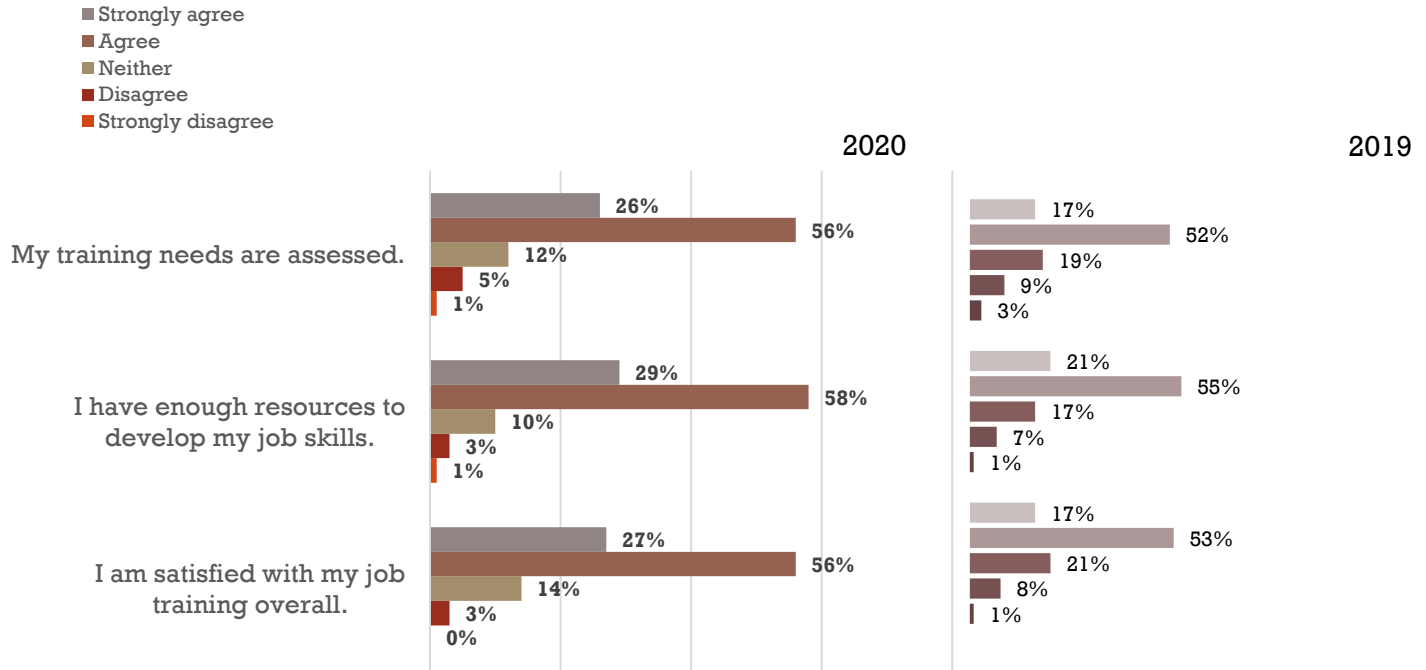
- 83% of staff report that they feel valued by Peace Corps Washington, with ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ increasing by 10% and 2% respectively from 2019.
- 8 out of 10 staff members are satisfied with their overall job training.
- 88% of staff members feel confident responding to Emergency situations.
- 9 out of 10 of staff feel that members of their team work well together.
- 57% of staff believe that trainees arrive with the appropriate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to serve. This is a 5% increase from 2019.
- 89% of staff believe that PCVs integrate into their communities.
- Nearly 90% of staff believe that they are treated fairly by senior staff.
- 8 out of 10 staff feel supported by their Country Director when expressing concerns about PCVs.
- 99% of staff believe that Peace Corps has a positive impact on their country.

III. CREATING A HIGH-PERFORMING LEARNING AGENCY

87% OF STAFF AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE THEY HAVE ENOUGH RESOURCES TO DEVELOP THEIR JOB SKILLS.

Over 80% of staff believe that their training needs are assessed, they have developed their job skills, and they are satisfied with job training.

All three categories increased by about 10% from 2019.

