



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: Nicole Bridges
- b) Host Organization: Social and Developmental Coordinating Office of Arsi-Robe, Koffele
- c) Assignment: Improved vegetable production and post-harvest handling and management
- d) Dates of Assignment: January 22-February 12, 2016
- e) Number of days worked- 12

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW

- a) Progress with the objective-Fair progress.

I have provided ample materials for staff in relation to post-harvest loss prevention for local crops, such as potatoes, cabbage, and beetroot. Methods include building storage 'mounds' and creating other types of cellars for post-harvest loss prevention using local materials. There are also specks to build a brick and mortar facility for post-harvest loss, which could be constructing with funds in Kofelle district.

- b) Expected impacts/results

I expect the staff to pass this information to the group for hands-on practice. I would expect that this method could be used on the village level for prolonged storage of local produce.

- c) Recommendations¹

I would like to see a demonstration mound or cellar built on the CRS site for the women to see how it is built and how it can work for post-harvest loss prevention.

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW

- a) Progress with the objective

I have provided the staff with materials to help guide the group with this. We talked extensively about the problems facing the farmers during post-harvest, including rat infestation, poor drainage, and insect infestation and seed borne illness.

- b) Expected impacts/results

I expect that through the use of these materials for trainings, more efficient post-harvest methods can be used to eliminate some of these issues.

- c) Recommendations

I think it is important for demonstration of other post-harvest methods to take place at the CRS office. If the women can see it working there, I think they will be more likely to adapt the practices.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW

- a) Progress With the objective

I believe we made some great progress in this area. The first training focused on vegetable production challenges, as well as post-harvest challenges. I learned more about the local

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.



produce grown, and as a group we identified the most pressing challenges in vegetable farming, number one being cost of seed. The second biggest challenge being pest and disease issues. I introduced the concept of inter-cropping to the women. This concept is built on the theory that planting more than one type of plant in one bed, will help increase yield, improve soil quality, as well as combat insects and disease. As a group, we planted two demonstration plots at the CRS farm in Kofelle using this inter-cropping method. Carrots, beets, lettuce, onion, and chard were all planted. In addition, I taught the group how to make a beer trap to combat the snails attacking the cabbage plants. This is an easy method for organic pest control that is fairly low cost, involving a discarded water bottle, a knife, and a beer. The snails/slugs are attracted to the yeast in the beer. So, I showed them how to cut the bottle, bury it in the cabbage plot and then fill with beer.

b) Expected impacts/results

After I was able to conclude the needs assessment of the group, it was clear that cost of seeds was the biggest barrier for these farmers. So, my family and myself donated \$300.00 worth of local vegetable seeds to 30 women in the group. They each received two different kinds of seeds to take back to their farms and put into practice this method of inter-cropping. After showing them this planting technique, I expect that they will practice this on their own farms. I also believe that they will try the beer trap, as I heard many discussing that they are going to do this right away.

c) Recommendations

I am not sure to what extent this is already being done, but I think training regarding organic pest control would be very helpful. The women seemed very responsive to this training, and I think more hands-on workshops of this nature could be very helpful, as I understand that non-organic methods are not promoted by CRS, and are very expensive as well.

I would also recommend that CRS staff continue to practice the methods of intercropping on their own farm, and hope that some follow up is done with the women to see how they are practicing this on their own farms. The dilemma of cost of seed is not an easy one, and outside of needing additional funding in this area, I am not sure I can recommend a sound solution as this time.

1.3 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Post-harvest loss prevention training	Build mounds/cellars as demonstrations on CRS land	CRS Staff	December 2016
2. Continue Inter-cropping practices	Continue to plant on the CRS farm using the inter-cropping methods	CRS Staff	December 2016-ongoing
3. Organic pest control trainings	Hold hands-on trainings related to organic pest control management for	CRS Staff	December 2016



	local crops		
4. Camp Glow	Hold 1 day empowerment workshops for young girls and boys aged 8-17	CRS volunteer	Staff/PC December 2016
5.			
6.			

1.4 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training 27
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count) 27 + 5 new
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs 4
- d) Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners	32		32
Employees	4	3	1
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total	36	3	33

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 noticed, that like many African nations, the women do the heart of the work around the home and on the farm. These roles did play a part in my assignment, in that, I wanted to provide the women with the best training possible to strengthen their skill levels, hoping that this will bring some bit of empowerment for them.
- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community? Please continue to provide trainings related to income generation activities. I think these kinds of workshops help to diversify the opportunities women have to earn income. I think it is also important to look for opportunities for the daughters of these women. If true progress is to be made, I think it is important to start holding trainings and workshops for the younger generation of women in Robe/Kofelle District. Peace Corps holds trainings for young women called Camp Glow, I would be happy to find out more about this program and share these resources. Emphasize on skill development, the importance of education and building courage, strength and confidence are of the utmost importance. It would be most impactful for young girls to know that they are important and they have the opportunity to do anything they please in this world. I think holding trainings also for young men is just as important. Peace Corps also holds these training, call Camp Be, learning different skills, as well as to respect others and the women in their lives. Recently Peace Corps combined these trainings and called it Camp Globe. Even if you held one of these trainings for one day a year, I think it would be beneficial.



1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$ 300.00

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment 15
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment \$400.00

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

- a) Meals \$30.00
- b) Transportation-Habtamu will report
- c) Lodging ?
- d) Translation Habtamu will report
- 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. No

1.9 Recommendations for CRS: Continue to do the great work you are already doing to improve the lives of Ethiopians, especially the women. I can't say enough in regards for the need of women to be seen as equals in society, at home, and on the farm. It is then, when true progress will come. In terms of agricultural practices, the post-harvest loss problem seems to continue to plague farmers. I suggest that CRS work with an American based company by the name of ADM, located in Decatur, Illinois, not far from my hometown. They have launched a multi-million dollar post-harvest loss prevention program specifically for developing nations, such as Ethiopia. I think it would be in the best interest of CRS to explore funding opportunities through this organization, and I would be happy to serve as a liaison during that process, as I am geographically close, and my NGO has in fact secured \$25,000 from them for a post-harvest loss project in Champaign, Illinois.

1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Champaign/Urbana Area Volunteer Travels to Ethiopia to Share Skills with Local Farmers

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

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Champaign/Urbana Area Volunteer Travels to Ethiopia to Share Skills with Local Farmers

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

Nicole Bridges, a **CRS volunteer** from **Champaign, Illinois** travelled to **Kofelle, Ethiopia** for **3** weeks to share his/her technical skills and expertise with local farmers. [Name]'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.

“I hope this experience was as enriiching for those I served, as it was for me said Nicole Bridges.

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 **Ethiopia**, **Nicole Bridges** worked with Robe women cooperative in **agricultural** training and giving technical assistance to **local women** to enable them to improve vegeatble farming techniques through inter-cropping and organic pest control methods, as well as methods for post-harvest loss prevention. Up to 33 beneficiaries were reached. [**Other details are optional**]

Nicole'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.