

**Farmer-to-Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Assignment Summary**  |

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| Assignment code | ET87 |

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| Country | Ethiopia |
| Country Project | Horticultural Crops Production and Sector Support |
| Host Organization  | Adigrat University, College of Agriculture and Environmental Science |
| Assignment Title | Crop production improvement and seed selection |
| Assignment Preferred Dates | Flexible (March to June or Oct to Dec) |
| Objective Assignment | Crop production improvement and seed selection  |
| Desired Volunteer Skill/Expertise | Demonstrated experience and University graduate (PhD) in agriculture, crop and soil sciences |

1. **BACKGROUND**

Ethiopia faces critical challenges of increasing population pressure and low agricultural productivity which contributes to the country’s food insecurity and poor nutrition. To respond to the increasing need to feed the population as well as an ever greater demand for a balanced and healthy diet, there is a continuing need to increase crop productivity per unit area. Several studies have shown that global crop production needs to double by 2050 to meet the projected demands from rising population, diet shifts, and increasing biofuels consumption. Boosting crop yields to meet these rising demands, rather than clearing more land for agriculture has been highlighted as a preferred solution to meet this goal. To increase the crop production and achieve the national food needs, having qualified graduates would play a critical role.

Adigrat University is among the newly established public universities in the country. The University was established in 2011 with the intention of producing qualified graduates. The College of Agriculture & Environmental Science of Adigrat University is one of the six colleges and it pursues three interrelated pillars: training; on-farm research; and farming community service. The teaching and learning process aims to produce qualified agriculturalists. Despite this vision, the University lacks experienced professionals in some areas, especially in crop production improvement and seed selection as well as plant genetics and breeding.  Currently the college has under graduate and post graduate students within the five departments of Animal production and technology; Plant sciences; Natural resource management; Environmental sciences and Horticulture.

Seeds are fundamental to agriculture.  They are the starting point for the production of most crops and delivery system for advanced genetics. It is for this reason that the University requested CRS, Farmer-to-Farmer program for volunteer technical assistance on crop production improvement and seed selection. Previously the University received two volunteer on vegetable production and soil fertility management, and this crop production improvement is a follow on assignment.

1. **ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Ethiopia’s agriculture is complex, involving substantial variation in crops that are produced in the country. This presents its own challenges. There has been substantial progress in cereals production, in terms of area cultivated and volumes of yields since 2000. Yields per unit area remain low in comparison to international standards, and the production is highly susceptible to weather shocks, particularly droughts. Thus, both raising production levels and reducing its variability are essential aspects of improving food security in Ethiopia, both to help ensure adequate food availability, as well as to increase household incomes.

One of the major challenges of increasing agricultural productivity is limited genetic improvement of seed traits in crop. Land degradation is also a great threat for the future and it requires great effort and resources to make reverse this trend. For environmentally and socially sustainable development, there is an urgent need to promote awareness and understanding of the interdependence of natural, socioeconomic and political systems at local and national levels. To meet this demand, the university has been mandated to provide agriculture education and produce qualified agriculturalists that can address these development needs.

The University has identified lack of experience in modern skills and knowledge on crop production improvement and seed selection techniques as a major capacity gap. In addition, the college of agriculture needs advice on plant genetics and breeding. Then the trained professionals so as to raise the agricultural skill and knowledge base and satisfy the trained manpower needs of the nation and the region. Therefore, Adigrat University has requested a volunteer from the F2F Ethiopia Program who specializes in crop production improvement and seed selection. The volunteer specialist will train and technically assist targeted staff, students and smallholder farmers.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The objective of this particular volunteer assignment is to train staffs and students of Adigrat University, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, and also provide advice to smallholder farmers on crop production improvement and seed selection. The volunteer will assess current practices and recommend improved practices through a series of trainings and practical sessions.

Staff and student trainings will be conducted in the University and/or ADCS offices or the neighbouring district’s agricultural office. Smallholder farmers will be trained in nearby Farmer Training Centres (FTCs). Smallholder farmers will benefit from direct technical assistance during on-farm training sessions for community members. The volunteer will also conduct research mentoring and share his/her experience to the junior vegetable production researchers of the University.

**Host contribution** – The agricultural college and research division of the Adigrat University will support the volunteer in accomplishing her/his overall assignment. Adigrat University will assign an associate to the volunteer to accompany and advise her/him on the local situations in the University and the vegetable production areas of the targeted smallholder farmers.

The Adigrat University together with Adigrat Catholic Secretariat (ADCS) will select the DAs, CDWs and the smallholder farmers, and set up all training venues. Adigrat University will arrange transportation for on-farm field trips to communities and FTCs to serve the selected farmers. The university/ADCS will organize the volunteer’s hotel arrangements (lodging and meals), and ensure all required facilities are appropriate. CRS will cover lodging costs against receipts and provide per diem advances for meals.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

It is anticipated that this volunteer assignment will improve knowledge and skill of staffs, students and smallholder farmers thereby contribute for crop production improvement and able to understand the basic concept of seed that improve productivity. The trained manpower are expected to play their own role in ensuring food security and agricultural transformation in the country which is the number one priority for the country.