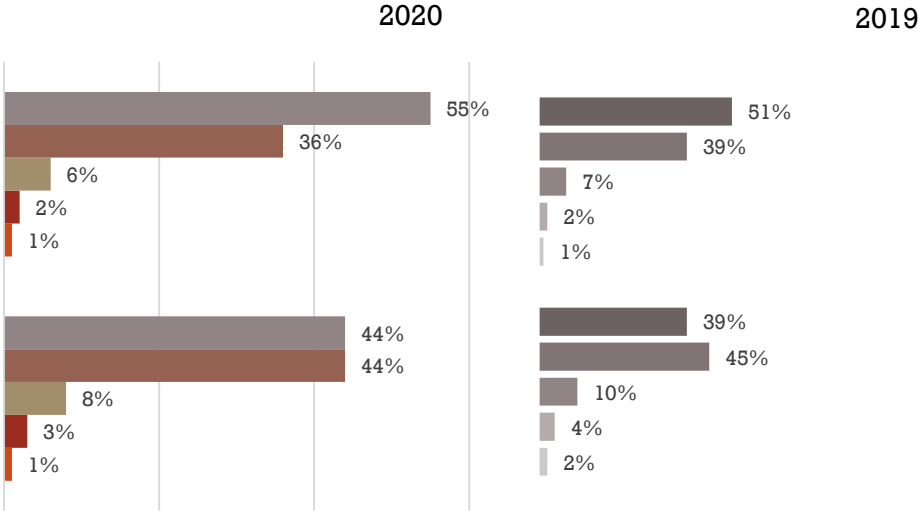


OVER 85% OF STAFF REPORTED FEELING CONFIDENT RESPONDING EMERGENCY SITUATIONS SUCH AS CIVIL UNREST, NATURAL DISASTERS, POLITICAL INSTABILITY, AND ISOLATING EVENTS.

Similar to the results from the 2019 HCSS, over 90% of staff reported feeling confident in responding to Volunteer Safety & Security incidents.



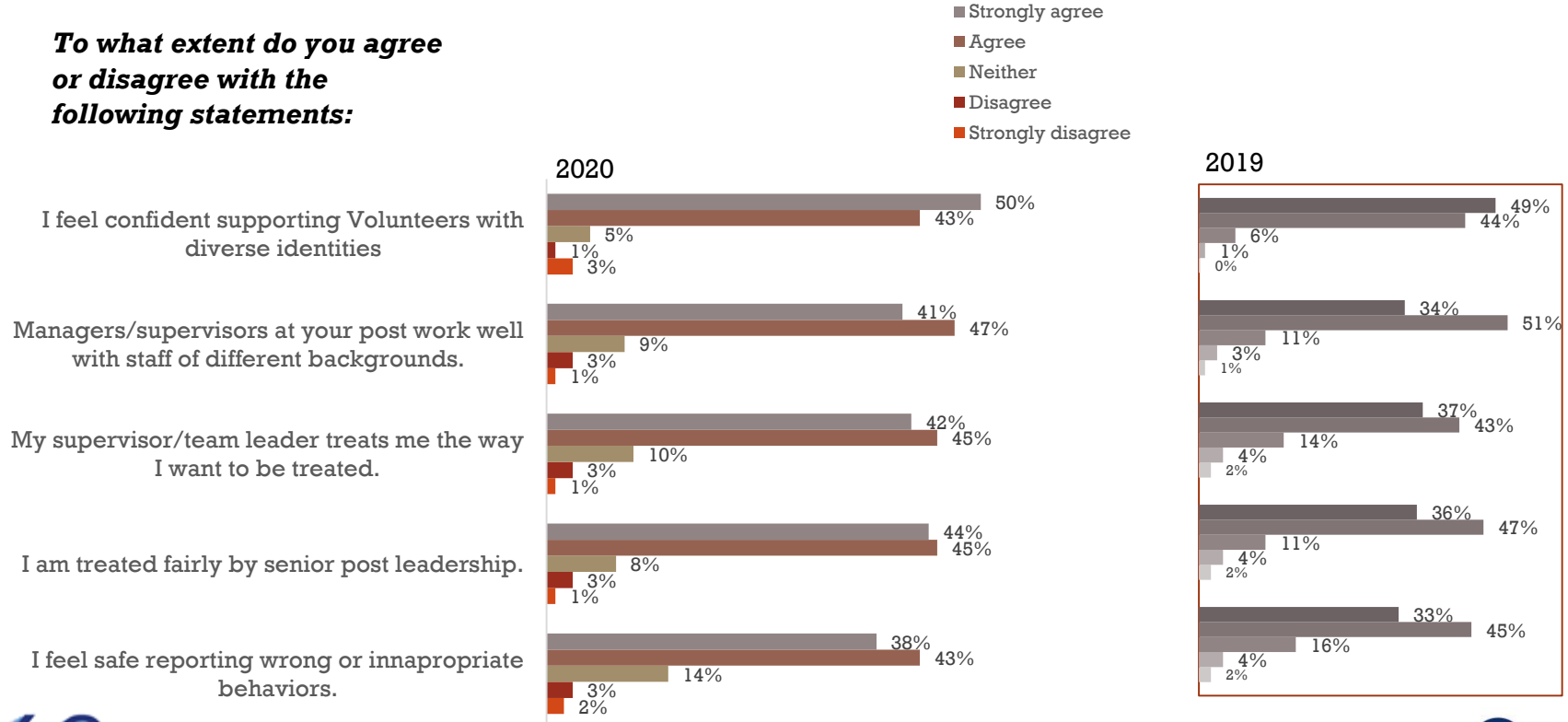
To what degree do you feel confident responding to the following issues:



