

VOLUNTEER REPORT FORMAT

To be submitted to CRS at the end of volunteer assignment and shared with the Host

1.1 Assignment information: **ET97**

- a) Volunteer Name: **John Bliss**
- b) State of Origin: **USA**
- c) Host Organization: **ECC-SDCOA**
- d) Assignment: **Small scale irrigation technologies for vegetable production**
- e) Dates of Assignment: **January 8-January 19, 2018**
- f) Number of days worked: **10**

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW **Train and innovate modern irrigation technologies**

- a) Progress with the objective **Through four visits to separate and distinct areas around Aidigrat we spoke with over 80 farmers and agricultural educators. I tried to set an entrepreneurial tone with a SWOT analysis and offer some possible solutions to the critical issues of irrigation water availability. Some new ideas were shared: developing technology around filters, design issues around low-pressure systems, and lay-out techniques on sloping land. Agricultural educators were involved with each training. Drip kits were analyzed for their faults: the attempt at simplicity and uniformity often results in failure in the local context.**
- b) Expected impacts/results
 - a. **I expect that the beneficiaries will better understand the concerns about watering with traditional furrow and flood techniques.**
 - b. **They should understand some of the alternatives, some easier than others, some more affordable, and some less labor than others.**
 - c. **Farmers without previous exposure to drip irrigation will have had an introduction which familiarizes them with components of the system.**
 - d. **Farmers with previous negative exposure will give drip another chance with a better appreciation for the limitations of the system.**
- c) Recommendations¹
 - a. **Farmer trainers should develop and intensify their knowledge of drip systems to the point that they can be educational leaders in the farming community.**
 - b. **Drip Kits should be used very cautiously given the limitations of the product.**
 - c. **No farmer should be given financial credit for a drip system without adequate training.**
 - d. **A demonstration plot set-up should be part of the exploration that extension educators conduct for themselves.**

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW **Equip target beneficiaries in skills and techniques on improved irrigated vegetable production practices**

- a) Progress with the objective **There was not enough time to fully equip farmers with skill and technique on this subject. While trying to reach farmers in four areas, we would only hope to have introduced a problem-solving model and described several styles of irrigation with a focus**

¹ **Note:** Only make not more than 6 recommendations. The most useful recommendations for hosts are ones that they can implement themselves with minimal expense. For example, a cooperative might change its financial reporting procedures or hold more regular meetings of its board. Broad recommendations on tax or credit reform, changes in government policy, or investment in large-scale equipment, are usually not within the host organization's reach.

on drip. We also focused on soil improvement, the importance of organic matter, and an organized, well-spaced planting bed. It will take more training with more hands-on and demonstration to build the skills and understanding that is required to use drip irrigation proficiently.

b) Expected impacts/results

- a. Farmers should have the secondary message of soil improvement and the importance of organic matter reinforced through this training.
- b. Trainers should look on drip irrigation as a gateway towards more scientific (rational) farming techniques, like even spacing, bed culture, and market-based planning. It is not an isolated technique.
- c. A more thorough understanding of the importance of unique context of specific sites should be expected of the extension educators.

c) Recommendations

- a. Farmers should make efforts to not irrigate with furrow and flood, and instead work towards a goal that approaches 80% less water used by adopting one of the four water conservation methods.
- b. They should experiment with hose/barrel irrigation, and develop a better understanding of low-pressurized systems.
- c. The drip system and the drip kits specifically should be used to demonstrate the limitations and benefits of using such a capital intensive approach.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW **Practically demonstrate irrigation system on farmers' land**

a) Progress with the objective **There was not time enough to set up an entire system and this would also require land be prepared in advance. This was too ambitious an objective given the number of sites to visit/train at, and the limited days of the training.**

b) Expected impacts/results

- 1. Field Educators will take the next step in utilizing the drip kits to demonstrate the system.
- 2. However, effort should be made to research more manufacturers and retailers in the area who can contribute to the material needs of farmers wishing to use conservation practices. (hoses, nozzles, drip fittings, header pipe, filters, watering cans, pumps, cisterns, and even sprinkler set-ups.)
- 3. Demonstration plot should be expected to fail to some degree. Failure is the first stage in improvement and better design!

c) Recommendations

- 1. Support practical implementation through continuing technical advice and research.
- 2. Identify model farmers and partner with them to prepare land appropriate for drip.

1.3 Recommended future volunteer assignment

1) This assignment, general as it is, will always need reinforcement. Given the number of farmers and number of field educators, volunteers should be recruited who can introduce techniques.

2) A business (rational) orientation to farming (regardless of how much profit potential) can encourage greater food security. A volunteer could expand on SWOT analysis approach and budgeting with regards to home economics.

3) A volunteer capable of working with irrigation manufactures or retailers/importers as a collective trade group might be able to convince the industry to invest in better technology along with financing options, thereby elevating the field of modern irrigation in this part of the country.

1.4 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Farmers should make efforts to not irrigate with furrow and flood, and instead work towards a goal that approaches 80% less water used by adopting one of the four water conservation methods.	This is a follow-up check-in with the farmers to periodically encourage conservation practices.	Extension Staff—educators and researchers. Community decision makers.	Continuously.
2. They should experiment with hose/barrel irrigation, and develop a better understanding of low-pressurized systems.	As a first small investment farmers should make the purchase of barrels and hoses with some kind of nozzle.	Farmers and community councils.	With the coming growing season, after the short rainy season. (May)
3. The drip system and the drip kits specifically should be used to demonstrate the limitations and benefits of using such a capital intensive approach.	Set up a drip system in a farmer's field or in a demonstration plot.	Extension Staff—educators and researchers.	In the coming year, once land can be prepared.
4. Support practical implementation though continuing technical advice and research.	On-going trainings, ideally linked to financial lending or grant programs for investment.	CRS F2F volunteers in partnership with field educators, and sales representatives of agricultural supply companies.	With the next funding cycle.

