

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: **Janel Wright**

b) Host Organization: **ECC-SDCOM – Meki Catholic Secretariat, Wonji Branch**

c) Assignment: **Nutritional training for members of Saving and Internal Lending Community (SILC) groups**

d) Dates of Assignment: **2/14/15 – 3/01/15**

e) Number of days worked: **11 (excludes 1 rest day, 4 days of travel)**

1.2.1 Objective 1 in your SOW: Train and technically assist selected SILC members and selected trainers (CDW's, DA's, animators/facilitators, and health extension workers) on the components of a healthy, balanced diet based on locally available horticultural crops.

a) Progress with the objective

- Brief formative research was conducted in the first two days of the assignment in the form of market visits and kebele home visits to understand the locally available horticultural crops, common meals, and cooking methods.
- A ToT was presented for 22 trainers, including health extension workers (5), staff of ECC-SDCOM/MCS-Wonji (10), Agriculture Development Agents (4), and animators (3) – a total of 6 females (27%) and 16 males (73%). The TOT discussed common nutritional issues and diet-based strategies to combat the common nutritional issues, as well as how to prepare, process, and store foods for maximum nutrition. The second half of the day demonstrated a sample nutrition education lesson teaching basic food groups and creating a balanced meal for a low or no-literacy audience.
- Additionally, a nutrition training and cooking demonstration was conducted at the kebele level in each Tedecha Guarcho (32 people), Amagna Debeso (33 people), Balale (41 people), and Dire Kiltu (43 people). The total number of people was 149, with 80 females (54%) and 69 males (46%). The sample nutrition education lesson from the ToT was repeated for these groups, in addition to a cooking demonstration. The lesson introduced the 3 main food groups (energy foods, body-building foods, and protective foods) and worked with participants to identify each of the food groups, then explained how important it is to eat from each food group every day, if possible. The cooking demonstration included a balanced Ethiopian meal of injera (energy food), shuro wat (body building food), and mixed vegetables (protective food). It was further discussed that to make the meal more nutritious, an egg or meat and some fruit, particularly a fruit rich in vitamin C, would round out the meal and help the body to absorb the iron of the teff, egg yolk, and the greens. Another meal of whole boiled barley, maize, haricot bean, chickpea, and yellow pea was also prepared and served, demonstrating the importance of eating foods in their whole form (instead of ground into flours).

b) Expected impacts/results

- 149 SILC group representatives received the balanced meal lesson, and it is hoped that they will then cascade the training information to 2,267 other SILC group members in Sire and Dodota region. We expect that they will share:
 - knowledge of a balanced meal and the importance of diet diversity

- how to prepare and store foods for maximum nutrition
- knowledge of food preparation for safety and sanitation.
- Additionally, the more detailed ToT provided nutrition information to 22 health extension workers, ECC-SDCOM/MCS Wonji branch staff, agriculture DA's, and animators and we expect that this information will benefit their constituents.

c) Recommendations¹

- Recommendation to repeat the balanced meal/diet diversity training during the rainy season and/or in conjunction with harvesting from keyhole or community gardens for greater access to micronutrient-rich foods. During the rainy season farmers - especially those who reside far from local markets - have increased access to their own horticultural crops.
- Recommendation to teach rainwater harvesting for keyhole or community gardens so that season of cultivating horticultural crops in-home (instead of purchasing them at the market) can be prolonged.
- Recommendation to involve children and elderly in the keyhole or community gardens project. Women of reproductive age already seem to bear many household responsibilities.
- Education and awareness on a how to eat a balanced diet is only one part of the equation in the path towards better nutrition and health for SILC members and their families. Recommendation to assist SILC groups with defining specific nutritional goals and then pairing that goal-setting with income-generating activities which will help to create resources to meet those nutritional goals.