IV. ENGAGING STAFF

89% OF STAFF REPORT THAT THEY ARE TREATED FAIRLY BY SENIOR POST STAFF.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



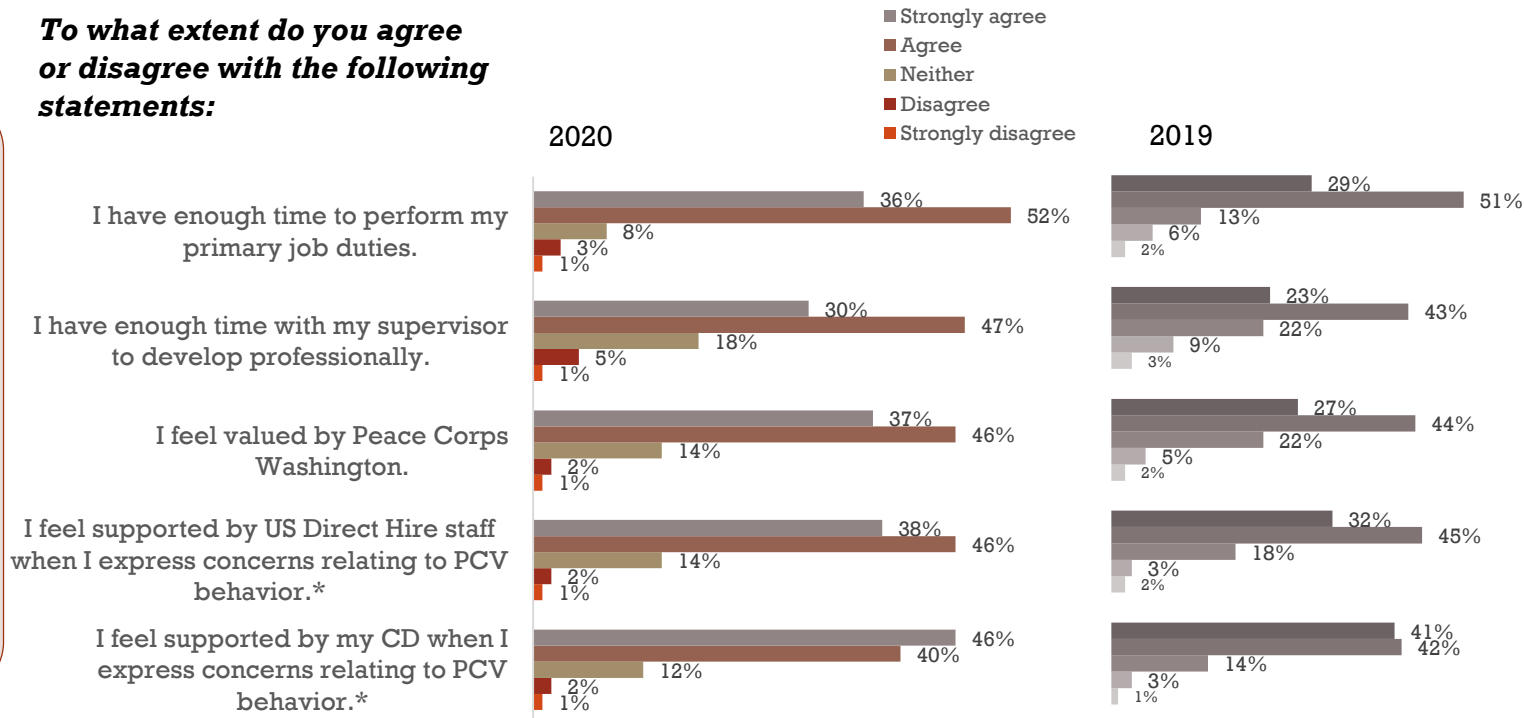
83% OF STAFF REPORT THAT THEY FEEL VALUED BY PEACE CORPS WASHINGTON, WITH 'STRONGLY AGREE' AND 'AGREE' INCREASEING BY 10% AND 2% RESPECTIVELY FROM 2019.

Peace Corps staff tended to respond more "strongly agree" and "agree" compared to 2019.

