

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: Steve Hallett, Marcia Croft
- b) State of Origin: IN
- c) Host Organization: Little Sisters of St. Therese, Meru
- d) Assignment: Piloting Horticulture Short Course Training
- e) Dates of Assignment: 15-20 March 2017
- f) Number of days worked: 5

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW. Co-Facilitate 5-day course to selected ToTs.

- a) Progress with the objective. Completed.
- b) Expected impacts/results. 1) Extension of production and sustainability techniques and practices to other farms by the trainees.
- c) Recommendations¹
 - 1) We hope the trainees will keep in touch. Perhaps they will even be able to form some form of farmer-trainer society. Perhaps they will be able to continue meeting in an informal or formal way. We will be happy to assist further if we are able, and if more meetings are planned. Trainees have already formed a WhatsApp group to keep in touch and are actively using it, we hope that this can be a useful medium for exchanging ideas.

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW. Improved Vegetable/Fruit production technologies.

- a) Progress with the objective. Complete.
- b) Expected impacts/results
 - 1) Improvements to the productivity and sustainability of the farms visited at Kiirua, Machaka, and Ntumburi. Specifically, improvements may be seen in IPM, farm planning, and rotations.
- c) Recommendations. More details to follow, especially for the farm at Ntumburi.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW. Land Management training.

- a) Progress with the objective. Complete.
- b) Expected impacts/results
 - 1) Improvements to the productivity and sustainability of the farms visited at Kiirua, Machaka, and Ntumburi. Soil management through cover crops, crop rotation, composting, and soil testing.
- c) Recommendations.
 - 1) Protect soils from erosion.
 - 2) Build organic matter.
 - 3) Match soil nutrients to plant needs.

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.

1.3 Recommended future volunteer assignment.

Future work at these sites would be highly recommended. There is much potential, and, given the skills and motivation of the sisters already involved, the farms at Kiirua, Machaka and Ntumburi could become models. Future assignments could focus on farm design, soil management and nutrition, and the deployment of scale-appropriate technology (some funding for equipment needed – see report).

1.4 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. More detailed document to follow			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

1.5 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training (Classroom setup) 16
- b) Through direct hands on practical assistance (Do not double count) 16
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs 2
- d) Training/assistance by field --- 16 Sisters

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners			
Employees			
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total			

1.6 Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How?
 - Of the 16 people trained, 14 were nuns from 5 different convents. The impact these women are having on their communities is very impressive and their work in several different sectors provides assistance to vulnerable populations both within and outside of their church communities. Empowering them to extend this training even farther will provide them with more tools to expand the incredible work they are already doing. The two additional students were also female and included the farm manager at Ntumburi and the local Ministry of Agriculture representative, who were very valuable members of the group. Having a class of all women may have encouraged some to contribute more

than they would have in a mixed classroom, but each of these women hold leadership positions in their communities and all of them provide role models of female leadership in their own communities.

- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community?
- Providing opportunities specifically for women, such as this, could help to extend this training farther through the training of trainers model. Each of these students can help to reach other members of their community, especially women and girls. We think the work CRS is already doing through the F2F and SCORE ECD programs will help improve opportunities in these communities.

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment. 100
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment. \$250

1.7 Value of hosts' contribution in \$ (Please consult the host as well) (Not sure)

- a) Meals
- b) Transportation
- c) Lodging
- d) Translation
- 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.

1.9 Recommendations for CRS:

The Sisters of Meru and the Sisters from the other convents and organization who gathered at Meru for this training were a highly motivated group. They were fun, attentive, questioning, and this was an extremely rewarding assignment. There were clear knowledge gaps that we were able to quickly understand and target because the participants were so deeply engaged in the course and eager to learn. All the Sisters were experienced at growing crops at the farms at their convents, and all had some agricultural knowledge. They were also highly skilled community builders who understood the challenges of trying to make social change at the community level. They are all engaged, one way or another, in social, health, or early childhood development issues. Thus, the extension of this into horticultural education was easy, and a natural step. We had a full classroom for the duration of the training, fielded thousands of questions, discussed specific issues, and walked four farms together with the group, interpreting the land, the opportunities, and the needs.

We visited two farms on the first day in order to gauge the needs at the farm level and also so that we could observe our class to understand their needs. From the second day we decided to create a farm-design group project so that the students could look for real-life solutions to the problems on the farm at Machaka. Meanwhile, we lectured on the theoretical bases of each issue that arose. Our biggest focus was on soil. The soil at each of the farms was in either a poor or moderate state (no surprise -- we can see

this clearly from poor crop growth, washouts, runoff, rills, gullies, etc. across the region). We taught methods for the short-term delivery of nutrients to improve crop productivity and long-term methods for soil building, erosion control and land management. In addition, we taught some aspects of IPM, budgeting, water management, farm planning and other specific topics as they arose.

I think we made a great connection with the Sisters of Meru and I would recommend that CRS continue to develop the Sisters' knowledge and skills in agriculture and horticulture so they can continue to become agents of change.

1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Purdue University Agriculture Scientists Work with Counterparts in Kenya

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

West Lafayette, IN, March 20, 2016—Steve Hallett and Marcia Croft from West Lafayette, IN who are agricultural scientists at Purdue University travelled **to Meru, Kenya for a week** to share **their** technical skills and expertise with local farmers. Steve and Marcia'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.

"East African farmers lack the agriculture colleges and networks that are readily available to American farmers," said Steve, "so it's great to be able to network with them and share skills, particularly those that might help them produce more nutritious food more sustainably."

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 **Steve and Marcia's** assignment was to **pilot a horticultural short course that could help other groups and individuals teach horticulture in Africa. They** worked with **sixteen nuns who are engaged in farming extension in dioceses across Kenya.** Most of **Steve and Marcia's** time was spent in Meru County, on the Northeastern edge of Mount Kenya but they hope the impact of their work will not be limited to improving the productivity and sustainability of the farms at which they worked in Meru, but, through the work of their trainees, that it will magnify across the country.



This is Marcia's first and Steve's second volunteer assignment with Farmer-to-Farmer 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](#).