



Peace Corps Office of

INSPECTOR GENERAL

Annual Plan

Fiscal Year 2025

The Role of OIG

The Peace Corps Office of Inspector General (OIG) was established in February 1989 and receives its legal authority from the Inspector General Act (codified at 5 U.S.C. Chapter 4) (IG Act). The IG Act establishes OIG as an independent entity within the Peace Corps. The law requires the Inspector General to keep the Peace Corps Director and the Congress fully and currently informed about any problems or deficiencies relating to the administration of agency programs and operations.

OIG is authorized by law to review all Peace Corps programs and operations. OIG's work typically examines the agency's operational efficiency, effectiveness, financial stewardship, and compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and agency policies.

OIG's role is to:

- Promote integrity, efficiency, effectiveness, and economy;
- Prevent and detect waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement; and
- Identify risks and vulnerabilities while offering expert assistance to improve the Peace Corps' programs and operations. OIG accomplishes its mission through audits, evaluations, investigations, and other reviews.

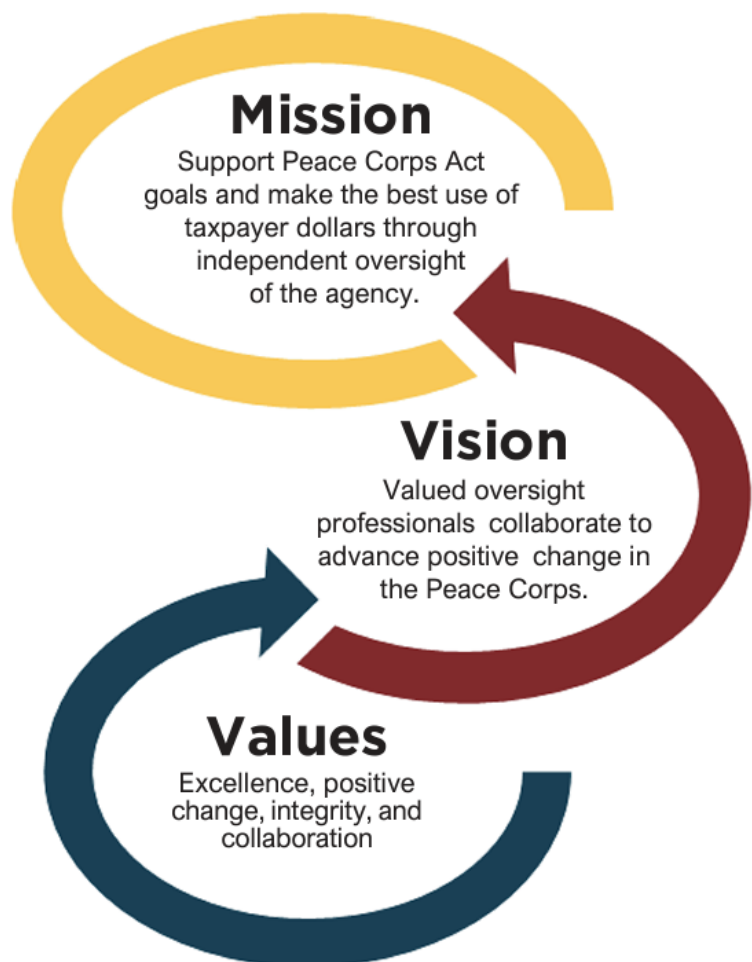
In accomplishing its mission, OIG is committed to:

Excellence: issuing accurate, timely, and reliable work products.

Positive change: making value-added recommendations to address issues and challenges with agency programs and operations.

Integrity: maintaining independence from the agency, meeting professional and ethical standards, and committing to continual improvement.

Collaboration: working together and promoting best practices within the office, with the agency, and with external stakeholders.