Increase

Primary job: 8%
Enough time with supervisors: 11%
USDH support: 7%
CD support: 3%

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

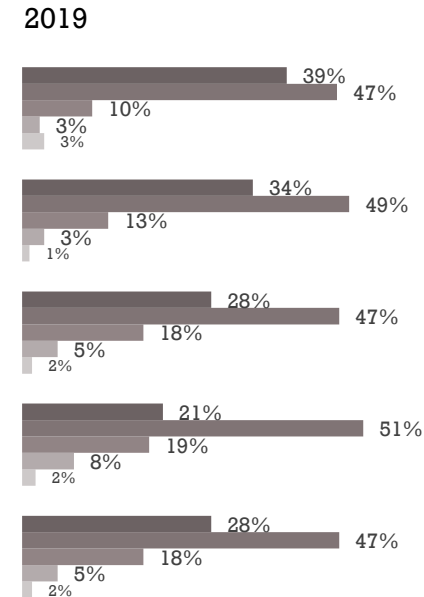
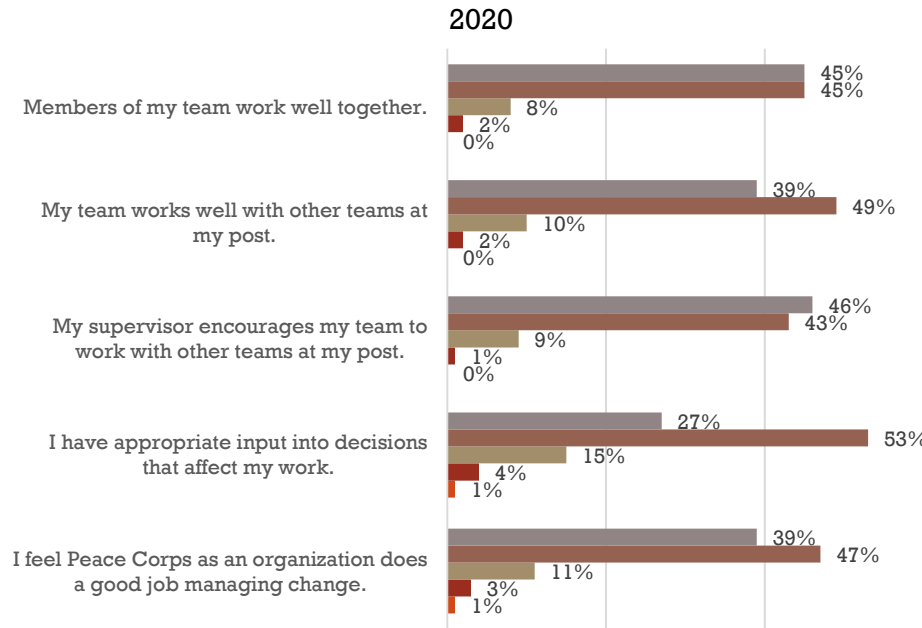


9 OUT OF 10 STAFF MEMBERS REPORT THAT MEMBERS OF THEIR TEAM WORK WELL TOGETHER.

Findings show a positive work environment for staff. 80% of staff reported having input into decisions that affect their work, while 89% reported supervisors encouraging teams to work together, and 89% agreed that teams work well with other teams at post.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

