



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: **Andy Lohof**
- b) Host Organization: Balimi Cooperative Society
- c) Assignment: UG94: Farming as a Business
- d) Dates of Assignment: August 15 - September 5, 2016
- e) Number of days worked: 21 days

1.2.1 Objective 1: Provide framework for farm business development as a basis for transiting from subsistence farming to commercial farming through working with farmers and staff of primary cooperative societies.

- a) Progress with the objective: CRS, the RFCU vanilla project manager, and I decided to focus on training RFCU trainers so that they could in turn train primary societies. My first two days in Kasese, I facilitated a training workshop with various RFCU personnel. Training topics included entrepreneurial behaviors, SWOT analysis, marketing value proposition, crop profitability analysis, bookkeeping, credit and alternatives to credit, and cooperative improvement planning. Three of the RFCU trainers (William, Asasio, and Doviko – in the vanilla project) followed my entire training. These 3 trainers and I then trained the leadership of 4 primary societies in 8 days. For the final 2 societies, the RFCU trainers conducted virtually the entire training.
- b) Expected impacts/results: The cooperative societies will be able to analyze their institutions and develop realistic work plans to make them stronger. They will also be able to behave more like entrepreneurs, maintain adequate records, market their services and products to farmers and buyers more effectively, and assess the profitability of different farming activities. As stronger institutions, the societies will be better able to improve the lives of their individual farmer members and communities. The 3 RFCU trainers will be able to train other primary societies and also follow up on our workshop to help farmers apply what they have learned to strengthen their cooperative societies.
- c) Recommendations¹ I recommend that Balimi and the other primary societies apply the concepts of the training and finish and implement the improvement plans that they started at the end of the training. I recommend that RFCU 1) hold the training workshop with the primary societies that we have not yet trained; 2) train the primary societies in communication in collaboration with a future volunteer; and 3) obtain improvement plans from each primary society and help them implement these plans.

1.2.2 Objective 2: Working with the staff of primary cooperative societies in streamlining the book keeping/ record keeping system for the organization.

- a) Progress with the objective: Balimi and the three other primary cooperative societies trained were already maintaining cash books. During my assignment, they were shown a capital book to keep

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.

track of member capital contributions and withdrawals and a member register to record acreage, production potential, contact information, and other details on each member.

- b) Expected impacts/results: The cooperative societies will be able to monitor their members' capital contributions and withdrawals and leverage this information to seek more capital for projects and other needs. They will have easy access to their members' demographic information, acreage, and production potential to facilitate planning and interactions with donors and customers.
- c) Recommendations: 1. If the primary cooperatives begin buying and selling vanilla, coffee or other commodities, show them one or more books to monitor purchases, sales, and credits. 2. Expand recordkeeping training to the other 10 primary societies.

1.3 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Expand training beyond the 4 primary societies trained during my assignment	Hold a similar training workshop for each of the other primary societies	Sharon Biira	October 31, 2016
2. Train the primary societies in communication	Volunteer already scheduled for November	Sharon Biira and George Ntibarikure/ F2F volunteer	November 30, 2016
3. Obtain improvement plans from each primary society	These plans were started at the end of each training. Each primary society should finish its plan and share with RFCU.	Sharon Biira	September 30, 2016 for the first 4 societies; 1 month after training for the other 10 societies
4. Verify that primary societies maintain adequate financial and member records	Verify cash book, capital book, and member register. Develop additional financial records for primary societies that begin trading commodities.	Sharon Biira	1 month after training sessions.

1.4 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training (T) : 107
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count) (DT): 0
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs: 3 (RFCU staff)
- d) Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners	104	81	23

Employees	3	3	0
Clients/ Suppliers	0	0	0
Family Members	0	0	0
Total	107	84	23

1.5 Gender

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

I did not recognize any distinct gender roles but noticed that most of the trainees were male. I suspect that most of the society members are male.

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

Perhaps lead campaigns to recruit more females into the primary societies.

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$ **1762.5**

- Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment – roughly 30 hours
- Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment
No material contributions.

1.7 Value of hosts' contribution in \$ **292.82**

- Meals
- Transportation for participants: \$ 126.85
- Lodging
- Translation: \$ 32.60
- Others: Office space/ training venues: \$ 74.09, Farmer mobilization: \$ 59.28
1USD = 3,374 Ushs

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.

None

1.9 Recommendations for CRS:

Provide caps to volunteers to protect them from the sun and to identify them as CRS F2F.

Provide business cards to F2F volunteers to facilitate introductions.

Communication training for RFCU primary societies: After being told at the start of the assignment that another volunteer was coming in November to focus on improving communication in the societies, I removed communication topics from my training. Since communication is a critical topic for a cooperative, I recommend that CRS field this volunteer as planned or train the societies in communication in some other way.



1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Andy Lohof

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**Central Florida Area Volunteer Travels to Uganda to Share Skills
with Local Farmers**

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

Andy Lohof, a small business advisor from Winter Park, Florida travelled to Uganda for 3 weeks to share his technical skills and expertise with local farmers. Andy'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.

“RFCU’s farmers are supplying vanilla to Ben & Jerry’s and coffee, cocoa, and other crops to other buyers,” said Andy. “By offering technical assistance, marketing, and other services, RFCU can significantly improve the lives of over 2,500 farmers and catalyze development in western Uganda.”

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 Uganda, Andy worked with the Rwenzori Farmers' Cooperative Union in Farming as a Business training and giving technical assistance to farmers to enable them to operate their cooperatives like businesses. Over 100 beneficiaries were reached.

Andy'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.