1.2.2 Objective 2 in your SOW: **Train and technically assist selected SILC members and selected trainers (CDW's, DA's, animators/facilitators, and health extension workers) on Infant and Young Child Feeding practices (IYCF).**

a) Progress with the objective

- While this objective was originally part of the SoW, it was decided that IYCF would not be specifically trained on during the volunteer assignment given the DFAP team's current use of Alive and Thrive materials and other IYCF-focused activities. However, many ties were made to IYCF in presentations given including how dietary intake affects breast milk composition and the most nutritious way to prepare porridge for children who are 6 months or older.

b) Expected impacts/results

- 22 trainers who received the ToT have increased knowledge of how a mother's dietary intake impacts breast milk composition and ways of preparing complementary foods for maximum nutrition.

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.

c) Recommendations

- Recommendation to strive for gender equality in two main ways:
 - Incorporate women as trainers, especially for IYCF; most of the host staff were men who are skilled and capable of training on IYCF, but women may enjoy receiving instruction and training from other women
 - Train men as well as women on optimal IYCF practices, demonstrating practical ways they can assist the mother with these duties. Negga Shimelis, Health and Nutrition Expert at the host site, is conducting post-graduate level research on this topic and was provided with a training geared towards males on IYCF.
- Recommendation for nutrition trainings to emphasize the importance of fats and micronutrients in the diet, as well as animal source proteins. The local diet seems relatively low in fats. Lipid content of breast milk is affected by the mother's lipid intake; a low-fat diet for the mother means low-fat breast milk for the baby, which is not ideal and will affect many body functions, not the least of which is brain development. A practical solution may be plant source fats such as avocados. Animal source proteins may be increased with livestock projects already underway in SILC groups.

1.2.3 Objective 3 in your SOW: **Train and technically assist selected SILC members and selected trainers (CDW's, DA's, animators/facilitators, and health extension workers) with practical cooking demonstrations showing the best ways to cook foods to preserve nutrients.**

a) Progress with the objective

- Cooking demonstrations took place at each of the kebele level SILC group meetings. We prepared a meal that contained all three food groups presented in the nutrition lesson. We prepared several different vegetables: boiled potato, boiled carrot, boiled cabbage/kale, boiled beetroot, onion, pepper, tomato, and lettuce. With each vegetable we introduced them and discussed the nutrients that they offer/how they help the body, and how to prepare them for maximum nutrition. We especially stressed reusing the water that the vegetables were boiled in to maintain the nutrients that are in the water. We also prepared "nefro:" a mixture of boiled wheat berries, whole maize seed, chickpea, and haricot bean. We explained how this mixture provides a complete protein, and how eating the whole food (not a flour) allows the body to access all parts of the legume or grain, including the parts that contain the vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Finally, we purchased injera and prepared shuro wat, which is also a complete protein together. We discussed how eating the vegetables with the injera and wat or the vegetables with the boiled grain and bean mixture allows us to have a complete meal with all three food groups represented. The shuro wat was prepared over a fire so that the methods demonstrated were easily replicable in the typical village home.

b) Expected impacts/results

- Those who attended the cooking demonstrations received vegetables in a season where it is very difficult to purchase or procure these foods due to low availability (no rain, no income).

- The elements of a healthy balanced meal were reinforced and participants gained increased knowledge of how to prepare foods for maximum nutrition, as well as what each type of food offers for the body.

c) Recommendations

- Continue to conduct cooking demonstrations that show a balanced meal. Cooking demonstrations help to reinforce the message and offer an opportunity for SILC group members to eat together, and to eat food that they did not have to prepare. Therefore, inclusion of cooking group demonstrations with helps to make meetings more successful.

1.3 Action Plan

Recommendation	Specific Action	Responsible person	By when
1. Connect nutrition and gardening via DFAP.	a) repeat nutrition trainings in conjunction with keyhole or community garden trainings during and/or after rainy season b) train on crop and diet diversity together.		
2. Promote gender equity within nutrition and health trainings.	a) women to serve as trainers on nutrition/IYCF/cooking demonstrations b) men to receive IYCF trainings		
3. Increase access and resources for healthy foods.	Assist SILC members to identify reasonable nutritional goals and then IGA that help increase resources for that goal.		
4. Develop and target specific nutritional issues in education.	Promote lipid and iron intake, especially for pregnant and lactating women.		
5. Conduct research to understand barriers to	Conduct focus groups at SILC		

adoption of keyhole gardens and/or increased use of micronutrient foods in diet.	meetings and/or develop survey or questionnaire to be administered.		
6. Explore possibilities for extending fruit and vegetable consumption outside of rainy season.	a) use of gray water for gardens b) harvesting or rainwater in rainy season c) solar drying of fruits and vegetables (also a possible IGA)		

