

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Summary Information** |
| Assignment Code: | UG39 |
| Country: | Uganda |
| Country Project: | Maize Country Project |
| Host organization: | Bugaya Area Cooperative Enterprise ( BACE) |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance: | *Technology Transfer (T)*  |
| Type of Value Chain Activity: | *On Farm Production (F)* |
| Preferred assignment dates: | August-September,2015 |
| Objective: | 1. Equip BACE members with knowledge and skills on soil conservation practices for reduced soil erosion and enhance soil fertility.
2. Recommend appropriate and practical practices for making compost manure
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| Desirable Volunteer Knowledge and Skills:  | * Specialized expertise in soil management systems (for crop production in tropical conditions)
* Formal qualifications in Crops Agronomy/Soil Management and Plant growth conditions (preferably cereal/grain crops)
* Wide experiences in cereal/grain crops production (including maize) acquired through either own farming activities or working with farmers/farms
* Other knowledge/skill areas may include soil fertility and productivity management in tropical conditions; good field/extension experience with excellent- hands-on training and communication skills gained with mixed adult (rural) audiences (women, men, youths)
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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, 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. CRS will also increase the American public’s understanding of international development programs and foster increased cross-cultural understanding between host countries/communities and US volunteers.

Maize is the 3rd most important cereal crop after sorghum and millet in Uganda. Maize is gradually becoming a very important cereal in Uganda in terms of area under cultivation, production and human consumption. . In an average year, maize acreage accounts for about 10 percent of the total area under annual crops and maize consumption accounts for about 12 percent of cereals consumption (MAAIF & UBOS, 2000). It is mainly produced by small holders using hand tools and little or no purchased inputs. The low level of technology used in production means that the yields are low and the production process is aimed mainly at providing subsistence requirements with very little surplus for sale.

Maize yields are still low averaging about 1.3 tonnes per hectare as compared to the yield potential of about 3-4 tonnes per hectare. Low yields are attributed to low technology inputs, heavy reliance on natural conditions, traditional production systems e.g. use of farm saved seed and rudimentary tools, lower producer knowledge of proper agronomic practices, high post-harvest losses, deteriorating land resources, poor market linkages and lack of credit access.

The technical assistance being sought after will focus on deteriorating land resources. Soil is a critical component of crop production. Crops depend on soil for both physical support and physiological purposes whereby the soil provides the water and nutrients necessary for best possible performance. Soil management is critical for optimum soil productivity and is therefore a key element in crop production.

**ISSUE DESCRIPTION**.

Bugaya Area Cooperative Enterprise (BACE) started in 2002 as a savings and credit association (SACCO) and later transformed into an area cooperative enterprise in 2005. The cooperative is legally registered under the Uganda cooperative alliance, with a membership of 1,087 farmers 47% being female, all originating from 8 RPOs (Rural Producer Organisations). Currently, BACE offers a range of services to its member farmers which include; collective bulking and marketing of farmers’ produce, purchase of quality inputs (Seeds and fertilizers) and offering them in form of input loans to farmers, acting as guarantors for farmers to access loans from the SACCO, and Maize milling and packaging. The focus of the cooperative is to be a model for the farmers in serving their interests and act as a focal point for disseminating modern agricultural technologies.

The **main challenge:** A major problem facing areas already under cultivation by BACE is soil degradation and loss of soil fertility due to misuse of agricultural land. Crop yields have declined from 7,000kgs per acres to less than 4,000kgs per acre in the recent past based on the information gathered from farmers. Soil conservation in the past was commonly focusing on soil erosion control. Today, soil conservation encompasses a more comprehensive and more positive for sustained improvement complemented by the preservation of the available resources thus requiring soil conservation not a mere technical problem alone. BACE farmers’ soils have been depleted for a long time and have since lost productivity.

**Causes of main challenge** – BACE’s several practices in agriculture have contributed to the degradation of the previously fertile land partly due to ignorance. Bad cropping patterns, unsuitable cultivation techniques, removal of organic manure in pretext of land clearing by grass burning, swamp reclamation are some of the practices that have exacerbated the current situation.

In addition, routine crop production practices involve removing weeds, mixing soil amendments like fertilizers, shaping the soil into rows and preparing the surface for seeding. Farmers using conventional tillage practices till the soil regularly and inevitably disturb the soil in various ways. Hence in spite of its continued use and relevance in crop production systems, particularly among farmers in developing countries, conventional or intensive tillage is associated with negative effects in relation to soil building properties. These include, among others, increased evaporation rates, increases in water runoff and soil erosion, reduction in organic matter content, reduced biological activity in the soil and increased soil compaction.