■ Strongly agree
■ Agree
■ Neither
■ Disagree
■ Strongly disagree

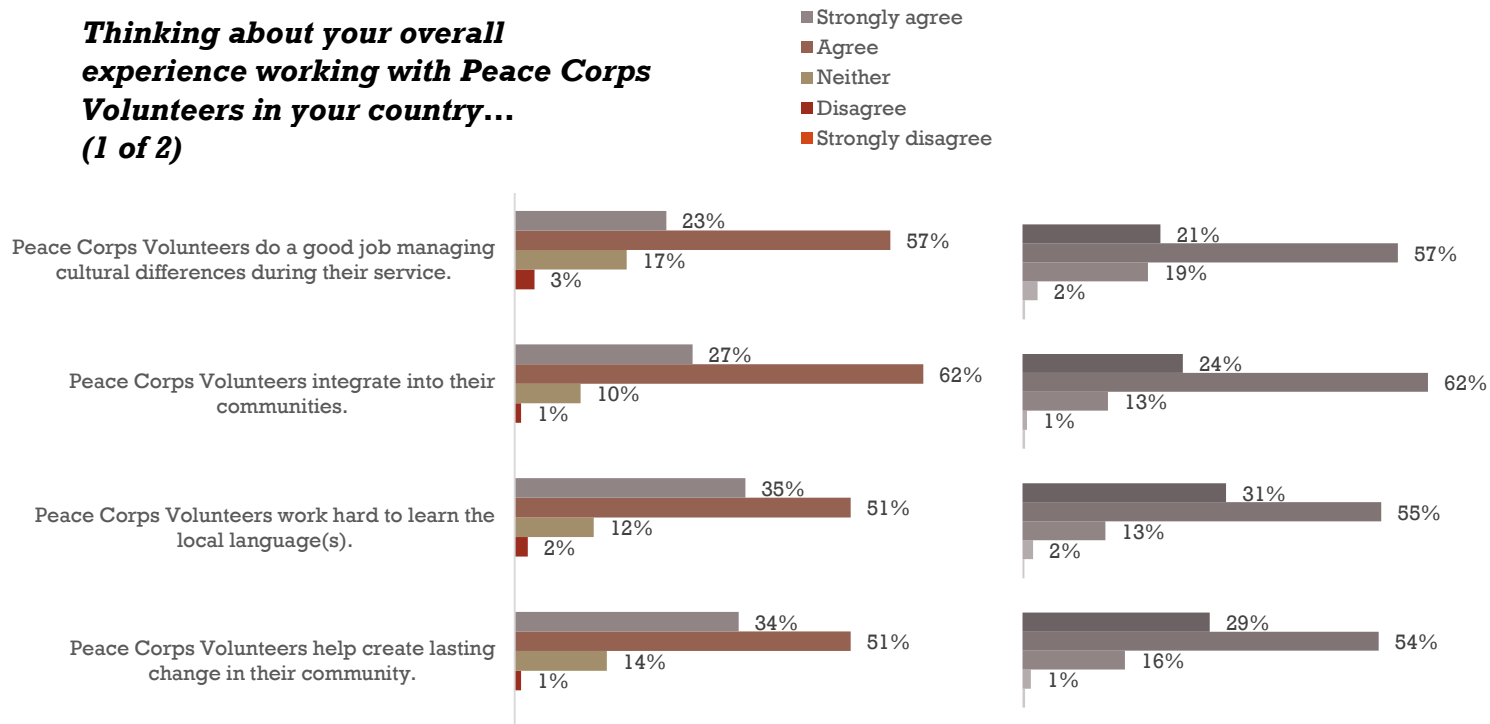


V. WORKING WITH PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

OVER 89% OF STAFF AGREE THAT VOLUNTEERS INTEGRATE INTO THEIR COMMUNITIES.

Staff perception of Volunteers is positive. Staff agreed that Volunteers do well in all categories including, managing cultural differences, integrating into communities, learning local language, and creating lasting change (each category >80%).

Thinking about your overall experience working with Peace Corps Volunteers in your country... (1 of 2)



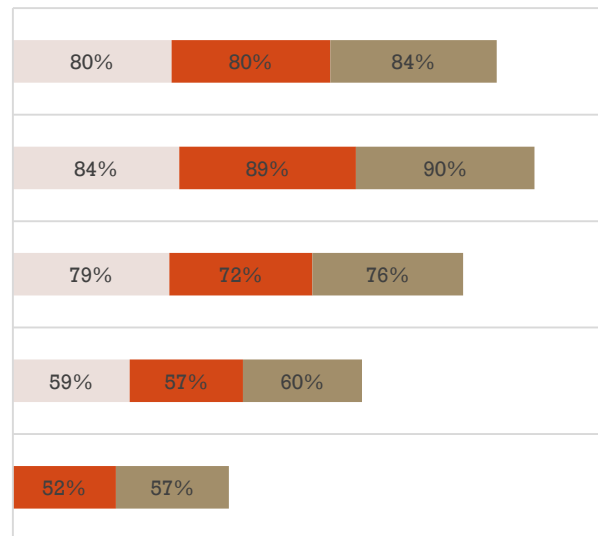
90% OF STAFF REPORT THAT PCVS ARE ENGAGED IN MEANINGFUL WORK IN THEIR COUNTRY.

Thinking about your overall experience working with Peace Corps Volunteers in your country...

■ 2018 (Strongly Agree/Agree)
 ■ 2019 (Strongly Agree/Agree)
 ■ 2020 (Strongly Agree/Agree)

84% of staff report that Volunteers have a good reputation. 60% of staff report that trainees arrive with appropriate expectations to serve, an increase from 2019.

- Peace Corps Volunteers have a good reputation.
- Peace Corps Volunteers are engaged in meaningful work.
- Peace Corps Volunteers do a good job being resilient, or withstanding or recovering quickly from difficult situations.
- Peace Corps Trainees arrive with appropriate expectations to serve.
- *Peace Corps Trainees arrive with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to serve.



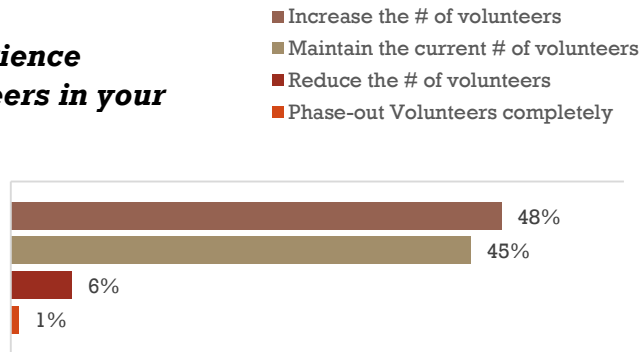
* This question was not asked in 2018.

99% OF STAFF BELIEVE THAT PEACE CORPS HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PEOPLE IN THEIR COUNTRY.