1.4 Number of people Assisted

- a) Through formal training: **22 total, 6 females (27%) and 16 males (73%)**
- b) Through direct technical assistance (Do not double count): **149 total, 80 females (54%) and 69 males (46%)**
- c) Out of these above, number of host staffs: **10 received formal training at ToT**
- d) Training/assistance by field

Category	Total	Males	Females
Members/ owners			
Employees	22*	16	6
Clients/ Suppliers	149	69	80
Family Members			
Total	171	85	86

* This number includes 10 of the host staff (all males) + 12 health extension workers, agriculture DA's, and animators (6 females, 6 males).

1.5 Gender

- a) What gender roles did you recognize in your host community? Did these roles play a part in your assignment? How?
 - The majority of the host staff working with SILC and nutrition/health programs is men teaching about topics that pertain mostly to women (IYCF, cooking, nutrition).
 - during SILC group meetings (both actual SILC meetings in the kebele's and at TOT) men tended to respond to questions more frequently, and to talk longer and more willingly – difficult to draw the women out (though some women did participate in hands on activities).
 - Men were never asked to watch children during meetings, whereas some women had to leave the sessions when the child needed to be tended, causing them to miss information.
- b) How might CRS or the host organization improve opportunities for the women in this host or host community?



- As recommended earlier, host staff should strive to hire female health, nutrition, and SILC staff to lead trainings so that women are represented at the trainer/expert level.
- Men should still receive IYCF information as well as cooking demonstrations, and perhaps host staff can assist in changing the normal behavior of men not being involved in cooking and childcare activities.

1.6 Value of volunteer contribution in \$

- a. Hours volunteer spent preparing for assignment: equivalent of 4 full days (spread out over 2 weeks)
- b. Estimated value of all material contributions volunteer contributed to host during assignment:
The host and CRS provided all materials used in trainings – flipcharts, markers, printed supplies, food for food demonstrations, etc. – so the volunteer did not need to contribute anything but time.

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

- 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.

n/a

1.9 Recommendations for CRS:

I had a wonderful experience both with CRS and with my host organization. I felt warmly welcomed to Ethiopian culture and felt that both organization were very well organized and able to be supportive and responsive to volunteer needs and requests. I am truly grateful for the experience!

My only recommendation is to be sure that the volunteer Scope of Work is passed by relevant CRS and partner organization employees to be sure that the volunteer work fills an appropriate gap. As I was one of the first nutrition volunteers, some of the systems still needed to be worked out in this regard.



1.10 Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Boston Area Volunteer Travels to Ethiopia to Share Skills with
Local Farmers**

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: [Name]
[Title]
[Phone]
[E-mail]

**Boston Area Volunteer Travels to Ethiopia to Share Skills with
Local Farmers**

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

Janel Wright, a **Agriculture-Nutrition Specialist** from **Boston, MA** travelled to **Ethiopia** for 2 weeks to share his/her technical skills and expertise with local farmers. Janel'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 had a wonderful experience volunteering, and felt warmly welcomed into Ethiopian culture by CRS Farmer-to-Farmer staff and my host staff. I feel fortunate to have been able to see firsthand the difficulties local communities face in terms of having access to and resources for a healthy, diversified diet, and I was honored to be able to contribute to the wonderful work that CRS and my host staff are doing on the ground everyday." said Janel.

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**, Janel worked with **Meki Catholic Secretariat-Wonji** in **nutrition** training and giving technical assistance to **members of the Saving and Internal Lending Community**



groups to enable them to gain knowledge of diet diversity and food preparation for maximum nutrition. Up to 171 beneficiaries were reached with nutrition lessons and cooking demonstrations, 22 of which were host staff, health extension workers, agriculture development agents, and other community leaders.

Janel'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.