Anticipated results from the assignment include:

* + 20 smallholder farmers will be trained/technically assisted on crop production improvement technologies (the majority of selected farmers will be women)
	+ Five the University staff from College of Agriculture, 60 students and seven extension/development staff (CDWs/DAs) will be trained Training handouts will be prepared and delivered to the University and ADCS

The anticipated deliverables of the volunteer include:

* + Initial presentation is completed (outlines activities, plan, approach etc.)
	+ Training and on-farm/household technical assistance conducted
	+ Field report with recommendations is submitted and cash advance is reconciled
	+ Presentation to CRS staff and/or USAID
	+ Outreach events conducted upon return to the US.
1. **SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA**

| **Day** | **Activity** |
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| Days 1  | Arrival to Ethiopia. The volunteer will be met at Bole Airport by CRS’s client hotel Churchill (churchillhotel@ethionet.et / info@churchillhoteladdis; phone # 0111111212) or another client hotel with a placard bearing “CRS logo and volunteer name”.  |
| Day 2 | Introduction to CRS higher officials and briefing meeting (security, general orientation, logistic, reporting formats, etc.) at CRS office. Discuss anticipated outcomes and work plan. |
| Days 3 | * Air flight to Mekelle and car travel to Adigrat University (in Adigrat town).
* Introduce with Adigrat Catholic Secretariat staffs
* Briefing on the main objectives of the assignment and work planning session (adjust the agenda for the coming days) with the host in the presence of ADCS, the University and CRS.
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| Days 4 | * Further identify skill and training gaps through visiting and discussing with the university, college of agriculture.
* Based on information gathered and gaps identified, enrich the prepared training materials incorporating hands-on practices.
* Firsthand information/data collection by volunteers as applicable.
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| Day 5-7 | * Conduct training and presentation to the students and staff
* Assess and refine the quality of trainings through feedback and observations.
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| **Day 8** | **Rest day.**  |
| Days 9-14 | Continuation of the trainings and technical assistance  |
| **Day 15** | **Rest Day** |
| Day 16-18 | Continuation of the trainings and technical assistance |
| Day 19 | * Group debriefing presentation to the university in the presence of CRS.
* Volunteer fly back to Addis Ababa.
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| Day 20 | * Finalize reimbursement expenditures and liquidations (if any) with finance.
* Finalizes his/her report and submit training M&E forms to CRS F2F staff.
* Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff
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| Day 21 | * Depart for USA (evening hours)
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| TBD | Outreach event when back in the US could include: presentation with a local group/organization, press release, media event and/or speaking tour. |

1. **DESIRABLE VOLUNTEER SKILLS**

The volunteer will have the following qualifications and competencies:

* Expert Educator with practical teaching experience in crop production improvement, crop breeding and genetics
* Good communicator and interpersonal skills
* Experience in farming (for the hands on training)
* Willingness and interest to train and technically assist University staff and students
* Willingness to travel in rural areas and in areas of small-scale farming
* Respect for the cultural and religious norms of the rural people.

1. **ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**
* Before travelling to the assignment place, the volunteer will stay in Addis Ababa at one of the CRS’s client hotels, Churchhill or another hotel that will be booked and confirmed before the volunteer arrival date. The hotel has rooms that include services such as airport pickup and drop-off, breakfast, wireless internet, etc.
* The hotel or CRS will arrange a vehicle for short travel from the hotel to CRS and vice versa while in Addis Ababa.
* All required materials will be prepared ahead of time and provided to the volunteer. CRS Ethiopia will provide the volunteer with a laptop computer (if s/he needs), local internet dongle (modem/EVDO) and mobile phone with a charged local SIM-card. Any other required logistics and facilities can also be requested by the volunteer during her/his stay in Addis Ababa.
* CRS will provide a vehicle and accompany the volunteer to the place of assignment.
* During her/his assignment period, the volunteer will be booked in a hotel at Adigrat town.
* CRS Ethiopia will arrange hotel accommodations and cover the lodging bills against receipts.
* CRS HQ will provide the volunteer with a per-diem advance to cater meals and incidences.
* CRS Ethiopia will also reimburse the volunteer with laundry costs against receipts.
* Before departing from Ethiopia, the volunteer will liquidate any advances received in Ethiopia.
* For more information, please refer to country information that will be provided.
1. **RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**
* Although CRS F2F has developed this SOW, the volunteer can fine-tune through her/his professional qualifications to successfully carry out this assignment.
* The assignment site is adjacent to dry lowland (hot) areas where malaria may be a problem. Therefore, the volunteer is advised to take pills or vaccination for malaria and (maybe also for cholera) as per medical recommendations by her/his doctors/health professionals in US before departing from US.
* Prior to travel, the volunteer is advised to prepare necessary training and demonstration aids and written handouts. Softcopies of the handouts and any other paper materials can be printed for immediate use at the CRS office in Addis Ababa on request by the volunteer.
* If the volunteer requires simple training aids like flip charts, markers or tape s/he should make the request and collect from the CRS office in Addis Ababa prior to travel to the assignment place.
* Translation of handouts to the local language can be done in the locality of the assignment, if required.
* Depending on the meeting places and availability of electric power and LCD projector, the volunteer may use a laptop and projector for power point presentations.
1. **KEY CONTACTS**

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| **CRS Baltimore** | **CRS East Africa Regional Office** |
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| **Host Organization** |
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