

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Summary Information** |
| Assignment Code: | UG41 |
| Country: | Uganda |
| Country Project: | Maize Country Project |
| Host organization: | Namungalwe Area Cooperative Enterprise (NACE) |
| Assignment title: | Business Plan Development |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance: | *Business/Enterprise Development (E)*  |
| Type of Value Chain Activity: | *Information and Input Support Services (S)* |
| Preferred assignment dates: | April – May, 2015 |
| Objective: | 1. Assist the ACE board and staff to develop a business plan
2. Training farmers on records keeping, the type of records to keep and the importance of keeping such records
3. Practical illustrations and practice with farm record keeping templates with the participants
4. Conducting a cost benefit analysis and profit determination in farming for business
5. Emphasize the importance of farm records and review of the inventory books at RPO level
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| Desirable Volunteer Knowledge and Skills:  | * Formal qualifications in agribusiness, farm business management and production economics are desirable.
* Good knowledge on smallholder subsistence and semi-commercial agriculture in developing tropical countries.
* Experience with developing farm business plans as well as strategic planning for farmer cooperatives.
* Experience in working with smallholder grain farmers and farmers’ organisations.
* Good writing and analytical skills, interpersonal communication and presentation skills (adult education skills).
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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 F2F program will also increase the American public’s understanding of international development programs and foster increased cross-cultural understanding between host countries and US volunteers.

Maize has become a major part of the Ugandan farming systems, ranking first in importance among the main cereal crops (maize, millet and sorghum) grown in the country. Small-scale farmers have traditionally cultivated maize for food and for income generation. Uganda’s maize yield levels are low and generally range between 1.0 and 1.8 metric tons/hectare. There is however great potential to increase the profitability and productivity of maize through smallholder farmers, by improving farmers capacity to conduct farming as a business.

There are several constraints to maize value chain identified limiting the productivity and ability for smallholders to earn incomes from maize farming including low producer knowledge of good agronomic practices, limited accessibility to improved varieties of seed maize, high post-harvest losses, weak maize producer associations, deteriorating land resources, poor market linkages and credit access. For the purpose of this assignment, the focus will be on helping the ACE board and staff to develop a business plan by strengthening Namungalwe Area Cooperative Enterprise (ACE) in farm business development. Namungalwe ACE smallholder farmers’ face inability to commercialize their farm operations since they do not keep records, plan their farming businesses due to lack of appropriate skills.

**B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

In Iganga, farmers grow maize and groundnuts for subsistence and cash. A **major challenge** with most of Namungalwe’s RPOs is that they do not keep records, and therefore cannot easily determine the profitability of their enterprises. The failure to keep records is due to rural farmers’ lack of relevant skills necessary to operate farm enterprises on business principles. This has culminated in farming being primarily for subsistence, and only secondarily for cash. At the RPO level, the leadership received inventory books to assist in streamlining the record keeping system, however the books are not put to use simply because there is lack of understanding for their significance and how this affects business decisions at the cooperative level.

In order to be competitive and to take advantage of the new market opportunities that are arising owing to improved storage, population growth, improved transport and ICT, farmers have to increasingly adapt to farming as a business.

Related challenges are that farmers generally lack knowledge in enterprise selection, enterprise budgeting, farm business planning, the role of appropriate technology (such as use of improved seeds and complementary inputs) in profit maximization, importance of functional linkages (such as input and output markets, credit and extension services) in sustaining the farm business, business performance assessment, risk management, and how various farming or business enterprises interact with each other to enhance production.

Once the members are able to view farming in a business sense, it’s imperative that Namungalwe ACE develops a business plan that will guide the organisations and lay down strategies, financial forecasts and available/possible financing options to achieve set objectives. The ACE lacks expertise to develop such a document.

1. **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The overall aim of approaching farming as a business is to increase the incomes of the rural poor, or to put more money in the farmers’ pockets and into the rural economy. This will enable them to improve their standards of living in terms of housing, food security and basic household needs. Namungalwe ACE has requested for a F2F volunteer to assist the organization in improving farm business skills and in turn empower the farmers to operate their maize farming as a business. This is in line with the Government of Uganda aspirations to transform Uganda’s agriculture from subsistence to commercial, as outlined in the Agriculture sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan (DSIP), which the USAID Feed the Future subscribes to.