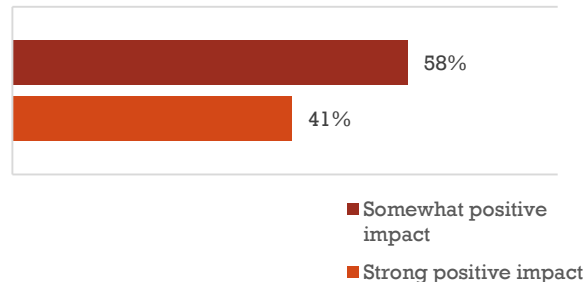
Half of all respondents believe that the best 5-year plan for the number of Volunteers is to increase the number at post. 6% of staff think that reducing or phasing out volunteers completely over the next 5-years is the best plan, an increase of 2% from 2019. In addition, less than 1% of staff believe Peace corps has no impact on their country.

Thinking about your overall experience working with Peace Corps Volunteers in your country:

What do you think is the best 5-year plan for the number of Volunteers at your post?



What kind of impact do you think Peace Corps has on people in your country?

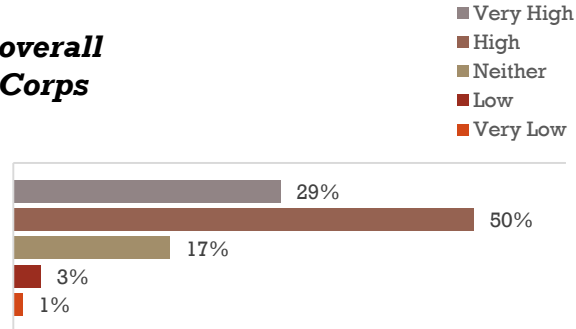


7 OUT OF 10 STAFF MEMBERS REPORTED THAT THEIR OPINION ABOUT AMERICANS BECAME MORE POSITIVE SINCE BECOMING PEACE CORPS STAFF

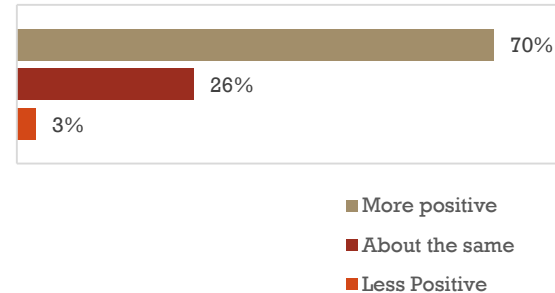
Almost 80% of staff reported that the morale, or feeling of confidence and enthusiasm among staff is “high” or “very high”. The overall opinion about Americans among staff is 4% more positive than in 2019.

Thinking about morale and your overall opinion of Americans as a Peace Corps staff member:

Morale, or the overall feeling of confidence and enthusiasm at work, among staff at your post is...



How has your overall opinion about Americans changed since you became a Peace Corps staff member? Is your overall opinion about Americans...

