

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: Jessica C. Zarate
- b) Host Organization: CRS F2F
- c) Assignment: Improved vegetable production technology training (kale, swiss chard, tomatoes, peppers)
- d) Dates of Assignment: 8/22- 9/6
- e) Number of days worked: In the actual nunnery – 7 days

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW: Understanding and improving their clay like soil by amending the soil and practicing composting.**a) Progress with the objective:**

On day 2, they were taught the composition of their soil and why correcting their soil for better drainage can prevent a good amount of problems that can potentially derive from this issue. Poor drainage will prevent oxygen from getting to the roots of plants, which kills the roots and also creates an environment perfect for fungus, such as root rot to take hold and further damage a plant. Because clay particles are so tiny they pack together easily and become very dense, virtually impermeable to water and air, which are essentials to healthy soil, so the solution to this major issue is compost.

b) Expected impacts/results

The composting process encourages the production of beneficial micro-organisms (mainly bacteria and fungi) which in turn break down organic matter which will improve the drainage of the soil. Compost has also been shown to suppress plant diseases and pests, reduce or eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers, and promote higher yields of agricultural crops. Organic materials diverted from landfills ultimately avoid the production of methane and greenhouse gas in the landfills meaning as we compost we are literally making the world a better place. This will be a lengthy journey but Melka Jebdu has the resources to make this happen.

c) Recommendations¹

I think following up with the nunnery is the key, not so much to make sure they are doing the work taught to them but in case they might need any help on an agricultural standpoint. It was a plethora of information taught to them in such a short amount of time, some information might be hard to retain. Though we will provide a step by step guide in case they may have missed something, a person with experience will be good to guide them. I recommend Meba to be hired for this task. She was with us everyday to translate, so she as well was taught the practices we taught at the nunnery and keep it consistent

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW

Proper pruning techniques

¹ **Note:** 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.

a) Progress with the objective

Pruning was taught to them in the field because it was observed on the first day that the majority of their pepper plants, shortly after transplant, had an abundance of flowers while the plants were still young. Proper pruning techniques will help plants focus its energy on growing a stronger root system and stem, rather than producing fruit that it can barely carry. Pinching and pruning means more plants attention on developing bigger, better veggies, bringing forth quality ideal harvests. Proper tool management and sterilization in addition are practices that must be incorporated in order to get optimum results.

b) Expected impacts/results

In addition to increasing fruit size and quality, pinching and pruning will help plants stay healthy, as removing excess foliage encourages good air flow through the plant, as well as it makes it easier to spot pests or diseases before it can become a serious problem.

c) Recommendations

Unfortunately, for this lesson I was only able to demonstrate pruning on their pepper plants. I understand that these volunteer assignments are best applied when the kids are out of school so they can learn as well but their vegetable season did not coincide so different pruning techniques weren't possible for demonstration. It's something to think about for future assignments in this area

Generally I recommend:

- Grafting and punning in vegetable (pepper, and other)
- Vegetable nursery establishment in rotary basis
- Inclusion of more types of vegetable to the farm like Swiss chard, lettuce, beat root, the likes
- Organic pest control like nim oil, moringa
- Underground compost preparation
- Continuous follow up and support (train) to the nuns

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW

Introducing new organic pesticides to shy away from heavy chemicals.

a) Progress with the objective

Though I was pleased to observe that Melka does not have a heavy pest situation to deal with, it was voiced that rodents and nematodes were a problem. There are always growing concerns about the long term impact of chemicals on soil and on food supply. Garlic and peppers are very spicy ingredients that insects and rodents find most unappealing. Amending the soil with ash can immensely help with nematodes. Preventative spraying on a weekly basis should keep this situation controlled. I taught the nunnery how to make citrus oil as well in which mixed with water, is an organic common pest pesticide.

b) Expected impacts/results

Pesticides are designed to be a repellant or toxic to the pest we target. When used properly, pesticides can protect plants from damage, each specific pest organism has optimum environmental conditions for causing damage. Prevention is always the best way to manage a pest problem; to continue having a rodent free environment a weekly pesticide application was advised.

c) Recommendations

1.3 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count) 30
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs= 10
- d) Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners			10
Employees			20
Clients/ Suppliers			
Family Members			
Total	30		30

1.4 Gender

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

The women, whether it'd be the nuns, or the orphan girls, they were always very active and participating in whatever chores or activities needed to get done. The nuns were obviously the authoritative yet kind figures while the men took on the heavier load, they handled the more labor intensive aspects of any job. These roles did absolutely play a part in the assignment because when everyone was out in the field learning new techniques and methods for farm improvements; when it came time to teach bigger tasks i.e composting and fruit tree pruning, very big holes had to be dug in the ground and trees needed to be climbed and cut in which the gentlemen helped us with. A task I personally think would have probably taken us double the time without their help.

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

I feel if there is a bit more planning ahead of time there would be more fluidity amongst the girls and the nuns and the assignment. If they are anticipating a volunteer assignment the nunnery as a whole can be more tactful as to what major improvements they'd like to work on aside from the obvious problems.

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment

Anywhere between 40-45 hours most possibly more (paperwork, packaging, doctor vaccinations and medicine pick-ups, Phyto documentation preparation, packing, work (planning, training and preparations) for while I was gone, etc.)

- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment
200-350

Value of Volunteer Time Leveraged on Assignment (U.S.\$) = \$2,994



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

- a) Meals: Lunch was provided for us at the nunnery which usually consisted of shiro and anjera with tea or coffee = \$45
- b) Transportation: Daily transportation- to and from
- c) Lodging: Everyday in Ethiopia there has been hotel accommodation
- d) Translation : We had 2 translators, Meba was with us everyday, Shams was with us whichever day he was available
- e) Other (Specify)= \$52

Estimated Value of Host Contribution (U.S.\$)= \$97

1.9 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.

1.10 Recommendations for CRS: