 

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Summary Information** |
| Assignment Code | ET45 |
| Country | Ethiopia |
| Country Project | Grain Crops Production and Sector Support |
| Host Organization | MCS- Shashamene Area Coordination Office, Food Security and Rural Development Project |
| Host Partner | Meki Catholic Secretariat (MCS) |
| Assignment Title | Agronomical knowledge/skill transfer on maize and other short rainfall planted grains (grain legumes, cereals)  |
| Assignment preferred dates | March 15th- April 8th, 2015 |
| Assignment Objective | Equip smallholder farmers and their actors with innovative agronomic practices and technologies as well as helpful oversee experiences |
| Desired volunteer skill/expertise | Agronomist and/or crop extension specialist with demonstrated experience in up-to-date maize and other grains crops technologies focusing the smallholder subsistence farmers |

1. **BACKGROUND**

The Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) East Africa program is a program that leverages US volunteer’s expertise to assist small holder farmers and small scale processors in East Africa to improve their business practices through volunteer assignments conducted with host organizations. Through F2F intervention, CRS will improve the livelihoods and nutritional status of significant numbers of low income households by: i) broadening their participation in established commodity value chains as producers and service providers; ii) strengthening community resilience to shocks such as droughts, that adversely affect livelihoods; and iii) preserving/enhancing natural resources upon which most rural communities depend. As an important corollary result through the program, CRS will also increase the American public’s understanding of international development programs and foster increased cross-cultural understanding between host countries and US volunteers.

Ethiopia is one of the largest grain producers in Africa; yet, there are still pockets of food insecurity caused by low productivity aggravated by increasing rate of population pressure, and uneven distribution of grains from surplus to deficit areas. Low use of modern crop technologies and agricultural inputs, inappropriate cropping system and poor mechanization together with fragmented land cultivation system are key causes of low crop productivity. For instance, Ethiopian smallholding farmers are among the lowest users of fertilizer and improved seeds in Sub-Saharan Africa[[1]](#footnote-1). Most grain producers in Ethiopia are smallholder farmers whose average land holding is less than a hectare per household[[2]](#footnote-2).

Grain farming in Ethiopia is predominately rain-fed and farming is mainly subsistence. Ploughing is normally done by oxen pulled traditional plowing implements locally called ‘*maresha*’ and farmers use both hand tools and oxen for their farming operations. Sowing is usually done when the soil moisture is sufficient for seed germination.

The MCS-Shashamene Area Coordination Office is implementing a food security and rural development project (FSRDP) in Shashamene and adjacent districts, but recognizes that it lacks knowledge and experience in grain agronomy. It is for this reason that they are partnering CRS’s F2F program to support its smallholder famer beneficiaries in Shashamene and Shala maize belt districts. These two districts are located in West-Arsi zone, Oromia region, one of the four USAID’s Feed-the-Future (FtF) and Agricultural Growth Program-I (AGP-1) regions of the Ethiopian government. This volunteer assignment proposes to train and directly assist smallholder farmers on improved maize and other cereal production technologies during the short rains planting season in March and April.

1. **ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

The major production constraints faced by smallholder farmers are poor land preparation, intercropping and crop rotation systems, insufficient water conservation practices, lack of knowledge on plant water requirements, poor soil fertility management, ineffective traditional pest control practices and little knowledge of farm planning. Crop production practices are dominated by relatively low levels of production technologies.

The knowledge-based intervention will introduce new agronomic technologies to the farmers as well as to selected training of trainers that include community development workers (CDWs) associated with the host and locally-based government development agents (DAs). Smallholder farmers in this region normally grow hybrid and non-hybrid maize as well as varieties of wheat and grain legumes with little intercropping and crop rotation practices. Grain legumes are considered a cash crop and protein sources for many poor farmers.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The objective of this assignment is to train and directly assist on modern crop technologies and practices for maize (corn) and other grain crops that would be planted during the upcoming short rainfall (*belg*) season of Ethiopia (March and April months).

The beneficiaries of this assignment will be 70 subsistence smallholder farmers (direct beneficiaries) and 5 trainers (CDWs, DAs and other grain experts through a training of trainers mechanism).

The volunteer will provide training and practical technical assistances on the following major topics/fields, but not limited to:

* + - Seed quality and seeding methods (proper seed handling, preparation and use of clean seeds, varietal selection, seeding rate, seed planting/spacing, etc);
		- Farm tillage and proper land preparation methods using local plowing equipment that might need to introduce possible ways of modernizing or attaching with accessible plowing
		- Modern and recommended agronomy technologies, intercropping and crop rotation practices, recommendations of the optimum plant density, pattern, relative time of planting and variety of options of intercropped crops;
		- Integrated soil and water conservation/management practices including conservation tillage (as applicable), moisture conservation, crop water requirement, etc;
		- Fertilizer application (appropriate type, rates, time and methods of fertilizer application);
		- Use of organic soil fertilizers and their management (compositing, mulching, manure, etc);
		- Use of preventive and early season pest control practices including integrated pest management (IPM), biological, cultural and physical methods;
		- Overall farm planning and crop calendaring;

During the first couple of days of her/his assignment, the volunteer will also assess missing gaps and refine training and technical assistance accordingly.

