 

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

**NOTE: THIS SCOPE OF WORK IS A DRAFT AWAITING EDITS**

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| **Assignment Summary** | |
| **Assignment Code** | **TZ62 SOW** |
| Country | Tanzania |
| Country Project | Tanzania F2F Horticulture project |
| Host Organization | Pearl Foods Ltd, A Cheetah Development Company |
| Assignment Title | Agronomic TOT to Benefit Maize & Potato Farmers in Iringa, TZ |
| Assignment objective | Train Pearl Foods staff on improved agronomic practices specific to the growing environment for maize and potato farmers in the Iringa area using a Training of Trainers approach to benefit the smallholder farmers we work with |
| Desired skills | Agronomist with extensive background in maize/corn and potato growing; preferably an extension specialist with a talent for training, particularly TOT training approaches |
| Assignment preferred dates | Mid-January 2016 |

1. **Background:**

The Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) East Africa program is a program that uses short-term US volunteer 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. The goal of the (F2F) grains project is to increase incomes and improve nutritional status of Tanzanian smallholder farmers through; smallholder farmers increased productivity of agricultural crops, improved access to and utilization of markets and credit and preservation and enhanced natural resources upon which target communities depend. The program reaches out and establishes partnership with like- minded organizations, the latest been Cheetah Development.

Cheetah Development is a US-based impact investor headquartered in the US with a registered entity – Cheetah Development of Tanzania – based in Iringa, TZ. Cheetah funds the establishment of agricultural companies using a micro-venture capital model. Established companies are launched that target specific weaknesses in agricultural value chains that are not being addressed by other companies. Cheetah Development USA manages two funds: one is an equity fund for starting up new value chain companies, and the second is a collateral fund used as a guarantee fund when working with lending organizations (banks and MFIs).

The first portfolio company that Cheetah established is Pearl Foods Ltd, a comprehensive farmer services company that provides services and linkages to smallholder maize and potato farmers. Pearl Foods (PF) provides a variety of trainings to farmers and connects them with input and seed suppliers as well as lenders who finance the seeds and inputs. PF is a for-profit company that generates income by charging a modest fee for service provision of seeds/inputs and links to lenders at the beginning of the growing season, and charges another fee during the harvest and collection period for provision of transport, crop offtaking, and other services related to crop collection. PF collects and aggregates the crops grown by farmers and is then able to arrange attractive purchase price from large-scale buyers. Farmers pay off their loans by selling their crops through PF, and any additional crop sold beyond the value of their loan is shared back as profit. This makes selling to PF preferable to middlemen who often take advantage of the fact that smallholder farmers are not always savvy when it comes to selling.

PF works with approximately 1,000 maize farmers and roughly 350 potato farmers, though for the 2015-2016 season the company hopes to double those numbers. Farmers generally grow on 1-3 acres and without any external help a farmer will produce 5-6 bags (weighing between 100kg - 130 kgs). Through the Pearl Foods support however, it has been possible for farmers to increase maize yields to 17-24 bags and more (weighing between 100kg - 130 kgs) with some maize farmers attaining a 10 fold growth. Linking farmers with high quality inputs and seeds and then also showing them the means to pay for all the inputs via a lender, and then making sure farmers get proper training to use the agro-inputs has resulted in this re-sounding success. PF works with farmers that are organized into groups of 30-50 people, comprised of teams of 4-6 people. The social pressure of the team and group structure helps ensure timely repayments. Loan repayment in 2014 was 95% for maize farmers. PF has an ambitious growth objective of serving 20,000 smallholders within 5 years.

**B: ISSUE DESCRIPTION:**

Smallholder farmers are most often financially poor and not well educated. They also generally practice more traditional forms of agriculture and cannot afford inputs without either taking a loan or a significant cash outlay. In either case, farmers usually don’t have the practical or theoretical knowledge that is used to increase yields and generate more income. PF has a tremendous impact on farmers through provision of the aforementioned services, but improvements are possible if PF hires and trains agronomists that can help farmers during all stages of the agricultural growing process. PF recently hired1 staff agronomist (and plans to hire 1-2 more). The new hire has not attained the skill level that would allow him to offer highly specific planting and growing recommendations that can help increase yields. Staff members are relatively young (almost all under 30 years old) and not everyone has a strong educational background in agriculture and also do not have skills on adult training methodology for effective farmer learning. Furthermore, input suppliers, such as Syngenta (who provide some seeds, fertilizers, and chemicals to our farmers), do provide trained agronomists to farmers at no cost, but their recommendations are targeted specifically on supporting their products and may not always be suited for smallholder farmers (think product mix and quantities). Furthermore, traditional growing techniques still practiced by many farmers can be counterproductive to productivity and these practices are difficult to train farmers away from.

Smallholder farmers in the villages where we operate are receptive to outsiders from the West coming to teach new practices, so we don’t anticipate any tension as long as farmers are treated respectfully and with patience.

**C: OBJECTIVE OF THE ASSIGNMENT-**

Pearl Foods’ objective is to train its staff and newly hired agronomists on improved agronomic practices specific to the growing environment for maize and potato farmers in the Iringa area using a Training of Trainers approach to benefit the smallholder farmers we work with.

