



VOLUNTEER REPORT FORMAT

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

1.1 Assignment information

- a) Volunteer Name: Kimberly Castelin
- b) Host Organization: PIQA Agriculture/EARO
- c) Assignment: KE75 Homestead Gardens Guide, Monitoring and Evaluation
- d) Dates of Assignment: Sept 6, 2016- Sept 20, 2016
- e) Number of days worked: 14

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW: Create a complete first draft of Session 12: Monitoring and Evaluation for the CRS Holistic Homestead Gardens Guide.

Progress with the objective: Given the structure of this assignment we were unable to test tools with our partners. Instead their inputs, suggestions, and interest in information and data that they have been missing will be incorporated into the suggested set of tools for measuring outcomes and impacts of homestead gardens. Over my 14 days in Kenya I was able to collect observations from CRS F2F partner organizations and the communities and farmers that they work with to get a sense of how farmers have benefitted from different interventions focusing on homestead gardens. One key element for homestead gardens in Kenya that will greatly influence the draft tool is an emphasis on production for income over household use. The scale of the homestead gardens is also much larger than gardens planted only for consumption or gardens typically referred to as “Kitchen Gardens” that I have promoted or seen used in other programs.

This assignment has also helped to emphasize the importance of economic sustainability in homestead gardens. Even when a garden is grown only for consumption it needs to save the household money; it should not cost more to grow food than to buy it in the market. Even income from sales of surplus from a smaller kitchen garden contributes enormously to households that are very cash-poor and can mean the difference between school attendance, purchasing medicine on time, or accumulation of savings, all of which have long-term consequences on poverty.

Upon my return, I will continue to work on and submit a draft tool that is farmer-centered on basic record keeping and a tool for an organizational or community level approach to tracking yields and increased availability and access to fresh produce across an area. Currently no organizations I worked with are systematically collecting data on nutrition. Incorporating this, even in a simple way, can help them to assign an estimated value to how homestead gardens are affecting nutrition in their organizations and communities. Both partner organizations had systems in place for recording yields and sales that they are involved in but neither worked with farmers to explicitly address record keeping for a single homestead garden. Including this would build farmer’s skills and abilities to make agribusiness choices independently.

- a) Expected impacts/results: I expect the outline of these tools to be adapted to local contexts in countries where CRS works and to help CRS and CRS’ partner organizations’ programs better quantify and describe the outcomes and impacts that homestead gardens have on households and communities. I also anticipate that the right kind of tools can help motivate and sustain behavior change and learning, empowering individuals to make choices that result in better incomes and nutrition for their families. At a broader level, there are some tools that can help CRS and other organizations to measure homestead garden’s impacts on the environment, health, and gender equality.

b) Recommendations¹:

1. **Adapt tools to the local context and country program's goals** Any tools developed for the guide will lack specificity so that they can be adapted globally. I would recommend that the CRS program team in country and the M&E experts in countries where the guide will be used and promoted take the time to plan out how to incorporate these extra tools and how to adapt them to their local context. I would also suggest that they work with interested partner organizations in developing a standard set of tools for a given country.
2. **Workshop on using the Holistic Guide** A follow on workshop that introduces the entire guidebook to CRS program staff and partner organizations is needed if it is going to be used to its full potential. A part of that workshop should be working with each organization to help them identify how their program can be made stronger and what information or data is truly necessary for them to collect. Helping them adapt tools to their specific context and teaching them how to use them properly would also be included, this is related to recommendation #1. I would recommend that a team approach in teaching about the guide be taken. Perhaps a video, with short explanations of each section, might be a useful tool for CRS to share initially.
3. **Focus on Nutrition** CRS and their partner organizations could strengthen their programs in Kenya by collecting survey data on nutrition using the Dietary Diversity Score (or another associated tool) in areas where they want to see larger impacts related to nutrition (for example impacts on health). I believe that the Kenya program has done such surveys in the past, but it does not seem clear to me that insights from this were shared with partner organizations or used to adjust programs to better incorporate growing for household nutrition into homestead garden plans. Coupling the Dietary Diversity Score tool with a questionnaire designed to gather more contextual qualitative data will help to give a baseline for diet status prior to program adjustment and also uncover why consumption is not a priority and also allow farmers to communicate in what ways they would be willing to produce foods specifically for their family's use and not for sale.
4. **Outreach program developed** The Sisters of Saint Theresa mentioned that they want to incorporate outreach and demonstration activities for their surrounding communities. This is a fantastic idea and by working with other local groups, like the water project and extension, they could greatly improve both yields and incomes in their surrounding communities as well as provide nutrition and cooking lessons alongside the agricultural trainings.
5. **Human nutrition follow on volunteer assignment** I would also recommend to CRS that follow on assignments that focus specifically on human nutrition be considered for both Good Neighbors and the Sisters of Saint Theresa in Meru; it seemed that both organizations had a

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.



desire for this kind of training for their staff and people who they work with in delivering services to their communities.

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW: Draft and field test the assessment tool

- a) Progress with the objective: Field data was collected from partner organizations. Testing of the field tool did not happen during this assignment but recommendations and needs of partner organizations will help to inform the tools suggested in the guide.
- b) Expected impacts/results: I expect the draft to be shared with the organizations we visited for their feedback and for their review.
- c) Recommendations:

- 1. **Use farmer centered tools to collect data and to teach** Both organizations used their homestead gardens and their approaches to teaching about agriculture as business ventures. This necessitates keeping records of sales, productivity, and income at the organization level. Outreach to farmers on farmer centered or developed tools for farmers to keep records and manage their gardens as efficient and productive businesses could be improved and would help make their outreach more economically sustainable.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW: Final report before departure & PowerPoint presentation of the developed assessment tool

- a) Progress with the objective: Final report completed and submitted 9/20/2016; PowerPoint prepared for report, additional draft of a PowerPoint on utilizing farmer centered tools for M&E also prepared and shared with CRS Kenya.
- b) Expected impacts/results: The PowerPoint on farmer centered tools might help CRS and partner organizations in Kenya to decentralize their M&E efforts and link them more closely to programming. A similar approach can be taken with nutrition lessons where households are left with a simple visual tool to represent what they have eaten that day.
- c) Recommendations:

- 1. **Continue to help develop tools for assessment** It is so important that tools used for evaluation be relevant and closely connected to program's goals and impacts on individuals. Further review and input of tools in the guide would be not only welcomed by immensely appreciated!