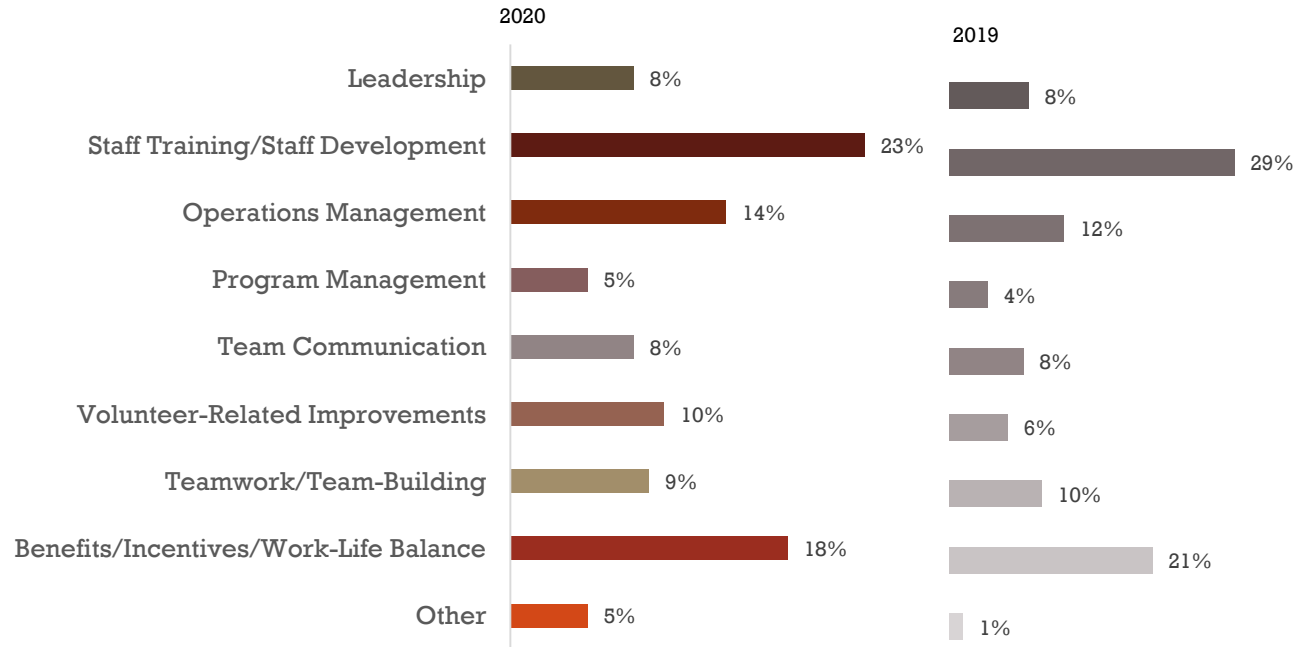


VI. IMPROVING POST OPERATIONS

ALMOST 1 IN 4 MEMBERS OF STAFF BELIEVE THAT STAFF TRAININGS/DEVELOPMENT WOULD MAKE OPERATIONS RUN MORE SMOOTHLY.

23% of respondents think that staff training and staff development would make operations run more effectively. 18% of staff think that operations would improve with more benefits, including higher salaries and more per diem during travel.

Topics for improvements that would make operations run more effectively at post.



VII. APPENDIX A



ACRONYM LIST

The acronyms below are commonly used in the Peace Corps and throughout this report.

AF	Africa Region
EMA	Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia Region
EVS	Employee Viewpoint Survey
FSN	Foreign service national
HCN	Host country national
HCS	Host country staff
HCSS	Host Country Staff Survey
IAP	Inter-America and the Pacific Region
OSIRP	Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning
PG	Performance goal in the agency's Strategic Plan
PSC	Personal services contractor
USDH	U.S. direct hires

LIMITATIONS

Distribution of the survey tool by email limited participation to staff who had an email address that was both valid at the time of the survey and available to the research team. Email addresses were compiled using a linking process to match staff names provided by an internal data source and email addresses provided by a separate internal data source, thus introducing the possibility of linking error.

Additionally, it is important to note that while best efforts were made to accurately translate the survey into French, Russian or Spanish, some of the survey questions were originally designed by the Office of Personnel Management for use in the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, which is targeted to an American workforce. There is always a possibility that concepts may not translate sufficiently clearly to post staff who do not speak English as their native language. As a result, there may be barriers to participation embedded in the questions themselves, both in terms of the level of language that is used and in terms of underlying cultural concepts or norms.

The cumulative effect of these limitations is that the results are based on a non-random sample of respondents who: (1) had an active peacecorps.gov email address that was provided to the researchers; (2) were on duty and able to receive the message during the survey window; (3) were sufficiently literate in computers and English, French, Russian or Spanish to take the survey; and (4) chose to respond.

While 70% of the staff with an active peacecorps.gov email address that was provided to the researchers responded to the FY 2020 survey, they constitute just over half (52%) of the total eligible pool of staff. Thus, results should be interpreted with caution, as they may not accurately represent the opinions of the global pool of host country staff.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA INTERPRETATION: WHY WE FOCUS ON GLOBAL FINDINGS

This report focuses on global results for two primary reasons. First, global insights provide “the big picture” for how supervisors can enact positive behaviors to support staff satisfaction and performance. While individual circumstances may vary among staff at different posts, the insights that are received from staff around the world are the ones that are most likely to produce positive results once they are acted upon at the local level.

Second, although the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning (OSIRP) used all of the tools available to its research team to increase the validity of the HCSS data, some logistical and intercultural limitations persist. Challenges to validity, such as sampling bias, coverage error, and the effects of intercultural interpretation of questions, are magnified at lower levels of reporting, but global-level results can offer insights where respondents display consensus around results.

SURVEYING METHOD

The HCSS attempts to reach all eligible staff, which is a non-random sampling methodology also known as a census. Unlike random sampling methodologies, census approaches cannot ensure with a known degree of confidence that those who respond to a survey are similar to those who do not respond. It is therefore important not to extrapolate the HCSS results to the eligible staff who did not participate in the survey, either because they chose not to respond, because they did not have a valid email address, or because they do not speak the survey's supported languages of English, French, Russian and Spanish. French, Spanish, and Russian accounted for 18% of the responses to the 2020 survey. See Appendix B for response rates broken out by language.

In 2020, email addresses for 70% of all host country staff were identified by the research team. Of those staff members who received the HCSS, 1,420 overall responses were received, or 74% of those surveyed—a 1% decrease since 2019. In total, 52% of all host country staff globally responded to the survey.²

²In 2019, 56% of all eligible staff or 74% of all identified email addresses. In 2018, 51% of all eligible staff or 70% of all identified email addresses. In 2017, 52% of all eligible staff or 72% identified email addresses. In 2016, 55% of all eligible staff or 78% with identified email addresses. In 2015, 52% of all eligible staff or 71% with identified email addresses responded to the survey. In 2014, 37% of all eligible staff or 58% of staff with identified email addresses responded to the survey.



