

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: **Katherine Cassidy**
- b) State of Origin: Maine
- c) Host Organization: Balimi Primary Cooperative Society (under Rwenzori Farmers' Cooperative Union)
- d) Assignment: UG91
- e) Dates of Assignment: March 13-March 25
- f) Number of days worked: 10 (plus three days, Nov. 22-23-24, 2016 before an evacuation)

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW (Streamline the leadership and management of the cooperatives with emphasis on roles and responsibilities of leaders and cooperative members).

- a) Progress with the objective: Four of RFCU's 14 cooperatives were trained -- the host cooperative (Balimi), and the three other coops that are considered the weakest in general. All of the coops appeared to learn tremendously, and appreciate my teaching style. We trained four, but we also visited two more coops for community suppers -- so I ended up touching as many as six coops in person.
- b) Expected impacts/results: We hope that community suppers will be repeated, and that the trainings will be presented in the same, dynamic, energizing, story-telling fashion that I managed to do.
- c) Recommendations: That the RFCU staff each replicate the training sessions (about three hours each day, for two mornings) for the 10 coops that did not receive my training. Given the staff members' ordinary work schedules, we might expect that each taking on 2 or 3 or 4 of these extra trainings might allow for all 14 coops to be trained in leadership skills and group dynamics by the end of August 2017.

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW (Train farmer cooperatives in conflict resolution, group dynamics and group cohesion).

- a) Progress with the objective -- Of the four trainings, had a specific communications / mobilization component for only the last two. (I had forgotten this, until Maria reminded me midway). But the message was strong, and both William and Daviko heard these lessons twice.
- b) Expected impacts/results -- We can hope that all farmers realize that it is not just the responsibility of the chairperson to "spread the word" for meetings and trainings, but every farmer needs to tell a neighboring farmer.
- c) Recommendations: That the staff strongly monitor how different chairpersons handle mobilizing all farmers. I realize this takes patience, as Asisio described how he has struggled with this for more than a year.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW (Create awareness about the importance of collectively working together).

- a) Progress with the objective: This was accomplished in a manner that none of us expected, with the introduction of community suppers as a capacity-building tool. Coupled with the leadership lesson that always resonates the most with farmers -- "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are," by doing the dinners for the first time ever -- the farmers learned that they can achieve

something together, something new and enjoyable for all.

- b) Expected impacts/results: That the farmers can continue to schedule their own community suppers two or three times a year -- now that they know what good can happen.
- c) Recommendations: That, with RFCU staff support, each cooperative attempt to schedule at least two or three dinners a year -- maybe after the harvests.

1.3 Recommended future volunteer assignment: Maybe an assignment could be built entirely around “community suppers as a capacity-building tool” -- because farmers are very receptive to them; they turn out in higher numbers than they do for mere trainings or meetings. (For the three suppers, we had turnouts of 45, 65 and 40 farmers, plus 20-27-12 children).

1.4 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Take the leadership skills training to the 10 other cooperatives we did not reach this time.	Sharon schedules with 10 cooperatives.	William, Daviko, Asisio.	End of August 2017.
2. Emphasize better communications for mobilization for all cooperatives.	Monitor effectiveness of specific tasks for improved mobilization.	William, Daviko, Asisio.	End of August 2017.
3. Bring community suppers to 11 more cooperatives.	Share the experiences of 3 successful suppers already.	Sharon, William, Daviko, Asisio.	End of August 2017.

1.5 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training (Classroom setup) -- 142
- b) Through direct hands on practical assistance (Do not double count) -- 0
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs -- 6
- d) Training/assistance by field -- 150 farmers who attended first-time community suppers.

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners	138 farmers	101	33
Employees	6 RFCU staff	4	2
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total	142	107	35

1.6 Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How? We were hoping for more women's participation, but some of the trainings fell on market days. Also, for one exercise were paired off two-by-two. When a man was matched with a woman and they rose together to speak, very nearly every time the woman deferred to the man speaking first as they presented together. (The exercise was, after five minutes of personal conversation one-on-one, tell the group two things that both farmers have in common - such as the same number of children; born in the same year; same religion or same clan, etc.).
- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community? I wish that Sharon Biira could duplicate herself, because she is a tremendous role model for both women and men in the cooperatives. We discovered that the community suppers IS something that can be replicated -- and the women were able to have strong roles in that. (Each of the three dinners were a success, largely because of the women's participation).

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in **\$ 424.5**

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment - 6 hours.
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment: Total of \$72. This involved the expansion to include three community suppers at three of the RFCU cooperatives. I spent on sodas for all farmers, and plastic plates, forks and napkins for all farmers. Total farmers attending the dinners were 150, and we also served another 60 children.

1.7 Value of hosts' contribution in **\$ 447.76**

- a) Meals
- b) Transportation for participants: \$ 197.48
- c) Lodging
- d) Translation: 10 days of translation: \$139.05
- e) Other (Specify): Training venue: \$ 69.52, Farmer Mobilization for trainings – \$41.71

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. One thing I found of great interest -- that the vanilla farmers' whose product ends up with Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, have no understanding of what that means -- that is, how huge a product that Ben & Jerry's is in the USA. Their interest in their vanilla ends with their harvests and sales. I somehow wish that Ben & Jerry's could be more emphasized ... perhaps, could the farmers all be supplied with Ben & Jerry's caps, or something very small? There could be such a pride there, if only they knew more about the end user (Americans who love Ben & Jerry's ice cream -- because Ben & Jerry's is the most famous ice cream in America).

1.9 Recommendations for CRS: Two notes relating to Facebook, which can greatly assist in spreading the word about Farmer-to-Farmer assignments. First, volunteers should be reminded in advance of the F2F hashtag to use in Facebook postings. (I was posting photos and news daily, but not using a hashtag, because we hadn't talked about this and I had forgotten). Second, please have Teresa in Baltimore take one hour to set up a "closed group" for former and returning and new volunteers on Facebook. She could then invite all previous volunteers, and newly recruited volunteers, to join in the discussion. This is



something I have suggested twice before, but it has not yet occurred. This really needs to happen!

Additionally, I highly recommend that volunteers arrange with Sharon to do radio interviews for Kasese's two radio stations, that RFCU has already paid for (to increase the media for the vanilla project). I was able to have a significant voice for CRS and Farmer-to-Farmer as Sharon translated to the local language over 45 minutes and one hour, respectively.