Staffing and Resources

OIG is comprised of four units: Audit, Evaluation, Investigation, and Management and Administration. Each unit develops its fiscal year work based on staff availability and funding. OIG has a cross-unit outreach committee that is responsible for informing all stakeholders (agency staff, Volunteers, Congress, and the public) about the role, work, and resources of OIG, and to promote the OIG Hotline. The OIG Annual Plan for fiscal year 2025 has been impacted by OIG staff turnover and significant agency Human Resources staffing challenges.¹

Return to Service

Volunteers began to return to Posts in March 2022, following the unprecedented evacuation of all Peace Corps Volunteers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the rollout continues, Volunteer reentry rate will continue to impact OIG’s program oversight activity for fiscal year 2025.

Focus Areas

Throughout the fiscal year, OIG will conduct audits, evaluations, investigations, and other reviews to address three priorities:

- Overseas Post operations, including Volunteer return to service
- Agency-wide processes, programs, and systems
- Management Challenges that are identified annually by OIG² and published in the Peace Corps’ Agency Financial Report (AFR)



¹ The OIG 2025–2027 Strategic Plan targets have also been adjusted to reflect the impact of these challenges.

² The 2024 Management Challenges are Volunteer Health and Safety; the Volunteer Delivery System, Human Capital Management; and Information Technology Security Management.

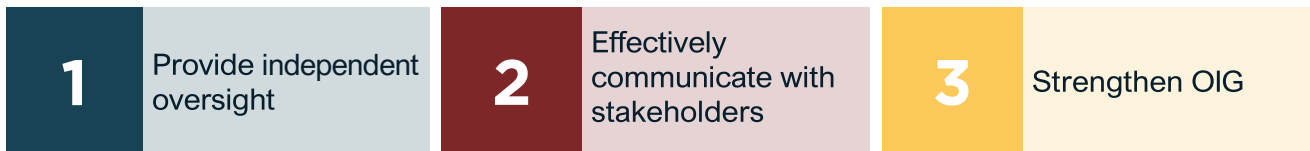
Advice and Assistance

In addition to addressing identified focus areas, OIG plans to perform the following functions in support of the agency's goals and objectives:

- Promote applicable best practices and lessons learned through OIG work products
- Provide Peace Corps managers with the technical assistance necessary to promote the efficient and effective implementation of financial and administrative policies, procedures, and internal controls
- Deliver trainings and presentations on best practices for fraud awareness and compliance with agency internal controls
- Present Volunteers/trainees and agency staff with informational materials, guidance, trainings, and other presentations on the role, responsibilities, authority, and functions of OIG
- Develop and distribute materials and information on how to effectively and confidentially report fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, serious administrative misconduct, or criminal wrongdoing involving Peace Corps staff, contractors, or Volunteers/trainees

Strategic Goals

As detailed in the OIG Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2025–2027, OIG has three strategic goals:



OIG plans to meet these goals by working with the Peace Corps to improve program effectiveness, efficiency, compliance, and accountability. In addition to performing traditional oversight and accountability functions, OIG will provide briefings, lead trainings, and conduct external engagements while working with the agency to acquire additional subject matter expertise, improve its internal controls, and engage in collaborative activities.

Audit Unit

The Audit Unit conducts audits and other reviews of agency programs and the financial and administrative operations that support the Peace Corps' mission and its Volunteers serving abroad. The Unit audits the agency's field activities at overseas Posts and its administrative support functions at headquarters and the domestic recruiting offices. The Unit also contracts with independent public accounting firms to conduct both an audit of the agency's financial statements and a review of the agency's compliance with the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014. OIG audits are performed in accordance with the Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

Post Audits

OIG considered the following risk factors and engagements when developing its audit schedule:

- Number of Volunteers serving
- Size, maturity, imprest fund amount, and Post operating expenses
- Interval since the Post's last audit
- Trends and anomalies in the agency's financial data and OIG Hotline information
- Input from regional and other headquarters management and staff
- Congressional requests and referrals from other offices or agencies

Based on these factors, OIG intends to initiate audits of at least three of the following Posts in fiscal year 2025. The final selection and scheduling of Post audits will be decided during the fiscal year. The Audit Unit will work with regional management to finalize the audit schedule for selected Posts based on available resources and Post constraints.

| Post Audits Identified for Fiscal Year 2025 | | |
|--|--|---|
| Africa | Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia | Inter-America and the Pacific Region |
| Botswana* | Mongolia | Paraguay |
| Liberia | Albania/Montenegro | Costa Rica |

*Post receiving the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) funds

For the Post audits listed in the table above, OIG will assess the overseas Posts' areas of concern and process challenges. The Audit Unit will also review funds received by Peace Corps Posts related to PEPFAR.