It is because of the drudgery of the low soil productivity hence low yields and the rising changes in climate that the members of BACE have expressed the need for a volunteer assignment on soil conservation.

1. **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The objective of this volunteer assignment is to provide a road map for Bugaya Area Cooperative Enterprise members for addressing challenges of soil degradation in a sustainable manner using locally available resources at farm levels.

The specific activities will include technical support in the areas of:

1. Demonstration or Making compost manure using locally available materials and develop a manual for the procedures.
2. Use of intercropping in soil fertility conservation
3. Promote use of chemical selected fertilizers in maintaining soil fertility as farmers have negative perception of use of fertilizers.
4. Introduce minimum tillage as a measure to enhance soil conservation
5. Create awareness on other soil erosion control measures

The volunteer will provide training on the above mentioned topics to extension personnel of each of the 8 Rural Producer Organizations (RPOs); these will act as ToTs to carry on with the training after volunteer assignment. The training will also include representative farmers from each of the RPOs, a total of 30 – 40 farmers per training day. It is anticipated that this activity will take about 2 days at each RPO. The volunteer is expected to train at least 80 people. The farmer selection criteria will be based on their ability to train others.

The specificities of the training activities will be discussed with CRS staff and BACE upon volunteer’s arrival and activities adjustment can be made in arrangement with the host, but the deliverables and results will remain.

The majority of training participants are illiterate or semi-illiterate, the volunteer is advised prepare training materials with this in mind. Focus will be on practical demonstrations, pictorials, illustrations and less theory. Training venues are usually at a school, in a local church or under the tree/shade or in the garden.

**Host contribution** - BACE has committed to mobilize the RPOs members to attend the trainings. The host will also, avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and actual trainings, to ensure that key staff are trained and will continue training other farmers even after the assignment is completed. The host will also provide translation services.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

The anticipated deliverables include:

* Trainings conducted and people trained
* Compost manual developed
* Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment
* Field trip report and expense report
* Outreach activity, press release or a media event back in US
1. **SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN UGANDA**

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| Day | Activity |
| Day 1:  | Travel from home to US international airport |
| Day 2  | Arrival at Uganda Entebbe Airport, picked by hotel shuttle to Kampala and check in at Fairway Hotel. |
| Day 3 | At 9.00 am the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter taken to CRS office for briefing and finalise with logistics. Any necessary training material will be prepared at CRS offices before travel to the field.  |
| Day 4 | Travel to Kamuli district to commence the assignment.  |
| Day 5 | In the morning CRS introduces the volunteer to the BACE management team and board members.Together with CRS and the management, the volunteer will review the SOW and develop the action plan. In the afternoon, Visit some of the members to familiarise with current agronomic practices. |
| Days 6- 8 | Demonstrations at 1st and 2nd RPO  |
| Days 9-11 | Demonstrations at3rd and 4th and RPO |
| Days 12-14 | Demonstrations at 5th and 6th RPO |
| Days 15-17 | Demonstrations at 7th and 8th RPO |
| Days 18- 20 | Training ToTs ( Representatives from each of the RPOs- Model farmers) |
| Days 21-22 | Develop a training guide/ manual together with them for future demonstrations |
| Day 23 | Wrap up meetings, whilst emphasizing key concepts of the assignment. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations. End of assignment presentation. |
| Day 24 | Travel back to Kampala  |
| Day 25 | Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff.Volunteer finalizes his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well as finalise liquidations with finance. |
| Day 26 | Depart for the US |
| TBD | Outreach event in the US |

1. **ACCOMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa ([www.fairwayhotel.co.ug](http://www.fairwayhotel.co.ug)). In Kamuli, the volunteer will stay at Century Hotels Ltd or any other hotel that will be communicated by CRS staff. The volunteer will be provided with an internet modem and a cell phone for entire duration of the assignment.

CRS will pay for hotel accommodation, and provide the volunteer with per diems to cater for meals and other incidentals. All advances received by the volunteer will have to be cleared before departing from Uganda. For more information, please refer to the country information that will be provided.

1. **RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION**
* The volunteer should prepare materials for hand-outs, which can be printed at CRS office in Kampala before commencement of the assignment. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations. Depending on the training venue the volunteer may use a laptop and projector for power point presentations. However if the training venue is in the community, it will be difficult to use PowerPoint. In this case the volunteer will be expected to prepare training materials and have hand-outs printed at CRS offices for distribution to the participants.
* CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer becomes familiar with the maize country project description prior to arrival in the country as well as country information that will be provided.
1. **KEY CONTACTS**

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