Sustainability is the key to our approach, so we would like the focus to be on training PF staff who can then impart this knowledge on our current and future farmers as well as future team members. This TOT approach will maximize the number of people trained. We anticipate a mixture of classroom style training as well as on-the-ground training in the field with our farmers. Once staffs have been trained, we would like the volunteer to test our staff (paper tests as well as field tests, including giving an actual training to farmers witnessed by the volunteer).

We are looking to offer our farmers advice from a neutral perspective (as opposed to agronomists from agro-input suppliers on how to maximize yields and protect crops using resources locally available. We are also looking for the volunteer to assess traditional maize and potato growing techniques to determine which practices are acceptable and which should be abandoned. We would also appreciate that the volunteer share on the production best practices and effective extension methodologies as practiced in the USA but tailored to the small scale farmer.

**D: ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT –** what would be expected as a result of the training -

* 15 Pearl Foods staff receive practical and classroom training on improved agronomic practices for potatoes and maize
* 15 Pearl Foods staff receive training on extension best practices for small scale farmers
* 15 Pearl Foods staff and agronomists establish demonstration plots for maize and potatoes for continuous learning for farmers
* PF agronomists develop work plans /schedules to reach target farmers in the Kilolo district in Iringa Region, reaching out to at least 2,000 farmers per year (with significant growth in farmer numbers over the next 5 years)
* Training manual that has wide application in the country and in other countries with similar environment developed
* Staff receive a list of resources for accessing relevant agronomic information in the future
* Volunteer advises on next steps for furthering our efforts on the objectives of the assignment

**E: SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY IN TANZANIA-**

The host would prefer to flesh this out once the skills and background of proposed volunteer (s) are determined. Opportunity to provide their feedback on amount of time needed for training and developing the manual will be offered to the volunteer/s identified for the assignment. Below is an indicative schedule that just gives some guide

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| **Day** | **Activity** |
| Day 1 | Travel from home to US international airport |
| Day 2 | Arrival in Dar es Salaam JKN airport. The volunteer will be picked from the airport by a designated cab and driven to the Amariah Hotel and Boutique |
| Day 3 | At around 09.00 am the volunteer will visit with the CRS office for logistics and briefing and then travel to Iringa |
| Day 4 | Upon arrival in Iringa, the first day would be spent with Marco and Edwin (Director of Pearl Foods in TZ) to go over assignment objectives, determine what’s achievable, and spending time with PF field staff to assess their knowledge and gaps. |
| Day 5-6 | Field visit to understand local agricultural context for maize & potato farmers |
| **Day 7** | **Rest** |
| Day 8-9 | Preparation of training program |
| Day 10-11 | Implement office and field trainings for crop 1 |
| Day 12-13 | Implement office and field trainings for crop 2 |
| **Day 14** | **Rest** |
| Day 15 | Testing of PF staff on what they learned |
| Day 16-18 | Creation of manuals and other training material |
| Day 19 | Wrap-up with Cheetah & Pearl Foods staff and work on assignment related docs |
| Day 20 | Travel back to Dar es Salaam from Iringa, check in Amariah Hotel and Boutique |
| **Day 21** | **Rest** |
| Day 22 | Volunteer will finalize his/her reporting for CRS office; provide feed-back on assignment and clear financial advances.  Depart for USA evening |
| TBD | Outreach event when back in the US |

**F. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEER SKILLS-** what skills and experience are we looking for with this expert

* An agronomist and/or extension specialist with experience in either maize or potatoes, or preferably someone with a high degree of knowledge of both
* Knowledge of agriculture in the Tanzanian or East African context (or similar developing country environment)
* Understanding of different types of agricultural practices, including more conventional approaches as well as innovative practices such as low or no till
* Demonstrated experience in successfully carrying out TOT approach, particularly in the developing country context
* Prior travel to Africa or other developing country and understanding/familiarity with cultural differences
* High level of comfort with ambiguity and ability to adapt to changing circumstances
* Patience, fortitude, and sense of humor are crucial to succeeding in this environment!

**G: ACCOMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS-**

In Dar es Salaam the Volunteer will stay at the Amariah Boutique Hotel nearby the CRS offices, located on Dr. Kairuki Road, Mikocheni, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, ‏‎0044 203 564 5228 while in Iringa Cheetah Development will provide accommodation at Cheetah House. This is a 3-bedroom standalone house about 15 mins walking from the Cheetah office. Volunteer would have his/her own bedroom and access to a full kitchen. One bedroom has its own toilet and there is a second shared toilet; shower is also shared. No TV but there is wireless Internet, though service is not always reliable. A housecleaner comes 2-3 times per week to do basic cleaning and also laundry (by hand). Bedroom door can be locked if you don’t want your room cleaned. There is no guard at the house but location is in the more affluent neighbourhood called Gangilonga. Marco Johnson, President of Pearl Foods, lives at Cheetah House.

There are 3-4 Western style restaurants within a 10 minute walk of Cheetah House, which are frequented by foreigners and tourists.

There are several banks (including Barclays) with reliable ATMs.

Cheetah will provide local ground transportation to/from office and to field sites.

**H: RECOMMENDED ASSIGNEMENT PREPARATION-** CRS will fill this part

**I: KEY CONTACTS**

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