VIII. APPENDIX B

Global Respondent Rates and Language Type

The research team worked in cooperation with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, the Office of the Chief Information Officer, and individual posts to assemble a survey distribution list that was as complete as possible. However, the distribution list was limited by the facts that not all host country staff are supplied with email addresses, and there is currently no central list or database of host country staff that includes email addresses. Resulting from the collaboration of all three offices, email addresses for 1,915 of all 2,717 eligible staff (70%) were available for distribution of the survey. The HCSS received responses from 1,420 staff for a response rate of 74% of reachable staff and 52% of all eligible staff.

	Sample Responses	Sample Members	Sample Response Rate	Population Members	Population Response Rate
GLOBAL	1420	1915	74%	2717	52%
English	1174	83%	18% Non-English	LANGUAGE TYPE	
Spanish	155	11%			
French	66	5%			
Russian	25	2%			

Respondent Rates by Region (Africa)

	Sample Responses	Sample Members	Sample Response Rate
AFRICA	626	889	70%
BENIN	20	28	71%
BOTSWANA	31	35	89%
CAMEROON	26	33	79%
COMOROS	13	13	100%
ETHIOPIA	27	62	44%
GAMBIA	15	24	63%
GHANA	17	33	52%
GUINEA	25	44	57%
KENYA	3	4	75%
LESOTHO	23	30	77%
LIBERIA	28	32	88%
MADAGASCAR	30	43	70%
MALAWI	37	41	90%
MOZAMBIQUE	39	47	83%
NAMIBIA	26	36	72%
RWANDA	36	41	88%
SENEGAL	32	74	43%
SIERRA LEONE	12	27	44%
SOUTH AFRICA	28	44	64%
ESWATINI	19	23	83%
TANZANIA	39	46	85%
TOGO	27	32	84%
UGANDA	30	40	75%
ZAMBIA	43	57	75%

Respondent Rates by Region (EMA)

	Sample Responses	Sample Members	Sample Response Rate
EMA	401	526	76%
ALBANIA	22	29	76%
ARMENIA	25	36	69%
MYANMAR	16	16	100%
CAMBODIA	23	26	88%
GEORGIA	19	37	51%
INDONESIA	16	30	53%
KOSOVO	17	19	89%
KYRGYZ REPUBLIC	23	37	62%
MOLDOVA	20	24	83%
MONGOLIA	23	31	74%
MOROCCO	26	29	90%
NEPAL	26	36	72%
NORTH MACEDONIA	21	26	81%
PHILIPPINES	34	34	100%
SRI LANKA	9	12	75%
THAILAND	23	30	77%
TIMOR LESTE	21	23	91%
UKRAINE	37	51	73%

Respondent Rates by Region (IAP)

	Sample Responses	Sample Members	Sample Response Rate
IAP	393	500	79%
BELIZE	16	24	67%
COLOMBIA	23	26	88%
COSTA RICA	37	38	97%
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	22	37	59%
EASTERN CARIBBEAN	18	20	90%
ECUADOR	37	43	86%
FIJI	13	17	76%
GUATEMALA	33	43	77%
GUYANA	16	22	73%
JAMAICA	15	19	79%
MEXICO	19	21	90%
PANAMA	33	46	72%
PARAGUAY	38	50	76%
PERU	36	44	82%
SAMOA	9	15	60%
TONGA	11	13	85%
VANUATU	17	22	77%

IX. APPENDIX C

The 2020 HCSS Questionnaire in English, French, Russian and Spanish

The 2020 Host Country Staff Survey was designed in English and then translated into French, Russian and Spanish by GSA translation services in order to increase the number of staff who could be reached.

Links to the English, French, Russian and Spanish questionnaire can be found here:

[HCSS Resource Page](#)

About the Office of Strategic Information, Research, and Planning

OSIRP advances evidence-based management at the Peace Corps by guiding agency strategic planning; monitoring and evaluating agency-level performance and programs; conducting research to generate new insights in the fields of international development, cultural exchange, and Volunteer service; enhancing the stewardship and governance of agency data; and helping to shape agency engagement on high-level, government-wide initiatives.

Acknowledgments

OSIRP developed this survey to systematically tap into the enormous wealth of experience of a critically important segment of the Peace Corps family: our host country staff. The interest and support from the Peace Corps staff in the countries where this survey was conducted were critical to this endeavor. Our sincere appreciation is extended to the Office of Global Operations for reviewing the survey materials and to the country directors at each post for their assistance in promoting participation in this survey. Finally, we would like to extend special thanks to all of the post staff who helped to make the 2020 Host Country Staff Survey a success by participating in the survey.

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