Agency-Wide Programs and Special Reviews

The Audit Unit intends to initiate, perform, or complete a variety of audits, reviews, and follow-up reviews of agency programs. These projects are cross-functional and may require assistance from other OIG units. For example, the Audit Unit works closely with the Investigation Unit on the forensic analysis of financial data and on Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA)³ issues. During fiscal year 2025, the Audit Unit plans to initiate one or more of the following:

| Agency Audits and Other Reviews Identified for Fiscal Year 2025 |
|--|
| Review of the Peace Corps' Information Technology Environment |
| Review of Human Resources Operations and Management |

Legislatively Mandated Work

The Audit Unit will conduct or oversee the following legislatively mandated work:

| Legislatively Mandated Audits and Reviews |
|--|
| Peace Corps' Compliance with The Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 |
| The Peace Corps' Financial Statement Audit |
| Review of the Peace Corps' Information Security Program |

Ongoing Audits and Reviews

OIG initiated the following audits and reviews in fiscal year 2024 which will generate final reports in fiscal year 2025:

- Pre-Award Process for Domestic Awarded Contracts
- Audit of Uganda Post Operations
- Audit of Peru Post Operations
- Peer Review of Architect of the Capitol OIG Audit Unit

³ The FECA program is authorized in statute at 5 U.S.C. Sections 8101 et seq.

Evaluation Unit

The Evaluation Unit provides the agency with independent evaluations and reviews of agency programs and operations at overseas Posts and domestic offices. Evaluations address efficiency and effectiveness, identify best practices, and recommend improvements. Evaluators also participate in cross-functional projects with OIG auditors and investigators. The Evaluation Unit reports provide timely, credible information that is useful to managers, policymakers, and other stakeholders. Evaluations and other reviews are conducted under the direction and guidance of the Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations and are performed in accordance with the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE) Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation.⁴

Country Program Evaluations

During fiscal year 2025, the Evaluation Unit will continue to conduct standard country program evaluations, which were suspended in 2020 due to the evacuation of Volunteers and resumed in 2024. The standard country program evaluation objectives were streamlined and updated to reflect the post-pandemic operating environment and focus on priority areas. Volunteer support remains to be a key area of examination in OIG evaluations. Posts receiving PEPFAR assistance will include a review of relevant programming and partnerships. OIG considers multiple risk factors and inputs in selecting Posts for country program evaluations including:

- Number of Volunteers at the Post
- Size and maturity of the Post
- Agency surveys and other data
- Interval since the last OIG evaluation
- New or changed conditions affecting the Post
- Input from agency managers and staff
- Other OIG activities at the Post

OIG intends to initiate at least three country program evaluations in fiscal year 2025. The following table lists Posts under consideration for an evaluation. The Evaluation Unit will finalize its Post selection and work with regional management and Post leadership to coordinate fieldwork in advance of travel to the Post.

⁴ MIRs and MARs are performed in accordance with OIG Directive 2020-03 – Revision to Reporting Procedures for MIRs and MARs.

| Country Program Evaluations Identified for Fiscal Year 2025 | | |
|--|--|---|
| Africa | Europe, Mediterranean, and Asia | Inter-America and the Pacific Region |
| The Gambia | North Macedonia | Samoa |
| Cameroon* | Mongolia ^x | Tonga |
| | East Timor | |

*Post receiving the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) assistance