**Host Contribution**: - The host will select farmers from its beneficiaries and mobilize communities to set up training venues. The host will also avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer at all times in assisting her/him during training, visiting sessions (in FTCs, on-farm/HHs, etc), and also to ensure translation to local language. The host will also select CDWs and DAs for this training, and make arrangements if prior scheduled training forums by local agriculture office are schedule to enable the volunteer present as many DAs as possible. The host will also provide the volunteer with office space and furniture. In consultation with CRS, it will also facilitate booking of hotel accommodation (lodging) possibly at Haile’s resort in Shashamene town, and also facilitate the volunteer for her/his meal services. For field travel in the assignment area, the host will provide the volunteer with transport. The host will consult CRS if fuel cost can be covered in mode of fuel receipts, mileage or any convenient ways as per the financial/administrative regulation of CRS.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

From this volunteer assignment, it is anticipated that (but not limited to):

* 75 beneficiaries (52% women) are trained and technically assisted on up-to-date agronomical technologies;
* The grains covered by this training and technical assistances (maize and others as applicable) will result in improved productivity,
* Locally adaptable and helpful oversees’ experiences are transferred and adopted for better productivity, income and livelihood,
* Preferably, training handouts/guidelines (for TOTs) is developed by the volunteer and submitted,

The anticipated deliverables by the volunteer include:

* Agronomical training and technical assistance conducted;
* Initial presentation (outlines/list of activities, plan, approach, etc.) prepared and presented as per the templets;
* If possible, handouts (especially for TOTs) developed and submitted;
* Field trip reports with recommendations to host organization and CRS are submitted;
* All logistics and advances (if any) are reconciled at CRS;
* Final debriefing (PPT presentation) with host organization (plus key stakeholders) and CRS/USAID conducted;
* Outreach events conducted upon return to the US by the volunteer.
1. **SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN ETHIOPIA**

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| **Day** | **Activity** |
| Day 1 | Arrival into Ethiopia. The volunteer will be met by a CRS representative or hotel staff from Sor-Amba ([www.sorambahoteladdis](http://www.sorambahoteladdis)) hotel with a placard bearing “**CRS logo and volunteer name”**.  |
| Day 2 | * Introduction with and welcoming by CRS higher officials and briefing meeting (security, general orientation, logistic, reporting formats, etc) at CRS office. Discuss anticipated outcomes and work plan
* If time permits, vehicle travel to Shashamene (250 km) accompanied by CRS staff and accommodated at SCS’ guesthouse
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| Day 3 | * Briefing on the main objectives and modality of the assignment and adjust the agenda for the coming days (work planning session). Briefing and debriefing with the field staff
* Conduct first hand staff orientation for relevant staff of SCS and key personnel of agriculture, research and other key stakeholders as required.
* The volunteer assess grain crops’ challenges focusing on seasonal activities
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| Day 4 | * Based on information gathered and gaps identified, refine training materials, and pretest with model staff and selected farmers, fields, equipment, etc
* Commence firsthand training and technical assistances
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| Day 5-7 | **Training and technical assistances**: utilizing the variously prepared methods and approaches (training, on-farm & household visit, show-up, demonstrations, individual and group contact & discussion, etc). Such activities will be complemented by information/data collection by volunteers as applicable.  |
| **Days 8** | **Rest day:** |
| Day 9-14 | Training and technical assistance continued |
| **Day 15** | **Rest day** |
| Day 16-21 | Training and technical assistance continue |
| **Day 22** | **Rest day** |
| Day 23 | Training and technical assistance continue |
| Day 24  | * Group debriefing presentation to the host in the presence of CRS.
* Volunteer travels back to Addis Ababa.
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| Day 25 | * Finalize reimbursement expenditures and liquidations (if any) with finance.
* Volunteer also finalizes his/her reporting and submit training M&E forms to CRS F2F staff.
* Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff
* Depart for the US
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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 VOLUNTEERS SKILLS**

The volunteer will have the following qualifications and competencies:

* Proven skills in modern farming practices for smallholder farmers (hybrid maize/corn, seed system, varietal development, crop rotation, intercropping, soil fertility, conservation, etc);
* Demonstrated skills and experience in crop technologies and practices focusing maize (corn) and other grains under rain fed agriculture
* Experience working with diverse teams in multicultural communities,
* Willingness to travel in rural areas and on-farm fields,

**G. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

Before travelling to the assignment location, the volunteer will stay in Addis Ababa at one of the CRS’s client hotels, Sor-Amba Hotel ([www.sorambahoteladdis](http://www.sorambahoteladdis)) or another hotel that will be booked and confirmed before the arrival date. In Addis Ababa, the hotel accommodation includes services such as airport pickup and drop-off, breakfast and wireless internet connectivity. The hotel or CRS will arrange a vehicle for short travel from the hotel to CRS and vice versa while in Addis Ababa. During her/his assignment period, the volunteer will be booked in a hotel at Shasamene town.

All required materials will be prepared ahead of time and will be 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 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.

Others:

* CRS Ethiopia will arrange hotel accommodation 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 also liquidate if s/he received any advances in Ethiopia.
1. **RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**
* The volunteer can fine-tune the Scope of Work based on her/his professional qualifications to successfully carry out this nutrition training program.
* Prior to travel, the volunteer is advised to prepare necessary training and demonstration aids and written handouts. Soft copies of the handouts and any other paper materials can be printed for at the CRS office in Addis Ababa on request by the volunteer.
* If the volunteer requires use of simple training aids like flip charts, markers and tape, s/he should make the request and collect from the CRS office at 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 electricity and LCD projector, the volunteer may use a laptop and projector for PowerPoint presentations.
1. **KEY CONTACTS**

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1. *Global Agricultural Information Network, 2012, Gain Report # ET 120, Ethiopia Grain and Feed Annual Report.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Paul Dorosh and Shahidur. 2012. “Food and Agriculture in Ethiopia.” Progress and policy challenge* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)