2. 1.3 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Incorporate human nutrition into agricultural programming	Start by inviting Sister Naomi and Zebby to the CRS conference on Nutrition in Nov.	Peterson Karanja	Before the Conference in Nov.
2. Use farmer centered tools for data collection and as teaching tools	Adapt record keeping books for use by farmers	Whoever is responsible for program design or M&E design at organizations	Should be started during transitions in planting so that all costs with a crop are included.
3. Measure nutrition outcomes/ impacts	There are indicators used by USAID (the dietary diversity score in	CRS Program team	Survey needs to take into account seasonal variability of production

	particular) that could be incorporated into CRS Kenya's M&E plan if appropriate		seasons; use at the same time (or times) each year
4.			
5.			
6.			

1.4 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training: No formal training was conducted during this assignment
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count): 3 (2 at Good Neighbors and 1 from the Sisters of Saint Theresa in Meru County) this is through the days spent with these hosts discussing their programming and measurements of outputs from their farms.
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs: 3
- d) Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners	3	1	2
Employees			
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total	3	1	2

1.5 Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How?

Many of the farmers we visited had the men speaking while the women tended to retreat inside or stayed quiet. However, our hosts were all women. To me this highlights the differences across socio-economic status in gender roles in Kenya. It would have been nice to discuss use of garden products with women (who prepare most of the food) to get a sense for how their families' use and access to more diverse foods have changed with homestead gardens.

- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community?

It seems to me that the outreach that these partner organizations engage in is very women focused. Generally, and personally, I feel that inclusive programs are more effective than programs that focus on one gender or another. From what I saw it seemed clear that both partner organizations were inclusive of working with both men and women and looked at their work from a community perspective.

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$ 4300



- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment: 24 (including time to recruit and put together a small team from Washington State University); anticipated follow up for writing the M&E chapter and related activities is 2 weeks
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment: \$0; did not contribute materials

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

- a) Meals: \$17 (Sisters of Saint Theresa)
- b) Transportation: \$ 40 (CRS taxis to office in Nairobi)
- c) Lodging: \$685 (CRS)
- d) Translation: NA
- 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.

We did not visit with the Irrigation Districts. Instead we visited with the Sisters of Saint Theresa in Meru County than traveled to Kitale and Bungoma County and worked with Good Neighbors.

1.9 Recommendations for CRS: Also see above. Kenyans seem to be very business savvy and hard working. CRS and their partner organizations have a strong focus on helping to promote economic growth and productivity. The different models that the partner organization use to ensure that their work remains economically sustainable is a strength that other organizations could learn from. However, there seems to be a weakness in linking this agricultural productivity to improved nutrition. There seems to be an assumption that increased production results in increased use and improved dietary diversity at the household level. It seems that the CRS Kenya team is aware of this and is interested in addressing this gap. This is not always the case, and CRS Kenya and their partners could strengthen their programs on a case by case basis by incorporating short courses on nutrition where applicable and where the communities (or donors) are interested.

1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Palouse Area Volunteer Travels to Kenya to Share Skills with Local Farmers

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Palouse Area Volunteer Travels to Kenya to Share Skills with Local Farmers

Farmer to Farmer program promotes economic growth and Agricultural development in East Africa

Kim Castelin, a **Research Associate** from **Moscow, Idaho** travelled to **Kenya** for **2** weeks to share her technical skills and expertise with local farmers. Kim's assignment is part of Catholic Relief Services' Farmer-to-Farmer (FTF) program that promotes economic growth, food security, and agricultural development in East Africa.

"Being recruited to be a part of the Farmer to Farmer Program with CRS has been a formative learning experience for me. My assignment was somewhat unique in that I was sent in more of a learning role rather than as trainer to assess how different homestead gardens in Kenya describe their outcomes and impacts on things like nutrition, the environment, health, and gender equality. I had a wonderful time in Kenya and was very impressed with the variety of successes of the organizations and farmers I was lucky enough to visit." said **Kim Castelin**.

Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the five-year program matches the technical assistance of U.S. farmers, agribusinesses, cooperatives, and universities to help farmers in developing countries improve agricultural productivity, access new markets, and increase their incomes.

In **Kenya**, **Kim** worked with **Good Neighbors Community Development Initiative** and the **Sisters of St. Theresa** in **Homestead Garden** training and giving technical assistance to **their program managers** to enable them to **better quantify and capture impacts of their work**. Kim worked closely with 3 individuals to assess what information they are already gathering; she met with a larger number of farmers to gain a better idea of what information matters at the farm and household level.

Kim's volunteer assignment is one of nearly 500 assignments that focus on agriculture, food security and nutrition in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. This is the first time CRS has been involved in the 28-year-old Farmer-to-Farmer Program funded by the U.S. government.

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 U.S. volunteers will travel to East Africa for anywhere from one to six weeks, their expenses covered by USAID.

“One thing we are certain of is 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 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 nearly 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality. For more information, please visit crs.org or crsespanol.org.