^xAn evaluation of Mongolia will not be initiated if an audit is conducted

Agency Evaluations and Other Reviews

The Evaluation Unit intends to initiate, perform, or complete a variety of evaluations and reviews of agency programs and operations. Other work may include follow-ups to completed projects, peer reviews of other OIGs, and unplanned evaluations or reviews, such as cross-functional projects that would require assistance from other OIG units.

| Agency Evaluations and Other Reviews Identified for Fiscal Year 2025 |
|---|
| Evaluation of Systems and Policies Related to Staff Misconduct |
| Peer Review of the Farm Credit Administration OIG |

Ongoing Evaluations or Reviews

OIG initiated the following evaluations and reviews in fiscal year 2024 which will generate final reports in fiscal year 2025:

- PC/Madagascar
- PC/Guyana
- Volunteer Delivery System

Investigation Unit

The Investigation Unit assists the Peace Corps in maintaining the integrity of its programs and operations. The Unit investigates allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, and misconduct involving grant, contract, and procurement fraud; violations of law and agency policies committed by Peace Corps personnel, contractors, and vendors; and the FECA⁵ claimants.

OIG investigations are conducted in accordance with the IG Act, the Attorney General Guidelines for Offices of Inspectors General with Statutory Law Enforcement Authority, and the Quality Standards for Investigations, as issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency and affirmed by CIGIE. OIG investigations can result in criminal prosecutions, monetary recoveries/penalties, sanctions, and personnel actions, including verbal counseling, suspensions, debarments, and terminations from Peace Corps service.

OIG is authorized by the Attorney General to exercise statutory law enforcement powers pursuant to Section 406(f) of the IG Act and in accordance with the Attorney General Guidelines for Offices of Inspector General with Statutory Law Enforcement Authority.

This authority provides OIG with important law enforcement tools, including the power to, upon probable cause, seek and execute arrest warrants, search premises or seize evidence, make arrests without a warrant while engaged in official duties, and carry firearms.

Investigative Priorities

With the Volunteers' return to service in the field, the Investigation Unit will be prioritizing its collaboration with many Peace Corps offices, including the Office of Victim Advocacy, the Office of Safety and Security, and the Compliance and Risk Office. OIG's investigative priorities are as follows:

- Strengthen OIG's engagement with stakeholders by providing them with briefings about OIG investigative responsibilities and processes for making confidential complaints
- Investigate allegations of violations of the Prosecutorial Remedies and Other Tools to end the Exploitation of Children Today Act⁶ committed by Peace Corps staff or by Volunteers
- Investigate allegations of sexual assault brought against Peace Corps staff or Volunteers
- Track any Volunteer complaints or allegations of Peace Corps staff misconduct, mismanagement, or policy violations; breaches of Volunteer confidentiality; and actions taken to assure the safety of Volunteers who file such complaints

⁵ The FECA program is authorized in statute at 5 U.S.C. Sections 8101 et seq

⁶ Pub. L. 108-21

- Provide technical assistance to partners and stakeholders on Volunteer deaths
- Ensure that allegations of whistleblower reprisal involving staff, Volunteers, and contractors are thoroughly investigated
- Investigate and refer crimes that occurred within the Special Maritime and Territorial Jurisdiction of the United States⁷ for U.S. prosecution
- When appropriate, seek local prosecutions by working with the Diplomatic Security Service and host country police entities
- Proactively work with the agency, the Audit and Evaluation Units, and external partners to review programs and contracts that are at high-risk for fraud, for example, FECA
- Refer individuals and entities for suspension and debarment, as appropriate
- Assist the agency with its applicant vetting processes by conducting name checks of returned and evacuated Volunteers

⁷ See generally 18 U.S.C. § 7. A number of U.S. criminal laws apply outside of the United States. In many cases, these laws are meant to apply to U.S. nationals who become a victim of crime abroad, or who are perpetrators of crimes abroad under certain conditions. Examples include when the crime is committed in a property owned, leased, or used for Government purposes, such as at a Peace Corps Post, training office, or similar site. Another circumstance relates to crimes occurring in residences used by the Peace Corps or its personnel, which may include residences where Volunteers or staff permanently reside.