The specific objectives for the volunteer will be to provide technical support in the areas of:

1. Training farmers on records keeping, the type of records to keep and the importance of keeping such records
2. Practical illustrations and practice with farm record keeping templates with the participants
3. Conducting a cost benefit analysis and profit determination in farming for business
4. Emphasize the importance of farm records and review of the inventory books at RPO level
5. Development of a business plan

The volunteer will work towards attaining these objectives at the grassroots level, directly working with five farmer groups; s/he will train the farmers in keeping basic farm records, cost benefit analysis with practical illustrations of simplified farm records templates. For each RPO, the volunteer will train five groups of 15 – 20 members each. The volunteer will give each group two days for the hands-on training and evaluation, at their FG meeting venue in villages. Towards the end of the assignment, the volunteer will work with 2-3 representatives from each of the RPOs and the staff of the ACE to develop a business plan to guide ACE operations. The RPO representatives will be expected to develop simple business plans at the RPO level which should reflect their contribution/ how they contribute to ACE objectives.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

With volunteer technical assistance, farmers will be in position to make production decisions based on cost benefit analyses and use kept records to make informed decisions. Good management decisions will help reduce farmers’ production costs and risks, and improve efficiency of farm production /productivity and marketing. In addition to the training, the volunteer will be required to develop a training manual on ‘Farming as a Business’, which will be used for future reference and training. It is anticipated that once farmers begin approaching farming from a business perspective, their incomes will increase and overall their livelihoods will be improved. Furthermore, Namungalwe ACE has a wider membership than the training will cover and the Training of Trainers approach and the manual that will be developed will help Namungalwe management to reach their wider membership through targeted training on farming as a business Through the end of assignment group presentation, it is anticipated that the rest of the farmers in the district shall also eventually benefit from the training and use training materials developed.

The anticipated deliverables include:

* Trainings conducted and people trained
* Training guidelines/manuals developed
* Developed business plan for Namungalwe ACE
* Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment
* Field trip report and expense report
* Outreach activities back in the 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 Airport 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 go to CRS office for introductions and briefings including host brief, logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Any necessary hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices.  |
| Day 4 | Travel to Iganga district to commence the assignment.  |
| Day 5 | In the morning CRS introduces the volunteer to the Namungalwe ACE management team. Together with CRS and the management, the volunteer will review and finalise the work-plan. The action plan should include group presentations to be done after the assignment. In the afternoon, visit some of the Namungalwe ACE members. |
| Days 6 | Rest day for Volunteer |
| Days 7-16 | Training 5 RPOs members and make appropriate recommendations (20 beneficiaries) |
| Day 17- 19 | Train Representatives from each RPO and ACE staff in business plan development |
| Day 20-21 | Review the draft manual with ACE management and board and train them in its use. Wrap up meetings with wider audience and emphasize key concepts of assignment. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations. End of assignment presentation. |
| Day 19 |  |
| Day 22 | Carry out outreach activity at the district head quarters |
| Day 23 | Travel back to Kampala |
| Day 24 | Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff.Volunteer will finalize his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well finalize advances and expenditures with finance. |
| Day 23 | Depart for USA |
| TBD | Conduct an outreach in the US |

1. **DESIRED VOLUNTEER QUALIFICATIONS**
* Good knowledge on smallholder subsistence and semi-commercial agriculture in developing tropical countries.
* Formal qualifications in agribusiness, farm business management and production economics are desirable.
* Experience in working with smallholder grain farmers and farmers’ organisations.
* Good writing and analytical skills, interpersonal communication and presentation skills (adult education skills).
1. **ACCOMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway hotel, [www.fairwayhotel.co.ug](http://www.fairwayhotel.co.ug) In Iganga, the volunteer will stay at Mum Resort Hotel; [www.mumresort.com](http://www.mumresort.com) in case the volunteer is not comfortable with staircase. Hotel Continental;[www.hotelcontinental](http://www.hotelcontinental) if the volunteer is comfortable with staircase.

CRS will pay for hotel accommodation, and provide volunteer with per diems to cater for meals and other incidentals. The volunteer may get an advance which has to be cleared before departing Uganda. For more information, please refer to the country information that will be provided.

**Host contribution** – Namungalwe ACE has committed to do all the translation and to mobilize the members to the trainings to be conducted by the volunteer. Namungalwe personnel will 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 using ToT. The host will contribute towards driver costs and CRS will cover the rest for volunteer transport while conducting the assignment in the field.

1. **RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION**
* The volunteer should prepare materials for hand out 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.
* Knowledge on FaaB and agribusiness in rural settings of developing countries is also advised.
* Knowledge of business management and operations for farmer collective marketing centres.
1. **KEY CONTACTS**

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