5. Identify model farmers and partner with them to prepare land appropriate for drip.	Similar to #4, establishing a network of capable farmers who can also act as sales representatives in their community.	ECC's continuing work in agricultural education. (Extension)	As soon as capable.
6.			

1.5 Number of people Assisted

- a) 80 Through formal training (Classroom setup)
- b) 5 Through direct hands on practical assistance (Do not double count)
- c) 5 Out of these above, number of host staffs
- d) 12 Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners			
Employees	Note: I gave the list to Lidia before making a copy for myself.		
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total			

e)

1.6 Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How? **This assignment was not as interactive as I would have wanted to be since the budget only allowed for an abbreviated timeline. Therefore, the trainings were delivered to those who attended without much attention to gender issues. There were certainly more men than women who attended. The burden of irrigating land seems to more male-centered.**
- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community? **Women might have been more positively engaged with longer time-periods in the field. Many of the educators were women and this is very encouraging but I lack any understanding of the gender nuances... perhaps this is something CRS can do to address this issue: help volunteers understand gender in Ethiopia and develop specific guidelines in pursuit of gender balance.**

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment **50 hours (at least. I am passionate about this topic and do research as often as I can.)**
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment **\$20 I bought some materials to bring but did not leave them with the program since they did not seem appropriate.**

1.7 Value of hosts' contribution in \$ (Please consult the host as well)

- a) Meals \$20
- b) Transportation \$0
- c) Lodging \$0
- d) Translation 45 hours at least
- e) Other (Specify)

1.8 Host Profile Data:

Did you obtain any data that supplements or corrects the data in the existing host information as detailed in the SOW? Please list it. **There were more than three sites; we chose to visit 4 among literally dozens of project areas.**

1.9 Recommendations for CRS: **As I have seen in the past, CRS did an exemplary job at supporting me. The limited time in the field was a regrettable result of budget.**

1.10 Press Release

I am writing an article to be submitted to a national magazine. I will keep CRS posted on progress...

1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VOLUNTEER CONTACT: [Name]

[Title]

[Phone]

[E-mail]

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443-955-7103

CRS CONTACT:

Susan G. Walters

Senior Communications Manager



[US City] Farmer [Researcher, etc] Works with Counterparts in [Country]

Farmer-to-Farmer program promotes economic growth and agricultural development in East Africa

[DATELINE: City, State, Month, Day, 2016]--- **[Name]**, a **[title]** from **[city, state]** who is a **[add your title, or area of expertise]** travelled to **[country]** for **[x]** weeks to share **his/her** technical skills and expertise with local farmers. **[Name]**'s assignment is part of Catholic Relief Services' Farmer-to-Farmer program that promotes economic growth, enhanced nutrition through access to healthy food, and agricultural development in East Africa.

"[Volunteer quote]," said **[name]**. *[Quote should tell why you were there and how you spent your time, what you were trying to accomplish and how your visit made a difference. Quotes that are short (2 sentences) and paint a picture are strongest.]*

Farmer-to-Farmer matches the technical expertise of U.S. farmers and professionals in agribusinesses, farming cooperatives, and universities with farmers in developing countries to assist them in improving agricultural productivity, accessing new markets, and increasing their incomes. Farmer-to-Farmer is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

In a world where 80% of food is produced by farmers working on small farms or fisheries, the movement to share proven farming and business skills can improve the quality and quantity of the world's food supply. For communities in the developing world who often struggle to produce enough food, this can improve access to a reliable source of food and better nutrition. For the farmers, it can strengthen their path to prosperity.

The goal of **[name's]** assignment was to **[__describe goal__]**. He/she worked with **[# of and type of beneficiaries]** who **[describe situation/challenge/opportunity]**. Most of **[name's]** time was spent in the **[describe the location/part of the country]** working with **[name the partner]**. **[Optional Statement: What impact do you think your work will have?]**

This is **[name's]** (first, second, third, etc.) volunteer assignment with Farmer-to-Farmer and is one of nearly 500 assignments that focus on improving approaches to local agriculture practices, expanding production of quality food crops and nutrition in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya



and Uganda. The program, funded by the U.S. government has been running for nearly 30 years.

CRS is partnering with five U.S. institutions to tap into the rich diversity of the U.S. agriculture community: the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Foods Resource Bank, National Association of Agricultural Educators, American Agri-Women, and the University of Illinois' College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences.

The volunteers travel to East Africa for anywhere from one to six weeks.

"We are certain that this program will be beneficial not just to the farmers in East Africa but also to the volunteers from America," said Bruce White, CRS' director for the program. "It's going to make the world a little bit smaller and a whole lot better for everyone involved."

For more information, visit farmertofarmer.crs.org

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***Catholic Relief Services** is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. The agency alleviates suffering and provides assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through programs of emergency response, HIV, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. For more information, visit www.crs.org or www.crsespanol.org and follow Catholic Relief Services on social media: [Facebook](#), Twitter at [@CatholicRelief](#), [@CRSnews](#) and [@CRSnoticias](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#) and [YouTube](#).*